

The history of project management and the project managers

Student of DIEP Qodirova Ozoda

e-mail: ozodaraxmiddinovna@gmail.com

Ubaydullayeva Shohista Hidoyatillo qizi

E-mail: shohista8108@gmail.com

Annotation. Project management is the use of specific knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to deliver something of value to people. The development of software for an improved business process, the construction of a building, the relief effort after a natural disaster, the expansion of sales into a new geographic market—these are all examples of projects.

Keywords.

To understand project management, we must look deeper into what constitutes a project. Essentially, projects are temporary efforts to create value through unique products, services, and processes. Some projects are engineered to quickly resolve problems. Others require extended timelines to produce outcomes that will not need major improvements outside of projected maintenance like public highways. Of course, some projects will be a mixture of both these things. This applies to everything from developing new software to planning disaster relief efforts. Still, this is all very general information concerning what a project is. When we break them down more specifically, we see that projects are amalgamations of tasks, activities, and deliverables that must be structured and executed carefully to achieve a desired outcome.

Before an outcome is achieved, each aspect of a project must go through phases of initiation, planning, and execution. This process is known as the project management lifecycle, and it is the lifeblood of successful projects. Moreover, this cycle allows project managers to plan each task and activity meticulously to ensure the highest chances of success. Overall, a project is a well-planned endeavor that follows a lifecycle with a definite beginning and end.

After months of conversations between Jim Snyder and Gordon Davis, a 1969 dinner in Philadelphia resulted in the decision that a new organization should be formed to provide a means for project managers to associate, share information and discuss common problems. This led to the first formal meeting at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, on 9 October 1969. From this meeting came the birth of the Project Management Institute. Shortly thereafter, articles of incorporation were filed in Pennsylvania, signed by five persons, who are officially recognized as the founders of PMI - James Snyder, Eric Jenett, Gordon Davis, E.A. "Ned" Engman and Susan C. Gallagher.

While Apollo was making project history, PMI was starting to build the foundations of project management. The first PMI leaders volunteered their time because they believed in the need to share project planning and scheduling practices. In fact, the organization was almost named The American Planning and Scheduling Society. But the founders realized it was bigger than that—it was about project management. PMI was founded and held its first Seminars & Symposium, “Advanced Project Management Concepts,” in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. The First PMI Chapter is started in Houston, TX. PMI quickly became global, holding another Seminars & Symposium in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. PMI also hired its first part-time employee, and leased office space.

Motorola invents the world’s first mobile phone, PMI calls on awards and certifications. It weighed 2.5 pounds (1.1 kilograms). It was 10 inches (25 centimeters) long. And it only lasted 20 minutes before the battery died. But Martin Cooper and his team at Motorola had done it:

invented the world's first working prototype of a mobile phone. PMI continued building its strong volunteer core, chartering 24 new chapters in the United States and establishing its first non-North American footholds in West Germany and South Africa. PMI hired Bradley Stanton as its first paid executive director.

Project Managers Lead Project Management

All projects are a temporary effort to create value through a unique product, service or result. All projects have a beginning and an end. They have a team, a budget, a schedule and a set of expectations the team needs to meet. Each project is unique and differs from routine operations-the ongoing activities of an organization-because projects reach a conclusion once the goal is achieved.

The changing nature of work due to technological advances, globalization and other factors means that, increasingly, work is organized around projects with teams being brought together based on the skills needed for specific tasks.

Leading these projects are Project Professionals-people who either intentionally or by circumstance are asked to ensure that a project team meets its goals. Project professionals use many different tools, techniques and approaches to meet the needs of a project.

Some projects are needed to quickly resolve problems, with an understanding that improvements will be made over a period of time. Other projects have a longer duration and/or produce a product or other outcome that will not need major improvements outside of projected maintenance, such as a highway.

Still others will be a mix of both of these types of projects. Project professionals use a variety of skills and knowledge to engage and motivate others to reach a project's goals. Project professionals are critical to the success of projects and are highly sought after to help organizations achieve their goals.

Project managers initiate, execute, and complete projects across various industries using their project management expertise. From mobile apps to the grandiose architecture of international cities, they are the innovators behind some of the most brilliant products, services, and processes that exist today.

Project managers have diverse skill sets that allow them to approach each assignment in a unique and strategic way. Most importantly, they understand how to leverage their project management skills to foster an organization's ability to learn, succeed, and evolve with a project.

Project Management Drives Change

Throughout human history, project management has always been practiced informally, but it began to emerge as a distinct profession in the mid-20th century when a group of forward-thinking individuals from the aerospace, engineering, pharmaceutical, and telecommunications fields realized a changing world needed new tools. Motivated by the need to address the scheduling and resource issues associated with increasingly complex projects, they met to begin to set down and standardize the tools for a new profession. And in 1969, the Project Management Institute (PMI) was born.

Today, we live in The Project Economy, where projects are the driving force behind how work is done, change is realized and value is delivered. In The Project Economy, the worldwide growth of project management proves its value as a:

- as a recognized and strategic organizational competence
- as a subject for training and education

- as a career path

It is now widely acknowledged that a basic knowledge of project management can provide value to people with a variety of roles in a vast range of endeavors. Project management skills can help a young student working on a science project realize success, or a corporate executive settle personality disputes. These skills can help a nurse streamline shift changes to improve patient response times on their ward. They can help an IT professional deliver innovative software in record time or help a government agency improve the services they provide in a more economical manner.

Qualified and experienced project managers are aptly skilled in the following areas:

1. Leadership and Effective Communication-project managers must effectively lead and communicate with their teams as well as stakeholders throughout the entire lifecycle of a project.
2. Organization and Time Management-project managers must handle the organization and delegation of tasks. They must also ensure that all project materials and deliverables are completed on time.
3. Creative Problem Solving and Adaptability-project managers must understand how to resolve issues and adapt their projects creatively to avoid mishaps and losses.
4. Motivation and Team Management-project managers must ensure their stakeholders and team members stay motivated throughout a project's lifecycle. Moreover, they must be able to manage their team to ensure top-quality results and on-time completion of project deliverables.

Cultivating expertise in these areas is a learning process that requires time, devotion, and practice. But it's necessary to build the skill set a career in project management requires.

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