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**Assignment questions**

1. Monitoring and evaluation are always portrayed as being one and the same thing, yet that are different.” Discuss the truthfulness of this statement.
2. Discuss the effects of Monitoring and Evaluation in project management
3. What are the advantages of conducting Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Outline in details the guidelines to an effective project evaluation
5. “Monitoring and Evaluation are the heart of the principles and practices of project management” Discuss
6. Discuss the benefits of effective stakeholder participation in an evaluation exercise
7. Describe the following terms as used in project Monitoring and Evaluation:
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9. Project evaluation
10. Primary stakeholder
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14. Discuss the steps in writing and presenting an Evaluation Report
15. Identify and explain any four features or characteristics of a project

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**Module Five**

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1. **Monitoring and evaluation are always portrayed as being one and the same thing, yet that are different.” Discuss the truthfulness of this statement.**

Monitoring and evaluation are always portrayed as being one and the same thing, yet they are different. Project management has the task of establishing sufficient controls over a project to ensure that it stays on track towards the achievement of its objectives. This is done by monitoring (which is normally done internal), so monitoring is a systematic and continuous collection, analysis and use of information for management control and decision-making on an ongoing intervention with indications of the extent of achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. Project monitoring is an integral part of day-to-day management. It provides information by which management can identify and solve implementation problems, and assess progress. The Logical Framework, the implementation schedule, activity schedules, and project budget provide the basis for this monitoring.

Meanwhile evaluation on the other hand is an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and Results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency & effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation provides information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Monitoring and evaluation are always portrayed as being one and the same thing, yet that are different. Evaluation differs from monitoring in three respects: - Timing, Focus, who conducts it, & level of details.

* **Timing** - Monitoring is a continuing function that takes place throughout the implementation of a project/programme, while Evaluation assesses the entire project cycle; and its done at the end of the project/stage of project implementation
* **Focus** - Monitoring is a regular part of project or programme management. It focuses on the implementation of the project, comparing what is delivered with what was planned. While Evaluation reviews the achievements of the entire project/programme and considers whether the plan was the best one to achieve the outcomes. Evaluation measures achievements, as well as the positive/negative and intended/unintended effects. It looks for lessons to be learned from both success and failure, and also looks for best practices which can be applied elsewhere.
* **Who conducts it -** Monitoring is usually done by people directly involved in implementing the project/programme. While Evaluation is best conducted by an independent outsider who can be impartial in consulting with project/ programme staff.

Relationship between monitoring and evaluation is that; Data collected and insights gained in the course of monitoring are then fed into and used by the evaluation process.

1. **Discuss the effects of Monitoring and Evaluation in project management**

Monitoring and Evaluation is used to assess the performance of projects, institutions and programmes set up by governments, international organizations and NGOs. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. It helps determine exactly when a programme is on track and when changes may be needed.

Monitoring and evaluation forms the basis for modification of interventions and assessing the quality of activities being conducted. It can help an organization extract relevant information from past and ongoing activities that can be used as the basis for programmatic fine-tuning, re-orientation and future planning. Without effective planning, monitoring and evaluation, it would be impossible to judge if work is going in the right direction, whether progress and success can be claimed, and how future efforts might be improved.

Monitoring and evaluation helps with identifying the most valuable and efficient use of resources. Without careful monitoring, the necessary data will not be collected; hence evaluation cannot be done well.

M&E supports project/programme implementation with accurate, evidence based reporting that informs management and decision-making to guide and improve project/programme performance.

It contributes to organizational learning and knowledge sharing by reflecting upon and sharing experiences and lessons so that we can gain the full benefit from what we do and how we do it.

Uphold accountability and compliance by demonstrating whether or not the work has been carried out as agreed and in compliance with established standards and with any other donor requirements.

Provide opportunities for stakeholder feedback, especially beneficiaries, to provide input into and perceptions of the work, modelling openness to criticism, and willingness to learn from experiences and to adapt to changing needs.

Promote and celebrate the work by highlighting the accomplishments and achievements, building morale and contributing to resource mobilization

1. **What are the advantages of conducting Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a process that helps improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. Monitoring and evaluation helps those involved with community development or any type of projects to assess if progress desired is being achieved. M&E benefits the key actors involved in community development in the following ways:

* **For project executors** (i.e., a company/NGO partnership, or a company foundation), M&E can improve management. By monitoring progress against defined goals, a project manager can assess what is working and what is not, and from there can determine what changes should be made to a project. This in turn makes it possible to improve the way things are being done in the project organization.
* **For companies**, whether executing a project or supporting it through partnership or funding, M&E can be used to demonstrate progress to internal management and to external stakeholders. Internally, measurable results can justify continued funding and clarify the return on investment of community development efforts to managers and shareholders. Externally, the results of M&E can demonstrate commitment to and competence in community development, and thus help a company maintain its social license to operate (Muyuka, 2015). This makes the companies to make sound decisions concerning major projects undertaken and to know where to invest. It therefore provides a more robust basis for raising funds and influencing policy.
* **For community members and NGOs**, participating in M&E is an opportunity to influence the design and execution of community development projects. Furthermore, by providing feedback on whether programs are achieving aims in line with community needs and desires, M&E is a powerful accountability mechanism. It often generates (written) reports that contribute to transparency and accountability, and allows for lessons to be shared more easily (Muyuka, 2015).

1. **Outline in details the guidelines to an effective project evaluation**

Evaluating a project means performing a rigorous analysis of completed goals, objectives and activities to determine whether the project has produced planned results, delivered expected benefits, and made desired changes. As a process, project evaluation takes a series of steps to identify and measure the outcomes and impacts resulted from project completion. For an effective project evaluation, the following guidelines should be taken into consideration.

* 1. **Purpose** - Purpose refers to the general intent of the evaluation. A clear purpose serves as the basis for the design, methods, and use of the evaluation. Taking time to articulate an overall purpose will stop your organization from making uninformed decisions about how the evaluation should be conducted and used. There are at least four general purposes for which a community group might conduct an evaluation:
* **To gain insight.** This happens, for example, when deciding whether to use a new approach. For a developing program, information from evaluations of similar programs can provide the insight needed to clarify how its activities should be designed.
* **To improve how things get done**. This is appropriate in the implementation stage when an established program tries to describe what it has done. This information can be used to describe program processes, to improve how the program operates, and to fine-tune the overall strategy. Evaluations done for this purpose include efforts to improve the quality, effectiveness, or efficiency of program activities.
* **To determine what the effects of the program are.** Evaluations done for this purpose examine the relationship between program activities and observed consequences. For example, are more students finishing high school as a result of the program? Programs most appropriate for this type of evaluation are mature programs that are able to state clearly what happened and who it happened to. Such evaluations should provide evidence about what the program's contribution was to reaching longer-term goals such as a decrease in child abuse or crime in the area. This type of evaluation helps establish the accountability, and thus, the credibility, of a program to funders and to the community.
* **To affect those who participate in it**. The logic and reflection required of evaluation participants can itself be a catalyst for self-directed change. And so, one of the purposes of evaluating a program is for the process and results to have a positive influence. Such influences may help to empower program participants (for example, being part of an evaluation can increase community members' sense of control over the program); and may also help to promote staff development (for example, by teaching staff how to collect, analyze, and interpret evidence).
  1. **Users** - Users are the specific individuals who will receive evaluation findings. They will directly experience the consequences of inevitable trade-offs in the evaluation process. For example, a trade-off might be having a relatively modest evaluation to fit the budget with the outcome that the evaluation results will be less certain than they would be for a full-scale evaluation. Because they will be affected by these tradeoffs, intended users have a right to participate in choosing a focus for the evaluation. An evaluation designed without adequate user involvement in selecting the focus can become a misguided and irrelevant exercise. By contrast, when users are encouraged to clarify intended uses, priority questions, and preferred methods, the evaluation is more likely to focus on things that will inform (and influence) future actions.
  2. **Uses** - Uses describe what will be done with what is learned from the evaluation. There is a wide range of potential uses for program evaluation. Generally speaking, the uses fall in the same four categories as the purposes listed above: to gain insight, improve how things get done, determine what the effects of the program are, and affect participants.

1. **Questions** - The evaluation needs to answer specific questions. Drafting questions encourages stakeholders to reveal what they believe the evaluation should answer. That is, what questions are more important to stakeholders? The process of developing evaluation questions further refines the focus of the evaluation.
2. **Methods** - The methods available for an evaluation are drawn from behavioral science and social research and development. Three types of methods are commonly recognized. They are experimental, quasi-experimental, and observational or case study designs. Experimental designs use random assignment to compare the effect of an intervention between otherwise equivalent groups (for example, comparing a randomly assigned group of students who took part in an after-school reading program with those who didn't). Quasi-experimental methods make comparisons between groups that aren't equal (e.g. program participants vs. those on a waiting list) or use of comparisons within a group over time, such as in an interrupted time series in which the intervention may be introduced sequentially across different individuals, groups, or contexts. Observational or case study methods use comparisons within a group to describe and explain what happens (e.g., comparative case studies with multiple communities). No design is necessarily better than another. Evaluation methods should be selected because they provide the appropriate information to answer stakeholders' questions, not because they are familiar, easy, or popular. The choice of methods has implications for what will count as evidence, how that evidence will be gathered, and what kind of claims can be made. Because each method option has its own biases and limitations, evaluations that mix methods are generally more robust. Over the course of an evaluation, methods may need to be revised or modified. Circumstances that make a particular approach useful can change. For example, the intended use of the evaluation could shift from discovering how to improve the program to helping decide about whether the program should continue or not. Thus, methods may need to be adapted or redesigned to keep the evaluation on track.
3. **Agreements** - Agreements summarize the evaluation procedures and clarify everyone's roles and responsibilities. An agreement describes how the evaluation activities will be implemented. Elements of an agreement include statements about the intended purpose, users, uses, and methods, as well as a summary of the deliverables, those responsible, a timeline, and budget. The formality of the agreement depends upon the relationships that exist between those involved. For example, it may take the form of a legal contract, a detailed protocol, or a simple memorandum of understanding. Regardless of its formality, creating an explicit agreement provides an opportunity to verify the mutual understanding needed for a successful evaluation. It also provides a basis for modifying procedures if that turns out to be necessary. As you can see, focusing the evaluation design may involve many activities. For instance, both supporters and skeptics of the program could be consulted to ensure that the proposed evaluation questions are politically viable. A menu of potential evaluation uses appropriate for the program's stage of development could be circulated among stakeholders to determine which is most compelling. Interviews could be held with specific intended users to better understand their information needs and timeline for action. Resource requirements could be reduced when users are willing to employ timelier but less precise evaluation methods.
4. **Gather credible evidence** - Credible evidence is the raw material of a good evaluation. The information learned should be seen by stakeholders as believable, trustworthy, and relevant to answer their questions. This requires thinking broadly about what counts as "evidence." Such decisions are always situational; they depend on the question being posed and the motives for asking it. For some questions, a stakeholder's standard for credibility could demand having the results of a randomized experiment. For another question, a set of well-done, systematic observations such as interactions between an outreach worker and community residents will have high credibility. The difference depends on what kind of information the stakeholders want and the situation in which it is gathered. Context matters! In some situations, it may be necessary to consult evaluation specialists. This may be especially true if concern for data quality is especially high. In other circumstances, local people may offer the deepest insights. Regardless of their expertise, however, those involved in an evaluation should strive to collect information that will convey a credible, well-rounded picture of the program and its efforts. Having credible evidence strengthens the evaluation results as well as the recommendations that follow from them. Although all types of data have limitations, it is possible to improve an evaluation's overall credibility. One way to do this is by using multiple procedures for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. Encouraging participation by stakeholders can also enhance perceived credibility. When stakeholders help define questions and gather data, they will be more likely to accept the evaluation's conclusions and to act on its recommendations.

**5. “Monitoring and Evaluation are the heart of the principles and practices of project management” Discuss**

Monitoring and evaluation is an essential component of any successful project management. Managers need the information generated to improve their management, and donors and stakeholders need results to ensure accountability. M&E are the heart of the principles and practices of project management because it helps determine exactly when a programme is on track and when changes may be needed. Monitoring and evaluation forms the basis for any practical modification of any interventions and assessing the quality of activities being conducted. It also helps with identifying the most valuable and efficient use of resources.

When project managers make important decisions without verified data, it is like taking a stab in the dark. The decisions will be based on very little to no evidence, so the action may not be very efficient and could only be a waste of time and resources. That’s why it is important to monitor projects diligently and use the data gathered to come up with intelligent decisions. No project management principles and practice can be achieved without Monitoring and Evaluation.

It should be noted however that, M&E is not a stand-alone activity, but is integrally linked to other phases of the project cycle. The starting point for project implementation is the project design which is built up through a process of situation analyses.

**6. Discuss the benefits of effective stakeholder participation in an evaluation exercise**

Participation of project stakeholders in evaluation means sharing a common understanding and involvement in the decision-making process of the project evaluation. To increase participation, the project should start with a consultation process that moves to negotiations and ends with joint decisions; this will lead to empowerment and joint ownership of the project. Effective participation of stakeholders in an evaluation exercise promotes greater transparency and accountability in development governance. Collaborative evaluation approaches maximize stakeholder involvement and it have distinct advantages and disadvantages (Rodolfo S. 1996). Some benefits of effective stakeholder participation in an evaluation exercise are that they: -

* 1. Build consensus through bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders to share needs, information, ideas and knowledge and harmonize the objectives of individual groups to reach common societal goals and it increases local talent and capacity for evaluation.
  2. Develops an environment of trusts by allowing the voices of the stakeholders to be heard and their issues be known, this will increase the quality and breadth of feedback for evaluation thereby making the project accountable to the stakeholders
  3. Increases ownership by stakeholders who feel the project is taking into account their views and motivates them to sponsor the project, which ultimately leads to sustainability. It is a key strategy to win support to the project, to gain commitment to the project, and ultimately to increase the chances for sustainability after the project has been completed.

Real development requires a people-centered approach instead of an output oriented one. Project managers need to break the conventional approach of top-down solutions to incorporate a bottom-up approach that enables a more sustainable solution.

While stakeholders’ participation in an evaluation may require more time and resources and may be more difficult to implement; the results is an increase in commitment to the project. Stakeholders who are consulted and made part of the solution feel more willing to support the project.

**7. Describe the following terms as used in project Monitoring and Evaluation:**

**­­­(i) Project monitoring -** Project management has the task of establishing sufficient controls over a project to ensure that it stays on track towards the achievement of its objectives. This is done by monitoring (internal), which is the systematic and continuous collection, analysis and use of information for management control and decision-making. Project monitoring is an integral part of day-to-day management. It provides information by which management can identify and solve implementation problems, and assess progress.

**(ii) Project evaluation -** Project evaluation is an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both the project recipients and the donors.

**(iii) Primary stakeholder -** Primary stakeholders are those stakeholders who are meant to benefit from a programme, or in the case of a situation assessment, those directly affected by a situation/issue.

**(iv) Scope Creep -** Scope creep in project management refers to continuous and incremental changes that lead to an uncontrolled and unauthorized growth in the project’s scope. Scope creep is when small but continuous requests stretch the project beyond its originally defined scope. Since these change requests are often small, they tend to “creep” up on the scope. Hence the term - “scope creep”.

**(v) Impact assessment -** Impact assessment is an evaluation whose purpose is to attribute outcomes and impacts to project operations. It is an assessment of the impacts (both intended and unintended) of value chain projects, measure the magnitude of the impacts, and determine the causal factors underlying the impacts.

**8. Why is it important to conclude M&E activity by writing a report?**

Reporting is an important part of most monitoring and evaluation systems. A written M&E report is a formal communication tool to present M&E results; an opportunity for project implementers to inform themselves & others (stakeholders, partners, donors, etc.) on the progress, problems, difficulties encountered, successes & lessons learned during implementation of programs & activities. M&E reports can be produced at any stage of a project or programme cycle from baselines through to impact assessment.

Reporting is everything when Monitoring and Evaluating, it is one of those things in Monitoring and Evaluation that you simply cannot run away from at all. In the world of Monitoring and Evaluation of programmes or projects it is highly important that the written report comes out properly and in a language where your audience can really appreciate. Concluding M&E activity by writing a report comes with numerous benefits; -

Written reporting enables the assessment of progress & achievements & helps focus audiences on the results of activities, enabling the improvement of subsequent work plans.

Written progress reports are frequently the most important kind of report developed within an M&E system. This is because the contents are used extensively both for internal management and as source material for a variety of external reports.

Reporting helps form the basis for decision-making & learning at the programme level. It also helps to communicate how effectively & efficiently the project is meeting its objectives

It is important to conclude M&E activity with a written report because it often provides the link between data collection and analysis on the one hand, and data use on the other. Written reports should present information to different stakeholders in ways that make it easy for them to use. Written reporting is not the only way of presenting information. Other ways include audio-visual materials, interactive media, verbal presentations, dance and theatre. But within Civil Society Organizations, written reporting is by far the most common way of presenting M&E information.

1. **Discuss the steps in writing and presenting an Evaluation Report**

An evaluation report, in the simplest sense, is a document which reports the results, findings, interpretations, conclusions, or recommendations derived through an evaluation exercise. Writing an evaluation report helps you share key findings and recommendations with internal and external stakeholders. A report can be used to suggest changes to how you work, to communicate your value to funders, or to share good practice with other organizations. To write and present a meaningful evaluation report, you will need data that you have collected and analyzed, an understanding of the people who will be reading your report, and helpful colleagues to read your drafts. The following steps are fundamental in writing and presenting an evaluation report

## Consider your audience -Think about the people you are reporting to so you can tell them what they need to know. You should consider what kind of information they need (e.g. whether they need to know more about the difference you’ve made or the way in which you’ve delivered your work), how they would like the information presented (e.g. as tables, case studies or infographics), and when, why they need the information and what you want them to do as a result.

## Plan your report - Having a clear structure makes your report easier to read. Before you write, plan your headings and subheadings. Most evaluation reports will include the following sections.

* **Executive summary:** a synopsis of your key findings and recommendations
* **Introduction**: a brief description of what you are evaluating, the purpose of your evaluation and the methods you have used (e.g. surveys, interviews)
* **Findings and discussion:** information on what you delivered, how you delivered it and what outcomes occurred
* **Recommendations:** actions that need to be taken to respond to the evaluation findings

## Write about your findings - Reports will vary depending on the nature of your work, but you will probably need to include findings on:

* **Outcomes** - what outcomes have been achieved, for whom and under what circumstances. You should also report on intended outcomes that have not been achieved
* **Outputs -** what has been delivered, when and to whom. You should also report on how satisfied beneficiaries were with your outputs
* **Processes** - information about how you delivered your outputs. You may need this information to explain why something worked particularly well, or why it didn’t work.
* **Describe and interpret your data -** In your report, you should **describe your data and interpret** it – analyzing your data before you start writing will help with this. Description means presenting what the data tells you. You might describe, for example, what outcomes were achieved, by whom and in what circumstances. Interpretationmoves beyond description to say what the data means – make sure you word your report clearly so the reader can tell when you are describing data and when you are interpreting it.
* **Use subheadings to structure your ideas -** Subheadings will make your report clear for your readers. Looking back at your evaluation framework or theory of change can help you generate ideas for subheadings. It often makes sense to have a subheading for each intended outcome. Sometimes you will have collected data about the same outcome from a range of different sources such as questionnaires, interviews, observation or secondary data. When you analyzed your data, you probably looked at each source separately. In your report, it usually makes sense to write about all the data relating to each outcome together (rather than having separate sections on data from different sources).

### **Choose how to present your data -** A common mistake is to try to present all your data, rather than focusing on what is most important. It helps to narrow down to what people reading your report need to know. It’s also important to think about how you will present your information. You could consider which **key numbers** do your audience need to know? what **visual aids** will you use? Etc. As far as possible, present data that has been analyzed or summarized rather than raw data, to make it as easy as possible for the reader to follow.

## Write accurately and clearly - It’s important to write accurately and clearly so that your report can be easily understood and is not misleading.

## Be Transparent - Being transparent means being open about what you can and can’t say, and clear about how you reached your conclusions and about the limitations of your data. or analyzing data, it's equally important to **minimize bias** when reporting.

* Avoid over claiming your role in making a difference. Your work may not be solely responsible for the outcomes that have occurred for individuals or organizations you have worked with. Remember to report on evidence of any other contributing factors (eg support received from other organizations or other sources).
* Choose case studies carefully. Evaluation case studies are not the same as marketing case studies. They should illustrate your learning points, not just the very best of what you do. You won't have a representative group of case studies, but as far as possible, choose case studies – and quotations – that reflect the full range of responses you had.
* Explore alternative interpretations or causal links. Sometimes, data is ambiguous and there could be more than one interpretation. All of us are prone to 'confirmation bias' – paying more attention to data that fits our existing beliefs. It's important to look for and talk about reasonable alternative interpretations or explanations of your data.
* Be clear about the limitations of your data. If there was a group you weren't able to hear from, or your sample over- or under-represents a particular group, say so.
* Be open about your sample size. In general, the smaller your sample, the less able you are to make generalizations about everyone in your target group.
* Report negative findings. If the data shows something isn't working or an outcome hasn't been achieved, don’t ignore it. Reporting negative findings will help your audience to use the evaluation to learn and improve.

### **Check anonymity and consent -** When you collected your data, respondents will have said whether they wanted to remain anonymous (most do) and whether you should check with them before using a quote or case study in your report. Make sure you do any checking with plenty of time before you need to complete the report.

Depending on the size of your sample and how easy it is to identify individuals, you may have to do more than just change the name to make someone anonymous. You might have to change their age or other identifying details, or remove references to anything that would allow people to identify them as an individual.

### **Use clear language -** Evaluation reports need to be as **clear and precise** as possible in their wording. Keep your language simple and straightforward. Remember to explain any terminology that might be unfamiliar to your audience.

## Develop your recommendations - Your recommendations are likely to be one of the most important parts of your report. Good recommendations will make your evaluation findings more likely to be used. Recommendations are more likely to be implemented if they are:

* **Supported by evidence** - be clear how the recommendations build on the key findings. It can help to structure the recommendations in the same order as the main findings to help readers understand the evidence base for each.
* **Specific** - say exactly what action needs to be taken and when.
* **Within the control of the evaluation** **users** - make sure individuals or groups have the authority and capability to take forward what you are suggesting.
* **Realistic and achievable** - recommendations should be feasible. You can categorize them by which ones are easy to implement and which are less so. More ‘difficult’ recommendations might need budget or staff changes. These should still be stated, but so should their implications.
* **Prioritized** - it’s helpful to indicate some priorities for action. You could, for example, split your recommendations into ‘essential’ versus ‘optional’ or ‘for consideration’ versus ‘for action’. Make sure the number of recommendations you include is achievable.
* **Involve people in the reporting process -** You can involve other staff, beneficiaries and external stakeholders at several points. For example, you could share your report drafts and ask them to help you refine the conclusions. This 'co-production' of findings can be valuable and yield interpretations you may not have thought about.

You can also co-produce recommendations by sharing the findings with stakeholders and asking them to suggest and prioritize recommendations. If you do this, take care to guide people to base their recommendations on the evidence, and not their own interests or preoccupations.

## Finish the report - Allow time for a couple of report drafts and make sure that there are people available to review the report for you. It is good to have someone look at it with ‘fresh eyes’; the “four eyes” principle. If the report is being widely shared, you could have someone from outside your sector review the draft to make sure it is clear for external audiences.

To complete the report, leave time for proof-reading and editing, checking references, and design and print if needed. You might include your data collection tools in appendices – this could help other organizations working in your field to improve their evaluation.

**10. Identify and explain any four features or characteristics of a project**

A **Project** is a temporary, unique and progressive attempt or endeavor made to produce some kind of a tangible or intangible result (a unique product, service, benefit, competitive advantage, etc.). It usually includes a series of interrelated tasks that are planned for execution over a fixed period of time and within certain requirements and limitations such as cost, quality, performance, etc. Any project can be characterized by these characteristics:

**Temporary**. This key characteristic means that every project has a finite start and a finite end. The start is the time when the project is initiated and its concept is developed. The end is reached when all objectives of the project have been met (or unmet if it’s obvious that the project cannot be completed – then it’s terminated). Projects have a start and an end; a characteristic of a life cycle.

**Every project is unique.** A project creates unique deliverables, which are products, services, or results. It requires the doing of something different, something that was not done previously. A project is a one-time, once-off activity, never to be repeated exactly the same way again. Example: Building a first school is different from building the second one. The location is different, the design is different, and there are different categories of students

**Cross- Functional.** A project involves people from different business departments and seniority that work together for the duration of the project. Projects always cut across the regular organizational lines and structures within a firm. They do this because the project needs to draw from the skills and the talents of multiple professions and departments within the firm and sometimes even from other organizations.

**Life-cycle.** A project has a life cycle reflected by growth, maturity and decay. It naturally has Conception stage, Design stage, Implementation stage and Commissioning stage. The organization of project changes as it passes through this cycle the activities starting from—conception stage, mounting up to the peak during implementation and, then, back to zero level on completion and delivery of the project

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