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ePortfolio Matrix Correlation: Planning-Integration

Discuss the development of a project management plan

The Project Management Plan is the output of the PMBOK process 4.2, “Develop Project Management Plan.” To those unfamiliar with developing a project management plan the process is intimidating, with the PMBOK describing the plan in section 4.2.3 as having potentially over two-dozen specific, bulleted line-item elements.

The process is made much less intimidating if the project manager will keep two things in mind: 1) the PM plan is the last project planning process a PM should undertake and actually involves very little work, and 2) for typical small projects the planning process can often be tailored to a very small subset of the PMBOK planning processes.

Writing the project management plan is the last step in the project planning process, not the first. The project management planning steps are, in general:

1. Defining requirements
2. Identifying deliverables (WBS)
3. Developing a schedule to put the deliverables into the customer’s hands
4. Developing a budget
5. Planning risk management
6. Developing a quality management plan
7. Developing a human resource plan
8. Developing a communications plan
9. Planning procurements

The key to developing a good project management plan is to perform each of these steps one at a time, as necessary. Larger projects are usually supported by larger organizations, and they have other individuals, such as quality, supply chain and HR managers, responsible for providing their plan inputs to the project manager. This relieves the project manager of much of the planning activities that are typically outside the areas of expertise. Once the individual steps are performed, putting the project management plan together then becomes a very simple task of aggregating the individual plans into a single document. Don't be intimidated by a blank sheet of paper that has "Project Management Plan" written at the top, posing the daunting task of planning the entire project in one grandiose effort. Plan the project logically, one step at a time, and the project management plan will fall together at the end.

On a small project, don't burden yourself with overplanning. The first four steps above are generally all that are required, although good risk management is often a life-saver. Always:

1. Identify what the customer's requirements are
2. Clearly define what deliverables will constitute success (including products, services and data such as reports)
3. Schedule the work and include a line item in the schedule for each deliverable item showing it actually being delivered to the customer.
4. Develop the budget using basis of estimate inputs from the project team member experts for each deliverable item.
5. Do risk assessment, monitoring and control rigorously

Small projects typically don't require quality management plans. If a project is large enough to involve manufacturing and quality management, it usually is also large enough to retain the services of a quality manager to do the planning and implementation. Small projects tend to be run by small teams that have a complement of skilled individuals, obviating the need for a Human Resource plan. Likewise, the stakeholder team is usually small and a communications plan is not necessary. A procurement plan might be needed to ensure procurement of any long-lead or difficult-to-obtain items is not put off until they impact the project outcome. A good risk management effort, however, will also prevent this from happening.

Knowledge Areas	Project Management Process Groups				
	A Initiating Process Group	B Planning Process Group	C Executing Process Group	D Monitoring & Controlling Process Group	E Closing Process Group
4. Project Integration Management	4.1 Develop Project Charter	4.2 Develop Project Management Plan	4.3 Direct and Manage Project Execution	4.4 Monitor and Control Project Work 4.5 Perform Integrated Change Control	4.6 Close Project or Phase
5. Project Scope Management		5.1 Collect Requirements 5.2 Define Scope 5.3 Create WBS		5.4 Verify Scope 5.5 Control Scope	
6. Project Time Management		6.1 Define Activities 6.2 Sequence Activities 6.3 Estimate Activity Resources 6.4 Estimate Activity Durations 6.5 Develop Schedule		6.6 Control Schedule	
7. Project Cost Management		7.1 Estimate Costs 7.2 Determine Budget		7.3 Control Costs	
8. Project Quality Management		8.1 Plan Quality	8.2 Perform Quality Assurance	8.3 Perform Quality Control	
9. Project Human Resource Management		9.1 Develop Human Resource Plan	9.2 Acquire Project Team 9.3 Develop Project Team 9.4 Manage Project Team		
10. Project Communications Management	10.1 Identify Stakeholders	10.2 Plan Communications	10.3 Distribute Information 10.4 Manage Stakeholder Expectations	10.5 Report Performance	
11. Project Risk Management		11.1 Plan Risk Management 11.2 Identify Risks 11.3 Perform Qualitative Risk Analysis 11.4 Perform Quantitative Risk Analysis 11.5 Plan Risk Responses		11.6 Monitor and Control Risks	
12. Project Procurement Management		12.1 Plan Procurements	12.2 Conduct Procurements	12.3 Administer Procurements	12.4 Close Procurements