



Everyone's Smart University

Project (Spring 2021)

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Communication Risks in Projects

1. Introduction:

The project is end-to-end residential house building, will be built on 6996 sq ft land. It is 3 story house, first floor will contain the outdoor area, the kitchen, pantry, family room and two formal living rooms and 2 bathrooms. The second floor will contain 3 master bedrooms, an office, and a playroom. The third floor will contain an outdoor area, setting indoor area, and the laundry room. As the project planner and scheduler, I aim to finish the project in 20 months, with 2 months variance period.

As the project is in the planning phase, we plan to meet the project schedule goals by using the right communication tools by conduction of meetings, daily scrums, spreadsheets, creating the weekly project dashboard and presenting monthly updates to senior management to follow our updates like Gantt chars and use the critical path method.

Project is a group of connected tasks to achieve a goal or the objective of the project by using a particular resource under a serious strict schedule and cost and note that each project is different and unique with its deliverables. Regarding the risks in project, there is always uncertainty about them and about the project success and how they could affect the project progress.

1.1 Risk Management:

There is uncertainty in everyday life, in organizations and projects, [1] it could be a threat to the business or an opportunity that must be taken. Risk is any unexpected events that may affect our project, these events could be good or bad and that will lead our project to be better or worse. Risk could affect any element in the project, resources, people, results, or technology. Knowing the differences between risk and issues is important to achieve a proper and accurate risk assessment. Risks are any events that could occur unexpectedly, for example, natural events. On the other hand,

issues are events that could be solved by finding the right solution or its already on the agenda and expected and that will make it easier for the team to find a solution to it.

Identifying the risks and doing risk assessment before any project is a must to assure or at least achieve the project success with least loss. So, the benefits of performing risk assessment in project management include reduction to project risk exposure, precise and clear decision making on key issues within every project phase, and clearer definition of risks related to particular projects with the risk assessment approach. [2]

Construction projects are facing several risks which have negative effects on project objects such as time, cost and quality.[3] In this research I will be writing about communication risks, formal communication plans are an absolute necessity for project success, and how miscommunication could affect the project oppositely.

2. Literature review:

All aspects of life have a probability and impact, for example, a doctor explaining to his patient the probability for the success of the treatment and the risk of its side-effects or everyday decisions by people based on probability and impact. Due to this dependence of the decision maker on the information provider, it is important that the message is understood as intended in-order to minimize the risk of miscommunication. [4]

2.1 Communication:

A study conducted by the Project Management Institute (PMI) revealed that ineffective communication had a negative impact on successful project execution. This problem still holds true today. Likely anyone ever involved in a project of any size knows this basic fact. What may surprise you is the number of projects still lacking effective communications management and the resulting magnitude of economic impact this deficiency has on projects. [5]

Miscommunication could happen in many different ways. First, the sender may not explain the message clearly or correctly and that will affect the understanding for all receivers. Second, the message could be lost during the communication which may

lead to a confusion. Third, the receiver may misunderstand the message and work from there with the wrong idea which in this situation may lead to rework or project failure.

2.2 Health & Safety communication risks:

In my organization on day we had a supplier came from Dammam to Riyadh to put a poster on a high wall. We informed the safety manager and supervisor to inform their team and be ready to meet the supplier once arrived for safety induction and training for working in high surface and supervision during the work. In the middle of the work we noticed that no one from the safety team was present during the work because they were not aware of the timing, which led to a huge problem with management because of the hazardous risk the supplier was on. All this happened because of the miscommunication between the team and lead to health and safety communication risk and that could have been avoided if the leader was clear about the timing of the work.

2.3 Control risks:

Everyone believes that tools help with communication, me included. However, in large projects these tools might be challenging and may not be as affected. For example, tracking the project information and communication using spreadsheets might be subjected to human error, and it hard to keep it updates and tracked for audit.

2.4 Legal risks:

Since the beginning of COVID-19, a lot of business were affected for many reasons and our organization is one of them. For example, the supplier we work with in Dammam had to postpone all our work due to lockdown between cities and country laws, that led to job delay. Unfortunately, this risk couldn't be avoided for the circumstances.

2.5 Technology risks:

One of the most common communication risks in projects and life in general are technology risks. For example, internet disconnect or no phone signal. Communication risks could be hazardous risks when it comes to company's security and stealing information. Technology risks can be mitigated by using powerful software and strong passwords.

3. Methodology:

In this research, a qualitative approach was the method adopted. With primary and secondary data gathering. Knowing the probability and impact for communication risks and how they could affect projects in all aspects.

For identifying risks in projects, brainstorming in my opinion is the best tool to be used between the team, then a quantitative analysis to understand the risk by using a numerical set of attributes to determine its consequence and likelihood. In contrast to qualitative analysis, this may require extensive use of time and resources, which is one of the project constraints across all phases. [2] The risk evaluation stage includes both identification and analysis of project risks and assists the project team in making decisions to address the analyzed risks. [2]

Risk	Probability	Impact	P X I
Worker fall from the scaffolding (serious injury or death)	0.1	0.9	0.09
Worker couldn't get on the scaffolding (work will be late)	0.3	0.7	0.21
Spreadsheets not updated	0.2	0.8	0.16
Supplier couldn't come to work (Lockdown)	0.5	0.8	0.4
Phishing or hacking company's information	0.1	0.9	0.09
Internet disconnect or no signal to contact suppliers	0.3	0.7	0.21

FIGURE 1. PROBABILITY & IMPACT MATRIX

Probability	0.7-1	high	high	medium
	0.3-0.69	high	medium	low
	0-0.29	medium	low	low
		0.7-1	0.3-0.69	0-0.29
		Impact		

FIGURE 2. RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

4. Results and Discussion:

As a result, communication is very significant in any project progress and success, but any miscommunication can shift the project in a negative way. Brainstorming and generating new ideas about communication risk that might occur and doing risk assessment in the early stages in the projects can save the project from a huge failure.

5. Conclusion:

In conclusion, each project is different, and each team is different with identifying and controlling risks. However, all teams in any project are the same when it comes to avoiding risks. Even if they have a large appetite for risks, still no project team want to rework or use contingency reserve because of a risk could have been avoided.

6. References:

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