

Project Management Assessment 2

Reflective Essay

Student Name: Blagovest Vasilev

Student ID: 1918701

Module code: LCBB5005

Lecturer`s name: Dr. Molly Jack

Table of Contents

Critical Incident	3
Gibb's Reflection Cycle	4
Description and Feelings	5
Description of the Project	5
My Feeling and Thoughts	5
Critical Evaluation and Analysis	5
What Lessons I Have Learned	5
Critical Success/Failure Factors of the Project	7
Action Plans	9
Career Path in Project Management	10
Skills Needed	12
Recommendations for the Project	13
Conclusions	13
Reference	14

Critical Incident

The university's endeavour to return to face-to-face classrooms after two years of online medium is a challenging project to handle. The project report was a reasonably complicated document, including a project initiation document, the project's stakeholder analysis, timing, budget, essential policies, risk analysis and a work breakdown structure. In this reflective essay, I will show how the project helps me learn various aspects of project management. By using Gibb's Reflection Cycle, I first write a description of the project along with my feelings associated with it. After that, I critically analyse the project and show what lessons I learnt from the project and skills which can be helpful in project management. Then in the Conclusion and Action Plans part in I discuss how I will utilise the lessons in my future project management. After that follows discussions on a career path in project management and what skills I think are required for such a career. Finally, I conclude with some recommendations.

Gibb's Reflection Cycle

To reflect on the lessons I learned and critically analyse the project, I will apply Gibbs' Reflection Cycle. There are many models for reflective practices, among which Gibbs' Reflection Cycle is the most frequently used one. Graham Gibbs came up with the idea for the Reflective Cycle in 1988 with the intention of providing structure to the process of learning from one's experiences. It provides a structure for analysing experiences, and because of the cyclical nature of its design, it functions particularly well for repeated experiences. This enables you to learn and prepare from things that either went well or didn't go well in the past, depending on the situation. Gibbs' cycle is composed of six steps, as shown in the following figure:

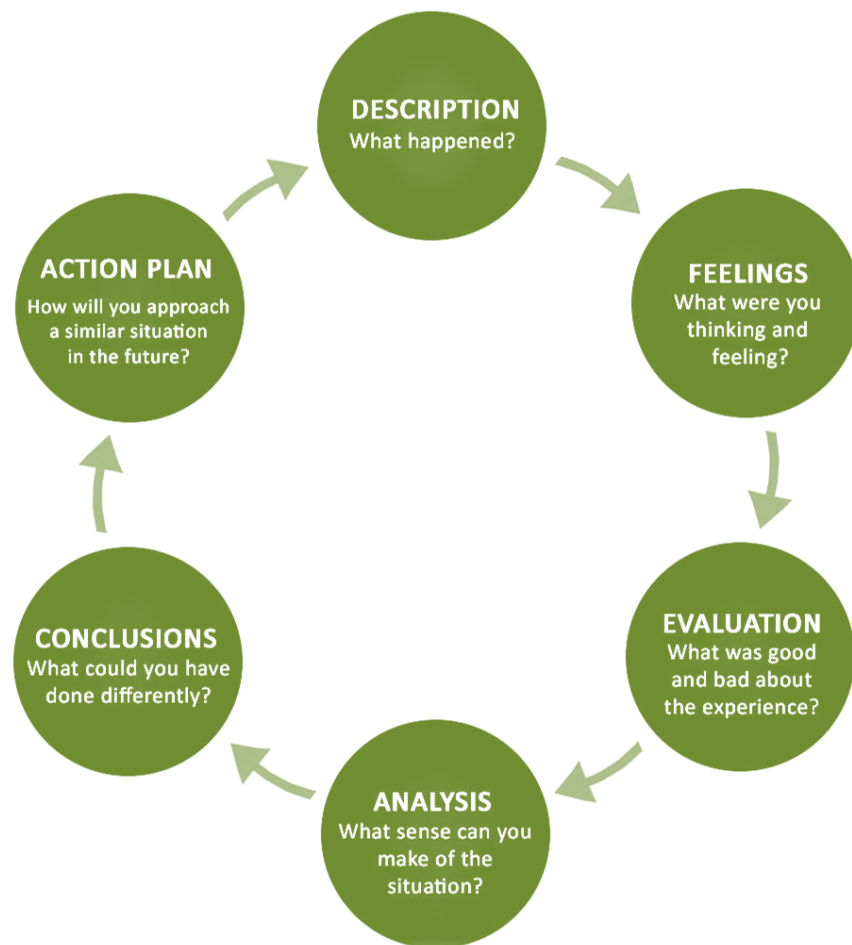


Figure 1 Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Description and Feelings

Description of the Project

The project of virtual delivery system project of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David is a project with the final outcome of moving to a fully offline face-to-face system after two years of an online system. However, to make the transition easy for the students, the project is going to offer a hybrid system where students can take either virtual or face-to-face classes until the project is closed. For this project, I am required to conduct stakeholder analysis and PID development, budgeting and project scheduling, policy-making, quality control, monitoring and control strategies.

My Feeling and Thoughts

For me, the analyses required in the project development were fairly complicated and required a considerable amount of time to compose. Therefore, some parts of the process were challenging at first. However, I felt that the analyses in the project and the overall development of the project management plan were extremely effective in developing analytical and technical skills in the areas mentioned in the previous paragraph. The feeling of challenge pushed me to try out new methodologies and new materials and sources for research.

Critical Evaluation and Analysis

In these two phases, I will evaluate my experience, whether it was good or not, beneficial or not and analyse the outcome of the experience.

What Lessons I Have Learned

I divided the project management plan into five sections for each phase of the project life cycle. In each section, I produced a number of documents regarding various aspects of project management, including a budget, timeline, stakeholder analysis etc. I learned the following lessons from the project:

- 1. Preparing Various Types of Project Documents and Reports:** I created various types of documents for the project. For example, PID is a comprehensive document that provides a wide range of information, including the project's objective, outcome, success criteria, expected completion date, success measures, budget, timeline, and risk factors (Daddey and Watt, 2021). The creation of a well-formatted PID requires a lot of analytical and technical skills. PID and other documents created for the project helped me develop skills in document creation.
- 2. Conducting Stakeholder Analysis:** As part of the initiation phase, I conducted a stakeholder analysis which is the most important task in this phase and can impact the project outcome (Eskerod et al., 2015). Stakeholder analysis can be done through a number of different frameworks. I learned to use the Power/Interest grid matrix.
- 3. Financial Planning and Budgeting:** I made the budget for the project, which was a complicated and risky task. It is complicated because it requires a lot of quantitative estimation and risky because any wrong estimation will result in an inadequate budget and may lead to a budget overrun (Lock, 2017). The project's budget is presented in figure 4, which was helpful for me in developing skills in financial planning.
- 4. Time Management and Project Scheduling:** I created the project schedule and Gantt charts which can help avoid project time overrun (Schwindt and Zimmermann, 2015). This skill is important for me to manage projects successfully in the future.
- 5. Conducting Risk Analysis:** I created a risk register for the project. Risk identification and risk strategy development are necessary for any project to succeed (Harrison and Lock, 2017). I developed risk analysis skills in the creation of the timeline and the Gantt chart.
- 6. Devising Communication and HRM Policy:** The project helped me in developing skills related to making essential policies for the project, including communication and HRM policies. These policies will help me establish effective communication, conflict management and proper resource management of the firm, as shown in figures 9 – figure 11 of the report (Aartsengel and Kurtoglu, 2013).

Apart from these lessons, I also learned to implement the theoretical tools and methodologies, such as WBS, Gantt chart etc., in real projects.

Critical Success/Failure Factors of the Project

I will explain the critical success/failure factors of the project in this section:

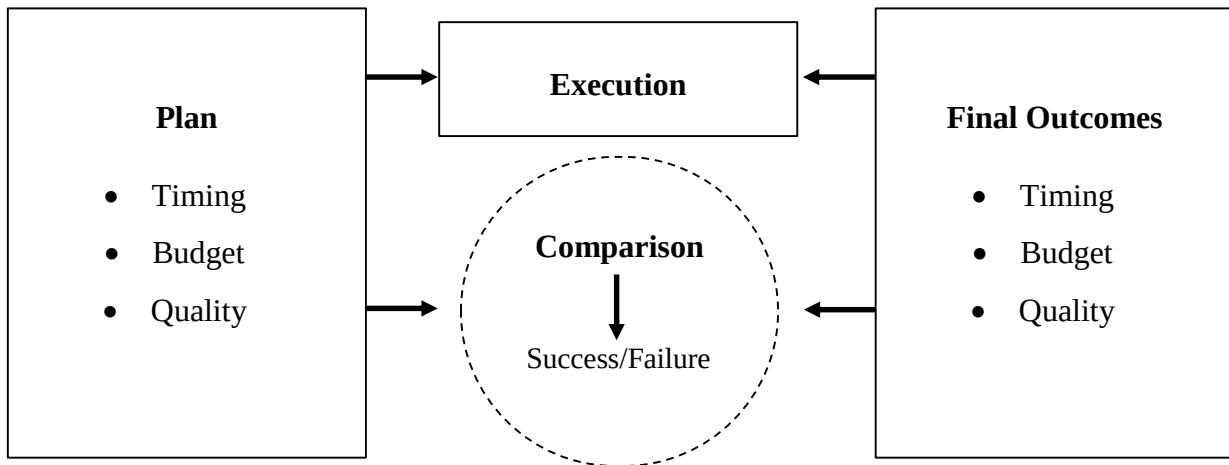


Figure 2 Project Evaluation Framework

The success/failure factors of the project will depend on the following factors:

1. **Students Engagement and Participation after the Project:** The project's main aim is to fully return to the face-to-face offline education medium. Therefore, the project will be deemed successful only if:
 - a. Students are utilising the hybrid system when they need to use it.
 - b. Students are also returning to the physical classroom gradually.
 - c. The participation rate in the physical classroom increases as time passes.
 - d. Students are fully participating in the physical classrooms at the end of the project timeline.
2. **The Project is Delivered without Time and Resources Overrun:** The project will be deemed successful if it maintains its constraints for which the following conditions need to meet:
 - a. The project is completed within its given budget of £100k and without any budget overrun.
 - b. The project is delivered within its given time of three months without requiring any further time extensions.

3. **Reaching the Defined Milestones on Time:** I have developed the following milestones for the project. If the project reaches each of the following milestones on time, the project will be more likely to produce its intended outcome:

Milestone	Completion
Project Charter Approval	September 7, 2022
Project Plan Approval	September 30, 2022
Resources and Materials Ready	October 16, 2022
Installation of the System	October 31, 2022
Launching the System	November 20, 2022
Project Closure	November 27, 2022

Figure 3 Project Milestones

4. **The Policies are Maintained:** As part of the project management plan, I have devised some policies, namely communication and HRM policies. The communication policy will make sure that there is no conflict during the project lifetime and that the project actions are carried out without time lags. The HRM policy will make sure that human resources are used in the most optimal manner without any waste. It will also ensure that no moral or moral hazard arises from the unethical or unconscious behaviour of the employees.
5. **Students and Faculty Members Feel Comfortable in the Physical Classrooms and Academic Performance:** The ultimate outcome of the project is to take the students back to the physical classroom, and this will be successful only if the students feel comfortable in the classrooms. This factor can be determined by the following:
- Students can engage in the classroom with their professors, materials and colleagues without any major communication problems.
 - Students are learning efficiently and are able to understand new ideas and concepts with as much competency as they would in a pre-pandemic classroom.
 - The faculty members can participate in sound communication and comfortably relay their lessons without any communication impediments.
 - The students can retain information as efficiently as they would in a pre-pandemic situation.
 - Students' academic performance, such as test results, and assessment merits, are unchanged when compared to pre-pandemic performance.

The project can be successful only if these factors are present and the students can return to the classroom without issues.

Action Plans

Define	• What are the various parts of the project?
Interpret	• What lessons are learned from the various parts?
Evaluate	• What is value of the lesson learned?
Plan	• What is the future use cases for the lesson learned?

Figure 4 Four Steps of Developing Action Plans

I have already defined the project and interpreted the lesson learned from the project, which is identical to the content shown in the [Description and Feelings](#) section of the report, and therefore I have not reproduced them here.

Evaluate: The analytical skills I developed in the assessment will be valuable for me in any type of project management because these skills prove that a project manager has the ability to handle a project. Furthermore, I will be able to make accurate forecasting and sound decision-making using these lessons.

Plan: I plan to implement the lessons I learned from the project in my future project management as well as strategical management of any type of organisational task. These skills will also help me in decision-making in my everyday life.

Career Path in Project Management

Project management is a highly potential career which is expected to grow over time. Various studies have estimated some numerical measures of growth in the career (Richardson et al., 2015). Therefore it is the right moment to choose a career path in project management. I have found evidence for the following positive sides:

1. Since this is a growing career, the salary is expected to grow in the future due to more demand for project managers (Havermans et al., 2019).
1. Almost all projects, whether in a private organisation or government-run projects, require project management efforts. Therefore, the demand for the profession is not likely to fall in the foreseeable future.
2. There are many reputable institutions, such as The University of Wales Trinity Saint David, offering career-oriented programs in this field.

The following are the different positions available in the project management career (Career in project management, 2022):

Titles	Description of the Position
Senior Project Manager	This position is available in organisations that run many projects at the same time. The senior project manager is in charge of several projects at once and chooses which should be prioritised. Under the senior project managers, work different project managers or assistant project managers are responsible for individual projects.
Project Manager	Each project manager is responsible for managing the entirety of a single project. The duties of a project manager include planning, budgeting, communicating with stakeholders, monitoring and controlling. Project managers work alone in small projects, whereas in large projects, a number of assistant project managers are employed to aid the work of the project manager. The project manager is also responsible for the final success or failure of the project.

Assistant Project Manager	The assistant project manager position is available only for large projects. The aim of the assistant project manager is to aid the work of the main project manager by entirely shouldering a specific part of the project manager's work.
Project Analyst	The project analyst's duty is to produce various analyses to aid the decision-making of project managers.
Project Scheduler	This project scheduler manages project schedules with the use of various digital tools such as GanttPro, Zoho Project etc. This position does not require any management of teams or individuals and just requires the modification and maintenance of schedules and other documentation.
Project Coordinator	The project coordinator is responsible for making various reports and documents in different phases of the project life cycle.

Figure 5 Career Opportunities in Project Management

Skills Needed

Project management is a fairly sophisticated profession. I believe the following factors are necessary to be a successful professional in the area.

Skill Set	Description
Communication Skills	Project managers need to communicate with various stakeholders throughout the project's lifetime. Therefore communication skills are necessary for stakeholder management and conflict resolution (Browne et al., 2016). For example, being able to present an idea in the weekly meeting is effective in convincing the senior project manager to bring any significant change.
Leadership and Team Management	Project managers are responsible for the management of their project teams and therefore determine the efficient use of human resources (Browne et al., 2016). For example, if a project manager can effectively influence their team, it can ensure the intended outcome.
IT Skills	Project managers need to use various digital tools throughout the project life cycle. Such tools include project management software, scheduling software, analytical software etc.
Analytical Skills	Project managers make a lot of decisions on a daily basis. Therefore, analytical skill is necessary to take sound decisions promptly.
Time Management Skills	Project managers are responsible for scheduling the various project tasks and the timely delivery of the project.
Research and Reporting Skills	Project managers are required to produce various reports and documents periodically. These documents need to be well-researched and well-formatted. For example, the weekly progress report for the virtual delivery system has to be detailed and well-researched (Pollack and Adler, 2016).

Figure 6 Skill Set for Project Management Career

Recommendations for the Project

The virtual delivery system project is supposed to facilitate the smooth transition from the online education system to offline, face-to-face classrooms. The project will be successful only if, by the end of the project, students feel comfortable and normal in the physical classroom and they can learn well. For the project to succeed, it can be recommended that frequent monitoring is done on various parts of the infrastructure. The project should be protected from any threat of data breach and cybersecurity risks. The project should also provide the students with an environment where they feel safe and comfortable.

Conclusions

I have listed the key success/failure factors of the project. In the second section of the essay, I have pointed out all the important lessons learnt from the project management plan and the report produced in assessment 1. These lessons summarise the key takeaways from the entire project. I have also outlined a career plan in project management and produced a skill set needed to succeed in the career. Finally, I made some recommendations for any practitioner in the field of project management.

Reference

- Levy, S.M., 2018. Project management in construction. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Meredith, J.R., Shafer, S.M. and Mantel Jr, S.J., 2017. Project management: a strategic managerial approach. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lamprou, A. and Vagiona, D., 2018. Success criteria and critical success factors in project success: a literature review. *RELAND: International Journal of Real Estate & Land Planning*, 1, pp.276-284.
- Beleiu, I., Crisan, E. and Nistor, R., 2015. Main factors influencing project success. *Interdisciplinary Management Research*, 11(2), pp.59-72.
- Gunduz, M. and Yahya, A.M.A., 2018. Analysis of project success factors in the construction industry. *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, 24(1), pp.67-80.
- Radujković, M. and Sjekavica, M., 2017. Project management success factors. *Procedia engineering*, 196, pp.607-615.
- Besteiro, E.N.C., de Souza Pinto, J. and Novaski, O., 2015. Success factors in project management. *Business management dynamics*, 4(9), p.19.
- Harrison, F. and Lock, D., 2017. Advanced project management: a structured approach. Routledge.
- Andersen, E.S. and Grude, K.V., 2018. Our tribute to Rodney—and the importance of goal-directed project management. *International Journal of Project Management*, 36(1), pp.227-230.
- Ziek, P. and Anderson, J.D., 2015. Communication, dialogue and project management. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*.
- Aartsengel, A.V. and Kurtoglu, S., 2013. Develop Communication Management Plan. In *Handbook on Continuous Improvement Transformation* (pp. 363-380). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
- Vanhoucke, M., Coelho, J. and Batselier, J., 2016. An overview of project data for integrated project management and control. *Journal of Modern Project Management*, 3(3), pp.6-21.

Kerzner, H., 2017. Project management: a systems approach to planning, scheduling, and controlling. John Wiley & Sons.

Fuller, M.A., Valacich, J.S., George, J.F. and Schneider, C., 2017. Information Systems Project Management: A Process and Team Approach, Edition 1.1. Prospect Press.

Daddey, F. and Watt, A., 2021. Project Initiation. Project Management.

Eskerod, P., Huemann, M. and Savage, G., 2015. Project stakeholder management—Past and present. Project management journal, 46(6), pp.6-14.

Lock, D., 2017. The essentials of project management. Routledge.

Schwindt, C. and Zimmermann, J. eds., 2015. Handbook on project management and scheduling vol. 1. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Harrison, F. and Lock, D., 2017. Advanced project management: a structured approach. Routledge.

Courses.lumenlearning.com. 2022. Reflective Writing. [online] Available at: <<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1/chapter/reflective-writing/>> [Accessed 30 August 2022].

Richardson, T.M., Earnhardt, M.P. and Marion, J.W., 2015. Is project management still an accidental profession? A qualitative study of career trajectory. Sage Open, 5(1), p.2158244015572098.

Havermans, L., Van der Heijden, B.I., Savelsbergh, C. and Storm, P., 2019. Rolling into the profession: Exploring the motivation and experience of becoming a project manager. Project management journal, 50(3), pp.346-360.

Glukhov, V.V., Ilin, I.V. and Levina, A.I., 2015. Project management team structure for internet-providing companies. In the Internet of Things, Smart Spaces, and Next Generation Networks and Systems (pp. 543-553). Springer, Cham.

Slideteam.net. 2022. A career in project management. [online] Available at: <<https://www.slideteam.net/career-success-path-in-project-management.html>> [Accessed 30 August 2022].

Khamaksorn, A., 2016. Project management knowledge and skills for the construction industry. In International Conference on Civil, Architecture and Sustainable Development (Vol. 3, No. 4, pp. 89-94).

Browne, W., Dreitlein, S., Ha, M., Manzoni, J. and Mere, A., 2016. Two Key Success Factors for Global Project Team Leadership: Communications and Human Resource Management. *Journal of Information Technology & Economic Development*, 7(2).

Pollack, J. and Adler, D., 2016. Skills that improve profitability: The relationship between project management, IT skills, and small to medium enterprise profitability. *International Journal of Project Management*, 34(5), pp.831-838.