

Chapter 7

Attributes of an Effective Project Manager: The Case of European Operational Programs in the Public Sector


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ABSTRACT

It is widely accepted that every project aiming at specific outcomes is unique, since it is not a routine operation. In this context it is important to identify and study certain common characteristics of an effective project manager. The aim of this research is to examine the importance of the attributes of an effective project manager by analyzing how satisfied his/her collaborators are. The study focuses on the project management of EU Operational Programs in the public sector. Based on the literature, the effective project manager should be able to understand and influence the key parameters of any project (physical, technical, scientific, etc.), such as the duration, the financial resources, the human resources, the legislation, and the operation. To analyze the degree of satisfaction and the importance of project manager characteristics, the MUSA method has been applied, which is a multiple-criteria decision-analysis approach in the field of preference disaggregation.

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INTRODUCTION

Project management is a set of activities aiming to implement a series of actions with the ultimate goal of achieving a final result or a change. To achieve this, a team is created that follows a timetable and has a budget at its disposal. The team simultaneously considers technical limitations until the project is fully implemented (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996). Fundamentally, project management is just a part of the overall business process that carries out the implementation of the project.

The process (of project management) is a set of functions such as design, development, and production of a project. Each process involves actions, changes, and operations that lead to a result when there is an appropriate budget and timetable (MD137675, 2018). When all the necessary elements are present, the strategic planning of a project is essentially carried out.

However, what is the definition of a project? According to JMD126829 (2015), it could be all the energy that is consumed in order to implement a final product or service that is unique in its kind. A natural characteristic of the project is its beginning and end (life cycle), while its result, which is the product/service, is always similar but never identical from a different perspective. The types of projects can be discriminate into three main categories according to the Project Management Institute (2013):

- a. Implementation of a new product or service.
- b. Influence on the structure or staffing of a service.
- c. Creation of modern software for optimal performance.

Also, the following should be noted:

- The start of the project has a clear date.
- The end of a project is determined by a date or the final outcome.
- A project has a clearly defined objective.
- The final outcome (product) is unique.
- There are usually important restrictions on the basic necessary resources.

The main phases of any project overall with the project life cycle, but they can help to understand the sequence of necessary operations. These phases are typical and can be roughly considered as follows (Horine, 2009):

- *1st phase – Project initiation*: It includes project definition and other key elements, such as the purpose, the benefits, the risks, the stakeholders of the

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