



COMSATS Institute of Information Technology Islamabad

Terminal Examination Spring 2007

Project Management

Program: MBE

Semester: 4th

Date:

Total Marks : 50

Time Allowed: 3 hours

Name of Instructor: Dr. Aurangzeb Z. Khan

Name of TA (if any):

Instructions for attempting paper:

1. Attempt all questions
 2. All question carry equal marks
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Project Management Experts is a small but rapidly expanding firm which provides state-of-the-art project management consulting services to a broad cliental which includes several medium and large industries and service organizations in the private sector, as well as some public-sector organizations running several small, medium and large-scale development programmes. Since its inception five years ago, *Project Management Experts* has gained an excellent national reputation for reliability, professionalism, competence, dedication and the ability to help its diverse clients tackle complex and challenging issues relating to the management of a broad spectrum of projects in their respective organizations.

Section 1: A provincial government agency contacts *Project Management Experts* and requests it to provide its services in the management of a capital-intensive education project whose prime goal is to increase the level of literacy in a remote and hitherto neglected region of the province. Previous experience with a similar project which was undertaken a few years previously in another region of the same province was not good. Despite the investment of a substantial sum of state money, the project outcomes did not live up to expectation. This previous well-intended project ended up exceeding its allocated budget and time-frame by a considerable margin and, moreover, it did not really attain its goal.

The agency wants to avoid a repetition of this problem, which caused it tremendous embarrassment and unwelcome publicity, and seeks *Project Management Experts* advice on how to “go about” with this project so that this time it stands a high likelihood of success. *Project Management Experts* carefully assesses this request and then assigns you (their new inductee who has recently graduated with an MBA degree from CIIT Islamabad) with the task of assisting the government agency in pursuit of this project. Discuss how you would “go about” your task **(10 Marks)**.

Section 2: *Project Management Experts* asks you to prepare and conduct a one-day workshop on the theme “project communications management” for a group of high-ranking representatives drawn from diverse client organizations. Discuss the relevance of communications management in projects. Would you recommend all client organizations represented at the workshop adopt the same project

communications management approach? Justify your answer. What, in your opinion, are the essential processes, tools and techniques which in essence constitute a sound project communications management? How would communications management in a large construction project (for example, a dam or nuclear power station) differ from, say, communications management on an IT project to develop and introduce an information management system in a small furniture manufacturing firm? **(10 Marks)**.

Section 3: A large industrial organization asks *Project Management Experts* to help it establish a PMO. This organization wants to set up a PMO because all its major competitors have already done so over the past three years and because it sees itself confronted with increasing difficulty in maintaining its market share. Apparently, adapting to changing external conditions is proving quite a challenge for this organization and it believes that a change in the way it undertakes its projects may be considered in order to improve its situation. Discuss how a PMO may help this organization, keeping in mind both holistic and methodological considerations. Give specific examples where possible **(10 Marks)**.

Section 4: One large client company from the telecommunications sector, which is concerned about problems it experienced, and is presently experiencing, with some of its project managers, requests *Project Management Experts* to help it determine a methodology for finding the “best” project managers from within (or, if necessary, from outside) its organization. Which characteristics, in your opinion, would a “best” project manager likely exhibit? Discuss at least ten such characteristics. How would you identify “best” project managers? Also, explain to the telecommunications company how a project manager could maximize his/her project team’s performance. Be as specific as possible **(10 Marks)**.

Section 5: A favourite request from *Project Management Experts’* clients is to identify the causes of failure of their projects. Discuss the concept of project “failure”. Is there a universal consensus on the part of project stakeholders as to what “project failure” actually constitutes? Identify and discuss at least ten common reasons of project failure. What would you advise your clients in connection with the management of their projects with a view to minimizing the risk of them failing at some point in their life-cycle? **(10 Marks)**

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Note to Candidates: Please read the question sections very carefully. They are all composed of subquestions and all of them must be answered. Marks will be deducted if any question parts remain unanswered! It is advisable to spend some time reading through the paper and rereading it before attempting your answers. Think carefully, do not rush into answering and give more attention to quality.