

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
SCHOOL OF NATURAL & BUILT ENVIRONMENTS**

PROGRAMS: **Master of Project Management
Graduate Diploma in Project Management
Graduate Certificate in Building & Planning**

COURSE: **PRINCIPLES OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT A (BUSS 5142)**

EXAMINATION: **Internal Exam, Semester 1, 2004**

DURATION: **3 Hours of Exam time preceded by 10 minutes of Reading time,
a total of 3 Hrs 10 Mins.**

**For ENTEXT students 10 minutes of Reading time plus 3.5 Hours
of Exam time, a total of 3 Hrs 40 Mins.**

EXAMINER: **Estelle Farwell Tel – 8232 7899**

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- This exam consists of **FOUR** questions and you need to **answer all questions**.
 - All questions are of equal value – 25%
 - Questions 3 and 4 are to be answered with reference to the Tourism Industry Case Study
 - No reference materials are allowed. Calculators are allowed
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Question 1

A key task of the project manager is the effective management of stakeholders:

- a) How does the project manager identify key stakeholders?
- b) Discuss the positive and negative effects stakeholders can have on a project?

Question 2

Project documentation ensures that information about project activities and issues can be disseminated to the project team. Discuss the ways in which reports and reviews formalise the means of project communication and ensure a shared understanding of project status?

Question 3 - To be answered with reference to the Case study

The major function of the project manager is to integrate all aspects of the project. Identify and describe some of the key interdependent activities which must be successfully integrated to ensure project success.

Question 4 - To be answered with reference to the Case study

Identify and describe the key success criteria for the project. How would these be described in a quality management plan?

A Service Industry (Tourism) Case Study

A large children's charity has been successfully combining the joy of travel with fund raising. This type of holiday is called "Cause Related Travel" and it is on the increase. The **Walk in the Woods** tour is just one of five such holidays the organisation has currently on offer. The inspiration for this particular tour came from Bill Bryson's novel of the same name becoming a best seller. The concept was to walk a section of the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine in USA. This was the subject of the book.

Before the concept could be progressed, permission had to be sought from the author and publishers to use the title of the novel. A 'wish list' was sent to Bryson detailing the concept and what was required from him for it to be a success. Once the approval had been gained (and an unexpected offer from Bryson to join the walk) further time was invested into researching the viability of the project. Before committing to it a Project Viability Report was completed. It then looked into all aspects of the project from the objectives, audience, marketing, competition, workload and expenditure.

Once approved it was then passed to the charity organisation's risk manager for assessment. This included identifying all areas of risk, such as political or financial instability and taking their severity into account. The Risk Manager is responsible for making recommendations for precautions such as insurance. Having risk areas identified facilitates a better monitoring system and provides the opportunity to redress situations early.

When the Project Viability Report was completed the budget was set based largely on experience gained from similar projects. Throughout the life of the project a quarterly re-forecast is completed on all aspects of the budget. This process facilitates the reallocation of resources to where it most needed and ensures that whilst there may be an over spend in one area it can be compensated from another thus maintaining the profitability of the project.

Working towards a proposed departure date in summer 1999 a draft critical path was constructed, detailing all the key elements of the project and the date by which it must be completed. The critical path acts as a check and by adding review periods ensures that the project remains on target. The next stage of the process was to find a suitable tour operator to handle all aspects of the trip from itinerary, flights, accommodation and response to enquiries. Initially the search was limited to those tour operators who currently work with charities or who specialise in tours to the USA.

The list was reduced through the exclusion of operators that worked in a way which was not compatible with the charity's needs. For example the charity avoids operators which demand upfront payment for the planning and development of an original itinerary. Reference checks were therefore carried out on the short list and one to one meetings were held which allowed an informed decision to be made about who could be trusted with this project.

The charity operates a core business policy when managing these types of fundraising events. Each member of staff concentrates their efforts on their own individual specialities. The core business policy ensures that participants receive professional service from both the tour operator and the charity. The organisation may make recommendations on the appropriateness of the itinerary and the date but concentrates its resources responding to queries and its core fundraising business. Similarly the tour operator concentrates itself with the logistics such as negotiations with the ground handlers and bookings.

With the tour operator in place the itinerary was planned and a date set. A brief was given to the tour operator to design an itinerary that followed the charity's challenge projects template of a tough physical challenge and reward in a fantastic location. For this project that meant five to eight days trekking the Appalachian Mountains as per Bryson's novel, followed by a couple of days at leisure.

With a draft itinerary designed, the tour operator, in conjunction with the ground handler, made recommendations as to the best times of the year to visit that location. This information combined with a minimum of twelve months lead time and Bill Bryson's availability, gave a departure date in mid June. Having finalised the departure date, the draft critical path was modified to accommodate this additional information. The critical path is then distributed to all key individuals within the charity, such as the press officer, so that everyone is aware of project deadlines.

In addition to the much needed income, cause related travel provides the charity with access to audiences that would be beyond its reach and provides the charity's supporters with the opportunity to do something that they would not, or could not, do on their own. These holidays appeal to both long-term supporters of the charity as well as a wide cross section of the public.

Quite often it is the lure of an exotic holiday coupled with something for a charity that initially attracts people to this type of fundraising. Following the holiday, a great many participants will go on to become supporters of the particular charity in other ways. Increasingly, individuals and organisations are looking for some kind of reward for their considerable effort whilst raising funds and cause related travel provides that. It is mutually beneficial for everyone involved.

Adapted from:

A Walk on the Wild Side

Megan Munsell
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Project April 1999

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