

Managing Projects in the Organisation

Teacher Name :Rexon Nting

Student Name :Clarisa Adela Kover

Student ID:1605694

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Introduction

In the present scenario, with the growing competition in the market, it has become highly significant for the business organisations to ensure improving its productivity and performance. In order to do so, it is necessary for the business organisations to improve the productivity of its employees by providing them with effective training and development. Providing proper training helps in improving the performance of the employees, it also helps in enhancing their overall morale and satisfaction. As a result, it increases the productivity of the organisation along with adhering to the quality standards. The employees being the most significant resources of the company, it is necessary to keep them updated with the latest advancements and technology; thereby, being able to fulfil the market demands as well as meeting the organisational objectives (Osburn *et al.*, 2015).

In this context, the case study of Amazon Inc has been considered. With the increased competition in the business of e-commerce, it is necessary for the company to ensure the effectiveness and productivity of its employees in order to sustain its position in the market. In this report, a project management plan will be developed in reference to training and development program in Amazon Inc. Additionally, the report will critically discuss the significance of different project management techniques and tools. Finally, a self-development plan will be developed; thereby, analysing the ability of successfully managing a product.

1) Provide a critical assessment of the usefulness of project management tools and techniques.

In order to carry out a project effectively, every business organisation adheres to certain project management techniques and tools. Some of the key techniques and tools are explained below:

Agile

As per the findings of Torrecilla-Salinas *et al.*, (2015), it has been observed that the agile technique is considered one of the most used and renowned project management techniques. It makes use of the “*sprint approach*”, which means, the project that is being carried out can be broken in the shape of a cycle or sprint. In the view of the fact that, the term agile refers to the capability of moving speedily as well as swiftly responding to the changes. Additionally, this technique allows collaboration and flexibility. On the other hand, Taibi *et al.* (2017) stated that, the agile project management technique fails in numerous cases owing to its unrealistic anticipations; thereby, being one of the biggest disadvantages. It has been further witnessed

from the discussions of Torrecilla-Salinas *et al.*, (2015) that, agile is generally considered a set of tools, processes or practices; however, in reality it is a culture and mind-set. This model or technique is most suitable in the instances when new changes are being implemented in an organisation. It allows a lot of freedom to the project managers, which further allows the managers to carry out the different functions of the project effectively and at a minimum cost.

PRINCE 2

“Project in Controlled Environments” or PRINCE 2 is another significant project management technique, which mainly comprises of different processes and principles. It is considered quite an equipped technique wherein, the project is split into a number of stages and levels. These significant levels possess their individual set of stages that needs to be followed accordingly. As opined by Parker *et al.* (2013), the standardness of this project management technique allows the project managers to make use of it in any sort of project regardless of its nature; thereby, allowing the managers to take suitable actions in order to successfully complete the project. However, this technique or methodology is not always considered the best fit. As per the findings of Parker *et al.* (2013), strong and effective leadership is considered one of the key factors of success when carrying out a project. The PRINCE 2 technique, on the other hand, states that the managers working for the project only exist in order to report to the project team members and are not accountable for the everyday activities of the project. It further asserts that, the managers must only suggest ideas when enormously necessary. This may have negative impact upon the quality and standard of the project due to lack of support and guidance.

However, the organisations operating in UK can positively adopt this technique of project management as it adheres to the organisational culture that works in UK. For instance, this methodology promotes having a core project board of members and no inclusion of the subordinate employees working for the project. Amazon Inc, when operating in UK can make use of this project management methodology, as it will facilitate the company in ***fitting itself effectively in the organisational culture of the business*** in context to UK, while implementing the projects.

Waterfall

According to Stoica, *et al.* (2016), this project management technique is considered the oldest and simplest methodologies. The waterfall is also referred to as ***SDLC (Software Development***

Life Cycle). This technique significantly focuses upon making solid and effective plans and successful implementation of those in context to the concerned project. It follows a sequential method wherein, one task or level needs to be completed prior to starting the next level. This further allows the business organisation to ensure that no mistakes are made in the entire process of project completion and monitor the development of the same in a more effective and successful manner.

In addition to the above project management techniques, there are a number of tools that are significantly used in order to carry out different project in an organisation. Some of the most significant tools are **“ProofHub”**, **“LiquidPlanner”**, **“Zoho Projects”**, **“BaseCamp”**, **“ClickUp”**, and so forth. These software or tools facilitates in easing up the entire process of the project as well as increases its effectiveness. The key features of some of the most significant project management tools and its effectiveness for the businesses are discussed below:

ProofHub

It is considered one of the most versatile and flexible tools of project management. It is used by some of the largest business organisations. It allows the companies in sharing feedbacks freely without any encumber owing to its online proofing feature. In addition to this, it makes the management of different tasks easy and less stressful for the managers (Botma, 2018). It further facilitates the managers in availing visual pictures of different projects by making use of Gantt charts with the help of this tool.

LiquidPlanner

This project management tool is considered to be most effective for the managers as it provides them with a better process or way of planning and executing work. It further offers a receptive approach towards the management of the project by treating them as evolving and living constructs (Cailliau *et al.*, 2016). This tool further allows the managers to prioritise the functions of the project as per the scheduled timeframe. It also allows the project managers to access statuses and data instantaneously.

2) Prepare a plan for the implementation of the project and specify the relevant steps that must be followed and how the plan is going to be implemented. Communicate the project plans with appropriate colleagues and stakeholders.

Project Title: Training and development project for increasing employee productivity within Amazon Inc.

Scope

Project's Deliverables and Scope

With the implementation of the particular project within the organisational premises of Amazon, the human resource department as well as the other business professionals shall be able to develop employee creditability with the suitable sets of training and development approaches. The project shall deliver success only when employees within the entire organisational premises are able to understand their shortcomings and coordinate with the project schedules accordingly with the expectations of the stakeholders as well as meeting business objectives (Kivilä *et al.*, 2017). The scope of project and the corresponding activities shall be first to determine the major gaps within the organisational workforce of Amazon and then develop cumulative strategies that shall help the project initiators and supervisors of HR department to train and develop them for the cause of the project.

Aim and objectives of the project

The particular project shall be implemented upon the aim to train and develop organisational workforce of Amazon Inc. in meeting business objectives.

The aim of the project will be backed with these objectives:

- To determine the possible gaps and shortcomings of the organisational workforce of Amazon Inc.
- To plan and frame appropriate strategies in order to train and develop the employees of Amazon Inc.
- To implement the framed strategies and incorporate the use of appropriate project management tools in successfully meeting the aim of the particular project within specified timeframe

Project's Structure

As the project is based upon the implications and functions of HR department of Amazon Inc., the project shall be implemented based upon the **functional project management structure** (Harrison and Lock, 2017). The project manager, supervisors, and other coordinators will be chosen from the HR department of the organisation. The implementation of training and development events shall be framed accordingly to functional expertise of selected stakeholder for the particular project, who will be responsible in incorporating their roles and functions for enhancing employee productivity within the organisation.

Resource and Costs Structure

<i>Resources</i>	<i>Cost per hours (£)</i>	<i>Utilised hours</i>	<i>Total Costs (£)</i>
Project management and employee performance development tools	40	5	200
Research upon skills and ability gaps	30	10	300
Conducting seminars and training events	100	30	3000
Analysing and reviewing results of performance development	40	20	800
Project Documentation	50	2	100
Grand Total	260	67	£4400

Table 1: Resource and Cost considerations

(Source: Created by the learner)

Project Implementation through PM tools

The overall implementation of the project shall be conducted under the supervision of above mentioned stakeholders that will be aligning the project management expertise in order to successfully achieve the aim and identified objectives of the particular project. Among the various project management tools, the project stakeholders can consider using a PID model

such as **Prince2** approach (Hinde, 2018). The demonstration of Prince2 approach with the criteria of the particular project is depicted as follows:



Figure 1: Prince2 project management framework

(Source: Alvarez-Dionisi *et al.*, 2016)

The entire implementation of any project management scheme through Prince2 project management methodology within the organisational premises includes deployment of corresponding activities as per the defined goals and objectives of the project with the help of 7 significant stages (Ilin *et al.*, 2016). The particular project to be held within the premises of Amazon, which is to train and develop employees in order to increase workforce productivity, shall be implemented with through these seven stages:

Starting the project

The project manager, supervisors, coordinators and staffs from the HR department of Amazon Inc. shall held a corporate meeting where they shall be discussing upon the needs of conducting training and development project within the organisational premises. This shall be remarked as the initial stage of the project where mainly the business professionals will be focusing to

develop rationale for the entire events that are to be conducted within the particular project (Hinde, 2018).

Project initiation

As per the provided scheme of Prince2, the project supervisor shall direct the HR managers and other business professionals within the HR department of Amazon to identify the potential gaps of the organisational workforce in terms of existing skills, abilities, knowledge and expertise (Kerzner and Kerzner, 2017). With the identified aspects of workforce creditability of the organisation, the participated stakeholders of the project shall then finalise upon deciding the training and development strategies, tools, systems and other resources with which the entire project will be able to achieve its developed aim and objectives.

Directing the project

Various implications to project management such as costs and time considerations, risk analysis, setting control strategies and other aspects will be the main focus of the particular stage of project management approach. Meetings will be held in association with the project manager, supervisor, coordinators, volunteers and entire staffs of HR department of the organisation. In the project stage of project management, the concerned stakeholders shall be finalising the training and development approaches, tools and others with which the employee performance within the organisation is enhanced (Cooke, 2016). Motivational seminars with the help of motivational approaches such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's two theories of motivation and others will be arranged in order to increase the concern of personal and professional development. Appropriate training methods through direct and indirect approaches shall be performed among the employees that shall be supervised by the concerned project management team.

Control Stages

In this stage, it is the role of the project management team to oversee that each of the desired stages of chosen project management methodologies are being addressed sequentially and timely, so that there is least scope of not achieving goals and objectives of the particular project. The PM team shall focus on **health** and **safety aspects** of the employees, as they are the project participants that shall be trained and developed to increase organisational productivity. The activities defined at each stage of Prince1 shall be evaluated by the project manager, so that the entire team is able to come up with solutions in case of any risks identified.

The **implementation** of **training sessions** and **seminars** shall be closely monitored in case of any risks associated with lack of skill development among the participated organisational workforce, are not left unidentified.

Manage product delivery

Employees that are participating the particular training and development session organised within the premises of Amazon Inc. will be provided with forms and other feedback tools, as they represent the product line of the particular project. Skill tracking, knowledge enhancement and experience shall be measured under the supervision of identified project stakeholders. Any issues to management of employee during the entire project management session shall generate risks, which will be threatening enough for the entire project. Various activities shall be framed with respect to motivate the organisational workforce during the project implementation, so that interest and urge of building productivity and experience is witnessed among the participants of T&D project. This is major aspect of the project that shall determine the achievement of project aim and objectives.

Manage Stage boundary

The stage boundary for training and development project (T&D) shall be to examine the development among participated workforce of Amazon after a certain timeframe during the implementation of the project. The employees that show least progress shall be sent to another cycle of T&D project however, any limitations witnessed post second project implementation shall affect the employment of the candidates. The implementation of the project shall allow the HR department as well as the key stakeholders of the organisation to squeeze out effective and efficient employees that shall aid the particular organisation in meeting respective business objectives.

Project Closure

The project shall be closed after implementation and evaluation of skill enhancement with a final meeting among the project stakeholders, where they shall be discussing to provide recognition and appraisals to the candidates that were able to develop the existing skill and ability sets, through being included within the particular project.

Work Breakdown Structure and Gantt chart

Activities	Start date	Duraton	Closure date
Meeting among project stakeholders regarding aim and objectives of the project	3.5.19	5	8.5.19
Proposing techniques to train and develop organisational workforce	8.5.19	5	13.5.19
Setting budget and timeframe	13.5.19	3	16.5.19
Allocating Project Management resources and tools	16.5.19	12	28.5.19
Implementation of project	28.5.19	10	7.6.19
Conducting training and development sessions	7.6.19	20	27.6.19
Risk and Control analysis	27.6.19	5	2.7.19
Reviewing employee performance and skill enhancement	2.7.19	5	7.7.19
Eliminating under developed candidates	7.7.19	2	9.7.19
Project Review and documentation	9.7.19	2	11.7.19
Project Closure	11.7.19	1	12.7.19

Table 2: WBS

(Source: Created by the learner)

3) Critically evaluate your ability to manage a project. Use feedback from others to evaluate your own ability to plan and implement a project, identifying strengths and weaknesses. Create a self-development plan to improve your own performance in managing projects.

In order to manage a project, following skills are required. I have taken feedback from my subordinates, seniors and co-workers to identify level of competency in each skill and knowledge acquired by me.

- Communication: Project managers spend most of their time in communicating with team members and supervisors (Schwalbe, 2015). I have excellent command over

communication skill, as I can convey goals, vision and issues effectively. I can produce creative reports for projects. The way I talk with my co-workers is much appreciative. I am good at verbal, written and formal communication styles. However, I am not good at non-verbal communication. Sometimes, my body language does not garn attention of audience.

- **Leadership:** This is an essential skill required to manage, supervise and lead team members assigned with the project. I can manage team members effectively and help them in performing their daily tasks. Team members allocated for the project may require supervision and guidance from senior members (Phillip *et al.*, 2012). I have the capacity to work cohesively with all members and guide them as per requirement. People working under me have given positive feedback on how I supervise and guide them in each phase of a certain project. They prefer to work under my supervision and leadership in upcoming project assigned to them.
- **Technical Skill:** It is important to manage all technical activities associated with project work and keep record of daily tasks. I have fundamental knowledge of project management tools such as PRINCE2, PMBOK and others. Chief Project Manager of my company applauded me for getting success in a project with application of PRICE2 technique effectively. I have significant command over project management software for which I can make work breakdown structure and network diagram required for project planning. However, I have less idea on Waterfall and PERT project management techniques, as I have not worked on these techniques.
- **Team management:** In addition to leading a team, a project manager requires managing people from operational point of views (Alias *et al.*, 2014). I have capability to promote teamwork, delegate tasks, set goals, resolve conflicts, and delegate tasks. I can create a team identity, address poor team performance and resolve conflicts among all levels.
- **Risk management:** Risks associated with a project can be financial, time, skill shortage and others (Teller *et al.*, 2014). I can handle risks and preventive measures to avoid occurrence of risks. My senior manager appreciates me for creating detailed budget for all projects. Therefore, I can prepare a comprehensive budget to avoid risks involved with fund and resource allocation. I used to prepare a timeline for big projects assigned to me. I will ask my team members to follow timescale to finish the project within required timeframe.

- Coping with stress: I am inefficient at handling stress and major mistakes are taken place in case I am forced to work and perform in stressful situation. A project may have many stressful events such as negotiating with suppliers, fulfilling stakeholders' requirements and completing works within given deadline. I am not confident about my ability that how I will respond to such situations. According to the feedback given by my immediate supervisor, I become confused while he put me in a stressful condition.
- Critical Thinking: Many problems may come across daily activities while working under a project. In such cases, the manager requires taking impartial decisions that shall favour overall effectiveness and stakeholders' needs. My co-workers and leaders say that I am incompetent at developing unique solutions for a particular problem. They believe that I used to give common solutions rather specific one, which proves unavailability of critical thinking skills.

Strengths and weakness of my personal behaviour, attitude, knowledge and skills are reflected in following table.

Strengths	Weakness
• Excellent verbal and written communication skill • Ability to lead people • Command over PMBOK and PRINCE2 • Effective Team management • Ability to manage project risks	• Poor non-verbal communication skill • Less knowledge on PERT and waterfall • Inefficient at managing stress • Poor at critical thinking skill
Opportunities	Threats
• Development in areas of project management • Advent of new and advanced project management software • Advanced project management training provided by Amazon • Online tutorial and assessment	• Intense competition in my field • Fresh candidates with advanced and core skill of project management • Lack of opportunities to handle projects outside the organisation

Table 1: Personal SWOT

(Source: Created by the learner)

A self-development plan has been created to improve performance in managing projects.

Objectives	SMART	Actions	Assessment	Review Date	Fulfillment Date
To acquire an enhanced communication skill	Specific: To develop non-verbal communication style Measurable: It can be assessed and measured by collecting feedback from others Achievable: I can achieve this because of my good written, formal and verbal communication styles. Realistic: It is easy to get positive outcomes by getting support from handouts, tutorials and	• Enrolling in a body language development class • Online tutorials • Regular practice	Feedback from others	6/10/2019	7/10/2019

	training videos. Timeframe: Two month is enough to achieve this objective.				
To learn application of project management tools	Specific: To acquire knowledge on PERT and Waterfall techniques of project management Measurable: I can measure it by applying it in a live project. Achievable: As I am working in project management profession, it would be easier to grab knowledge on these techniques. Realistic: Online	• Attending project management training sessions conducted by Amazon • Working on dummy project with application of these tools	Feedback from others and carrying out a live project	06/15/2019	8/8/2019

	tutorials and classroom training programs are available to get competencies on advanced project management tools. Timeframe: I require three months time become competent.				
To manage stress	Specific: To increase patience level to cope with stressful working conditions Measurable: It is assessable by taking feedback from others. Achievable: My interpersonal skills are	• Meditation • Staying calm • Reading books	Feedback from others	7/9/2019	13/11/2019

	strong and this will support me to develop this ability. Realistic: Some stress relaxing techniques are available to increase patience. Timeframe: I may take five months to improve patience and subsequently deal with stress.				
To acquire an improved critical thinking skill	Specific: To resolve problems with unique ideas and suggestions Measurable: It is measurable by observing effectiveness of a solution.	• Attending brainstorming games • Solving puzzles	Feedback from others	12/6/2019	19/8/2019

	Achievable: The objective is aligned with my existing capabilities Realistic: Puzzle, brainstorming and other skill development tools are available to improve it. Timeframe: I may take 3 months to fulfil my goal.				
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Table 2: Self-development plan

(Source: Created by the learner)

Conclusion

In the above study, different project management techniques such as, Agile, PRINCE 2, Waterfall and so forth has been discussed. It has been further observed that, these different project management techniques possess distinctive features that allow the different business organisations to carry out their projects effectively. However, it has been also witnessed that every project management technique or tool may not be appropriate for every type of business or project. This is for the reason that, these techniques or methodologies adhere to different set of principles and standards that may not be feasible for every type of business. Furthermore, a project management plan has been developed for Amazon Inc. The project focuses upon devising a training and development program for the employees of the company with the key aim of improving the performance of the employees; thus, meeting organisational objectives successfully. Finally, the project has designed a development plan in order to ensure further effectiveness and growth in context to project management planning and execution.

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