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Learning Journal 4
Chapter 7 and 8

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Course: SOEN 6841 – Software Project Management

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Dates Rage of activities: 27/02/2025 – 13/03/2025

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Key Concepts Learned

This week's focus was on **Project Monitoring & Control** and **Project Closure**. I learned how **Earned Value Management (EVM)** helps track project schedule and budget performance. To apply this, we used Microsoft Project and Jira to monitor our project progress, ensuring we stayed on track.

Project closure was another important area, emphasizing deliverable finalization, version control, and documenting lessons learned. Learning how companies like Google and IBM conduct structured closure reports helped me understand industry best practices for project completion.

Application in Real Projects

These concepts were applied to our **Food Expiration Alert System** project. We created a **Gantt chart** to track tasks and milestones, which allowed us to identify delays early. By using **EVM principles**, we monitored task completion rates and budget allocation, helping us ensure that we met our deadlines while staying within financial constraints.

To strengthen risk management, we developed a risk assessment matrix to identify potential issues and mitigation strategies. Learning from past project estimation challenges, we introduced buffer periods to better handle uncertainties and avoid last-minute pressure.

Peer Interactions

This week, discussions with my team helped refine our approach to tracking and monitoring. One teammate shared their experience using Trello for Agile project tracking, which led us to integrate a task prioritization system for improved workflow.

We also discussed scope creep and how companies manage last-minute requirement changes. To prevent uncontrolled changes, we implemented a Scope Change Log to document and assess each request before approval. These discussions helped reinforce the importance of structured project management techniques.

Challenges Faced

One challenge was ensuring data accuracy in EVM tracking. Initially, our progress updates led to miscalculations, so we introduced a weekly status update system to improve accuracy. Another difficulty was adapting project monitoring for iterative development, where constant changes made traditional tracking methods less effective. We resolved this by adjusting our Gantt chart with flexible milestone reviews to accommodate evolving tasks.

Additionally, our initial effort estimation was overly optimistic, causing scheduling misalignment. To improve this, we applied COCOMO-based estimation techniques, which helped us refine task durations and resource allocation.

Personal Development Activities

To expand my knowledge, I explored case studies on EVM implementation in large companies and practiced using Jira's sprint tracking feature. I also refined our risk assessment framework, improving how we categorize risks based on severity and likelihood.

Additionally, I revisited previous feedback on estimation challenges, focusing on improving my accuracy through function point analysis. This experience enhanced my understanding of real-world project estimation techniques.

Goals for the Next Week

Next week, my focus will be on **finalizing project deliverables**, ensuring that risk assessments, project plans, and budgeting reports are well-structured. Our team will conduct a final quality review session to make sure everything meets submission standards. Additionally, I will reflect on effort estimation lessons, documenting key takeaways for future projects to avoid common pitfalls in planning and execution.