The Benefits of Change Management

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Change is inevitable. It is something unavoidable in any organization. In the modern business world, everything is changing at a fast pace. Business organizations face complex changes due to the changing customer needs and demands. It is same for different projects and projectized organizations. The project’s success is determined by the customer acceptance and implementation of the project’s deliverables. Changes in projects are usually more pervasive than changes within organizations. Customer requirements and expectations can change any time. Technology and other external factors highly influence customer demands and they can demand and expect changes in the project scope and deliverables In such cases, it may become essential to change or modify the project to achieve customer satisfaction.

Changes in project consist of any addition or deletion in the project specifications and deliverables. Such changes impact the project cost, quality and schedule. Whenever a change occurs in a project it brings its consequences as well and have the ability to highly influence the success and failure of the project. Change management is the way of standardizing the ways to ensure the efficient management of all the changes coming in the way of a project, without impacting the success of the project. It emphasizes continuously changing the direction of an organization to meet the ever-changing demands of customers (Hornstein, 2015).

The need of project change management has identified by Craddock. According to him, project success is achieved by meeting the triple constraints of time, scope and cost. The project stakeholders are focused on impending changes and for some stakeholders changes may result in the loss of power, this can result in conflicts arising from a divergence of focus. An integrated project change management approach can result in avoidance of such conflicts (Craddock, 2007). There are two sources of changes in projects; internal and external sources. The internal sources of project change are related to the stakeholders, project manager and the project team while the external sources of changes in project are any unforeseen events and technological changes which change the customer’s demands and requirements (Hwang & Low, 2012).

Changes in projects can result in increase of costs by means of delays in the project schedule, degradation in quality, or an increase in the overall expenses of the project. Change management is an essential component of every project because it enables to forecast the changes beforehand, adopt preventive measures and help manage change across the entire project. Change management not only helps in reducing the impact of changes on the project quality and budget but also helps solve problems that can impact the progress of the project (Hwang & Low, 2012). Studies reveal that effective change management results in considerable cost savings and enhance the overall cost performance of an organization. In addition, change management results in the quality improvement and overall performance of the project (Hwang & Low, 2012). Furthermore, the project’s success not only relies on traditional measures of project performance but also on associated fields such as change management in an organizational setting (Hornstein, 2015). A range of literature on PMIhave highlighted the potential impact of change and adoption on the success of a project and have encouraged project managers to further develop the theory of organizational change management (Hornstein, 2015).

A change manager plays a key role in the success of a project. The change manager has to ensure that all the project activities are completed on time, ensuring that the project objectives are met within time and budget constraints through increasing employee adaption and usage. The change manager not only focuses on the human side of change but also focuses on changing the business processes and systems, job roles and organizational structures . The basic responsibility of a project change manager is to implement the change management strategies to reduce employee resistance and enhance employee adoption. The change manager plays a vital role in the effective change management because he works to drive quick adoption and higher proficiency with the change among employees. Such improvements in the project results in generating more benefits for the organization, creates more value, and higher returns on investments and helps with the achievement of outcomes and results. Though a change manager does not have the primary responsibility to do so, but he acts as the coach and works with other employees for the success of the project. While performing his role as a coach he helps senior leaders to fulfill the role of change sponsors. In addition, he also provides coaching and direct support to managers and supervisors in the organization. Apart from this, the change manager also supports project team in integrating change management into project planning.

Based on the importance of change management in an organization, hiring a change manager is a considerable investment in a project. The role of a change manager is to apply a structured methodology and a change management process and tools to effectively lead change management activities, while supporting adoption of the changes needed by a specific project. A change manager further supports, designs and develops ways to promote effective communication across the project team regarding any changes. He is also responsible for assessing the impact of change, change readiness and identification of key stakeholders in change, while at the same time supporting training efforts by providing constant input for the delivery of training programs.

In addition, a change manager is vital for the successful implementation of change management processes in a project. The change manager completes the change management assessments and identifies and prepare risk mitigation techniques. They are solely responsible for the overall quality of the change management process in a project and its final outcomes on the project. They take informed decisions about change requests, out of scope changes, important changes and also prioritize changes, and also make use of all the important change management tools and techniques, such as a change management reporting system, for the success of the project. Essentially, they are the process manager of the change process, ensuring that all the important activities of a change management process are carried out in an effective manner.

To conclude, change in unescapable in any organizational process and in the projects, especially the projects related to information technology. In order to respond to the ever changing needs of customer, change management is a critical element of project management which ensures changes are managed in an effective manner without disrupting customer satisfaction and the project quality, scope, and budget. Change management ensures minimal impacts of change on the project deliverables and the change manager contributes to the success of project by effective implementation of the change management process and its techniques.

**References**

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