

Essay on integrated project management tools

[Business](#), [Management](#)



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Introduction

In a project to assess the stunting levels in children less than five years initiated by an international Non-Governmental Organization in partnership with the government, I was contracted as a project manager. The project belonged to the healthcare industry and was supervised among others by the provincial medical officer of health. The project run for eight concurrent months and was done in phases. The healthcare industry is mostly involved in the provision of healthcare services to the citizenry. The government is one of the players in the industry and among other roles; it acts to oversee the activities of the other players. Other players in the industry include members of the private sectors like insurance agencies, private hospitals and health and recreational sites among others.

The project had quite a number of high level deliverables as stipulated by the funding donor agency. Firstly, the project was to determine the prevalence rate of stunting in the province using methodologies that allow the data to be generalized for the country. Secondly, the project was required to determine the incidence rate stunting in children of the said age

group using similar methodologies. Thirdly, the project was required to bring the government to speed with the factors associated with stunting in children. Finally, the project was required to make recommendations on feasible ways to deal with the factors thereby lowering the incidence and prevalence rates. The project was funded to the tune of two million dollars with a clause on a possible extension and more funding if the project was successful in its first location.

Discussion

Of importance to the project's success was the establishment of an integrated project management system. A number of tools were at our disposal; although we settled on three. They include the following: -

- Work Authorization System

This tool is used by a project manager and other designated people for the purposes of approving all the activities of the project throughout the course of the project. It assumes the form of a list detailing well-documented and formally accepted procedures. A work authorization procedure details who ought to authorize work to be done and how such an authorization is obtained. A work authorization system includes details of documents that must be prepared before work is started and any prerequisites to an activity being performed at any level of the project. This tool was very effective in this particular project. It established a hierarchy of authority in seeking approval for various activities of the project. It also helped keep track of time as it detailed time limits for various activities of the project. The work authorization system was also important in activity selection and prioritization as it stipulated the order in which different activities were to be

carried out and the personnel responsible (Barkley, 2006).

- General Work Breakdown Structure

This is a plan aimed detailing how to accomplish the project objectives as stipulated in the contractual agreement. The general Work Breakdown Structure defines the effort required, apportions responsibility to various elements of the project team and establishes budgets and time schedules for the project. The development of the general Work Breakdown Structure is done in accordance with the industry's budgeting policies and directives of the project management system. The general Work Breakdown Structure offers a common framework through which budgets and costs can be established, performance, time and costs can be tracked, status-reporting procedures and schedules are established, control planning and network construction are initiated, and responsibility assignment for every element of the project team is established. The general Work Breakdown Structure was very effective in the project. This document was drawn before the contractual agreement with the project financiers. The tool was influential during the allocation of resources and time as it showed the projected length of the project and the cost to be incurred (Barkley, 2006).

- Project Status Report

This is a tool that communicates the status of the project. It helps project managers inform relevant authorities on the progress of a project. It also helps them raise issues pertaining the running of the project and also ask for assistance where necessary. Status reports are prepared on a weekly or a biweekly basis in order to keep the relevant authorities abreast on the progress of the project. It offers general information like the project title, the

start date of the project, the reporting period, budget status, cost status, current phase, spent to date and the reporting date. The tool also summarizes any significant happenings for the reporting period, the project delivery status summary, emerging risks and their probabilities. The status report was important to the successful completion of the project. Among other reasons, it helped disseminate timely information to the stakeholders (Barkley, 2006).

Conclusion

Project management is a very tasking job. This project was particularly tasking because it involved working in remote settings away from the organization of an office building. Om order to meet the objectives of the study, particularly the high level deliverables of the project, coordination of team members was required. The three tools of integrated project management came in handy.

Reference

Barkley, B. (2006). Integrated project management. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill