

What a Prince2 Project Management Course Did For Me

I used to think I knew everything there was about project management, well that was until I was put on a project management course. I had always known that project management is “a set of well-defined methods and techniques for managing a team of people to accomplish a series of work tasks within a well-defined schedule and budget.” However, I was missing out on a lot of nuances within the subject, and this was highlighted to me as soon as I started the course.

I had thought project management was a new concept but I was surprised to learn that it has been a field of study for many years. Project management came about from different areas of application including construction, engineering and defense. In the USA, the pioneer thinker who saw the need for a formal system of management to deal with the complexities of project management was Henry Gantt. He is known as the father of planning and control techniques. His most famous work, known as the Gantt chart, is used as a project management tool in today’s workplace. In 1969, the Project Management Institute was formed to provide and upkeep the interest of the project management industry.

Throughout the course we covered various aspects of project management: first of all we looked at a project and how the successful completion of a project is directly related to the achievement of definite project goals and objectives. Then we looked at what constituted project goals and objectives.

The role of a project manager was highlighted and this has made me look at my project manager in a new light. I had always presumed our projects were a success because they were easy. I never realised how much work our project manager had to do to make them a success, for example: he has to attain all the project goals and objectives while working within a framework that is formed by three constraints: scope, time and budget, and frequently there is a fourth constraint – quality. Another challenge is to optimally allocate and integrate the required inputs that are essential to meet the objectives of the project. Wow! And that is only the tip of the iceberg of what a project manager does.

A project manager also has to be able to function under pressure, and to help with project management there are project management software options. The software has many types of modules such as scheduling, cost control and budget management, etc. The software allows an automated response to tackle the complexities of challenging projects and they have been designed to make the role of the project manager a little easier. We were shown some of the software packages and we were encouraged to try them to give us an additional insight into the role of the project manager.

After we had finished with the software, we looked at the different activities within project management and then the activities were broken down so we could clearly understand each point. For example we looked at: analysis of goals and objectives; assessing and managing risk; the allotment of tasks; estimating resource requirements; quality management; and last but not least, forecasting future needs.

Another important aspect of the course was highlighting the importance of teamwork within project management. A project manager has to be able to function under pressure, and to help control/reduce the pressure, a strong, committed team working with the project manager can significantly improve the success rate of a project, which will reflect well on the company/business.

I must admit, I hadn’t been looking forward to attending the course, but not only has the course opened my eyes to the subject of project management, it also looks good on my CV.

About the Author

Rachael Steenhout wrote the Article 'What a PRINCE2 Project Management Course did for me' and recommends you visit

<http://www.squidoo.com/afaprojects> for more information on [PRINCE2 courses](#).

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