Characteristics of Resources and the Impact on Projects

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever started an easy project and thought it was a piece of cake, but realizing halfway through that your assigned resources has turned your project into a total disaster? You now have to switch to damage control mode and waste valuable time, instead of concentrating on the core objectives of your project. This is byproduct of not properly assessing your resources correctly. Projects in themselves are complicated to manage, so dealing with difficult people can add more stress and create barriers that can hinder the progress. I don't think your resources plan on giving you a hard time, but like the old adage says; *the path to a project nightmare is littered with good intentions.* Project success is not only about balancing the triple constrains (cost, time and scope); it is also about controlling all the unknowns, including your resources. A team is only established when everyone pulls together and focuses on the project objectives. Your role as a project manager is key to insuring successful outcomes. A poor project manager fails to bring out the best in his team, but a good one can produce a winning combination, even with some individuals that may perhaps seem to lack ability to do so. Leadership is a critical and essential component for any project management team. To better understand the impact of project manager, it is helpful to consider the following definitions of project manager:

- A project manager is usually a person who is responsible to run a project from the beginning to the end. It includes organization, implementation and control of their resources including people. (Techpedia, 2013).
- Project managers need to be leaders which is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2002).

You need to lead which involves the ability to influence people to take actions toward completing a goal or project. Projects contain a number of components with the main three being scope, cost, and time. For the project team to effectively meet scope, cost, and time goals, one must appreciate the impact of positive leadership. It is up to the project manager to manage issues related to scope, cost, and time, as well as to lead the team to successful completion of these goals and the project as a whole. A project manager manages their project staff by developing a positive environment.

We are all very familiar with the term "lead by example." Team members may already have negative characteristics, but if the leader displays negative traits, other team members will follow to parallel behavior as the leader. However, these types of project manager that don't lead by example introduce a whole other issues and motivational scheme in which I am not addressing in this article. Any individual who forms part of a team will also make a decision to commit to the team's goals; this is why they need to be sure they understand the goals. Teams normally are complicated, it is helpful for the members to ask questions, clarify any misunderstanding and get to know their project manager.

BACKGROUND

Company survival depends on how well they adapt to changing technologies, diversity of their workforce and market situation. So it is no wonder that project management is the key to guide the company in the right direction. A great deal is being written about project management addressing things like budget,

time and scope, but not a lot of emphasis on how to handle resource and their characteristics. The success of any project is not only attained by following a project methodology but by adhering to and effectively using the tools and resources available to you. Past experiences show that diverse resources can dramatically impact cost management and as well as the overall timeline. It is important to recognize resource aspects that can cause disruptions in a project and how to mitigate and manage them more effectively to reach desired outcomes. Human resources can have a negative impact to projects. Project manager need to be prepared to put challenges on permanent lockdown. When looking back on previous unsuccessful projects, it was not the methodology that was deficient but in the way that the group came together as a team. It is also critical to analyze the different personality types and how they can influence the outcomes. Early analysis and observation of each personality involved can help to isolate potential pitfalls and help to address the issues immediately. It is often better to deal with potential problems at the start that could delay timelines, and make the necessary adjustments for the betterments of the individual, team and the project.

PROJECT MANAGER COMMON MISTAKE STORIES

As it is, project managers are faced with great deal of pressure from tight timeline and budget constrains. So to put more pressure they now have to deal with the dilemma of working with team members that don't even report directly to them. How can you hold them accountable for not following through with their work? We have been told that as a project manager it is normal to go through conflict and friction with your team while it is undergoing a self-adjustment phase. Although this is a normal process, it's important as a project manager to analyze each personality and make sure they don't disrupt the project. We are responsible as project managers to smooth the progress of creating conformity within our project team in multiple ways. How will you make your team members accountable for completing task if they don't get along with you or any of the other team members? You might be thinking, "Do I need to polish up on my babysitting skills?" The answer is yes you do! In my vast experience as

a project manager, I have encountered team members showing bad behavior which make them hard to manage at times. So what are basic babysitting skills? It is managing behavior problems and understanding the psychology of how different personalities types function

A big issue is project managers that are indecisive, they keep changing their mind, and they like to move the team in new directions all the time. They are reacting to everything that is received and adjusting to new feedback, while changing directions at the drop of a hat. These are project managers which think they have everything under control by doing these unpredictable moves, can only damage team productivity and hamper moral. This in turn will only drive the team to bad behavior as method of survival. Project managers should not take side or side with complainers, if they do; they automatically join the drama club. This club will drawn you into endless and worthless arguments that will take you away from your real focus, your project. They want to demolish your project, hinder any progress made, or devour your funds, thus prolonging your timeline and converting your project scope into what is commonly referred to project scope creep.

AVOIDING PROJECT CATASTROPHES

Project Manager Most Common Oversights

Many reference materials and experienced project managers can tell you that there will be occurrences with your project team members where they will face disagreements through out all the phases of the project, during the decisions making sessions and even after post implementation. How about when you set goals and their changed by other forces? One of the forces is the people around you; they usually want to sway the goals you set. Most of the time your team member may feel that they think they know what is best for project, or perhaps they have their own agenda and want to take different paths. Obviously, it is critical to curate excellent relationships with your team members. Unclear statements or expectations are another common mistake. We assume that everyone understands them and they know what is expected of them, Right? Wrong! I have seen project managers over communicate with

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