Chapter XI

Graduate Programs in Project Management

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ABSTRACT

Presented in this chapter is research regarding graduate programs in the relatively new academic area of Project Management. A number of professional organizations have developed around the world to address and foster this specific discipline. Several universities also recognized the fact that Project Management involves distinct skills, and that the traditional degree programs and courses in business schools and other schools do not adequately cover and integrate these skills. The particulars of the research information concern degree and certificate offerings, program and course organization, delivery mechanisms, and the organizational location of the program within the university. The author’s university is interested in developing a graduate Project Management program, and research conclusions toward this interest are presented.
INTRODUCTION

Project Management is “the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to the project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations from a project” (Duncan, 1996). A project is defined as “a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service” (Duncan, 1996).

A number of professional organizations have developed around the world to address and foster this specific discipline. Most notable is the Project Management Institute (PMI, www.pmi.org), with about 80,000 members worldwide. Other major international organizations are the Association for Project Management (APM) and the International Project Management Association (IPMA) (Morris, 2001). These organizations recognized that there is a distinct skill set necessary for successful project managers, and the organizations are devoted to assisting their members develop, improve, and keep current these skills (Boyatzis, 1982; Caupin, 1998).

Several universities also recognized the fact that project management involves distinct skills, and that the traditional degree programs and courses in business schools and other schools do not adequately cover and integrate these skills. The Chronicle of Higher Education recently reported that seven Philadelphia-area corporations established ties with four universities in that region to improve the business skills of computer science and IT students; most of these key skills involved the project management skill sets, which are specifically identified later in this document (Chronicles of Higher Education, 2001).

BACKGROUND

Perhaps self-evident from the previous paragraph is the fact that the knowledge and training needed by project managers covers traditional business or management disciplines and disciplines involved with building or making things. Often, the skills involved with building or making things would be found in an engineering curriculum and in information technology or computer science curriculums.
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