Role Definition: SYSTEM-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MANAGER

A Responsibilities (or activities)
Given an authorized request for a new or modified application system

1. In consultation with the project sponsors:
   a) Determines and documents the project goals, scope, and expectations.
   b) Prepares and maintains the project justification\(^1\).

2. Partitions the project into discrete phases and/or subprojects, each of which:
   a) Can be budgeted and scheduled in detail.
   b) Will produce a well-defined set of end results (phase deliverables)

3. For each project phase prepares (or causes to be prepared) and maintains a detailed project plan\(^2\) consisting of a network of tasks, each of which:
   a) Can be assigned to a single individual
   b) Produces a well-defined result (task deliverable)

4. For each task on the project plan prepares (or approves) reliable estimates of the cost\(^3\) and duration

5. Aggregates the task estimates into a firm schedule and budget for the current phase

6. Obtains personnel and other resources for the project team.

7. Assigns tasks to individual project team members (or groups of tasks to participating organizations)

8. Monitors the status of project tasks, and periodically:
   a) Aggregates them into a target date and budget for the current project phase and rough estimates for later phases, and communicates those estimates to management, to sponsoring users, and to other affected parties
   b) Adjusts priorities and resource levels, and takes other corrective action as necessary

9. Resolves (or asks management to resolve) issues and conflicts

10. Establishes communication channels and mechanisms\(^4\) to disseminate information about the project:
    a) Within the project team.
    b) To potential users, management, and others outside the project team

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\(^1\) As a return-on-investment or benefit/cost ratio
\(^2\) Often called a “work breakdown structure” (WBS) by the project-management community.
\(^3\) In terms of manpower and/or money.
\(^4\) Usually either a project workbook or an internal web site.
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B. Accountability (or measures of performance)

The Project Manager will be doing his or her job satisfactorily when:

1) New project-team members and other interested parties can understand the purpose, goals, scope, structure, and expected results of the project within no more than three hours by examining a clearly organized set of documents. (R 1, 10)

2) The project plan for the current phase shows all work to be done. For every task on the project plan it is clear:
   a) How the task can be performed.
   b) What skills / resources are needed. (R 2, 3, 4)

3) For every assigned task on the project plan, reports assembled weekly show whether the task is:
   a) Complete, with task deliverables on file, or
   b) Incomplete, with a firm target date. (R 8)

4) Management is informed within 10 days whenever a task schedule slippage or cost overrun affects the critical path (target date for the whole project) or the project justification (costs & benefits). Management is informed within 10 days whenever the project team needs additional resources.

5) No more than one project phase in five exceeds its schedule and budget by more than twenty percent. (R 5, 6, 7, 8)

6) The final end-product system either:
   a) Satisfies the users’ requirements and the cost/benefit justification, and is installed within agreed-upon schedule and budget, or
   b) Is abandoned by mutual agreement before the system architecture phase.

C. Authority

The Project Manager may, without additional authorization:

1) Convene meetings of the project team and other affected parties.

2) Within an agreed-upon budget:
   a) use computing and communications resources
   b) assign work to project-team members or contracting organizations
   c) use internal services
   d) purchase external support services
   e) travel to appropriate sites and authorize travel by others

3) Communicate with potential end users and their managers

4) Communicate with vendor representatives.

5) Examine all task deliverables, source documents, relevant background material, etc.