**ASSIGNMENT.**

**MODULE: THREE (3)**

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT-CAPACITY BUILDING AFRICA INSTITUTE-KENYA.

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**1.Explain the factors that affect implementation of a project?**

The process of project implementation, involving the successful development and introduction of projects in the organization, presents an ongoing challenge for managers. The project implementation process is complex, usually requiring simultaneous attention to a wide variety of human, budgetary, and technical variables. As a result, the organizational project manager is faced with a difficult job characterized by role overload, frenetic activity, fragmentation, and superficiality. Often the typical project. A manager has responsibility for successful project outcomes without sufficient power, budget, or people to handle all of the elements essential for project success. In addition, projects are often initiated in the context of a turbulent, unpredictable, and dynamic environment. Consequently, the project manager would be well served by more information about those ' specific factors to be both a brilliant strategist and a skilled tactician to manage the complexities involved in managing projects (Pinto and Slevin, 1987).

There are eight factors that influence the implementation of a project that a project manager, project sponsor and project teams should take into account for a successful implementation of a Project which can vary from one institution to another. They include technical, economic, commercial, political, social cultural factors and managerial.

1. **Deadline:**

Deadline is one of the key aspects that determine how a project is managed. Missing a deadline creates a bad impression for your team. However, completing a project on deadline does not mean that you compromise on quality. You have to be both alert about time and have a keen eye on quality. If the project has narrow deadlines with strict clients or stakeholders, project manager should be alert to all possible hindrances from before and take appropriate precautions, so that on-time delivery of quality products or services can be ensured. Not only should the manager be on their toes but they should instill the same kind of attitude among the team members. Team members should flag issues, problems and hindrances the moment being faced so that solutions can be looked out for immediately.

1. **Budget:**

Budget is another critical factor that determines a project’s progress and management. In case the budget is high, then the number of days for completion of the project is also more and so is the number of resources allocated to it. Do not rush in such situations; rather focus completely on delivering products or services that are of best quality, with maximum utilization of resources. However, if the budget is less you have to adjust with limitations such as unavailability of resources, lack of time, and money. However, you cannot compromise on quality which means the stress level of you and your team increases. You may have to motivate your irritated overworked team members by encouraging them for their good performance and recognizing their efforts through rewards.

1. **Stakeholders:**

Techniques of managing projects will vary depending upon the kind of stakeholders for the projects. In case a project has multiple stakeholders from different backgrounds, there is a possibility of disagreement between them. In such cases, project management becomes extremely challenging as you cannot afford to have unhappy stakeholders and clients. Great convincing and negotiation skills are required in such cases to reach a consensus. It can be time consuming and hence the actual time dedicated to resources will reduce. The project manager needs to adopt tactful approaches in such cases and get the work done.

1. **Project Members:**

Project management techniques are also determined by the challenges faced by a project manager which, in turn, depends on the kind of team he or she is handling. If the team consists of members with diverse backgrounds and skills, a gap in terms of team spirit may exist. This obviously impacts work. Therefore, a project manager should apply techniques to bring the team close. He should ensure that regular team meets happen which can be both formal and informal. In team meetings and outings people from various backgrounds are bound to interact. This creates a bond between members and they are ready to be there for each other.

1. **Demand:**

Demand is another key factor that influences project management techniques. Demand itself depends on a few factors such as type of products or services, usability, etc. If the product is a perishable item such as grains or vegetables, the nature of demand will be different from that of garments that can be stocked and used for months. In case of services, such as creation of instruction manuals for electronic products, the demand depends on the number of users in the market. Depending on the kind of demand and the nature of the product or services offered, a project manager needs to apply appropriate management techniques ensuring on time delivery of goods and services.

1. **Supply:**

In order to meet the demand within a stipulated date and time (which we came across as deadline), supply of resources is necessary. A project manager needs to ensure that supply is adequate, so that deadline is not compromised for want of resources. For example, the company has scheduled a training session with 15 students on a given date. Students have paid fees and they have been given the date, time and venue of the session. However, more people started registering for the session and the total number reached 25. The current venue has a capacity of 20 people. Now, the training provider should be in a position to arrange another venue immediately for the training session. If the session gets cancelled due to lack of space, it will be a big loss for the company both in terms of money and reputation.

1. **Price:**

Price is an important aspect of project management. Price is determined by high level managers in consultation with project sponsors after studying market trends. Price is an important determinant of the sale and profit and should be determined after careful calculation. The type of product or service is an important factor to be considered when talking about price determination. For convenience, we will categorize products into three 3 types: perishable products, non-perishable products, and specialized products. There are two factors that need to be considered here: the quantity that needs to be sold and the price that the buyer is willing to pay for it. In case of non-perishable items like cooking oil, grains and pulses, coal, demand is never a limitation. Additionally, being non-perishable, the products can be stored and marketed throughout the year. The storage and demand factors balance out the price. These kinds of products are usually not exorbitantly high priced.

However, it is different for perishable products and seasonal items. These are in the market for a short duration and are in high demand for that period. Owning to the high demand and limited supply, price is usually high. For example, an organization focused on export of fruits and vegetables, will have enough supply of the items during winter.

Project management is a complex concept. There is no one rule for managing projects as there is no single type of project. Services and products are the two key categories of offerings in the market and the management method differs significantly for both. Within each category, there are multiple varieties and again project management will vary depending on the type of product or service in question. The factors mentioned in this article will give you a clear idea regarding the key determinants of project management methods and techniques.

**2.Explain any two methods for effective implementation of projects**

Every project is extremely unique which means we cannot have a standard structure to execute our projects and achieve success in our endeavor. However, to have a good plan we need some kind of framework or structure to follow depending on the nature of the project. Project management models or methodologies provide the framework to execute projects.

A framework is something that tells you how often you will meet and discuss the progress, how you will document results, how you will communicate and so on. Projects involve many moving activities at the same time. Keeping track of the activities, schedules, timelines is rendered easier if there is a visual mapping of activities against the timelines, activities that precede others, and the interdependencies among them. Project time management ensures completing a project on time, which is one of the major challenges for any project manager. Kwak and Ibbs (2002) identify project time management activities as definition and sequencing, duration estimation, schedule development, and schedule control; and bar charts, the CPM/PERT technique, resource allocation and leveling, network crashing, and fast tracking of projects are used to effectively manage the project schedule.

Project managers and teams use different tools to effectively manage projects, two of which are bar charts or Gantt charts, and network based scheduling tools.

a) Bar charts Bar charts that could otherwise be known as Gantt charts were developed as a tabular production planning tool used to plan and manage batch production. In modern terms bar charts take a time-phased dependent demand approach to production planning. Wilson (2003) describes the bar chart formula in manufacturing especially as production planning worked in a ‘‘top–down’’ manner by linking end item requirements to their constituent components with time-phased production to allow all components to be available when needed for subsequent production activity. Due dates are further used to plan daily activities or production processes by determining the quantities to be made and then tracking production against the daily goals. Bar charts give a tabular visual snapshot of what activities should be done and the amount of time needed to do them to completion. This tabulation would highlight areas with discrepancies, activities that would be undertaken in parallel, the precedencies and assumptions in the timelines, and allows for remedial action to be taken in good time. Bar charts have two axes; horizontal representing the activities and the vertical axis representing the time required for an activity. For instance, in the simple example below, it is possible to see, without much effort the overlaps of the planning, implementation, monitoring and closing phases and make a decision as to whether there is an inherent problem in the scheduling – implementation overlapping with planning- and whether it would need to be revised to reduce the overlaps or whether they are workable for the project at hand.

b) Network based scheduling The introduction of network scheduling techniques in the late fifties according to PMI (2017) greatly aided the timely completion of complex construction projects. The two techniques used in network based scheduling are the Performance Evaluation and Review Tools (PERT) and Critical Path Method (CPM) techniques and their main function is to determine and control the time required to complete a project and, by extension, costs. Time and cost are closely related, and savings in time can correspond to savings in costs without compromising quality or final product or outcome of a project.

I) **Performance Evaluation and Review Tools**. A network is the foundation of the PERT system. Cook (1966) described PERT as a graphic representation of the project plan and shows the plan established to reach project objectives, interrelationship and interdependencies of project elements, and priority elements of the plan. Some of its components include the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) - smaller and more easily managed activities; a network that defines the events and activities in the project and identifies the precedencies, dependencies and interdependencies of activities – Finish-to-Finish, Finish-to Start, Start-to-Finish and Start-to-Start; estimated time to complete each step that has three time estimates - Most Likely Time (normal circumstances), the Optimistic Time (under prime conditions), and the Pessimistic Time (worst case scenario) whose accuracy is dependent on how well defined the activities are; and a schedule where significant events or activities are assigned a scheduled date putting into consideration the possible constraints.

ii**) Critical Path Method** was developed in the 1950s by DuPont, and was first used in missile-defense construction projects. Since that time, the CPM has been adapted to other fields including hardware and software product research and development. To effectively complete a complex project, project managers must develop plans that show, with a degree of accuracy how the efforts of the people representing the functions in a project should be directed toward its completion. To devise such plans and implement them, Kelly and walker (1959) suggested that management must be able to collect pertinent information to accomplish tasks:

There must therefore be a technique that managers can use to arrive at these plans and the schedules for them. The Critical Path Method (CPM) is a scheduling tool that is used to estimate the minimum project duration and determine the amount of schedule flexibility on the logical network paths within the schedule model (PMI, 2017). It can be used in all forms of projects, including construction, software development, research projects, product development, engineering, and plant maintenance. While developing the CPM, it was argued that a high degree of coordination could be obtained if the planning and scheduling information of all project functions are combined into a single master plan - a plan that integrates all efforts towards a common objective. This masterplan would involve a high level of detail on the project. Below is an illustration of a critical path.

The Critical Path Method makes use of the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), the time required to complete each activity, the dependencies between activities. It shows the most critical activities along the longest path of a project to completion and the earliest and latest an activity can start without prolonging the completion time of the project. The critical path can be shortened by running activities in parallel (fast tracking) or adding more resources to the critical path to shorten the duration of the activities (crashing the path).

**3.Identify an assumption that a project manager should bear in mind when executing project documentation**

According to PMBOK® Guide 5th Edition, Project Assumption is “A factor in planning process that is considered to be true, real or certain often without any proof or demonstration**”**

These are factors that could influence the implementation and success of a project, be they internal or external to the organization. Internal assumptions would be such as availability of human resource or equipment for the project when needed, while an external factor could be acceptance of the project by the community or availability of outsourced services and equipment. A planner can reduce the uncertainty in which the project will operate by specifying the situations which must be ‘taken as given’ if the project is to achieve its objectives, but over which the participants (donor, government) have little or no control.

An assumption is a belief of what you assume to be true in the future. You make assumptions based on your knowledge, experience or the information available on hand. These are anticipated events or circumstances that are expected to occur during your project’s life cycle. Assumptions are supposed to be true but do not necessarily end up being true; Sometimes, they may turn out to be false, which can affect your project significantly. They add risks to the project because they may or may not be true. Suppose in our shopping example; you assumed that it would take one hour for you to reach the destination. What will happen if, due to traffic, you don’t reach the mall on time? Your assumption is false, and your plan for shopping is endangered.

In executing project documentation, a project manager should bear in mind the probability that the project may not necessarily be wanted by the community in which it will be implemented and project outcomes, recommendations could be rejected by the community, some members of one’s own team, policy makers, government functionaries and other groups.

This assumption can push a project team to be more innovative in how it approaches project design, the rationale for the project, the desired outcomes and outputs, and how it conducts its stakeholder assessment and engagement. acceptance of the project, a project manager would have to work into the design of the project a baseline study that identifies the community’s issues and its expectations. One would also have to query whether the community suffers from being the subject of too many projects that do not seem to be of benefit thus creating resistance to any further projects, and how to navigate that complication.

It would also be prudent to consider whether the project impacts on the norms and social fabric of the community, the ethical issues that would need to be addressed, whether it is targeted specifically at men or women, and how the community perceives its involvement in the project design and implementation. From this, the design of the project could change or be adapted to respond to the community’s anxieties, contributions, suggestions and recommendations from the initiation of the project. The stakeholders’ involvement would set it up for the probability that it would succeed. It would also be probable that the outcomes and recommendations would be acceptable if the stakeholders have been involved in designing and implementing the project, and validating the documentation having their knowledge taken on board.

**4.When designing a project proposal, why is it important to formulate a project rationale?**

A project rationale is an argument in favor of implementing the proposed project by your [organization](https://www2.fundsforngos.org/tag/organisations/). It gives a detailed explanation of why the project is required in the area. In other words, it describes the issues and problems the community is facing and how an organization and the proposed project will address them with the [funding](https://www2.fundsforngos.org/tag/funding/) support expected from the donor. This section of the proposal can be very crucial because it is here that one need to convince the funder that why it is absolutely necessary to get the grant for implementing the project.

This would be the document that a board of an organization or company would see in relation to a project laying out high level reasons for undertaking the project. It allows management to buy into the project, make necessary adjustments, source for funding, seek more information and grant approval of the project or not depending on their perspective and objectives of the organization. Jarmooz (2012) states that a rationale must: be evidence based; be clear and concise and underpinning the importance of the project and state justifiable reasons for its approval; outline the identified problem within the organizational context; analyze the main determinants such as market requirements, identified risks, and resource requirements; evaluate possible solutions and recommendations; draw on previous experience and lessons learnt from previous projects for justification of assumptions; and have a clear statement of goals to be achieved and benefits to gain.

A project rationale grounds the project and gives the requisite information on a project that allows a decision to be made. The project document may lay out objectives, timelines, activities, schedules and other pertinent information to the running of a project but the rationale would give life and direction to the project and bring it to the starting point when it is well considered.

**5.Explain any five good practices in project design**

According to Stephanie Ray, August 29, 2019; A Project design is a major first step towards a successful project**.** A project design is a strategic organization of ideas, materials and processes for the purpose of achieving a goal. Project managers rely on a good design to avoid pitfalls and provide parameters to maintain crucial aspects of the project, like the schedule and the budget. Manager must ensure the below are practices are valued;

1. Involve all relevant stakeholders in participatory processes of project design Stakeholders are all those people or groups of people upon whom a project will have an impact in one way or another. Some are more critical than others and each needs a different engagement strategy. Different stakeholders need to be engaged in the project in different ways; some more closely than others. For instance, the stakeholder dealing with financing the project is a key stakeholder that the project team needs to keep appraised on a regular basis with face-to-face meetings, phone calls, emails and other channels of communication that could suit the purpose from the conceptualization of the project to the closure process. The key benefit of involving stakeholders is that it provides an actionable plan to interact effectively with stakeholders and this can be undertaken periodically throughout the project.

2. Undertake a thorough situation analysis, together with primary stakeholders, to learn as much as possible about the project context as a basis for designing a project strategy and implementation processes that are relevant. It is important to have as much background information as possible on the context – political, social, economic, the types of stakeholders, the issue or challenge at hand, limitations of interventions to enable effective project design. For instance, in Agriculture, Njuki (2017) states that while women form 70 per cent of the agricultural labor force, they do not own the land on which they farm and thus have limited decision making capacity on the land. Without this understanding, researchers could spend a lot of time getting women to make decisions on crops or livestock on land they do not possess which could retard the project. Thus, any project must understand the environment in which the project will be conducted and plan for certain situations of context if it is to succeed.

3. Develop a logical and feasible project strategy that clearly expresses what will be achieved (goal and purposes) and how it will be achieved (outputs and activities). The greater the detail provided on a project, the more likely it will be successful. Scheduling, resource allocation, inputs and developing proper charts that show interactions, premises, dependencies, interdependencies, and precedencies are invaluable in managing a project and arriving at the outputs, completing activities and meeting the goals or objective of the project. Without these, it would not be possible to tell whether the project can deliver on time, on budget, within agreed limits and of the quality that would be expected.

4. Agree and focus on cross-cutting issues Cross cutting issues are not the core of a project but support a project and make it better. A portfolio of projects, could have issues common to all projects or that could be addressed by all projects either to make the projects more visible, inclusive or participatory. These cross cutting issues could be communication, gender, youth or participation. For instance, the fisheries value chain has various nodes where women participate more, like processing, and where men are mainly found, fishing. A project that is working on fisheries, for instance, solar tent driers for fish, must take into account how the gender factor would affect the setup of the driers, the availability of fish and the processing factors, and thus should consider having gender as a cross cutting issue in projects that work on fisheries.

5. Build in opportunities and activities that support learning and enable adaptation of the project strategy during implementation. A project should start from the premise that there is a need or gap that needs to be explored or corrected so that people can live a better quality of life. However, education, social norms, cultural practices and economic and political issues create a highly complex environment. A project needs to leave room to adapt to various learnings as it is implemented and to be ready to make changes that would ensure its success. Both the community and the project teams have something to learn during the design and implementation of a project.

**6.Is it important to involve stakeholders in project implementation, explain your answer?**

According to Peter Landau, June13,2017; A stakeholder is either an individual, group or organization who is impacted by the outcome of a project. They have an interest in the success of the project, and can be within or outside the organization that is sponsoring the project. Stakeholders can have a positive or negative influence on the project.

Also according to PMI (2017) project stakeholder management includes the processes required to identify all those who would be impacted and to develop appropriate management strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in project decisions and execution. Maak (2007) discussing Responsible Leadership, Stakeholder Engagement, and the Emergence of Social Capital argues that there are both theoretical and practical challenges with respect to stakeholder engagement in general, and evaluating and balancing the various and often conflicting claims of multiple stakeholders (employees, clients, shareholder, suppliers, NGOs, communities, government, nature, future generations, etc.) in particular. This calls for pro-active engagement and requires inclusive stakeholder engagement and dialogue, to facilitate a legitimating discourse and to help balance diverse claims ensuring ethically sound decision making.

For instance, if an organization is developing a software application for a company, the project team has to decide whether to engage the client and the users of the software at the end of the project and risk it being rejected because certain requirements were not met, bugs were not caught ahead of the delivery, or technology has moved so the end user has a better application from elsewhere. If they involve the client and the end user in the testing of the product in phases, the quality delivered at the end would meet the requirements as changes would have been made in the product development phase and the end user can also have their needs met by the application. Engaging stakeholders can also be a cost control measure given changes to the project schedule or product can be quite costly. If caught during the implementation phase, communication on changes can be discussed with stakeholders and agreed upon, including what it would cost to undertake the changes especially if there is an integrated change management plan where changes are approved or rejected or adjusted and all stakeholders understand the implications of changes. Also, it can be made clear who pays for the changes and the stakeholders can hold off on any lofty ideas that would escalate costs and delay the project delivery.

Impact can be negative or positive on stakeholders. Without the engagement of stakeholders, a project could be in jeopardy, end products rejected because they could be defective and not meet the requirements or stakeholders could feel they were not consulted and therefore make it difficult for the project to operate. From building railways, roads and ports, wildlife conservation, projects that touch on social education and ethics, software development, and sanitation and hygiene, stakeholders are a valuable source of information and can be a catalyst or an impediment to a project. Therefore, all stakeholders must be identified, project team members should be involved in stakeholder management, stakeholder community should be reviewed regularly, consulting with those most affected should be ongoing and lessons should be captured, positive or negative.

**7.The local community where a project is to take place or taking place is a very important ingredient when it comes to decision making on project implementation. Do you agree with this statement? Backed up by relevant examples, explain your answer.**

The local community is “engaged” when they play an effective role in decision-making. That means they are actively involved in defining the issues, identifying solutions, and developing priorities for action and resources. Local leaders need to broaden their list of responsibilities to include roles as facilitator, supporter, collaborator, and empowers local community members. This change requires letting go of some of the traditional reins of power and trusting that citizens can and will effectively engage in the issues. The result is a partnership that is nearly always healthy for a community

Implementation is a process of putting in motion, in an organized way, planned activities in order to achieve certain established objectives. According to Fullan and & Pomfret (1977) there are four characteristics that make implementation possible: characteristics of the innovation itself, strategies and tactics, characteristics of the adopting unit, and sociopolitical units including design issue, incentive system, evaluation and political complexity.

If a project takes a traditional view of implementation where beneficiaries are seen as either clients (to be sold an idea) or employees (to be instructed) rather than an open approach that recognizes that people are important, and are thought of as ‘instigators’ and ‘actors’ rather than planners and clients, a project can run into difficulties during implementation as communities may not be as involved as they should be. In addition, if a project takes the traditional approach, the stakeholder identification and planning for stakeholder engagement may not have the depth it needs to ensure that a local community does not become an impediment to implementation.

The local community, in any project, is a major stakeholder, whether people understand its full implications or not. Building social capital through stakeholder engagement is ultimately essential to both a sustainable business and the common good. Implementing organizations can gain legitimacy, manage social risk and even co-develop innovative solutions to social problems with community

members through a well-designed community engagement strategy while for communities, projects offer access to charitable dollars, employee volunteers, training, capacity building, influencing projects and substantive improvement to social problems. In a development situation an approach is needed which encourages and fosters decreasing dependence and increasing self-reliance; the open method of implementation is suited to this. Whatever project it may be, health, economics and livelihoods, agriculture, infrastructure, water and sanitation – all have to take into account the local community.

Stakeholders were not properly identified and the engagement process was not thoroughly considered where the community is concerned. This especially happens where they are likely to feel shortchanged especially on land payments, and employment and labor issues. While many of the employees working for the SGR are Kenyans, construction continues to trigger bitter conflict because the communities through which the railway passes, rightly or wrongly, feel shortchanged and discriminated against. It therefore becomes an expensive endeavor to appease the community which inflates the cost of a project, interferes with timelines and the successful implementation.

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