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Managing Project in the Organisation

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Executive Summary

This report evaluates the "Promoting Romanian Desserts" project, which aimed to promote Romanian culture while raising money for EYST Wales. It examines the project lifecycle, including project initiation, planning, stakeholder management, communication and project management tools such as the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) and Gantt Chart. The report critically evaluates how these tools supported the project and discusses both successful outcomes and areas for improvement. Finally, it reflects on the lessons learned and provides recommendations for managing similar projects more effectively in the future.

1.Introduction

Promoting Romanian Desserts project was organised by a team of five students as part of the Managing Projects in the Organisation module. The main aim of the project was to promote Romanian culture through traditional desserts while raising money for EYST Wales through voluntary donations. The project was self-funded by the team members, meaning that no external sponsor was involved. According to Kerzner (2022), clearly defined objectives help projects remain focused and increase the likelihood of success. The event offered traditional Romanian desserts including Amandina, Tosca, Alba ca Zapada and Cozonac. Around 30 to 40 visitors attended the event and approximately £80 was raised for EYST Wales. Reflecting on the experience, I believe the project was successful because it not only supported a charitable organisation but also allowed me to develop practical skills in communication, teamwork and organisation. This report critically reflects on the project lifecycle and evaluates the project management tools and techniques used throughout the project.

2. Project Lifecycle and Reflection

2.1 Initiation

The idea for the project was developed collectively by all five members of the team. We wanted to promote Romanian culture while supporting a charitable organisation. After considering different options, Andreea Lilea identified EYST Wales as a suitable charity

partner. According to the Project Management Institute (2021), the initiation stage is important because it defines project objectives and scope.

The main objectives were to introduce traditional Romanian desserts to students and staff, encourage engagement and raise money for charity. I found that having clear objectives helped the team remain focused throughout the project. Kerzner (2022) argues that clear goals improve project performance and decision-making.

As the project was self-funded, we had to consider time, cost and quality. Managing these constraints was challenging, particularly with limited resources. This experience taught me that even small projects require careful planning and balancing competing priorities. According to the Project Management Institute (2021), successful projects depend on effectively managing scope, time, cost and quality.

2.2 Planning

Planning was essential to ensure that the event ran smoothly. According to Maylor (2010), planning reduces uncertainty and helps teams coordinate activities effectively. Responsibilities were divided among the five team members according to individual strengths.

Ionut supported the coordination of the team, helped with setting up the table and interacted with visitors during the event. Andreea Lilea managed communication with the university, obtained approval for the event and arranged the partnership with EYST Wales. She also managed donations through a mobile POS system. My responsibilities included organising the banner, donation box, flyers, allergen information and collecting and transporting the desserts. Andreea Porumbel ordered the desserts, decorations and personalised aprons and helped prepare the stall. Silvia contributed by distributing flyers and collecting the EYST Wales banner.

The team used a Gantt Chart to organise activities and deadlines. As shown in Figure 5, the chart provided a visual overview of the main tasks and their sequence. Meredith and Mantel (2017) suggest that Gantt Charts improve coordination and time management. Personally, I found this tool useful because it helped me manage the preparation of promotional materials and ensure that important tasks were completed before the event. However, I realised that the Gantt Chart could not predict unexpected delays, particularly those involving suppliers.

Communication between team members mainly took place through a WhatsApp group. I found this method effective because updates could be shared quickly. In retrospect, I recognise that more formal meetings would have improved accountability and

communication. Lock (2020) argues that communication plays a critical role in project success.

2.3 Execution

The execution stage involved delivering the event and interacting with visitors. According to Pinto (2020), successful project execution depends on effective teamwork and coordination. On the morning of the event, team members worked together to set up the table and prepare the desserts. As shown in Figure 1, the team collaborated to organise the stall and ensure that visitors had a positive experience.



Figure 1. Project team during the Promoting Romanian Desserts event.

Traditional Romanian desserts including Amandina, Tosca, Alba ca Zapada and Cozonac were displayed attractively to encourage interest. Visitors were welcomed and informed about the desserts available. Ionut actively interacted with visitors, explaining the desserts and recommending options according to individual preferences. I also spoke to visitors and helped serve customers throughout the event.

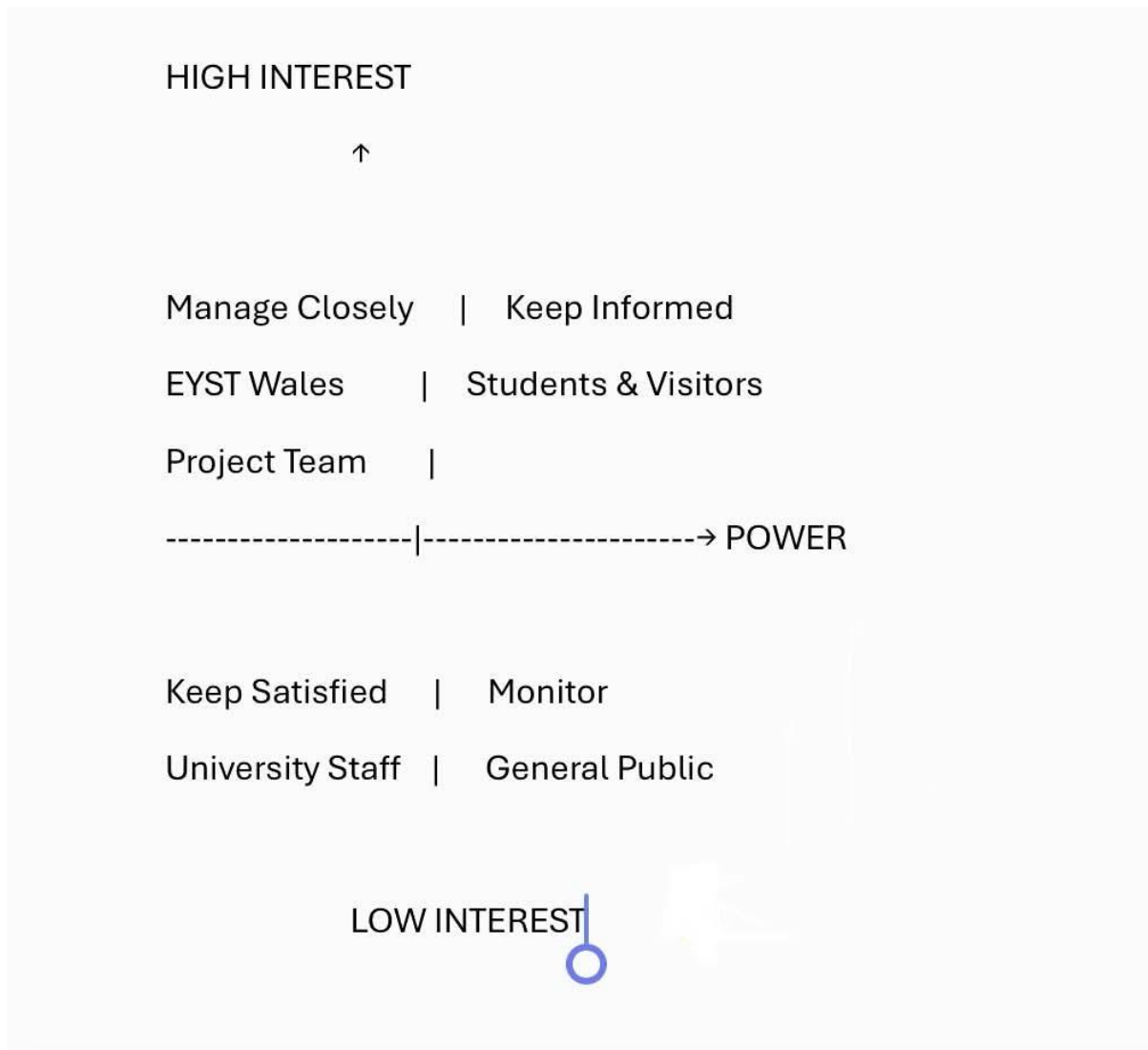


Figure 2. Power-Interest Grid used for stakeholder management.

Effective communication with stakeholders contributed to the successful delivery of the event. Stakeholder analysis, supported by the Power-Interest Grid shown in Figure 2, helped the team understand stakeholder priorities and maintain effective communication throughout the project (Bourne, 2016).

Positive engagement from visitors demonstrated the success of the event. As shown in Figure 3, many visitors enjoyed tasting the desserts and interacting with the team.



Figure 3. Visitors enjoying Romanian desserts during the event.

From my perspective, interacting with visitors was one of the most rewarding aspects of the project because it increased my confidence and communication skills. West (2012) explains that effective teamwork and positive interactions contribute to successful outcomes.

2.4 Monitoring and Control

Monitoring activities took place throughout the project. According to Gray and Larson (2021), monitoring allows teams to identify issues and respond effectively. One challenge I encountered involved delays with the banner and donation box. To prevent further problems, I regularly contacted the supplier to monitor progress.

Another issue occurred during the event when we realised that the number of plates available was insufficient. Although Andreea Porumbea had brought plates, the number of visitors exceeded our expectations. Fortunately, additional plates were borrowed from the university canteen, allowing the event to continue without disruption.

The experience highlighted weaknesses in our risk management. Wysocki (2019) suggests that contingency plans are important because they reduce the impact of unexpected problems. I realised that preparing spare materials would have reduced stress on the day of the event.

Food safety was also considered carefully. Allergen information was displayed to ensure visitors could make informed choices. This was one of the strengths of the project because it demonstrated responsibility and professionalism.

2.5 Closure

At the end of the event, approximately £80 had been raised for EYST Wales and around 30 to 40 people had attended. Feedback collected from visitors was extremely positive. As shown in Figure 4, many participants expressed satisfaction and some visitors even returned to the stall several times.



Figure 4. Feedback collected from visitors during the event.

Using reflection helped me evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the project. Gibbs (1988) argues that reflection allows individuals to learn from experience and improve future performance. Overall, I consider the project successful because it provided valuable experience in communication, organisation and teamwork. However, I also realised that stronger risk management and clearer task allocation would improve future projects.

3. Critical Evaluation of Project Management Tools and Techniques

Several project management tools and techniques were used throughout the Promoting Romanian Desserts project. These included the Gantt Chart, Stakeholder Analysis, the Power-Interest Grid, Belbin Team Roles, communication methods and risk management. Overall, I found these tools useful because they helped the team organise activities and deliver the event successfully. However, I also realised that some techniques had limitations and could have been used more effectively.

3.1 Gantt Chart

One of the most useful tools used during the project was the Gantt Chart. As illustrated in Figure 5, the chart provided a visual timeline of activities and deadlines. According to Meredith and Mantel (2017), Gantt Charts improve scheduling and help teams monitor progress. The chart included activities such as obtaining approval, promoting the event, ordering desserts and preparing materials.

Gantt Chart – Promoting Romanian Desserts

Task	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Project Planning	✓			
Poster Design	✓	✓		
Promotion		✓	✓	
Order Desserts			✓	
Event Day				✓
Evaluation				✓

Figure 5. Gantt Chart used during the planning stage.

I found the Gantt Chart particularly useful because it helped me organise the preparation of the banner, donation box, flyers and allergen information. It also allowed me to understand deadlines and prioritise my responsibilities. Gray and Larson (2021) argue that scheduling tools contribute to better coordination and time management.

However, I realised that the Gantt Chart had some limitations. Although it showed deadlines clearly, it did not account for unexpected delays. For example, the banner and donation box arrived later than expected, causing additional stress before the event. From this experience, I learnt that combining the Gantt Chart with a contingency plan would have improved project performance. Maylor (2010) states that traditional planning tools are useful, but they cannot eliminate uncertainty.

3.2 Stakeholder Analysis and Power-Interest Grid

Stakeholder analysis played an important role because the project involved several groups, including EYST Wales, University staff, students, visitors and the project team. Freeman (2010) defines stakeholders as individuals or groups who can affect or be affected by a project. As previously shown in Figure 2, the Power-Interest Grid helped categorise stakeholders according to their level of power and interest. This enabled the team to identify which stakeholders required close management and which only needed to be kept informed. Bourne (2016) argues that stakeholder management contributes to better relationships and improves project outcomes. Personally, I found this tool useful because it helped the team understand the importance of maintaining communication with key stakeholders. However, I realised that more attention could have been given to internal stakeholder management. Differences in participation affected the distribution of tasks, demonstrating that managing relationships within the team is equally important (Cleland, 1999).

3.3 Belbin Team Roles

Belbin's Team Role theory helped explain how different members contributed to the project. According to Belbin (2010), teams perform more effectively when individuals contribute different strengths and behaviours. My contribution reflected characteristics of an Implementer because I focused on practical tasks such as organising materials and preparing the event.

I found this theory useful because it highlighted the importance of teamwork and different skills. However, I also realised that people do not fit perfectly into one role and often perform several functions. In addition, unequal participation among team members affected the distribution of work. West (2012) suggests that communication and cooperation are more important than individual roles alone.

3.4 Communication

Communication mainly took place through a WhatsApp group and face-to-face discussions. Kerzner (2022) states that communication is essential for successful project management. Personally, I found WhatsApp useful because it allowed quick updates and efficient coordination between team members.

However, relying mainly on informal communication had some limitations. I noticed that some members communicated more actively than others, which occasionally resulted in unequal involvement. This experience taught me that regular meetings and clearer responsibilities would improve accountability and coordination in future projects (Lock, 2020).

3.5 Risk Management

Risk management was one of the weaker areas of the project. Although allergen information was prepared and displayed, unexpected problems still occurred, including delays with the banner and a shortage of plates. According to the Project Management Institute (2021), identifying risks early can reduce their impact on project performance. This experience highlighted the importance of contingency planning. Although the team managed to solve these issues successfully, I realised that preparing spare materials and developing a risk register would have improved project delivery. Wysocki (2019) suggests that contingency planning increases project resilience and reduces disruption caused by unexpected events.

4. Recommendations for Future Projects

Reflecting on the overall experience, I believe the Promoting Romanian Desserts project achieved its objectives successfully. However, several areas could be improved in future projects. According to Meredith, Shafer and Mantel (2019), lessons learned from previous projects contribute to better performance.

One area that requires improvement is risk management. Although the team managed unexpected problems, such as delays with the banner and a shortage of plates, we focused more on reacting to issues than preventing them. Heldman (2018) suggests that risk identification should take place before project implementation. If I were to repeat the project, I would prepare backup materials and develop a risk register.

Task allocation and communication could also be improved. Although all members contributed, some were more involved than others, which resulted in an uneven distribution of responsibilities. I believe clearer roles and regular meetings would improve accountability and coordination. According to Field and Keller (1998), effective task allocation improves team performance. While the WhatsApp group was useful, relying mainly on informal communication sometimes limited engagement. Schwalbe (2022) argues that communication planning improves collaboration.

Overall, this experience taught me that successful projects require flexibility, effective communication and shared responsibility (Kolb, 1984).

5. Conclusion

Overall, the Promoting Romanian Desserts project was a positive and valuable experience. The event successfully promoted Romanian culture while raising approximately £80 for EYST Wales. Traditional desserts, including Amandina, Tosca, Alba ca Zapada and Cozonac, attracted around 30 to 40 visitors, and feedback received from participants was positive. As shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4, visitors engaged enthusiastically with the event and enjoyed learning about Romanian culture.

Throughout the project, I developed valuable skills in communication, organisation, teamwork and problem-solving. I found project management tools such as the Gantt Chart and stakeholder analysis useful because they helped structure activities and support decision-making. However, this experience also highlighted the importance of stronger risk management, clearer communication and better allocation of responsibilities. According to Gibbs (1988), reflection allows individuals to learn from experience and improve future performance. The skills and knowledge gained from this project will support my future academic studies and professional development.

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