Learning Journal

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Course: SOEN 6841 Software Project Management

Journal URL: https://github.com/shezin888/SOEN-6841-Learning-Journal

Week 5: 29.02.2024 - 08.03.2024

Date: 08.02.2024

Key Concepts Learned:

Last week we had reading week, but since we had our midterm exams before the reading week, I have learned chapter 1 to 6 for the exam. The exam went well, eagerly waiting for the results to the announced. For this week we were indented to read chapter 7 and chapter 8. So I have read chapters 7 and 8 prior to the lecture class.

Chapter 7 delved into **project monitoring and control**, emphasizing the importance of having a concrete project plan as a baseline for measuring progress. I learned about the significance of setting milestones to gauge whether target dates for completion are met. This chapter highlighted the utility of Earned Value Management (**EVM**) as a potent tool for tracking both schedule and budget progress, underscoring the need for maintaining accurate baseline and actual figures for effective variance analysis.

Chapter 8 was related to **project closure**, elucidating the activities performed during this phase. This includes managing deliverables, source code version management, and archiving measured metrics data. A key takeaway was the emphasis on learning from the project through archived data, highlighting the importance of lessons learned for the continuous improvement of future projects.

Reflections on Case Study/course work:

There was few case study with the example within the textbook which we were following from the start. The Chapter 7 on project monitoring and control were directly applicable to a recent case study where we were tasked with rescuing a project that was significantly behind **schedule and over budget**. The emphasis on Earned Value Management (EVM) as a critical tool for measuring project progress provided a structured approach to assess where the project truly stood against its planned baseline. Utilizing EVM, we were able to identify specific tasks that were causing delays and budget overruns, allowing us to implement targeted corrective actions.

One of the key lessons from this experience was the importance of **continuous monitoring** and the willingness to adapt plans based on **project performance**. This aligns with the course's differentiation between monitoring that is data collection and progress measurement and control which is taking corrective action based on data. The practical application of these concepts underscored their value in maintaining project alignment with its objectives.

In Chapter 8 we focus on project closure and the importance of lessons learned was particularly resonant during the **completion phase** of a group project. Ensuring that all project deliverables were completed and properly archived was a crucial step in closure, but the reflective process of documenting lessons learned was equally significant. This practice not only facilitated a constructive review of what went well and what could be improved but also served as a vital resource for future projects This process illuminated the importance of a structured **closure phase** to not only formally complete the project but also to capture invaluable insights that can inform future project management practices. **The realization that project closure is not merely an administrative task** but a learning opportunity has profoundly impacted my approach to projects.

Collaborative Learning:

During the midterm week, we have already started with the **project deliverable 2** work, which dealt with **feasibility study, solution proposal, project paln, risk assessment and budgeting documents**. We have splitted the work among our teammates and started working on it, the final draft is yet to be filtered. The **feasibility study** phase of the project underscored the importance of comprehensive research and collaborative evaluation of the **project's viability.** Working as a team allowed us to pool our diverse knowledge and perspectives, enhancing the depth of our analysis. Developing a solution proposal in a group setting was a lesson in negotiation and compromise. It required us to not only advocate for our ideas but also to listen actively to others' suggestions and integrate them into a cohesive proposal. This process reinforced the importance of aligning team members around a common goal and the power of collective brainstorming to produce innovative solutions. **The project plan phase** introduced us to the complexities of organizing tasks, timelines, and **resources in a collaborative environment.** It was during this phase that the teachings from Chapter 7 on **project monitoring and control became particularly relevant**. As a team, we had to agree on **milestones, assign responsibilities**, and establish mechanisms for tracking progress and addressing deviations. **Collaborative risk assessment was an eye-opening experience in identifying potential project pitfalls and planning mitigations.** It emphasized the value of diverse perspectives in foreseeing risks that might not have been apparent to any one individual. The **budgeting process** brought to light the intricacies of **financial planning in projects**. Working collaboratively, we learned to justify our budgetary needs based on the project scope and expected outcomes, balancing cost-efficiency with the need for resources that ensure quality.

Further Research/Readings:

For the project delivery part, I have done huge research on SPM and also on the sub topics for this delivery. I have came across new terms throughout my research, EVM is highlighted as a pivotal tool for integrating the measurements of scope, schedule, and cost in a project. By comparing the planned value (PV), actual cost (AC), and earned value (EV), project managers can assess the project's performance. For resource utilization Monitoring the effective loading and utilization of resources ensures that project teams are neither overextended nor underutilized, optimizing efficiency and productivity throughout the project lifecycle. Also aligning project objectives with organizational goals- Ensuring that the project's objectives were in harmony with the broader organizational goals was critical for securing stakeholder support and ensuring project relevance. These findings helps me alot for drafting for the deliverable 2 of the project, as I was assigned risk management and project plan I have gone more into that side of our topic and learned many new things during the break about our project topic and we had few meetings among our teammates on project discussion.

Adjustments to Goals:

For the coming week, we will be covering same chapter 7 and 8 in the class, as I have already read it, I will the brushing the concepts up before next lecture and also will be reading few topics from chapter 9 and try to gain idea about the chapter 9 topics. Also we got an extension for the project 2 deliverable submission, so for this week I'll be more focusing on the project part of SPM. Even though we have started with the project, this week we will try to add more content to the topic and will try to filter the drafted document again. Also since we have time I'll be researching more on our project topic and the deliverable 2 parts assigned to me, after that I'll cross check the whole documented which is drafted. Before next lecture I'll be running my eyes through the all the major topics from chapter 7 ,8 and 9.

Abbreviations:

SPM - Software Project Management.
EVM - Earned Value Management
AC - Actual Cost
PV - Planned Value