

Analysis of eco-trans project essay sample



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Project Definition

Astrid Varga, the project manager of ECO-Trans, a European-based company renowned for its efforts to cut down fuel cost and to reduce CO₂ emissions. The firm deals with the provision of “ driver aide” systems that are used in land transport equipment such as trains, buses, and transport vehicles. The ECO-Stream company carries out the analysis of the current route of buses and trains, including scheduling arrival time, and advising the operator on techniques like gear or notch or when to break or coast to save on fuel. The prime client is Sunshine Rail Transit (SRT) – a light rail commuter company owning 53 locomotives. SRT wants ECO-Trans to install ECO-Stream systems in all the 53 locomotives. Project Schedule and Cost Management

SRT expects of Varga to work on a sophisticated project plan to make, install, and calibrate the ECO-Stream. The plan has two main phases: the installation and assessment of trial equipment to ascertain the best configuration of the system, while the second is committed to the installation of ECO-Stream modules and equipment on the whole SRT light rail locomotives. To effectively implement the 15-months schedule, Varga planned the following: Nov 2012: Initiation of project.

April 2013: Full system test on North Central line and documentation of results
May 2013: Confirmation of funding by state transportation authorities and SRT.
June 2013: Equipment implementation for central control room
Sept 2013: Equipping the first phase of locomotives with the system
Jan 2014: Equipping the whole fleet with ECO-Stream system

Feb 2014: Complete end user training

This milestone was successful, although some main computer components were defective and were on their way back to the supplier for replacement. Varga's manager and John Schaller – the Project Sponsor – are putting her under pressure to deliver within the deadline and meet the budgetary requirements. Having determined what components were faulty, Varga decides to find another supplier. The alternative supplies are more expensive, but there is no other way out. Performance Measurement

As soon as the faulty component issue was resolved Varga was asked by Schaller to compute a performance measurement baseline better known as (PMB) at the current point, 12th month to prepare for soon-to-happen checkpoint meeting between ECO-Trans and SRT. SRT does not invite budget variation despite the change of supplier. Project Resource Management

From the moment the project started, the SRT's Transportation Department Training Manager – Mark Osborne – was not at home with the timing of end user training. To him, the training occurred too late in the project plan. The locomotive engineers also felt that they were being excluded in the project and vowed to boycott the operation of the locomotives upon project completion. Intra-team resistance is always there. For instance, Varga expressed concerns that the locomotive engineers have been resisting the project from the beginning. They are resistors of change claiming that the improvements would mount more responsibilities on them. Looking at their complaints carefully, their reaction is partially justifiable. Project Conflict and Team Management

SRT had some concerns about training. SRT's communication specialists in the Mechanical Department, Bernie Hays and Ed Hallman were charged with the responsibility of installing the terminals and corresponding parts on the trains, meaning that the locomotives would stay out of service for two days, something that met disapproval from Lisa Lindstrom – the head of Transportation Operations – whose responsibility is the taking of locomotives out of service. The problem intensifies forcing Lisa to remain silent on the issue. Despite a request by Schaller to intervene, Varga does not want to get involved in clients' disagreements. She leaves the problem to the SRT's conflicting departments. Stakeholder Engagement and Resource Allocation

Nine months into the project, the ECO-Trans-SRT communication had been effective. The parties held team meetings weekly and exchanged information through emails or phone to ensure that all stakeholders were on the same page. Vargas was kind enough to prepare status reports every week to update the stakeholders on the project prospects. The conflict about terminals drew the attention of all stakeholders to the project and consequently, questions about the project began to flood into Roland Letessier who is the software expert at ECO-Trans. Roland also received countless emails from SRT's Operations Planning Director with regard to interface customization. Frequent status reports as lamented by Letessier and other under pressure teammates, slowed down the progress of the project. This situation forced Varga to consult with the project sponsor-Schaller – about the possibility of relaying information directly to him in her weekly status reports other than everybody doing it. Although Schaller

agreed, he raised concerns that the weekly reports delivered by Varga were extremely long and ambiguous. Project Monitoring and Control

Varga approved the installation of the ECO-Stream systems on all 53 locomotives and made it her business to supervise the performance and reliability of the equipment. Every part was subjected to inspection by Varga to ensure that there were no defective components. Under her supervision, every piece of hardware was examined for visible faults, the operating system was booted up, and the GPS devices were all tested. Other minor components were also tested to meet the standards of performance. However, Varga reviewed the full checklist and other inspection documents and realized that some casings of the terminals did not meet the dimensions as specified by the client. The fault was fixed as soon as possible. In general, the ECO-Trans case study enabled me to evaluate and ascertain my project management skills.

References

An Introduction to Project Management: Bureau of Reclamation.
<http://www.usbr.gov> (2003). Project Management Guidebook: Empowering Managers to Succeed. Project Management Methodology Guidelines: Project Management Methodology & Step-by-Step Guide to Managing Successful Projects. Chandler. Arizona.