PROJECT MANAGEMENT & ANALYSIS

ATTRIBUTES OF A PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

□ Broadly, a project is a specific task to be accomplished . Whether mega or minor, large or small scale or whether long or short run is not really important.

➢ What is key is that the project be seen as a unit. However, there are some attributes that normally characterize projects:

(1) **PURPOSE:**

A project is usually a one-time activity within a well-defined set of desired end results. It can be divided into subtasks that must be accomplished in order to achieve the project goals. Such subtasks require careful coordination and control in terms of timing, precedence, cost and performance.

(2) **LIFE CYCLE:**

Like organic entities, projects do have life cycles. Start to finish . From a slow beginning they progress to a build-up, of size then peak then begin a decline and finally must be terminated. Some projects end by being rolled into the normal on-going operations of the sponsoring organization.

(3) **INTERDEPENDENCY:**

Projects often interact within other projects being carried out at the same time by their sponsoring organizations. Ordinarily, the functional departments of an organization (Finance, Marketing, Manufacturing etc) interact with one another in regular patterned ways, but with projects the patterns of interaction with these departments tend to be changeable.

Often marketing may be involved at the beginning and end of the project but Finance for instance has major involvement throughout.

(4) **UNIQUENESS**

Every project has some elements that are unique to it. No two construction or R&D projects are precisely alike.

Note that some degree of customization is a characteristic of projects. In addition to the presence of risk, this particular characteristic (uniqueness) means that projects by their nature cannot be completely reduced to routine.

(5) **CONFLICT**:

For a project manager, unlike other managers, it is a whole world characterized by conflicts. The reason is not far-fetched.

Project compete with functional departments for resources and personnel. And at times with adequate funding there could be project Vs project conflict within the organization. (Multi-projects sponsors). At times, the members of the project team are almost in constant conflict for the project's resources and for roles as well (Leadership roles in solving project problems).

All these distinguish projects from mere routines;i.e. managerial routine that are performed on a daily basis.

Project cannot be managed adequately by the managerial skills used for routine works.

PRINCIPLES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

❑ A rational 'Project Manager' should be guided as follows:

(1) Ensure that the project chosen is driven by BENEFITS that support the strategies.

(2) Use stage and technical framework approach to manage the entire project.

(3) Place high priority or importance on the early part of the project. This is akin to having a good 'foundation'.

(4) Engage yourself with the stakeholders and understand their current and future needs and investment profile.

(5) Obtain commitment from the start and make it continuous till the end of the project life: from start to finish.

(6) Encourage team work and use team work approach

(7) Ensure that project Team work across functions i.e coordination amongst them.

(8) Project manager must monitor against plans and schedules especially the time frame.

THANK YOU