What is Project & Program Management

By the end of this learning module you will know…

What a **Project** is

What a **Program** is

What **Project Management** is

The differences between **Project**, **Program**, **Portfolio** and **Product** Management

The difference between **Projects** and **Operations.**

What is a **Project**?

What is a **Project**?

A **temporary** endeavor undertaken to create a **unique** product, service or result.

A project is temporary in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources.

And a project is unique in that it is not a routine operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal.

Temporary

means is has a definite START and END date

Unique means

each project is different from another

Projects can be simple, like organizing a birthday party. Or complex, like building a space rocket. They have a start and end in order to achieve a specific goal. Because the work has an end, projects are different than processes, or operations.

Examples of projects include:

- Developing and launching a new product, feature or service

- Launching a new system or tool

- Building a new facility like an FC, data centre or photo studio

- Conducting a strategic research effort for a Long Range Plan

- Implementing a new set of processes and tools in a business unit

Projects are aligned to the organization's goals, and will enable their success.

What is a **Program**?

amazonpm-cdf

What is a **Program**?

A program is a **group of related projects** managed in a coordinated manner to obtain benefits not available from managing them individually*

In other words, A Program is a collection of projects, each one aligned to, and contributing to an overarching business goal. For example, launching an Amazon service in a new country would be considered a program, comprising multiple projects, each one with a specific set of goals, such as a Tech project to setup the platform; an FC project to launch a new FC; a Legal project to ensure all contracts and agreements are in place, etc.

Program

Multiple Projects

Specific time-based activities to achieve specific goal(s)

Aligned to org objectives

Collection of similar projects

Aligned to divisional / org strategic goals

A Program will contain multiple projects with interdependencies.

Each constituent project aligns to and contributes to an overarching business goal.

What is **Project Management**?

amazonpm-cdf

What is **Project Management**?

Project Management is a methodical approach to planning and executing a project. Its goal is to deliver projects by organizing resources and activities, and providing oversight and control.

Project Management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements and reach the end goal.

Why use **Project Management**?

As Amazon continues to grow to invent of behalf of our customers, it is use skills and competencies that ensure investments are properly controlled and delivered. Project and Program Managers (PMs) ensure this by following a Project Management methodology.

As the number of projects and programs at local, regional and global levels continue to increase, so too must our PM capability.

At Amazon, we have a broad range of projects in terms of size and complexity. Project Management discipline can be applied to these projects to increase their chances of launching on time, within budget and meeting their goals.

Why use **Project Management**?

Using Project Management techniques will increase the certainty of project outcomes, improve delivery discipline and reduce risk. It will provide you with a logical, structured approach that can be tailored to your specific project, to get you to your end goal.

Project Management, when correctly applied, is proven to prevent or mitigate problems, like delivering late or over budget, or not achieving desired business outcomes.

A successful project will: meet or exceed expectations, optimize resources, and build team confidence and morale for future projects.

*Source: PMI "The Value of Project Management – link"

How does it help?

For example, planning sessions with the project team help you understand the scope of work that needs to be done so you can accurately estimate the time it will take. Also, making sure the key stakeholder signs off on the requirements, sets expectations and the baseline for controlling scope, time cost and quality.

So, it solves all my problems?

Applying project management doesn't mean problems won't come up. But with project management, problems are dealt with proactively, rather than haphazardly, using smooth running processes like scope, risk and issue management.

What does a Project Manager **do**?

Project Managers ensure their projects deliver the business value expected by the customer within a set of limitations, like scope, time and cost. They plan for these limitations, monitor them and take action when needed.

Managing Projects, Leading People*

At Amazon, we are all leaders. By being a project manager, you will also be a project leader. You will manage 'things' during project management – like schedules, deadlines, scope, budgets - and you will provide leadership to people working on your project. To be a great PM, you will need to build your hard and soft PM skills

HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS
Planning	Communicating
Budgeting	Influencing
Risk Analysis	Negotiating
Issue Management	Conflict resolution
Monitoring project KPIs	Cultural awareness
Etc.	Etc.

It is very often the case that project teams do not directly report to the Project Manger. Its also the case that in many roles you need to deliver projects even though you are not an official project manager. Developing your hard skills of project management, along with the softer skills – especially developing your informal authority and influence – will help you be a great project manager at Amazon.

Project Management **Methodologies**

There are many project management methodologies you may have heard of – Waterfall, Agile, Scrum etc. The methodology taught in the PM-CDF adopts industry standards from the Project Management Institute (PMI).

This contains **Process Groups** – often referred to as **phases** – that all projects go through. These are shown here:

Initiate ✓

The start of a project. Generate a proposal with a description of the problem to be solved, project objectives, and benefits. Determine whether the project will benefit the organization and the timing is right.

Plan ✓

Determine project tasks, milestones, resource assignments duration, and dependencies. Identify risks, issues and assumptions. Determine the project schedule and budget.

Execute ✓

Complete the planned work. Determine business process and requirements. Assess the change impact and complete the communication and learning strategy. Design, develop, and deploy the solution.

Close ✓

Validate the project success metrics. Debrief to determine and apply lessons learned. Hand over the final deliverables to the customer and release the project team.

Monitor and Control

Track and report project progress. Determine action needed to keep the project on track. Monitor and mitigate risks and issues. Take corrective action when there is a change to scope schedule, or budget.

As you progress through the PM-CDF, you will learn more about these process groups, and the skills, techniques and tools you can adopt to achieve project success.

Thank you

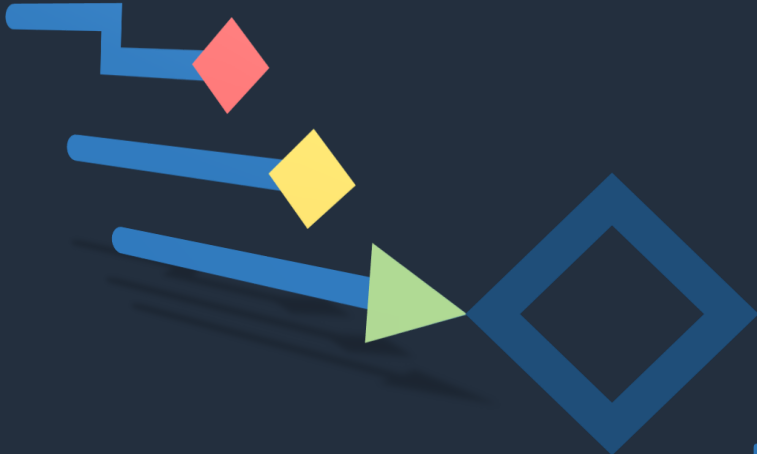You can discuss your learning and understanding in the Knet PM-CDF online community

Learning material contributed by:

amazonpm-cdf

Program Management
Competency Development Framework