

WBS 8.4 Chapter Exercise: Decision Making

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Exercise 2 of Chapter 11 provides three decision making scenarios and ask the reader to choose between one of three decisions: “make the decision on your own with available information, consult others before making a decision,” or “call a meeting and reach a consensus, seeking to arrive at a final decision everyone can agree on.” (Larson and Gray, 2014)

Scenario a

You are part of a charitable event organizing committee. Initially the organizing group narrowed the choice donation recipients to two organizations; finally deciding on one. Just as your about to write the check you find out the chosen organization has ceased operations. What do you do?

Answer: Make the decision on my own with available information. The organization prior to narrowing their decision had decided that both organizations were worthwhile. This means the non-selected organization was established as suitable alternative. Had the one organization self-eliminated earlier the decision would have been to go with the non-selected organization anyway. In the end the impact of the decision is minor; the money is going to one of the predetermined recipients chosen by the group. Of course “once the decision has been made and implemented, it is important for the team to find the time to evaluate the effectiveness of the decision.”(Larson and Gray, 2014)

Scenario b

You are the lead on a project to renovate a golf course. The design had been approved with close consultation with the board of directors. During construction one of the tee box locations is determined to be right over a natural spring, which could create serious problems. Another location for the tee box is found which extends the range of the hole by 35 yards and is in a new location. What do you do?

Answer: Since the design of the course was in consultation with the board of directors and they have specific criteria for their expectations. I would consult with the board of directors before making a decision. If a decision is made and the board disagrees then potentially large amounts of time and money will be need to correct the situation. Also, there may be a better alternative. “The project manager needs to be careful not to state the problem in terms of choices. Rather [they] should identify the underlying problem to which these alternatives and others are potential solutions.”(Larson and Gray, 2014)

Scenario c

“You are the leader of a new product development project.”(Larson and Gray, 2014) As your team reaches 50% completion on the project you learn that a competitor is about to release a similar product that has an innovative design with expanded functions. Top managers are considering canceling your project. What do you do?

Answer: I would call a meeting and reach a consensus and seeking to arrive at a final decision everyone can agree on. “Projects encounter problems and decision that require the collective wisdom of team members as well as reluctant stakeholders.”(Larson and Gray, 2014) In this case there is a great deal at stake. A collective decision is needed to find every possible alternative prior to just scraping the project. There may be something the design team can do to resurrect the uniqueness of the product.

Conclusion

The decision making process is situational. There are many things that determine the level of coordination required for decision. Some of those things are. the impact of the decision, the need to continue group participation, or the necessity for additional talent or skills to answer complex question prior to making the decision.

References

Larson, E, & Gray, C. (2014) Project Management, The Managerial Process. New York,
NY.McGraw-Hill Education.