Introduction to Project Management

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Eight Basic Principles of Project Management

- No major project is ever installed on time, within budget, with the same staff that started it. Yours will not be the first.
- Projects progress rapidly until they become 90 percent complete; they then remain 90 percent complete forever.
- One advantage of fuzzy project objectives is that they let you avoid the embarrassment of estimating the corresponding costs.
- When things are going well, something will go wrong.
  - When things just can't get any worse, they will.
  - When things appear to be going better, you have overlooked something.
- If project content is allowed to change freely, the rate of change will exceed the rate of progress.
- No system is ever completely debugged; attempts to debug a new system inevitably introduce new bugs that are even harder to find.
- A carelessly planned project will take three times longer to complete than you expected; a carefully planned project will only take twice as long.
- Project teams detest progress reports, because these reports vividly manifest their lack of progress.

Introduction

- Yourself, experience with project management
- Your project
- Questions for the workshop

Plan the Work –

Now Work the Plan

Importance of Project Management

- Why is it important to consider a project management approach for projects?
    - Projects are typically collaborative (team-based)
    - Projects require the juggling of variety of tasks, people, skill sets, and resources
    - Projects often require funding (grants) to undertake the work

    - From project inception to implementation

Project Risks

- ❖ Timely completion
- ❖ Scope creep
- ❖ Budget mismanagement
- ❖ Unanticipated obstacles / tasks
- ❖ Team personnel changes
- ❖ Conflicting schedules
- ❖ Assignment of credit

Project Management Defined

- set of principles, methods, tools and techniques for the effective management of objectives-oriented work in the context of a specific and unique organizational environment
- Objectives:

Specified performance criteria

On time   On budget
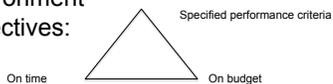
Project Defined

- relatively new or unknown undertakings (uncertainty and not regularly repeated)
- coordination of multiple people, tasks, resources and skills
- definite life cycle (start and end)
- cross organizational boundaries
- well defined scope and objectives

Activity

- Defining your project
  - what is the issue to be addressed within the project?
  - what is the project scope?
  - what are the project objectives?
  - What is the time frame?
  - By what standard will you measure results?

Project Plan

- Benefits
  - Effective Communication
  - Final check
  - Baseline established
  - Reduces need for narrative reporting
- Project sign-off
  - Agreement
  - Basis for negotiating changes

Developing the Plan: Modeling the Work

- work breakdown structure (see handout)
  - all tasks
  - checklist of activity and responsibility
- network (see handout)
  - relationship and relative interdependence of tasks
- critical path analysis (see handout)
  - any path of tasks where delays could delay the project
- gantt chart (see handout)
  - tasks and a time scale
- what can go wrong and what are Plan Bs?

Balancing The Plan

- Balance limited resources
  - Within project
  - Against other projects
  - Against nonproject efforts
- Can the project be achieved given the other deadlines that are present?

Working the plan

- tracking progress against planned
  - where are there differences?
  - do these differences indicate a potential problem?
  - is change recommended?
- reporting progress
  - where are we compared to where we want to be?
  - using the work breakdown structure as checklist
  - using the gantt chart as a visual progress report
  - who needs to know?

Gantt chart as progress report

Task	Duration	Time Period												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	2 time periods													
	Actual													
2	3 time periods													
	Actual													
3	2 time periods													
	Actual													
4	3 time periods													
	Actual													
5	4 time periods													
	Actual													
6	2 time periods													
	Actual													
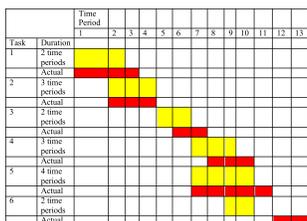
When is change needed?

- Tracked against actual performance
- Change may be required when actual does not matched planned
- Guidelines for change

Final Step

- Project review
  - Attainment of objectives
  - Effectiveness of agreement
  - Effectives of project plan, project organization and management systems
  - Deficiencies and problems experiences
    - Any issues outstanding
  - Lessons learned and suggested improvements

Tools

- what is needed given the project and team members' needs, geographical distribution and other factors?
  - choose a tool and use it with discipline
- "Low tech"
  - white board, flip charts, markers, calendar, post-it notes
- "Higher tech" (too many to talk about)
  - online calendars (google/outlook calendar)
  - online gantt charts (google doc templates, dotproject)
  - online project spaces (basecamp, asana)
  - folder/file sharing (dropbox, evernote)
  - many, many, many apps for iphone, ipad, etc

Building and Sustaining Teams

- small set of individuals who work interdependently and are jointly accountable for performance goals
- identifying team member
  - what skills are needed (technical, content, collaborative)?
  - what individuals are needed/available?
- supporting the team and its members
  - ensure team performance, member satisfaction, team learning and stakeholder satisfaction
  - build trust and accountability across team members, distances, institutions, disciplines and time zones

Components of an Effective Team

- Performance
- Member satisfaction
- Team learning
- Outsider satisfaction

Team Effectiveness Model

- Evaluation
- Components
  - Organization and team environment
    - Reward systems, communication systems, physical space, organizational environment and leadership
  - Team design
    - Task characteristics, size, composition
  - Team process
    - Development, norms, roles, cohesiveness

Team Charter

- Description of how the team will work together
- Components
  - Team purpose
  - Ground rules for behaviour
  - Assign roles and responsibilities

Work Practices to Support Teams

- multiple communication channels, including formal and informal face-to-face meetings, conference calls, online project spaces
- documented project plans with deliverables and timelines with signoffs (indicating agreement)
- project charters with signoffs (see samples)
  - agreed ways of working together

Back to the Beginning

- Have we answered/discussed your questions from the start of the workshop?
  - Any outstanding issues?

Want to develop your PM/DH skills?

- more training opportunities
  - DHSI (Victoria and other locations)
  - European Summer University in Digital Humanities (Leipzig) http://www.culingtec.uni-leipzig.de/ESU_C_T/node/97
  - HILT (Humanities Intensive Learning and Teaching) http://dhtraining.org/hilt/
- other resources
  - DevDH.org (Development for Digital Humanities)