

Chapter 2: The Manager, the Organization, and the Team

True/False

1. It is common practice to select the project manager prior to the project being selected.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

2. The functional manager has expertise in the function he or she manages, but the project manager rarely has expertise in many of the projects technical areas.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

3. The project manager is supposed to facilitate the work of the project team and must, therefore, stay aloof from the conflicts arising among project team members.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

4. The project manager should take a careful, analytic approach to making decisions about projects.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.3

Level: medium

5. If the performance of all subsystems is optimized, it follows that the overall system is optimum.

Answer: False
Response: See section 2.5
Level: medium

6. The project manager must maintain a high level of flexibility in dealing with people.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.4
Level: medium

7. It is appropriate for the project manager to play an active role in communications between the client and the senior management of the organization conducting the project.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.4
Level: medium

8. The individual with responsibility for performing a task is more likely to overestimate the time required to complete the task than his/her immediate supervisor.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.5
Level: medium

9. The most effective program managers tell their project managers exactly what to do. The project manager should not allow functional managers to usurp his or her control of the project.

Answer: False
Response: See section 2.4
Level: medium

10. When it comes to assigning individuals to work on projects, functional managers and project managers are often in conflict.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

11. It is critical to a project's success to have top management support.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.5

Level: easy

12. Conflict occurs mainly at the beginning of the project.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

13. A matrix organization is a combination of pure project organization and functional organization.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

14. A pure project organization is usually too expensive for the management of small projects.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

15. An advantage of pure project organization is its great depth of technical knowledge.

Answer: False
Response: See section 2.5
Level: medium

16. Cross divisional project communication is enhanced when a project is organized in a functional project organization.

Answer: False
Response: See section 2.6
Level: medium

17. Functional project organizations have higher personnel costs than pure project organizations.

Answer: False
Response: See section 2.5
Level: medium

18. Functionally organized projects are not seen as a high priority by functional managers.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.5
Level: medium

19. It is common to have more than one boss in a matrix organization.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.6
Level: easy

20. Project team members are often faced with conflicting orders in a matrix organization.

Answer: True
Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

21. Intrateam conflicts are minimal in a matrix organization.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

22. Since the PM has position power there is no need for them to have credibility

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.5

Level: easy

23. Political savvy is not only an important characteristic of a project manager but is also important for project team members.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.3

Level: easy

24. Morale of the project team is a key responsibility of the project manager.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.3

Level: medium

25. Project team conflict stifles team creativity.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

26. Project “war rooms” discourage team cooperation, morale and communications.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

27. Matrix, pure project, and functional project organizations may exist in the same company.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

28. When making trade-offs on a project, the project manager needs to be aware that profit for the firm is always the most important of the project’s goals.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.2

Level: medium

29. The job of managing work across multiple groups is called integration management.

Answer: False

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

30. In order for a PM to be “believable” the PM must have technical and administrative credibility.

Answer: True

Response: See section 2.3

Level: medium

Multiple Choice

31. Fiona and her team are working on a complex project. After multiple conflicts in the initial stages of the project, the team establishes a set of guidelines and is now working cohesively to accomplish the project goals. In the given scenario, Fiona's team is in the _____ phase of team development.
- a) norming
 - b) forming
 - c) storming
 - d) adjourning
 - e) performing

Answer: e

Response: See section 2.6

Level: difficult

32. Samuel is a project manager who is working on his first project. He assembles a multidisciplinary team and assigns roles and responsibilities to each team member. In this scenario, Samuel is in the _____ phase of team development.
- a) storming
 - b) norming
 - c) performing
 - d) adjourning
 - e) forming

Answer: e

Response: See section 2.6

Level: difficult

33. Laura worked with a cross-functional team on a project. After the completion of the project, she held a meeting with the team members after which they returned to their respective departments. Which of the following phases of team development does this scenario exemplify?
- a) Storming
 - b) Norming
 - c) Performing
 - d) Adjourning
 - e) Forming

Answer: d
Response: See section 2.6
Level: difficult

34. Albert is managing a team that comprises individuals from various departments in his company. After facing some difficulties initially, the team members work toward resolving the issues and collectively establish certain rules to avoid any future conflict. In this scenario, Albert's team is in the _____ phase of team development.
- a) storming
 - b) norming
 - c) performing
 - d) adjourning
 - e) forming

Answer: b
Response: See section 2.6
Level: difficult

35. Sarah is handling a project team whose members are spread across different geographical regions. The members work independently, and this leads to several conflicts among them. In this scenario, Sarah's team is in the _____ phase of team development.
- a) storming
 - b) norming
 - c) performing
 - d) adjourning
 - e) forming

Answer: a
Response: See section 2.6
Level: difficult

36. Maria's team starts working on a new project. Halfway through the project, the client visits the team and requests some changes in the specifications of the project. This alters both the cost and the schedule of the project. The given scenario exemplifies the concept of _____.
- a) storming
 - b) interface coordination
 - c) scope creep
 - d) integration management
 - e) administrative credibility

Answer: c

Response: See section 2.1

Level: difficult

37. Roger and his team have been designing a factory that will be modular in nature. They have been working on it for the past seven years, and now it is ending its developmental cycle. Roger has observed that his team is apprehensive. He has also received proposals for a follow-up project in the same area of interest with the same team. This is an example of _____.
- a) projectitis
 - b) analytical approach
 - c) scope creep
 - d) systems approach
 - e) norming

Answer: a

Response: See section 2.5

Level: difficult

38. Cibrastruct, a real estate developer, has undertaken a project to construct a mall. It hires a contractor to call in architects to draft plans, a procurement specialist to gather the best quality of raw materials, a lawyer to ensure the proper planning permits have been obtained, and labor union specialists to assemble a group of workers who will work on this long-term project. This is an example of _____.
- a) systems engineering
 - b) functional project organization
 - c) scope creep
 - d) pure project organization
 - e) technical credibility

Answer: d

Response: See section 2.5

Level: difficult

39. Proteus, a hotel chain, has bought some new kitchen appliances that would enable its kitchen staff to work more effectively. The senior management of the hotel assigns the task of removal of old appliances and installation of new appliances to the respective manager of the food and beverage department in each of its hotels.

The manager assembles a team from within the department to perform this task. This scenario exemplifies _____.

- a) projectitis
- b) functional project organization
- c) scope creep
- d) pure project organization
- e) systemsengineering

Answer: b

Response: See section 2.5

Level: difficult

40. Martha has taken on an ambitious project that requires input from different departments within the organization she works for. She also needs contributions from external experts and contractors. She needs to bring the work of all these groups together in a harmonious whole for the project. In the given scenario, Martha needs to engage in _____.

- a) systems engineering
- b) integration management
- c) scope creep
- d) suboptimization
- e) conscious capitalism

Answer: b

Response: See section 2.6

Level: difficult

41. The _____ approach centers on understanding the bits and pieces in a system.

- a) facilitating
- b) analytical
- c) systems
- d) sensitivity
- e) matrix

Answer: c

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

42. A matrix project that closely resembles the pure project is referred to as

- a) a weak matrix
- b) a strong matrix

- c) a functional matrix
- d) a balanced matrix
- e) an unbalanced matrix

Answer: b

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

43. Which of the following is not a characteristic of effective project team members?
- a) They are technically competent.
 - b) They are politically sensitive.
 - c) They have a strong orientation to their discipline.
 - d) They have a strong goal orientation.
 - e) They have high self-esteem.

Answer: c

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

44. Altering the specifications of an ongoing project is referred to as
- a) suboptimization
 - b) scope creep
 - c) a virtual project
 - d) projectitis
 - e) PMI

Answer: b

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

45. The PM's job includes all of the following except?
- a) Convener and chair of meetings
 - b) Facilitator
 - c) Communicator
 - d) Supervisor
 - e) Virtual project manager

Answer: d

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

46. The four essential skills of persuasion described Jay Conger (1998) include all of the following except:

- a) Effective persuaders must be credible to those they are trying to persuade
- b) They must find goals held in common with those being persuaded
- c) Must give locker-room motivational speeches
- d) They must connect with the emotions of those they are trying to persuade

Answer: c

Response: See section 2.2

Level: medium

47. During project formation stage, the major sources of conflict are all of the following except:
- a) Priorities
 - b) Procedures
 - c) Technical
 - d) Schedules

Answer: c

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

Short Answer

48. Describe the difference between the analytic approach and the systems approach to solving problems in a project.

Answer: The analytical approach to solving problems centers on understanding the bits and pieces in a system. It prompts study of the molecules, then atoms, then electrons, and so forth. The systems approach includes study of the bits and pieces, but also an understanding of how they fit together, how they interact, and how they affect and are affected by their environment. The systems approach manager conducts the group so that it contributes to total system optimization. To be successful, the project manager must adopt the systems approach. Consider that the project is a system composed of tasks (subsystems) which are composed of subtasks, and so on.

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

49. Why are negotiation skills an important criterion of a successful project manager?

Answer: It is not possible for a project manager to fulfil his or her responsibilities without being a skilled negotiator and resolver of conflict. The acquisition of resources requires negotiation. Dealing with problems, conflict, and fires requires negotiation and conflict resolution. The same skills are needed when the project

manager is asked to lead the project to a successful conclusion—and to make the trade-offs required along the way. A project manager who lacks these skills cannot be successful. There is no stage of the project life cycle that is not characterized by specific types of conflict. If these are not resolved, the project will suffer and possibly die.

Response: See section 2.2

Level: medium

50. Define “projectitis.”

Answer: A disease called “projectitis” is one of the most serious problems seen in R&D projects or in projects that have fairly long lives. People assigned to a project tend to form strong attachments to it, and the project begins to take on a life of its own. One pronounced symptom of projectitis is worry about “Is there life after the project?” Foot dragging as the project end draws near is common, as is the submission of proposals for follow-up projects in the same area of interest—and using the same project team.

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

51. It is said that the distinction between the traditional manager-as-supervisor and the modern manager-as-facilitator is diminishing in recent years. Why?

Answer: The once sharp distinction between the manager-as-facilitator and the manager-as-supervisor has been softened in recent years. With the slow but steady adoption of the participative management philosophy, the general manager has become more and more like the project manager. In particular, responsibility for the planning and organization of specific tasks is given to the individuals or groups that must perform them, always constrained, of course, by company policy, legality, and conformity to high ethical standards. The manager’s responsibility is to make sure that the required resources are available and that the task is properly concluded. The transition from traditional authoritarian management to facilitation continues because facilitation is more effective as a managerial style.

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

52. What is meant by the phrase “scope creep?”

Answer: Sometimes during a project, the client may drop in to check on a project and ask a team member, “Would it be possible to alter the specs to include such-and-such?” The team member may think for a moment about the technical problems involved and then answer quite honestly, “Yeah, that could be done.”

Again, the project manager must intervene— if and when the question and answer come to light—to determine the cost of making such a change, as well as the added time that would be required. The project manager must then ask whether the client wishes to alter the project scope given the added cost and delayed delivery. This scenario is called scope creep. It is the project manager's nightmare.

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

53. What is a “virtual project?”

Answer: More and more often, project teams are geographically dispersed. Many projects are international, and team members may be on different continents, for example, aircraft engine design and engine construction. Many are carried out by different organizations in different locations. Similarly, many projects involve different divisions of one firm where the divisions are in different cities. These geographically dispersed projects are often referred to as “virtual projects,” possibly because so much of the intra-project communication is conducted via email, through websites, by telephone or video conferencing, and other high-technology methods.

Response: See section 2.1

Level: medium

54. Briefly describe the project manager’s role as a firefighter. What sorts of obstacles do project managers have to overcome?

Answer: A key responsibility of the project manager is to deal with obstacles. All projects have their crises—fires that must be quenched. A successful project manager is also a talented and seasoned fire fighter. Early in the project’s life cycle, fires are often linked to the need for resources. Budgets get cut, and the general cuts must be transformed into highly specific cuts in the quantities of highly specific resources. An X percent cut must be translated into Y units of this commodity or Z hours of that engineer’s time. As work on the project progresses, most fires are associated with technical problems, supplier problems, and client problems. Technical problems occur, for example, when some subsystem (e.g., a computer program) is supposed to work but fails. Typical supplier problems occur when subcontracted parts are late or do not meet specifications. Most experienced project managers are good fire fighters. If they do not develop this skill, they do not last as project managers.

Response: See section 2.2

Level: medium

55. Briefly describe and contrast pure project organization, functional project organization, and the matrix project organization.

Answer: In a pure project organization, the supplies, equipment, and workers arrive just when they are needed, do the work, complete the project, and disband. The project manager (PM) is, in effect, the CEO of the project. When the project is completed, accepted by the client, equipment returned, and local workers paid off, then the PM and the specialists return to their parent firm and await the next job. For large projects, the pure project organization is effective and efficient, but for small projects it is a very expensive way to operate.

Quite unlike pure projects that are generally separated from the day-to-day operations of the parent organization, functionally organized projects are embedded in the functional group where the project will be used. This immediately corrects some of the problems associated with pure projects. First, the functional project has immediate, direct, and complete contact with the most important technologies it may need, and it has in-depth access. Second, the fractional resource problem is minimized for anyone working in the project's home functional group. Functionally organized projects do not have the high personnel costs associated with pure projects because they can easily assign people to the project on a part-time basis.

In an attempt to capture the advantages of both the pure project organization and the functionally organized project as well as to avoid the problems associated with each type, a new type of project organization—more accurately, a combination of the two—was developed.

To form a matrix organized project, a pure project is superimposed on a functionally organized system. The project manager reports to a program manager, a vice-president of projects, or some senior individual with a similar title whose job it is to coordinate the activities of several or all of the projects. These projects may or may not be related, but they all demand the parent's resources and the use of resources must be coordinated, if not the projects themselves. This method of organizing the interface between projects and the parent organization succeeds in capturing the major advantages of both pure and functional projects.

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

56. Briefly list the primary advantages and disadvantages of a matrix project organization.

Answer: One of the most important strengths of a matrix project organization is its flexibility, that is, the way in which it can interface with the parent organization. Because it is, or can be, connected to any or all of the parent organization's functional units, it has access to any or all of the parent organization's technology. The way it utilizes the services of the several technical units need not be the same for each unit. This allows the functional departments to optimize their contributions to any project. They can meet a project's needs in a way that is most efficient. Being able to share expertise with several projects

during a limited time period makes the matrix arrangement far less expensive than the pure project with its duplication of competencies, and just as technologically “deep” as the functional project. The flexibility of the matrix is particularly useful for globalized projects that often require integrating knowledge and personnel coming from geographically dispersed independent business units, each of which may be organized quite differently than the others.

The matrix has a strong focus on the project itself, just as does the pure project. In this, it is clearly superior to the functional project that often is subordinate to the regular work of the functional group. With all their advantages, matrix projects have their own, unique problems. By far the most significant of these is the violation of an old dictum of the military and of management theory, the Unity of Command principle: For each subordinate, there shall be one, and only one, superior. In matrix projects, the individual specialist borrowed from a function has two bosses. The project manager may control which tasks the specialist undertakes, but the specialist reports to a functional manager who makes decisions about the specialist’s performance evaluation, promotion, and salary. Thus, project workers are often faced with conflicting orders from the project manager and the functional manager. The result is conflicting demands on their time and activities.

While the ability to balance resources, schedules, and deliverables between several projects is an advantage of a matrix organization, that ability has its dark side. The organization’s full set of projects must be carefully monitored by the program manager. Further, the movement of resources from project to project in order to satisfy the individual schedules of the multiple projects may foster political infighting among the several project managers.

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

57. List the key characteristics of effective project team members.

Answer: Effective team members have some characteristics in common. Some of them are as follows:

1. They must be technically competent. While functional departments will always remain the ultimate source of technological problem solving for a project, it requires a technically competent person to know exactly when additional technical knowledge may be required by the project.
2. Senior members of project teams must be politically sensitive. It is rarely possible to complete a project of reasonable size and complexity without incurring problems that require aid from the upper echelons of executive row; that is, from a project sponsor.
3. Members of a project team need a strong problem orientation. The team’s members should be concerned about solving any problems posed by the project, not merely about those subproblems that concern their individual academic or technical training.

4. Team members need a strong goal orientation. Projects are uncomfortable environments for people with a 9-to-5 view of work. In particular, neither project teams nor project managers can succeed if their focus is on activity rather than results.

5. Project workers need high self-esteem. Team members must be sufficiently self-confident and have sufficient trust in their fellow team members that they can immediately acknowledge their own errors and point out problems caused by the errors of others.

Response: See section 2.6

Level: medium

58. What does “PMO” stand for? What is its purpose?

Answer: One of the ways of addressing some of the challenges associated with the alternative organizational forms for projects is to set up a project management office (PMO). The parent organization can set up the PMO, more or less like a functional group or as a center of excellence with its own manager. This group may act as staff to some or to all projects. The project office may handle some or all of the budgeting, scheduling, reporting, scope, compliance with corporate governance, and risk management activities while the functional units supply the technical work. The PMO often serves as a repository for project documents and histories. However, the PMO must never replace the project manager as officer in charge of and accountable for the project.

Response: See section 2.5

Level: medium

59. Explain the importance of credibility and why PM’s need it.

Answer: For a project manager, credibility is critical. In essence, it means that the project manager is believable. There are two areas in which the project manager needs believability. The first is technical credibility, and the second is administrative credibility. A project manager is not expected to have an expert’s knowledge of each of the technologies that may be germane to the project. The project manager should, however, have expertise in one or more areas of knowledge relevant to the project. In particular, a project manager must know enough to explain the current state of the project, its progress, and its technical problems to senior management who may lack technical training.

While quite different, administrative credibility is just as significant to the project. For management and the client to have faith in the viability of the project, reports, appraisals, audits, and evaluations must be timely and accurate. For the team, resources, personnel, and knowledge must be available when needed. For all parties, a project manager must be able to make the difficult trade-offs that allow the project to meet its objectives as well as possible. This requires mature judgment and considerable courage.

Response: See section 2.3

Level: medium

60. How are the PMBOK and PMI related?

Answer: The Project Management Institute (PMI) is a professional organization that has been devoted to project management. The growth in the field of project management has been exponential. Among other reasons for this growth is the project-oriented organization. The PMI has published the *Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK). It also publishes two professional periodicals; first, the *Project Management Journal*, oriented to project management theory, though its articles are almost uniformly related to the actual practice of project management; and second, the *PM Network* magazine, which is a trade journal aimed at practitioners. Both publications are valuable for experienced project managers as well as neophytes or students.

Response: See section 2.4

Level: medium