Time Management

"Doing it Your Way in Project Management"

Project Time Management – What is it?

- The Everlasting Triple Constraint
  - Scope
  - Cost
  - Time

- Everything is Relative – just like Einstein said!

- Time Management = Schedule Management

- Time Management in repeatable projects

- Time Management in unique or stand-alone projects

- Typical Time Savers

- Typical Time Wasters

The Triple Constraint - Scope

How is Scope related to Time Management?

- Project Scope is defined as activities and deliverables that are included in the Project Charter.

- Time is usually a function of scope.

- Does the scope ever change after the Project Charter has been approved?

- Does a scope change always equal an adjustment in the timeline?

The Triple Constraint - Cost

How is Cost related to Time Management?

- Project cost is simply the dollar figure associated with delivering scope within the timeframe allotted.

- Cost is usually a function of time and scope.

- Does the cost ever change after a project budget is approved?

- Does a change in cost always equal an adjustment in time?

The Triple Constraint - Time

How is Time related to Project Management?

- Project Time is defined as the duration of all tasks that are in the project schedule starting with the project start date and ending with the completion date.

- Time is defined by understanding the tasks that have to be performed and the correct sequence of those tasks (events) to achieve the project objective.

- Does the timeline ever change after the project begins?

- Can there be a change in the timeline without a change in cost or scope?

The Triple Constraint – So What !

So here's what we can take to the bank:

- The relationship between scope, cost and time is real.

- The Project Manager is responsible for understanding the relationship between scope, cost and time.

- The Project Manager should <u>expect</u> and <u>plan for</u> changes in one or all of the elements of the triple constraint.

- Time has a direct and measurable impact on cost.

- Managing time is the same as managing the schedule.

Time Management = Schedule Management

The most common cause of blown project budgets is the lack of schedule management.

What are the basic elements of schedule management?

- Tasks – Duration, Resources and Dependencies

- Scheduling – Tasks, predecessors, successors

- Critical Path – Identifying it and tracking changes that affect it.

Time Management = Schedule Management

Managing the schedule requires specific management disciplines:

1. Insisting on the development of a complete and accurate project schedule.

2. Enforcing a commitment to monitoring the schedule within the team.

3. Identifying milestones and reporting accurately on their completion or delay.

4. Addressing missed deadlines within the team on an individual basis.

5. Identifying the impact of missed deadlines and adjusting resources or cost accordingly.

Time Management in Repeatable Projects

Some examples of Repeatable Projects:

- Software Implementations – New Products/Systems

- Software Upgrades

- Requests for Proposal (RFP)

- System Conversions

- Software Development

- Implementation of New Services or Lines of Business

Time Management in Repeatable Projects

How is Time Management affected in a positive way?

1. Many tasks have already been defined in context and duration.

2. Resources are often experienced.

3. Project Documentation is usually available.

4. Subject Matter Experts are more readily available.

5. Lessons Learned may be documented for review.

6. Business Requirements may be portable.

And these are good things!

Time Management in Repeatable Projects

How is Time Management affected in a negative way?

1. Too many assumptions about project tasks may be made.

2. New requirements may be overlooked.

3. Project Documentation can be out-dated.

4. The timeline can be unrealistic.

5. As a result, the project schedule may be incomplete and inadequate.

And these things are not so good….

Time Management in Unique Projects

How is Time Management affected in a positive way?

1.   Business Requirements must be gathered and are not assumed; time is allotted for this activity.

2.   Tasks (definition and duration) must be defined and affirmed by subject matter experts.

3.   Dependencies are identified.

4.   More collaboration by team members is required which equals more input and participation in planning.

5.   Key stakeholders are usually more involved.

And these are good things!

Time Management in Unique Projects

How is Time Management affected in a negative way?

1. Task definitions and durations are not proven.

2. Dependencies may not be understood.

3. Team members are less experienced in the deliverables and requirements.

4. Documentation from previous projects does not exist.

5. Management decisions can be slower the first time around.

And these things are not so good….

Time Management in Repeatable vs. Unique Projects Summary

- Both types of Projects have their own set of positives and negatives.

- Project Managers should be aware of how to apply their time management practices in both repeatable and unique projects.

- If the schedule is dependable, then the project timeline can be managed.

- If the schedule is incomplete or unreliable, then the management of the schedule becomes problematic.

Some Time Savers

- Be sure that your status meetings are effective and meaningful. Always publish an agenda and stick to it.

- Problem solving and information gathering are not appropriate topics for a status meeting. Take all such discussions off-line.

- Have a way to identify slipping tasks so you can adjust related activities as soon as possible.

- Know the difference between action items and scheduled tasks. Don't let this line blur.

- Build some "quiet time" into the final weeks of your schedule.

Some Time Wasters

- Trying to solve problems in too large a meeting.

- Having too many detail tasks in the project schedule.

- Having an incomplete schedule, or not having one at all.

- Having Lessons Learned available from previous projects, but not using them!

- Having unrealistic target dates around milestones.

Some Real Life Examples – Case Studies

Trouble up North !

- Impossible timeline
- Late start
- Inexperienced client
- Cultural shock
- Unbelievable outcome

Where are the experts?

- Reasonable timeline
- Sound PM practices
- Experienced client
- Experienced staff
- Unbelievable outcome

Questions ?

Open Discussion