

Project Management

Case Study

ASTRAZENECA

VACCINE

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Project Management ISE 2



INTRODUCTION

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AstraZeneca is a global bio - pharmaceutical company headquartered in Cambridge, England, with revenues of \$26.6 billion (2020).

Astrazeneca's many years of experience in manufacturing live virus influenza vaccine meant covid 19 vaccines were built on solid foundations and strong expertise



As of July 2021, AstraZeneca has released 1 billion doses for supply to 170 countries.

ASTRAZENECA Fighting a Global Pandemic

CHALLENGE: From Lab to Jab at Light Speed

AstraZeneca and Oxford University pledged to provide the vaccine on a not-for-profit basis. This landmark partnership brought together world-class expertise in vaccinology with AstraZeneca's ability to deliver a global solution at scale.

01

Need

To create effective COVID-19 vaccine to defeat the virus and save lives

02

Collaboration

Joined forces with University of Oxford to deliver global solution

03

Commitment

Vaccine would be available at cost during the pandemic, and accessible to low-income countries after the pandemic subsides

CONTEXT

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Risk

Complexity

Visibility

From the moment AstraZeneca publicly announced a vaccine partnership with Oxford University on April 30, 2020, the process it undertook was unlike that for any other technology it had developed in the past, with vastly more uncertainty, complexity, and visibility.



CONTEXT: RISK



- Uncertainties and reputation risks in the vaccine project were significant
- The need for speed demanded large, simultaneous investments in
 - the clinical program of Phase III for emergency use authorization by regulatory bodies such as the FDA
 - setup of manufacturing capacity around the globe.
- These investments typically would have taken place after years of work and risk mitigation rather than within weeks of seeing initial clinical results in Phase 2.

CONTEXT: RISK



- The company had to dedicate resources and top talent to the project without compromising the rest of its portfolio
- Reputational risk associated with delivering a vaccine on a global scale at unprecedented speed
- The risk management process would also require close, frequent contact between project and senior leadership teams

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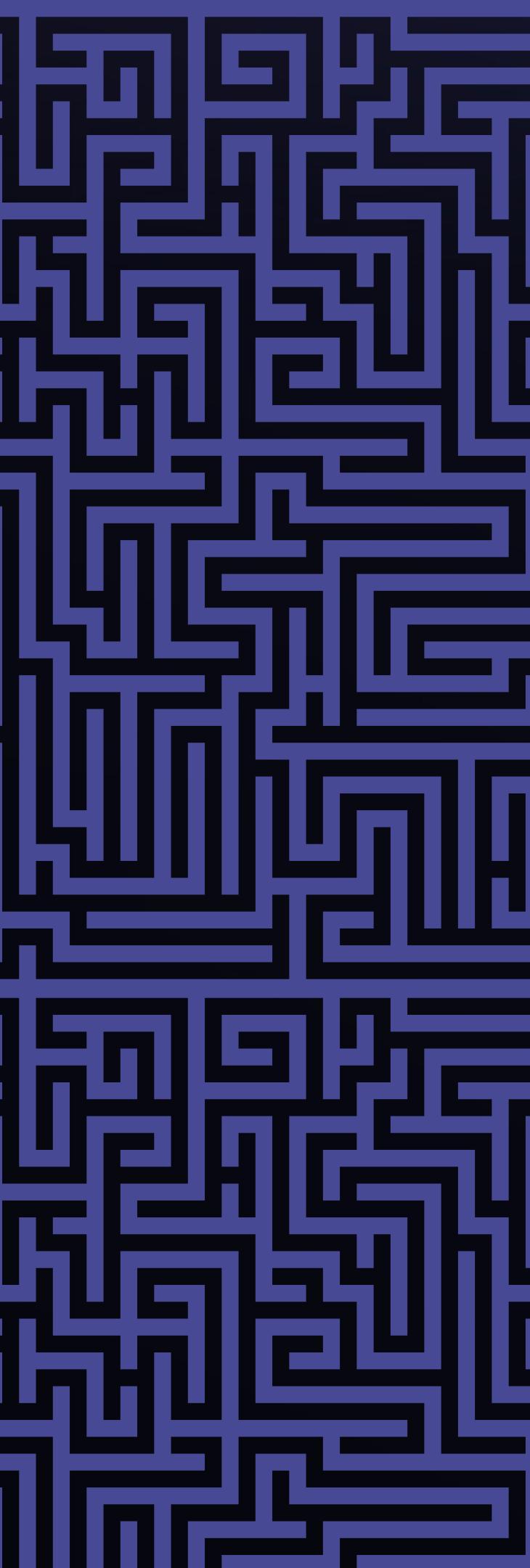
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CONTEXT: COMPLEXITY



- The need to move quickly drove the project's complexity
- Due to the accelerated timeline of the vaccine project, AstraZeneca had to manage clinical trials while simultaneously ramping up manufacturing capacity.
- The project's complexity also increased with every new customer
- The primary customers were governments seeking to immunize their populations, and each government brought its own regulatory requirements and compliance framework to the table, adding to the contracting and compliance challenge.



CONTEXT: VISIBILITY



- The global need for the vaccine gave this project a prominence unlike any other for drug development—there were universal pressures.
- “It’s a fishbowl to the nth degree to be on a project like this, where you literally have presidents of governments calling and asking, ‘When am I getting my vaccines?’” said Colleen Dixon, Head of Biopharmaceutical Project Management. “We were working out loud on a global scale.”



PROJECT MANAGEMENT



As AstraZeneca's Global Project and Portfolio Management function identified 3 gaps

1

Internal project managers experienced in vaccine development

2

Project management processes fit for moving at the speed the vaccine project required

3

An internal government contracting organization that could support the project.

ESTABLISHING A PMO

- Project management infrastructure was necessary to address the unique challenges of this project.

- The first step was to create a project management office (PMO)

- PMO that would take two was supposed to be built in a week

4 KEY ROLES FOR THE PMO

**Integration
of schedule
and budget**

**Adapting the
enterprise system
to support billing
for a US
government
contract**

**Contract
management**

**Provided a
centralized resource
for team members
and functional
owners**

**Team
process
guidance**

**Developed guidance
and training for
team members on
ways of working on
various govt
contracts**

**Risk
management**

**Understand and
manage key risks
to the project and
the business**

STAFFING THE PROJECT



- Next challenge was to staff the PMO
- Hiring externally would have taken time
- Dixton searched internally, looking for people within her existing team of 80 project managers, as well as people outside the team with relevant experience in their careers
- Staffed the vaccine team with people who had worked on government contracts or vaccine projects in the past
- A new project manager was hired from outside by HR in a week, despite the pandemic situation

Focusing the Project Manager's Role

1

Hired Tina Guina, who previously had worked at the US government's Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), to serve as the lead R&D global project manager for the vaccine project

2

The newly created PMO proved invaluable for easing the project manager's responsibilities in contract management, schedule and budget integration, compliance, and risk management, enabling her to focus primarily on the efforts of the project team.

SCALING TO MEET GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Having so many government clients also meant satisfying stringent regulatory requirements across multiple jurisdictions. While the project adapted for speed where it could, the one area in which it could not cut corners was quality

We had to achieve this using all our standards of quality and complying with our quality systems and satisfying regulatory bodies around the world,” said Dixon

LESSON LEARNED

Adapt, Adapt, Adapt

LESSONS LEARNED

Adaptability was the core project management challenge.

At every step, the project faced changing circumstances as governments across the globe lined up to become customers

For example, the US government initially planned to issue the contract through BARDA, but given the sheer size of the agreement, elected to move the contract to the Department of Defense (DOD), which had significantly more experience with procurements of this size

SOME OF THE ADAPTATIONS MADE

- They had to rework a different contract with a different group of people.
- It was ultimately a good switch because of the DOD's capabilities, but it was hard to be in the middle of the negotiation and have to start over.
- As the project acquired increasing nos. of government customers, it had to secure agreements with contract manufacturing organizations (CMOs) in various geographies to ensure that it would have necessary production capability.
- There was no time for hesitation since other vaccine projects would be seeking manufacturing capacity as well.

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Knowing when to ADAPT is important

1

There's also a fine line between how much adaptability there should be, how much adaptability is actually feasible, and deciding when it's ok to let go.

2

It's the goal for the project manager to know when to push, when to pull, when to work offline with somebody, and when to try to pull a team together to discuss things. To manage things appropriately without a breakdown is a question mark every day.

Thank You

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