

Information Technology Project Management

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Overview

Kathy Schwalbe's "Information Technology Project Management" is a foundational textbook that provides a comprehensive guide to managing information technology projects successfully. The book meticulously covers the project management process groups and knowledge areas as defined by the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), tailoring them specifically to the unique challenges and characteristics of IT projects. It emphasizes the importance of applying sound project management principles, tools, and techniques to ensure projects are completed on time, within budget, and to specification, ultimately delivering value to organizations.

The text integrates theoretical concepts with practical applications, offering numerous real-world examples, case studies, and templates. It addresses critical topics such as project integration, scope, time, cost, quality, human resources, communications, risk, procurement, and stakeholder management, all within an IT context. Schwalbe also delves into the role of project managers, ethical considerations, and the impact of organizational culture on project success. The book is designed to equip students and practitioners with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of IT projects, from initiation to closure, and to improve their overall project success rates in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Key Takeaways

- Successful IT project management requires a systematic approach that integrates all knowledge areas, from scope definition to risk mitigation.
- Effective communication is paramount; project managers must proactively engage stakeholders and manage expectations throughout the project lifecycle.
- Thorough planning, including detailed scope, time, and cost management, is crucial for preventing common IT project failures.
- Risk management should be an ongoing process, identifying potential issues early and developing strategies to mitigate their impact.
- Understanding and applying agile methodologies can significantly enhance flexibility and responsiveness in dynamic IT project environments.

- Project managers must possess strong leadership, negotiation, and problem-solving skills in addition to technical expertise.
- Measuring project performance and learning from past projects are essential for continuous improvement and organizational maturity.
- Stakeholder engagement and management are critical; understanding their needs and influence can make or break a project.

Chapter Summaries

Introduction to Project Management

This chapter introduces the fundamental concepts of project management, defining what a project is and the role of project managers. It highlights the growing importance of project management, particularly in the information technology sector, and discusses the project management framework, including the ten knowledge areas and five process groups. The chapter also provides an overview of the Project Management Institute (PMI) and its Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), setting the stage for the rest of the book.

The Project Management and Information Technology Context

This chapter explores the unique context of IT projects, discussing how they differ from other types of projects and the specific challenges they face. It covers the impact of organizational culture, structure, and politics on project success, and introduces various project life cycles and methodologies, including agile approaches. The chapter emphasizes the need for project managers to understand the broader organizational environment and adapt their strategies accordingly for IT initiatives.

Project Integration Management

Project Integration Management focuses on coordinating all aspects of a project to ensure they work together cohesively. This chapter details the processes involved, from developing the project charter and project management plan to directing and managing project work, monitoring and controlling project work, and performing integrated change control. It stresses the project manager's role in making integrated decisions and managing interdependencies across all knowledge areas to achieve project objectives.

Project Scope Management

This chapter addresses the critical process of defining and controlling what is and is not included in the project. It covers planning scope management, collecting requirements, defining scope, creating the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), validating scope, and controlling scope. The emphasis is on preventing scope creep and ensuring that the project delivers precisely what is required, which is particularly challenging in dynamic IT environments.

Project Time Management

Project Time Management involves the processes required to manage the timely completion of the project. This chapter details planning schedule management, defining activities, sequencing activities, estimating activity durations, developing the schedule, and controlling the schedule. It introduces tools and techniques like Gantt charts, network diagrams, and critical path analysis, crucial for tracking progress and ensuring IT projects meet their deadlines.

Project Cost Management

This chapter focuses on the processes involved in planning, estimating, budgeting, financing, funding, managing, and controlling costs so that the project can be completed within the approved budget. It covers planning cost management, estimating costs, determining the budget, and controlling costs. The book provides practical advice on cost estimation techniques and earned value management (EVM) for monitoring and controlling IT project expenditures.

Project Quality Management

Project Quality Management ensures that the project and its deliverables meet the specified requirements and stakeholder expectations. This chapter covers planning quality management, performing quality assurance, and controlling quality. It discusses various quality standards, tools, and methodologies relevant to IT projects, emphasizing the importance of building quality into the process rather than just inspecting for defects at the end.

Project Human Resource Management

This chapter addresses the processes that organize, manage, and lead the project team. It covers planning human resource management, acquiring project team, developing project team, and managing project team. The text emphasizes the importance of soft skills, team building, conflict resolution, and motivation techniques for effectively managing diverse IT project teams and fostering a productive work environment.

Project Communications Management

Project Communications Management involves the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate planning, collection, creation, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, control, monitoring, and the ultimate disposition of project information. This chapter details planning communications management, managing communications, and monitoring communications, highlighting the critical role of effective communication in stakeholder engagement and overall project success, especially in IT projects.

Project Risk Management

This chapter focuses on identifying, analyzing, and responding to project risks. It covers planning risk management, identifying risks, performing qualitative risk analysis, performing quantitative risk analysis, planning risk responses, and implementing risk responses. The book provides

strategies for proactively managing uncertainties inherent in IT projects, aiming to minimize potential negative impacts and capitalize on opportunities.

Project Procurement Management

Project Procurement Management includes the processes necessary to purchase or acquire products, services, or results needed from outside the project team. This chapter covers planning procurement management, conducting procurements, controlling procurements, and closing procurements. It discusses various contract types, vendor selection processes, and the complexities of managing external relationships in IT projects.

Project Stakeholder Management

This chapter addresses the processes required to identify all people or organizations impacted by the project, analyze stakeholder expectations and their impact on the project, and develop appropriate management strategies for effectively engaging stakeholders in project decisions and execution. It covers identifying stakeholders, planning stakeholder engagement, managing stakeholder engagement, and monitoring stakeholder engagement, crucial for IT project success.

Themes

- IT Project Success
- PMBOK Application
- Risk Mitigation
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Agile Methodologies
- Integrated Management

Notable Quotes

- "Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements." — Defining the core concept of project management early in the book, emphasizing its systematic nature.
- "Many organizations have found that their IT projects are more likely to succeed if they use good project management processes." — Highlighting the practical benefit and necessity of structured project management for IT initiatives.
- "The project manager's job is to integrate all the areas of a project." — Emphasizing the central, coordinating role of the project manager, particularly in integration management.
- "Scope creep is the tendency for project scope to grow bigger and bigger." — Defining a common and critical challenge in project management, especially relevant to IT projects.

- "Good project communication is essential for project success." — Underlining the fundamental importance of effective communication as a critical success factor for any project.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Information Technology Project Management about?

Kathy Schwalbe's "Information Technology Project Management" is a comprehensive textbook that guides readers through the principles and practices of managing IT projects. It aligns with the Project Management Institute's (PMI) PMBOK® Guide, adapting its knowledge areas and process groups to the specific context and challenges of technology-focused projects. The book covers everything from project initiation and planning to execution, monitoring, and closure, with a strong emphasis on practical application.

Is Information Technology Project Management worth reading?

Yes, it is highly regarded as a valuable resource for anyone involved in or aspiring to manage IT projects. Its strength lies in its clear explanation of complex project management concepts, its alignment with industry standards (PMBOK), and its practical, IT-specific examples. It's particularly beneficial for students, new project managers, or professionals seeking to formalize their project management knowledge in the IT domain.

Who should read Information Technology Project Management?

This book is ideal for students in information systems or project management programs, aspiring IT project managers, and current IT professionals looking to enhance their project management skills. It also serves as an excellent reference for PMP certification candidates focusing on IT projects and for anyone needing a structured approach to managing technology-driven initiatives.

How long does it take to read Information Technology Project Management?

Given its comprehensive nature as a textbook, reading "Information Technology Project Management" typically takes between 25 to 40 hours. This estimate can vary significantly based on the reader's pace, prior knowledge, and whether they engage with all the exercises and case studies. For academic study, it's usually spread across a semester.