

***Name : Mohammed Abdul Amin
Student ID : 1711961
University of Wales Trinity St David***

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Lecturer Name : Ernest Oliva

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Executive Summary

The following report is based around project management strategies on the Vintners case study. The report starts with a basic insight into the Vintners company and what the project involved requires. The report will look at the risks associated with the project, with an assessment of how to reduce and mitigate these risks. Also included in the report is descriptions of project management tools and techniques used during the project, ending with a conclusion and personal reflection.

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1: Introduction to The Vintners Company case study.

The Vintners family run an antiques shop, which has been operating as a family business for three generations. The shop has been owned by the family for over thirty years, and is situated in Shirley on Stratford Road, Birmingham. The major stakeholders of the business are Dennis Vintner, Doreen Vintner, Suha Madanni, and Omar King. These major stakeholders are shown below:

	Denis Vintner •Star of the business. Is passionate about antiques, searches antiques for restoration.
	Doreen Vintner •She deals with the accounts and financial side of the business.
	Suha Madani •Deals with the customer service side of the business.
	Omar King •Has been working for the vintners for a long time and is considered as a general all rounder.

The family also own another building which is situated in Sparkhill, Birmingham. This building is primarily used for storage.

2: Project Overview.

The family have received an offer for their shop in Shirley. They are planning to sell the shop in Shirley and move into the building in Sparkhill. The building in Sparkhill is just a shell of a building with no electricity, no internet, no office space and a concrete floor. The Vintners want to move into the building in Sparkhill, and set up a business similar to that of the business of Salvage hunters where they can restore antique items and sell them via the internet or to people like Dru from Salvage hunters. To do this the building will need major renovation work.

The Vintners require a project plan to move into the building in Sparkhill so that they can operate all their activities from there.

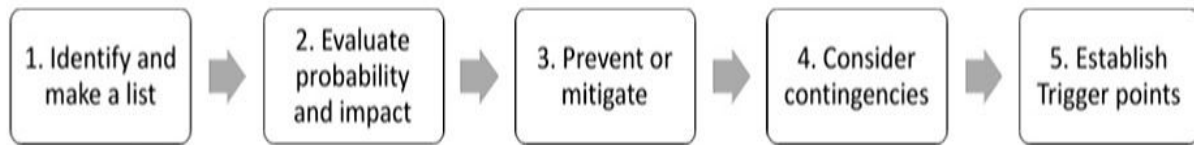
3: Defining Roles.

The project seems simple, but with all projects, there are risks associated with it that can have catastrophic consequences. To reduce risks that can occur, risk management strategies are an important factor associated with project management. Another important factor is the individuals and the roles they play that determine the success of the project delivery. According to Cooke-Davies (2002) it is the human factors, and not the processes or systems that deliver projects. Henrie and Sousa-Poza (2005) also mentioned that the success or failure of a project is based on the right individuals and what roles they play. To reduce risks, roles that major stakeholders must be defined and maintained. This means people must understand what their role is and stay within their roles to reduce risks to the project. This is especially important to family business projects. An explanation of the project sponsor and steering group roles for the Vintners project is given in Appendix 1, along with a diagram of the decision making hierarchy.

4: Risk Assessment.

According to Boehm and Turner (2003) risk assessment can be referred to as a process, or a series of steps that involves identifying risks associated with the project, and steps to reduce or eliminate these risks before they could threaten the project or become responsible for expensive reworking. There is a strong link to how successful a project is and the level of risk assessment carried out, which indicates most successful projects carry out more risk management (Elkington & Smallman, 2002). The project manager should comply with the established steps and comply with the success factors identified for reducing or eliminating risks of the project (Rozenes *et al.*, 2006).

According to Heagney (2011) risk assessment can be undertaken by compiling a risk plan. The following steps illustrated below are a common and practical way for creating a project risk plan in a systematic process to reduce risks, and allows a project manager to be proactive.



5: Risk Assessment of the Vintners Project.

Step 1: Identify Risks.

The first step is to identify and make a list of major risks associated with the Vintners project.

- **Risk A:** Costs more and takes longer than expected.
- **Risk B:** The finished building is not practical or not user friendly.
- **Risk C:** Builders/Contractors not keeping promises or agreements or of bad quality.
- **Risk D:** Bad weather causing interruptions.

Step 2: Evaluate Risks.

The second step is to evaluate the risks and in the event of that risk becoming a reality, consider the impact it will cause. This should be done with inputs from the whole project team and experts (Heagney, 2011). The following table is an evaluation of the probability of the risks, and the impact each risk will have on the project using a scale of *High*, *Medium*, and *Low*.

Table 5.1: Evaluation Table

Risk	Probability	Impact
A	High	High
B	Medium	High
C	Medium	High
D	Medium	Low

The evaluation table shows that **Risk A** requires the most focus to reduce that risk, because of its high probability and impact, with **Risk D** requiring less effort to mitigate it. But just because it is labelled as low probability or low impact does not guarantee that it will be, so it should remain a matter of concern throughout the project process.

Step 3: Prevent or Reduce Risks.

The next step is to prevent or reduce the risk from occurring. This can be done with the following considerations.

Risk A can be prevented by getting verified estimations of costs and time from builders, contractors and suppliers. This can be done at the start of the project with signed agreements on time and costs. The risks can be reduced by estimating using estimation techniques such as the Delphi technique.

Risk B can be reduced by communication with the steering group and project sponsor at the start of the project, so that requirements can be achieved through a technique which is called 'User Stories'. This is a technique that helps improve communication within teams and with stakeholders which reduces the risk of misinterpretation, and fulfills requirements from a user or customer point of view. User stories can be used to give the project scope and direction so that it delivers the benefits each stakeholder requires.

Risk C can be prevented and its impact reduced by using Builders/Contractors that are highly recommended by online ratings, have good standards of work from past experiences, or are of established and reputable companies.

Risk D cannot be prevented entirely because weather can be unpredictable, but its impact can be reduced by starting the work on a certain period of time of the year. For example, if the work is started during the summer period when there is less chance for bad weather and more sunlight hours to do the work.

Step 4: Contingencies.

Contingency planning is about what to do if the risks identified actually happen. Risks identified to have a high probability and impact should be focused on more because contingencies can mean higher costs. The project manager will need to have contingency plans if **Risk A** occurs.

For example, if costs are higher, then more funds will be needed and this may mean more time will be needed. This plan should be shared with stakeholders and revisited on a regular basis. If **Risk C** becomes a reality then a second builder/contractor should be considered to take over.

Step 5: Trigger Points.

Establishing trigger points is important because it allows you to act before the risks identified can have full impact or salvage the situation before the risk becomes reality. This allows the project manager to anticipate and be proactive. Being proactive is being positive rather than negative which increases the probability of the success of the project (Kerzner, 2009). The main trigger points for the risks associated with the Vintners project is of time and costs. These should be evaluated on a regular basis and evaluated. For example, if costs exceed more than half of total costs, but the work schedule is not half completed, this can be a trigger point in which to act on reducing **Risk A** and **C**, and going with a contingency plan.

6: Project Management Tools and Techniques

There are many tools and techniques that can be used in project management. The following is descriptions of some of these tools and techniques used for the Vintners project.

Product Project Technique.

This is a useful technique that allows tasks to be categorised by the amount of effort it requires. Tasks for the Vintners project can be determined by this technique with dimensions of size and complexity for each task, giving a matrix of effort needed for each task (Roberts, 2011).

This will help with prioritising tasks in accordance to the size, and it will help reduce uncertainty. Figure 6.1 is an illustration example of the matrix table for product project technique.

Figure 6.1: Product Project Technique

Size \ Complexity	Low	Medium	High
Small	1	3	5
Medium	4	8	11
Large	7	12	19

Source: Roberts (2011).

The Delphi Technique.

This is a method for estimating using the wisdom of the crowd. According to Sekayi and Kennedy (2017) the delphi method is a qualitative method of estimating using a series of rounds of data collection to calculate averages and to gain an accurate estimate number. With each round, participants are given the average number to use as a guide when estimating, which results in the final estimate being very accurate.

Gantt charts.

A gantt chart is a graphical representation of project activities shown by horizontal time scale bars. It can be used by small or large business projects to view all scheduled tasks that need to be carried out and how long each task will take. According to Wilson (2003) gantt charts provide a powerful method for implementing interactive approaches to scheduling. This means that if a certain task takes longer than expected, the chart can be adjusted to comprise timelines or deadlines which then can be communicated with stakeholders.

MoSCoW Analysis.

This is a method used in project management to prioritise requirements according to how much they are needed. Requirements are categorized as must have, should have, could have, and won't have. It is important to prioritise requirements that are a 'must' to ensure the success of a project. Effective and efficient prioritisation is important to ensure time and scarce resources are well spent on tasks that provide better value to a project (Lomborg, 2003).

The Project Management Iron Triangle.

Fig 6.2: Iron Triangle



The iron triangle is a concept that illustrates the relationship of the constraints that affect quality of the project. Scope of the project can affect costs and time which then can affect the quality delivered. More time can mean higher costs which can increase scope. All these constraints must be considered in relation to how it will affect quality (Pollack *et al.*, 2018).

Source: Locke (2007).

User Stories.

User stories is a technique of brainstorming stakeholder requirements with feedback from stakeholders. Using *Microsoft Planner*, these user stories can then be recorded and categorised so that it gives scope to the project. Knowing what requirements are needed means that the project will be able to deliver these requirements and solve the problems at hand.

7: Communication with Stakeholders.

One of the aspects of project management is to report and communicate plans with stakeholders. This can be done by a method called 'stand-ups'. This is a method where individuals delegated with specific tasks of the project have a meeting at the start of the day. This can be done face to face or via Skype video call. Each person has a certain amount of time in which he or she gives feedback about how their task is going and how much percentage of the work they estimate is completed. This information is used by the project manager to update the gantt chart which can then be evaluated on how the project is going. This information is then shared with the project sponsor and steering group by email or Skype calling. The project sponsor decides on strategic decisions based on this information, and if to continue with the project plan or make alternative plans. Examples of a gantt chart is illustrated in Appendix 2, and an example of an updated gantt chart is illustrated in appendix 3 which shows work completed by Paul is at 60% which changes the schedule of the chart.

8: Conclusion.

Project Management is a complex process and the success of the project depends on a number of factors. Project managers are often faced with numerous challenges, such as working without adequate budgets, tight timeframes, incompetent teams, and unpredictable environments. Project managers need experiences from past projects and knowledge learned from past mistakes that will contribute to the success of a project (Neverauskas et al., 2013). Lessons learned from past projects through self reflection and using that knowledge incorporated into waterfall techniques will mean that projects are successful in the future. This along with risk assessment will mean that projects success rates are increased.

9: Personal Reflection.

At the start of the project I was apprehensive because project management and all the aspects associated with projects was new to me. Once I read the case study of the Vintners project I felt that it was straight forward and did not take into consideration the risks that may be involved. I did not understand the implications of risk management and risk assessment.

During the project I learned more about project management techniques such as the importance of roles people play in the project. I took into account what roles the project sponsor plays and the project steering group.

I also understood more about how requirements of the project are defined using user story techniques. One of the things I could have done better to improve the project was to do more planning. This is something that is crucial to delivering the project. Planning each stage of the project from start to finish and analysing each stage of the project cycle. This is something that I learned during the project.

In future I will use methodology and techniques more for project management. For example, planning the project using the project control cycle, illustrated in Appendix 4. This will mean the project will have more planning and monitoring involved. This is something that I learned during the project which are aspects vital for project success. Another method for projects is using the waterfall technique where each stage of the project is done systematically. This method is also something I will use more in future projects.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Project Sponsor

Roles can be defined by establishing the decision making hierarchy, which will determine which person has responsibility for the final decision and which person has authority over others in respect of financial budgets. The first step is to establish the sponsor of the project. The project sponsor is referred to as the champion, instigator and owner of the project. From an early stage the sponsor will establish goals, objectives, define criteria of success of the project, and work closely with project management to make sure the objectives of the project are received (Bryce, 2008). The project sponsor will make decisions from arguments presented by the steering group, and in extreme cases make decisions to cancel the project with recommendations from the steering group or project manager.

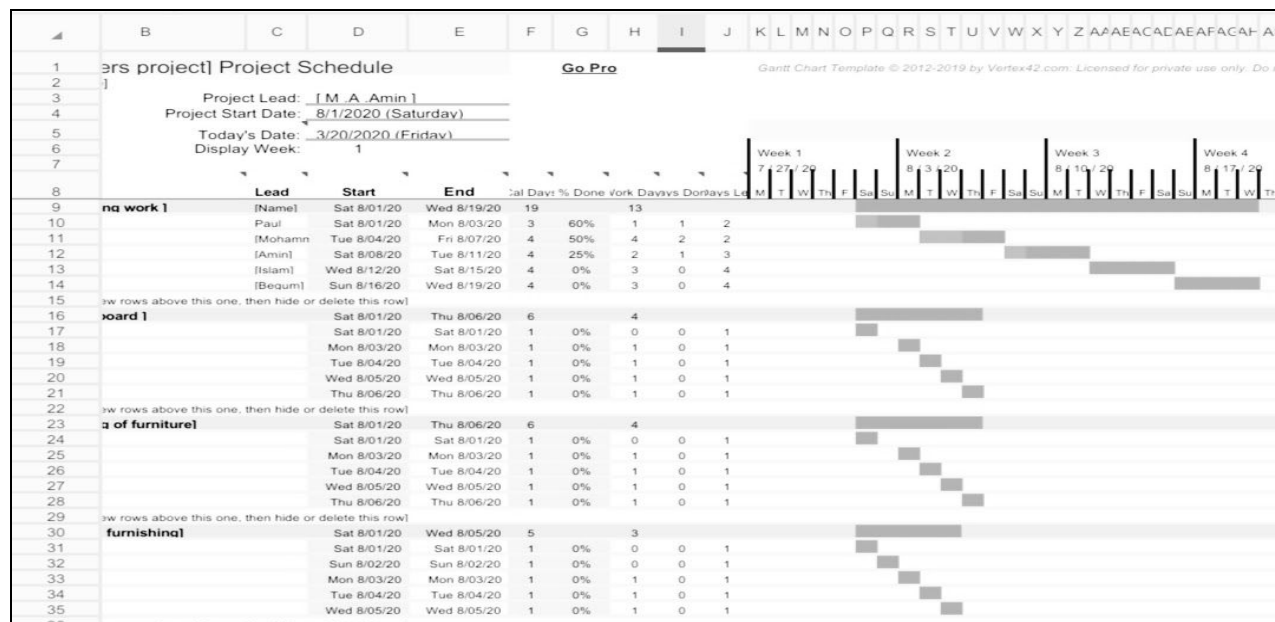
Steering Group.

The steering group is made up of individuals who are senior stakeholders and are experts in their respective fields. The individuals in the steering group are established from the requirements for the success of the project. For example, for the project to be completed it will need financial resources, which will require expertise financially and commercially.

According to Roberts (2011) the steering group is responsible for making sure that objectives that are set for the project are met and they are behind the success of the project outcome. Sometimes people do not stay in their roles which is a risk factor that affects the success of a project. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to ensure that the steering group members stay within their field of expertise. The project manager will receive input from the steering group as and when required, then make decisions based on evaluation with the project sponsor.

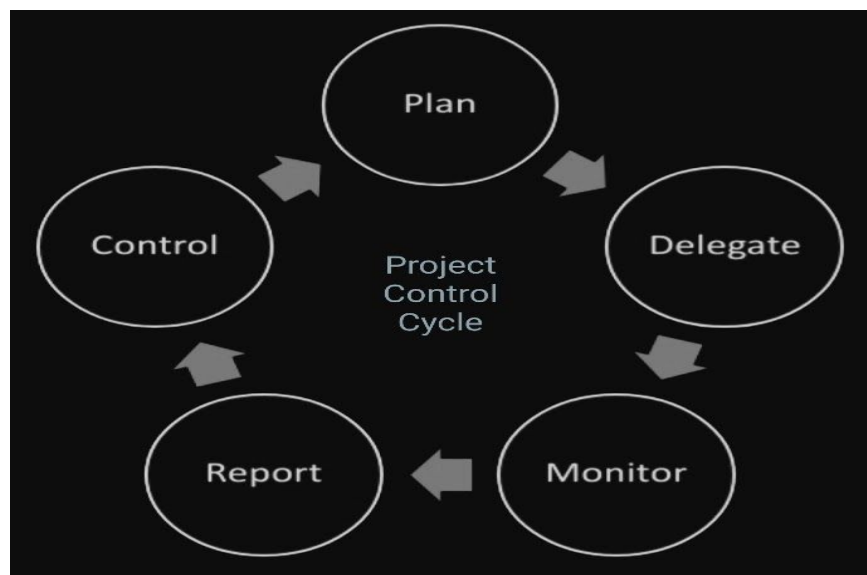
The illustration below is that of the decision making hierarchy for the Vintners project, which was completed using PowerPoint, Smartart.

Appendix 3: Gantt chart 2



Appendix 4: Project control cycle

Fig 9.1: Project control cycle



Source: Roberts (2011).