GEPM 375

Project Planning and Construction Management

Conflict in Different Project Stages

What we learned in the last class?

- Matters on which conflicts center during a project life cycle.
- **Fundamental categories of conflicts**.
- Constant source of conflict in a project.
- **Methods for settling conflicts about priorities**
- Locus-of-authority conflicts

What we are going to learn today?

•Conflicts into Chronological Perspective of Project Stages

- Conflicts in Project **Evaluation Stage.**
- Conflicts in Project **Build-up Stage**
- Conflicts in Project **Main Stage**
- Conflicts in Project **Phase-out Stage**

Conflicts in Project Evaluation stage

- Technical objectives
- Resources allocation
- Priorities of projects
- Solving of conflicts

Describe the Conflicts in Project Evaluation stage:

- Most of the **conflict centers** around the **inherent confusion of setting up a project.**

- Almost **nothing about the project or its governance has been decided.**

- Even the **project's technical objectives**, **not clearly defined or established.**

- **Moving from** the **state of semi-chaos,** to the relatively **ordered world** of the build up stage is **difficult.**

Question: Why do you think about conflicts in the project evaluation phase?

Fundamental Issues: (Must be handled for transition from semi chaos to Build-up stage)

- **1st: Technical objectives of the project must be specified** to a degree that **will allow the detailed planning** of the build up stage to be accomplished.
- **2nd: Commitment of the resources to the project must be forthcoming** from senior management and from functional managers.
- **3rd: Priority of the project**, relative to the priorities of the parent project organization's other projects, **must be set and committed.**
- **4th**: These three conditions are not sufficient but most necessary if the **conflicts of the formation stages are resolved at reasonable level** so that not to be exaggerated in build up stage.

Question: Describe the fundamental issues that must be handled for transition from the **state of semi-chaos,** to the relatively **ordered world** during the build up stage of the project life cycle.

Conflict Management in Build-up stage of project

- PM who **practices conflict avoidance** in this stage is inviting disaster in the next stages.

Three fundamental issues ie.

- **delimiting** the technical objectives,
- getting management **commitment of resources** and
- setting up the **project's relative priorities**;

must be resolved irrespective of what organizational form is selected for the project.

- **Clarification of PM and FM Rules in the Project**

-More independent and stand alone the project, the **more authoritative role to be played by PM.**

-Weaker the project and more functional ties, **more authority is embedded to the functional managers.**

-Lack of clarity about the relative **power/influence/authority** of the PM and the functional managers is **major component of all conflicts**, involving **technical decisions**, **resource allocation**, and **scheduling**.

Critical Matters that underlies Four fundamental issues in solving conflicts:

- ***Which*** **of the functional areas** will be needed to accomplish the project tasks?
- ***What*** **will be the required level of involvement** of each of the functional areas?
- ***How*** **will conflicts over resources/facility usage** between this and other projects to be settled?
- ***Who*** **has the authority to decide** the technical, scheduling, personnel and cost questions that will arise?
- ***How*** **will changes in the parent organization's priorities** to be communicated to everyone involved?

Conflicts in Project Build-up stage

- Project **Priorities**
- **Schedules**
- **Administrative** procedures
- **Technical issues**, mainly between PM and functional managers.

How Conflicts arise in Project Build up stage:

- **Transition stage**.

- **Projects moves from a general concepts to highly detailed set** of plans and **conflict at its highest** in this transition period.

- Conflicts occur over **project priorities**, **schedules**, and **administrative procedures**.

- As project's plans become detailed, **conflicts over technical issues** between the PM and functional area **tend to predominate**.

- If **PM is a generalist**, Functional departments **can claim more technical expertise.**

- If **PM is a specialist**, discussion between functional manager and PM about **the best technical approach often result in conflict.**

Conflicts in Project Main program

- **Schedules**
- **Technical issues**

Conflicts in Project Main Program – mainly two types

- **Schedules are still a major source of conflicts** but usually differ than earlier stage.

- And then **technical conflicts**

Project plans have been **developed and approved** by everyone involved, and **actual work is underway**.

Schedule Conflicts:

•Assume that **some activity runs into difficulty** and **is late in being completed.**

•**Every task** that is dependent on this late activity **will also be delayed.**

•Some of these subsequent activities will, if sufficiently late, and if the **late work is not made up**, **delay the entire project.**

Prevent Delay of Entire Project

•To **prevent the consequences**. PM must try to **get back the schedule to track.**

•But **catching up is considerably more difficult** than falling behind.

•**Catching up requires extra resources** that the functional groups who are doing the 'catching up' will demand more resources but which the PM may not have.

- **More complex the projects**, the **more difficult it is to trace and estimate the impact of all the delays,** and the more resources that must be consumed to get things back on schedule.

- PM's job of **managing time/cost/scope trade-offs**, but **adding** to the project's cost or **scaling down** the project's technical capabilities to save time.

- PM **will not take if there is any viable alternative**.

- PM's **trade-offs is often constrained** by **contract, company' policy** and **ethical considerations** which makes trade-offs decision quite difficult.

Question: What is schedule conflict in the main program stage of a project? Describe the role of project manager in handling the effects of such conflict to keep the project in schedule.

Main Program Stage

Technical Conflicts:

- Are **serious and frequent** during main program stage.

- **Sources of technical conflicts are somewhat different** than in earlier stage.

Example Computer and Printer

- Computer and printer must be **correctly linked** together in order to perform properly.

- Linkages are **known as interfaces**, the **number of which increases** as the project gets larger ie. System gets more complex.

•As the **number of interfaces get increases**, so does the **probability that the problems will arise** at the interfaces.

•**Need to manage** these interfaces and to correct incompatibilities is the key to the technical conflicts in the main program phase.

Conflicts in Project Phase-out

- **Schedules**
- **Technical issues (rare)**
- **Interpersonal stress**

Schedule is the major source of conflict during project phase-out.

- If **schedule slippage has occurred in the main program** stage, the consequences will surely be felt in this final stage.

- Project with **firm deadlines** develop an environment best described **as hectic**.

•**Project manager** and **project team** and **functional group**, **often combine together** to do what is necessary to complete the project on time.

•**Cost overruns**, if not outrageously high, are tolerated.

Phase out

Technical Conflicts in phase-out stage in a project:

- Technical problems are **comparatively rare** during phase-out because most have been solved or by passed earlier.
- **Working interfaces** have been developed and put in place.
- If the project involves **in implementing a technology** in an out side client's system, technical conflicts will probably arise, but they are usually intense.

Question: What do you understand the technical conflicts prevail in the phase-out stage in a project?

Personnel Conflicts in phase-out stage of a project:

•Personality conflicts are the **second ranked source of conflicts** during phase-out.

•Ascribe these conflicts **to interpersonal stress** caused by:

-the **pressure t**o complete the project, and

-to **individual' natural anxiety** about leaving the project either to be assigned to another or to be returned to the functional unit.

•Sometimes, **bitter conflicts** arise on the **distribution of project's capital equipment and supplies** when he project is completed.

•Conflicts also **arises between projects phasing out and those just starting,** particularly if the latter need resources or personnel with scarce talents being used by the former.

Phase Out

Example- Conflict in multi functional design teams:

- One team member speaking of another said, "**He will do what ever he thinks is right, to get his (own) job done**, **whether or not it's good for (the company) or anyone else".**

- In context, it is clear that this **conflict** was **between a problem-oriented individual and one who is discipline oriented.**

Thank you