

Overview of Project Management

Answers

- 1.
- i.c
- ii.d
- iii.a
- iv.b
- v.a

2. **Short Questions:**

- i. What is the difference between a project and routine work?

A project has to achieve a concrete objective within limited time and resources with a specific starting and ending dates. Routine work is an ongoing activity of an organisation.

- ii. Briefly outline the tasks that a project manager performs during the course of his project.

A project manager is responsible for a variety of tasks, including:

During the initiation stage of the project, if necessary and if it hasn't been done thus far, order or perform a Feasibility or a Scoping study.

Drawing the Terms of Reference outlining the objectives, the scope and budget, the deliverables, sponsor or a source of budget, the customer, the project phases and milestones is an important task to be undertaken by a project manager.

Planning and organisation stage requires a project manager to identify all relevant stakeholders who should be involved, interested in or affected by the project. A project management plan could be established to specify who is responsible for what project activity and what resources are required (budgetary and human) within what timetable in order to achieve project's objectives successfully.

During the Implementation stage, the project manager is in charge of making sure that project activities are implemented by the team members in charge in a timely manner and within the allocated budget. Troubleshooting and problem solving during this and other stages of a project management are project manager's tasks too.

Project manager should perform regular monitoring and controlling against the original objectives and the project plan.

Last but not least, attention must be paid to the closure and evaluation of the project tasks. The deliverables have to be presented to the concerned customer and stakeholders. Success and impact evaluation is the final task before the project is finally closed.

- iii. Describe different stages of the project lifecycle.

The project lifecycle consists of the following stages:

Initiation of the project: in this stage, the objectives and the mission and vision of the project are established. This is when it is clarified why the project is being undertaken, with which means and within what schedule. Here it is important to define what are the expected deliverables of the

project and milestones against which the progress of the project will be measured.

The Planning stage includes identification of all stakeholders. Also, the team has to be set up assigning clear responsibilities for the activities to be carried out within the project scope. In addition to human resources, other resources have to be made available, for example, tools (technical equipment, IT tools, etc.) and a budget to successfully prepare for the implementation stage.

Implementation phase of the project basically is putting the plan in place, i.e. the allocated team performing activities at a specific pre-defined time.

During the Monitoring & Controlling stage the project manager and the team make sure that the project tasks are implemented according to the initial plan, within the budget and without a delay.

During the final Closing stage the impact and results of the project are evaluated and presented to the customer of the project. These project deliverables are formally accepted and the project team is dismantled.

iv. Outline the key skills every good project manager should possess.

Every good project manager should possess Communication skills, so that he/she can relay clear information in an understandable manner to the stakeholders of the project. Organisational and planning skills are necessary to ensure smooth execution of a project. This includes organising documentation, contracts, meetings and other activities for an easy day-to-day running of the project. Budgeting skills of a project manager are needed to acquire, plan and spend the financial resources on project activities. Problem solving abilities are useful when a certain issue arises, such as a technical difficulty or a legal matter. Negotiation and influencing skills help problem solving. It is in project manager's interest to negotiate the relevant issues with the environment surrounding the project in order to achieve its objectives. Leadership skills are a bonus, especially when it comes to motivating and leading a team towards achieving a specific mission and goal. Managing people and making teams work smoothly together is another challenge that a project manager has to face. A good PM listens to team members and takes informed decisions for the benefit of the project.

v. It is said that there are five process groups and nine knowledge areas in project management. Name all the process groups and knowledge areas.

5 process groups: Initiation, Planning, Executing, Controlling, Closing

9 knowledge areas:

Management of: Project integration, Scope, Time, Cost, Quality, Human resources, Communication, Risk, Procurement.

Activity

Use this activity to define the key activities of a project within your organisation

- i. Select a project that you have been involved in or affected by during the past year.
- ii. ii. Identify what the different stages were and approximately how long each stage lasted.
- iii. iii. Note the key activities of each stage.

Project title: Rural sanitation and water supply in Kenya

Stages:

Alternatives assessment phase 8 months

Feasibility phase 2 years

Detailed design 7 months

Construction phase 5 years

Operation and maintenance phase

Length of time involved 7-8 years

Key activities (too many to name them all).

Perform engineering assessment and alternative scenarios. Evaluate potential sites. Perform a feasibility study recommending a solution to the problem based on technical assessment of alternatives. Establish a project management plan. Develop costs and schedule estimates. Perform engineering and design studies. Check the relevance of the feasibility study. Select final design parameters. Land rights acquisition. Select the final sites, materials and designs. Establish construction contracts. Perform construction works. Establish O&M manuals. Perform inspection and handover to the customer and maintenance team.