

Management and support for projects flashcard



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In *Managing Projects for Success: A Trilogy*, Albert Hamilton pours a brief history of the development of project management. He argues that some aspect of project management probably first appeared in the works of ancient civilizations like the Egyptian, Greek and Roman civilization. However the management techniques that we now call modern project management had their beginning in the late 50s. We today have professional project managers as a major part of management teams in a broad range of business and industries, which was never the case in the late 50s and 60s. The reason why project management gained momentum in the late 50s was that this was the onset of an age of giant projects: the type of project whose size, complexity, time span, resource requirements and total cost demanded more than the Gantt chart - a chart named after Henry Gantt that is commonly used to show planned activities against a calendar time frame.

The other reason is that the 50s was the time when certain companies and key people influenced the new management methods as well as their developmental direction and speed of progress.⁽⁹¹⁾ Another factor that necessitated project management was the increase in interest to use industrial engineering techniques to represent project operation. The tools include flow charts, resource balance charts and process charts which were seen as essential to create relationships between activities while developing paper models. At that time understanding project complexity was helped by breaking a project down into its component activities and then attempting to represent their interrelationship by using techniques like the flow charts. (Hamilton, 91) Hamilton claims that project management is anew way of thinking about problems and about how to identify solutions. Therefore,

project management presents a systematic and logical approach to achieving project objectives.

Project management process has been identified as a strong source of better management within most organizations. Project management has certain essential features that provide a strong basis for organization which, being prepared to accept change will achieve greater success in their operation. These features include total accountability assumed by a single person; project dedication rather than functional dedication; requirement for coordination across functional lines and proper utilization of integrated planning and control. (Hamilton, 95) The term Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) describes the sum of the knowledge within the profession of project management. The term PMBOK is advocated for by the Project Management Institute in the United States. As with other professions the body of knowledge rests with the practitioners and academics that apply and advance it.

The Project Management Body of Knowledge include proven traditional practices that are widely applied alongside innovative and advanced ones which have seen more limited use. (Hamilton, 99) In the book Project Planning Scheduling and Control: A Hands-on Guide, Lewis argues that the only reason for doing a project plan is to achieve the control of the project. If one has no plan, then it is improbable to have control of it. He therefore proposes that for there to be the control of a project, then two things need to be known.

The organization's present position and where they management intend to be after a specified time. In essence the plan indicates where the organization is supposed to be. The knowledge of the present position of the organization can be acquired from the project information system, which in many organizations is non-existent. (323) Marshall Engel beck hails planning as one of the most important function that a manager does. He argues that the implementation of all acquisition decision begin with a plan, which is key to getting the project off to a successful start. By setting the objectives of the acquisition, the plan establishes the course for integrated acquisition team to follow.

Without solid planning the buyer is forced to play catch-up and, the integrated acquisition team becomes a reactive rather than proactive team. (61) The objectives developed during the planning process also provide the integrated acquisition team a road map and reference point that can be used that can be used to measure variance from the desired route. Effective management control relies on the measurement of the variance from the desired point and enables the project leadership to evaluate performance and institute corrective action where and when required. Acquisition reform efforts seek to change the program management environment from a risk-averse philosophy to one of risk management.

(61) Marshall observes that the success of every project warrants the collaboration of separate bodies of knowledge, each having its won perceptions and objectives. Each profession or technical specialists tends to regard itself as elite, with special values that may get in the way of the cross-disciplinary sharing. This can easily bring about conflict, thereby

breaking down the process. The project manager's ask is to discipline the team under him and establish a climate and a communication protocol that will ensure that the entire team work as one.

(45) There also has to be a comprehensive communication channel.

Communication is a process by which information of the project is exchanged and this can be either through a formal or informal mode. Timely communication is vital to the overall success of the project. The exchange of information allows parties in a project to share their knowledge with other specialists.

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