

PROJECT MONITORING AND CONTROL

Student name: Polina Eneva

Student number: 1714688

Module: LCBB5005 Project Management

Project monitoring and control are significant functions in project management as they are performed to ensure that the project goes according to plan from start to finish. Sometimes in the lifespan of a project, deviations from the original plans and changes in some of the aspects of the project are needed to keep the project in line with its goals and objectives. Sometimes, these changes are needed because of unforeseen issues that spring up during the project execution phase, which means that these issues were not planned for in the original project management plan (Meredith, Shafer and Mantel Jr, 2017). It is the role of project monitoring and control to envision these issues as the project goes ahead with its plans and therefore come up with means to ensure that such issues do not derail the project. Project monitoring and control activities include monitoring of the project parameters, commitment of the stakeholders, issues and risk management, communication management, stakeholder involvement, change management, and progress reviewing (Meredith, Shafer and Mantel Jr, 2017).

The purpose of this document in the project was to assist the project management team to get an insight into the progress of the project by informing them of the progress and contrasting it with the original plan. It was also a vital source of information when the team needed to correct some issues in the project and as such, they were in a better position to control the direction the project proceeded in, especially when the tasks at hand required cooperation of multiple stakeholders (Meredith, Shafer and Mantel Jr, 2017). Through project control and monitoring, the project team was able to maintain the progress of the team as close as was possible to the original plans, meaning that not many significant changes were needed and the few ones that were made were not significant enough to impact the project as a whole. Most significantly, monitoring and control activities ensured that none of the stakeholders were lagging behind in their roles but instead, that all members played their roles as required. This was

a major reason for the success of the team because it boosted teamwork and dependability of the stakeholders from the beginning to the end of the project (Meredith, Shafer and Mantel Jr, 2017). Some of the specific activities carried out as PMC routines are discussed in subsequent sections of this document.

Monitoring the Parameters of the Project

The specific parameters of this project included the budget, timeline and deadlines, and designs among others. The role of PMC with regards to these parameters was to ensure that the project followed them as planned and as required in the agreements between the contractor and the client. While managing such parameters as design was easy, given that this was already decided on before the commencement of the project, managing other parameters was not as easy and straightforward (Pellerin and Perrier, 2019). For a start, incorporating change management and contingency planning during scheduling and budgeting was done with the target being to allow slight flexibility in the project execution such that some minor changes could be accommodated with minimal effects on the project at large. The project had a strict timeline such that it was not supposed to exceed the six months for which it had been allocated. The downside of exceeding this timeline would be the additional costs that would be incurred, which would have been the responsibility of the contractor as per the agreement with the client before the project was commenced (Pellerin and Perrier, 2019).

On the other hand, since the project was to be executed over a period of six months, the financial planning and budget estimations were made basing on the existing market conditions at the time of planning. Contingency planning was done to make the project a little flexible in terms of cost and resource allocation. This meant that during the progress of the project, the management team could be allowed to revise some cost and allocations but remain within the

limit given (Pellerin and Perrier, 2019). In the project management plan, the management designated the quality of the project deliverables as a principle only second to safety. As such, the quality of these deliverables could not be impacted in any adverse ways regardless of changes in material costs in the market (Pellerin and Perrier, 2019).

In some instances, during the project, some minor changes were required and these were carried out at an extra cost. The contingency fund allocated in the budget was a vital resource in these cases because it ensured that progress continued normally due to the availability of the funds. Also, the availability of the contingency fund ensured that the quality of the specific deliverable involved was not compromised by the corrective measures needed. More so, the flexibility introduced in the project planning allowed the management to complete all the tasks within the scheduled timelines, which made the progress of the project from one part to the other more seamless than when such flexibility is not incorporated at all (Pellerin and Perrier, 2019).

Monitoring the Commitment of Stakeholders

For any project to be successful, all stakeholders must be committed to their roles from the beginning of the project to its completion. Project managers face a great challenge in ensuring that all members of their team are committed enough, both as a group and on individual terms, to push the project ahead as planned (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018). This project was an extensive one in that it involved different sub-projects within it, with different teams being responsible for excavating, construction, paving and tarmacking, plumbing, electrification, and evaluation. Essentially, there were different forms of authority bestowed on the members of the project team, and it was the role of the manager and departmental heads to ensure that despite the differences in authority and responsibilities, every member in the team felt equally treated,

valued, and appreciated. This equal treatment also needed to be reflected in the responsibilities that each individual had (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018).

One of the ways through which stakeholder commitment was controlled and enhanced was through delegation and subdivision of the project tasks. Together, the project team would have been a big one to the extent it would make it impossible for the manager to singly manage them. Delegation and subdivision of tasks put members of the team in groups according to their specialties and requirements (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018). These subgroups would be small enough for their respective leaders to manage, and the project manager would then have an easier time controlling the project because much of the work would have been done by the group leaders. This also boosted team working by taking authority and leadership closer to the team members who were at the lower tiers, which served to motivate them to keep working together for the team's objectives (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018).

While managing the members of the team can be done in many ways, sometimes managers have a hard time managing the involvement and commitment of external stakeholders such as the financiers, government agencies, and the client or the representatives. Through PMC activities, the project manager is able to identify areas of need with regards to the commitment of these stakeholders and assess ways to rectify the areas where commitment falls below the expected levels. The external stakeholders in this project were very committed in that they provided all the resources and information needed within the required time. This commitment, together with that of the project team, was crucial for the success of the project as a whole (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018).

Issues and Risk Management

Like any other project, this one involved many risks and issues that the management team had to resolve for the team to reach the goals of the project. The first step in issues and risk management was risk identification and some of the risks that were identified for this project included:

- i. Health and safety hazards such as poisoning and toxic materials
- ii. Electrocutation
- iii. Cuts and bruises
- iv. Falls and breakages
- v. General project risks like missed deadlines
- vi. Financial risks such as the project running over budget
- vii. Legal risks involving approvals and agreements

The project team approached risk and issues management in this project with the principle of “Safety First”, meaning that above all things, the safety of everybody involved was primary, and then the other aspects followed (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018). After the identification of these risks, the team then identified ways through which these risks could be avoided and mitigated. The first of these ways was to ensure that the project team was aware of these risks. This was done through various forms of communication, including memos, signage and posters, and daily team briefing before the workday commenced. The second step involved providing all the necessary safety equipment for the different tasks involved every day. Some of the protective equipment included safety boots, safety goggles, gloves, hard hats, and an onsite first aid facility (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018).

Financial and scheduling risks were mitigated from the start through proper planning. The planning phase was allocated enough time for the stakeholders to brainstorm and come up with a well-informed plan of action through which the project would be realized. As stated in previous sections, the planning included a contingency fund, which though minimal in terms of percentage of the overall project cost, allowed some flexibility in cost management and change management in later stages of the project (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018). The same was done with scheduling and this planning was essential in ensuring that the project did not run into problems that could lead to delays. During the planning phase, all the documentation needed and certification or approval activities were planned for, which aided in avoiding financial and legal risks which could face the project (Habibi, Barzinpour and Sadjadi, 2018).

Communication Management

In the stakeholder commitment section above, it has been noted that this project involved communication on two levels; Internal and external. Internal communication was the passing of messages and information from one point to the other within the project team. This constituted of communication between team members in a specific department of the project, between these members and their group leaders, between the group leaders themselves, and between the group leaders and the management team or project manager. On the other hand, external communication involved the passage of information between the team and outside stakeholders (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017). Such communication involved communication with the client, the government agencies and other external authorities, and any other form of communication that took place between the construction team at the site and the outside environment (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017).

The classification of communication into internal and external communication was essential for proper communication management in this project. First of all, it enabled the management to incorporate both formal and informal modes of communication into the communication plan such that internal communication would include both forms of communication according to effectiveness and the situation at hand (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017). However, all external communication was made formal and had to follow communication plans already agreed upon during the project planning phase. The essence of using informal communication only in the internal matters was to maximize openness and reduce the time it took to pass a message within the team, thus making it more effective where simple instructions were being relayed. Communication with external stakeholders was made exclusively formal so that all informational exchanges that took place would be put into the records by the manager for reference in future if needed (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017).

Progress review

This project as carried out with continuous evaluation and reviewing of the project at the heart of matters. Therefore, progress review was a continuous activity from the project's initiation phase until its closure (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017). The project manager delegated authority to different group leaders who headed their departments. These group leaders were tasked with filing evaluation and progress reports to the project manager on a bi-monthly schedule. However, the group leaders were required to have their weekly progress reports, which were not mandatorily required to be filed with the manager, but which would be included in the by-monthly reports they filed. The essence of continuous progress review was to ensure that issues hampering the progress of the team and the project at large could be detected and corrected early on before they grew to have a significant impact on the project's cost, quality,

and scheduling. A few issues arose, which were not serious enough to necessitate a change of the plan, and these were sorted out as soon as they were found. The corrective actions taken in these cases were handled by the departmental heads, although the manager was notified and consulted on the corrective measures taken by the teams. Overall, the project remained largely within the original plan throughout its lifespan (Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen, 2017).

Project Closure

The project closure stage was arrived at when all the construction works, finishing, installation of different mains electricity lines, lighting, sound systems, and safety systems were all completed. After completion, project evaluation was carried out and an independent quality control agency was tasked by the project team and the client to conduct an all-out assessment of the project. The Report of the assessment by the project team and the independent quality controller were filed and provided to the necessary authorities and the client. Government agencies responsible with certification and quality control also carried out their tasks and eventually, the project was certified as having met all the necessary conditions for a construction project of its kind. Following the certification of the project, the project manager arranged a handing-over event for the project team to hand over the complete recreational park to the client. With a vote of thanks to all involved stakeholders by the project manager and the client, the project was market complete and successful.

End of Project Report

Construction projects are often very difficult to manage, especially when the budget and timelines are very strictly outlined. This is because they involve a lot of different tasks and specialties at the same time, and all these have to be responsibly represented and effectively involved for the project to be successful. When developing a park where people and their families can go and have fun, creativity and innovation are key to building an awe-inspiring site that attracts more people for the client. However, as this project indicated, it is very necessary to ensure that the client has an influence on the design of the project. On one hand, the project team could have great ideas on how to develop an out-of-this-world creation that the team thinks would be attractive and set itself aside from the others competing with it in the market. On the other hand, the client could be harboring a different vision or idea of what he or she wants to offer to the market.

Therefore, this project taught me the necessity to be in continuous communication with all major stakeholders, especially in the early stages of the construction. This could be vital in the sense that some improvements may be needed if the project runs into problems, or the design agreed upon by the client and the manager fails to meet the needs of the client. It is possible to change some designs while others are much more difficult to edit. Proper communication among team members is vital for projects to be successful. Above everything else, the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved, treating them with equality and respect, and motivation are essential for any project manager to realize the vision of a project.

As a manager, this project taught me the need to have flexibility in the project plan; in the scheduling and budgeting sections. It is always necessary to expect that some things will not go as planned and, therefore, planning for these is vital if the project is to be successful. The other

lesson for myself as a manager was on cooperation and team working. This project was successful because every stakeholder did their part and collectively, the goal of the project was attained. This project also exposed me to working under pressures caused by financial and time constraints, but with the successful completion of the project, the lessons I took will be useful for my future ventures in management.

Bibliography

- Habibi, F., Barzinpour, F. and Sadjadi, S., 2018. Resource-constrained project scheduling problem: review of past and recent developments. *Journal of project management*, 3(2), pp.55-88.
- Kivilä, J., Martinsuo, M. and Vuorinen, L., 2017. Sustainable project management through project control in infrastructure projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 35(6), pp.1167-1183.
- Meredith, J.R., Shafer, S.M. and Mantel Jr, S.J., 2017. *Project Management: A Strategic Managerial Approach*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Pellerin, R. and Perrier, N., 2019. A review of methods, techniques and tools for project planning and control. *International Journal of Production Research*, 57(7), pp.2160-2178.