

IS 350 Week 3 Assignment: Project Management Essential and Integration Management

Rickardo Henry

CUNY

Project

A project is an endeavor which is temporary and executed with an aim of developing a product, outcome, or service that is unique (Schwalbe, 2011). The project has a specified start and finishes time and it is completed when the desired objectives are achieved. This makes it different from the daily activities done by most people.

Project Attributes

A project has six attributes. First, it aims at fulfilling a certain unique purpose in the form of well-described objectives (Schwalbe, 2011). For instance, many hospitals are implementing Electronic Health Records (EHR) systems to improve efficiency in patients' data storage and accessibility. The outcomes of such a project are to establish an integrated information center for the health facility. Secondly, a project is executed within a certain time period, that is, it is temporary. For the case of EHR, the installation may start in say March 2019 and end in January 2020. This shows a definite start and a definite end of the project. Thirdly, the development of a project is based on a progressive elaboration approach where specific details become clearer as the project advances (Schwalbe, 2011). For example, in EHR many health practitioners may not understand how the new system will work because they are used to the manual data entry. However, with time, the project manager and IT teams explain to them as well as collect information and ideas from them to improve the quality of the project.

Fourthly, successful implementation of a project requires resources in the form of hardware, human resource, software, and other applications from all units of the organization (Schwalbe, 2011). In the case of EHR, the resources from patients account, medical records, human resource, general service, finance department, radiology, discharge, and admission units are required to create an integrated information system. Workers from these units must

work in collaboration to facilitate efficient implementation of EHR. Fifthly, a project has a primary client or sponsor who is responsible for funding as well as providing a roadmap of the implementation (Schwalbe, 2011). For EHR, the sponsor can be the vice president of the Information System and Technology unit in the health facility implementing the project. Lastly, implementation of a project involves uncertainties such as unclear objective and inaccurate estimation of time and costs to be incurred. For EHR, uncertainties that are likely to be experienced include incompatible software and IT applications, fluctuation in the market price of hardware, and internal resistance.

The Triple Constraint

Time, cost, and scope are the three main competing goals that a project manager must balance to ensure successful implementation (Schwalbe, 2011). For the EHR case, the scope will entail work to be done such as evaluating software and hardware vendors, training workers in the health facility, installing the software, and undertaking various tests to identify if it meets the results. The scope also includes the unique services to be provided which in this case is an integrated and efficient information and data system. Time, in this case, entails the duration (months or years) of implementing the EHR in healthcare. The time constraint also involves the schedule of the entire EHR project, how actual performance of the schedule will be tracked by the team, and the person responsible for approving emerging changes to the schedule. Lastly, the cost constraint indicates the total expenses to be incurred in implementing the EHR (from purchasing the hardware and software, paying external consultants and experts, training, and application upgrades). Besides, it entails the tracking of the costs as well as the person responsible for authorizing changes in the budget (Schwalbe, 2011). In the case of EHR, the IT unit can work closely with the finance department to ensure that the project is implemented within the stipulated budget. They will authorize any reasonable changes in the budget to enable the project to meet unforeseen contingencies.

Project Management and Project Management Framework

Is the application of best managerial and leadership practices, techniques, tools, knowledge, and skills in project implementation to ensure that the requirements are fully met (Schwalbe, 2011). For instance, in EHR project, the manager does not only focus on time, cost, and schedule constraint but also meet the expectations and needs of staffs in the health facility involved in the project activities.

Project Management Framework involves stakeholders, knowledge areas, tools techniques, and success factors (Schwalbe, 2011). Stakeholders are the individuals affected by project activities such as patients, nurses, physicians, and social workers or involved parties such as IT department, suppliers of hardware and software, support staff, and the project team for the case of EHR project. Knowledge areas key leadership and managerial competencies demonstrated by project managers during the undertaking of the activities. In this case, they include management of employees through motivation, recognition, and talent development, effective communication, risk management, and procurement management (Schwalbe, 2011). These areas facilitate the core management knowledge that focusses on cost, time, and schedule management.

Project management tools and techniques include Gantt Charts, critical path analysis diagram, and network diagrams that facilitate management of time, tracking of the tasks, and accountability (Schwalbe, 2011). The success of a project can be analyzed in three different ways. First, if the implementation period fulfilled the cost, time, and scope period. For example, the EHR project will be termed successful if the hospital will have a fully operational information system by January 2020 which covered either exact or less budget. Secondly, if the IT department and the entire facility is satisfied with the new system regarding easy retrieval and access to patients' data and effective communication between

various units. Lastly, if the objectives of the project were achieved (Schwalbe, 2011), that is, improving the workflow of the health facility.

Project Integration Management

This is the coordination and integration of all management knowledge areas in a life cycle of a project to ensure that all aspects are combined at the right time to successfully execute the project (Schwalbe, 2011). This entails various aspects. First, working closely with all stakeholders (clinicians, physicians, nurses, patients, and suppliers of hardware and software) in designing a project charter to authorize the project formally. Secondly, coordinating all efforts across the facility's department related to the planning process to ensure that the implementation plan is coherent and consistent. Thirdly, directing and managing the execution of all activities described in the project plan. This achieved through producing deliverables, project update, change requests, and information on the performance on a regular basis (Schwalbe, 2011).

Fourthly, monitoring and controlling the tasks to ensure that the activities are undertaken to fulfill the described performance objectives. In the case of EHR, this includes identifying if patients' private information is protected by installed systems, if the software creates a centralized system, and if the hardware meets the operational targets of the hospital. Fifthly, undertaking inclusive change control through identifying, analyzing, and managing proposed changes across the project life cycle. For instance, if an upgraded software application is required and necessary, main stakeholders such as software vendors, IT unit, and the finance department must be involved in handling this change request. Sixthly, project closing where all activities are formally finalized and the health facility has a fully functional EHR (final product), effectively trained staffs, and updated internal systems.

References

Schwalbe, K. (2011). *Information Technology: Project Management* (6th (Revised) ed.).

Boston: Cengage Learning.