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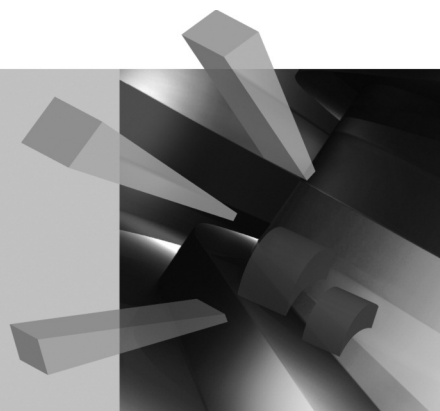

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Streszczenia

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EFFECTIVENESS OF A PROJECT IN LIGHT OF ITS INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Summary: This paper addresses the issue of the evaluation of project effectiveness. Emphasisis put on the expectations of internal stakeholders of aproject, i.e., members of aproject team. The overview of the relevant literature and own research allow stating that the issues of the recognition of the team's expectations as to the project work as well as the research of the satisfaction from work after completing the undertaking are neglected. This paper postulates that a higherrank should be conferred thereon, since this will contribute to the professionalisation of actions in the "human-work" field in the project and to the streamlining of the process of managing subsequent projects.

Keywords: project management, project effectiveness, project stakeholders, project team.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the number of executed projects (undertakings) is growing also in such enterprises for which they are not the primary activity. Today, even in those industries where the operating activity traditionally was not the core of operation projects have begun playing an increasingly more significant role.[1] Key undertakings are changing astrategy, entering a new market or implementing a new IT system. The approach consisting in the use of project management tools for change management isregarded as fully justified. Projects concern changes to a considerable extent – they aim at creating a certain condition, which is not present and which is necessary [Young 2006, p. 21].

Aproject is a unit process comprising coordinated actions, with exactly specified dates of commencement and completion; it is an undertaking aiming at accomplishing the assumed goal given the specified time, cost, and resource limitations [Jones 2007, pp. 17-18]. Project management, in turn, is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques with reference to the actions performed in the unit

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[1] Operating activity is the day-to-day activity of an organisation, related to permanent provision by employees of e.g., administrative, marketing, financial and accounting, and HR service [*The Standard…* 2008, p. 11].

project in order to meet or exceed the needs and expectations of stakeholders as to aproject [Ward 2000, p. 168].

Project success constitutes one of the fundamental terms in project management. Unfortunately, the definition of this term remains ambiguous [Baccarini 1999, p. 25]. Regarding a given undertaking as successful depends to a great extent on who defined the criteria of evaluation and who measures the results. It may be argued that customers, management board, and enterprise employees or suppliers may have a stake in aproject. When speaking of stakes, one should think about a complex system of predispositions, embracing goals, values, desires, expectations, and other attitudes and inclinations, which make a person undertake an action in this and not that direction [Morgan 1999, p. 170].

Entities which have a stake in aproject are called stakeholders. Cobb divides stakeholders into external ones, which are customers, sponsors, line managers, and internal ones, which are members of the project team [Cobb 2006, p. 170]. It was assumed that the effective implementation of an undertaking requires looking through the prism of the expectations of its external stakeholders, however, taking into account the interests of the members of a project team.

The aim of the paper became the presentation of the issues of the project effectiveness evaluation. Thereby the expectations of the internal stakeholders of a project, i.e., project team members, were highlighted. The theoretical discussion – based on the relevant literature studies – was confronted with the results of own research. In 2009 the needs which may be satisfied by work in projects were identified based on interviews combined with direct observations. In June and July 2011 a survey was conducted in 96 large enterprises of various industries, the object of which were projects related to the implementation of IT solutions in HR departments.[2] The respondents were asked above all about the popularity of the examination of project work satisfaction.

2. Measures of project effectiveness – problem approach

As was indicated in the introduction, project success means successful implementation, that is, achieving adesired result or goal [see *Słownik języka*...]. The indicated term fits in the category of effectiveness, which is regarded as the most significant criterion of effective activity [Pszczołowski 1982, p. 247]. Project effectiveness will be thereby identified with reaching the result which was intended as the goal.

It is assumed as standard that the basic parameters (limitations) and at the same time criteria of project effectiveness are as follows [Meredith, Mantel 2000, p. 4]: meeting the quality requirements (*performance*),

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a) implementation costs (*cost*),
b) implementation time (*time*).

The aim of project implementation is to accomplish all specified parameters at aassumed level. In practice this amounts to acting by the "well, cheaply, and quickly" principle. This rule includes a certain contradiction since often meeting the "well" and "quickly" conditions for a customer (regarded the most important project stakeholder) generates "expensively" for another stakeholder – management board. The indicated project limitations are becoming the primary source of conflict between different groups of participants in an undertaking.

There are projects wherein the limitations in the form of quality, finance, or time are not fully known at the beginning of defining or during the implementation thereof. This results from changing expectations on the part of acustomer. Typically, such projects are the construction of a house or interior fit-out.

The aforementioned approach to the effectiveness measurement is not applicable in the case of an IT undertaking. Differing interpretations of the benefits from introducing IT solutions and implementing an IT system are assumed, but the implementation in accordance with abudget and in a timely manner, and even cost savings, are not always interpreted as benefits from introduction of IT solutions. It is recommended, thus, to accept the IT system user satisfaction level as the special criterion of evaluating an IT undertaking [Pańkowska 2011, p. 239].

The project-related literature also provides an additional parameter, namely the scope (more details in Lewis [1999]). It defines which works should be done to achieve a result of specific characteristics [*Kompendium wiedzy…* 2003, p. 111]. This scope depends on the requirements of the recipients of the final effect as well as on the available outlays and time. Outlays are sometimes defined collectively as resources. Money, equipment, and time are distinguished among them [Burton 1999, p. 20].

The term of resource treated as a parameter of aproject embraces also losses in ateam or in the relations between employees. Unfortunately – as noted by Mingus – most people concentrate primarily on the budget and the completion time of aproject, neglecting the remaining three parameters (quality, scope, resources) – including the members of a project team [Mingus 2002, p. 21]. It is worth mentioning here that there is no project without people. Therefore, it is justified to create characteristics of an effective project from the point of view of project team members.

3. Project meeting the expectations of internal stakeholders

Internal stakeholders of a project are members of aproject team. The following can be distinguished among them:
- project manager,
- project work performers.

A project manager is above all responsible for the implementation of an undertaking in accordance with the expectations of the external stakeholders of aproject, the most significant of whom is acustomer. A project manager has to constantly reconcile contradictory stakes of different entities that have an influence on aproject. As revealed by the conducted literature studies, a project manager evaluates the effectiveness of team performance not only based on the approved or pre-set quantity and quality results (see Table 1). Also the so-called results of behaviour are important, which are related to the external evaluation of the satisfaction from the effects of team work and the methods applied by a team.

Table 1. Criteria of project success – in light of project team members

Role in team	Effectiveness category	Manifestation	Definition
Project team manager	Effectiveness of action	Greater quantity	Better effects
		High efficiency	More done in shorter time
		Higher productivity	More done with use of less resources
		Better quality	Better products or services
	Result of behaviour	Greater customer satisfaction	Exceeding customer expectations
		Better communication	Positive influence of interaction and information exchange
		Greater creativity and innovativeness	Generating new, valuable ideas
		Greater turnout/commitment	Team members are fully committed in actions
Project team manager and project work performers	Team member attitudes	Sense of coherence	Sense of community
		Sense of commitment	Sense of own contribution to the work performed by ateam and contribution to achieving higher results
		Sense of pride	Sense that a team acted effectively
		Sense of common identity	Members strongly bound to ateam
	Impact of a project on further professional career	Image of a "professional"	Maintaining one's position, receiving new interesting professional proposals (including project topics)

Source: author's own work based on Kohn, O'Connell [2008, p. 46]; O'Connell [2009, p. 112].

The criterion of project success – from the point of view of both a project manager and project work performers – may be the attitudes of team members. They involve effectiveness understood in the subjective sense, related not only to external results and satisfaction of customers, but also to the conviction of team members that they did their job well [Kohn, O'Connell 2008, p. 45].

Among the needs satisfied by participation in projects, team members list mainly the possibility of self-fulfilment and better integration not only with the appointed team but also with the employees of other organisational units. Projects are as a rule interdisciplinary, go beyond boundaries of single departments, and require the commitment of specialists of various fields. Self-fulfilment – in organisations wherein operating activity prevails – is correlated with the opportunity to display features that are not necessary at work on the specified position every day (more details in Piwowar-Sulej [2010, pp. 110-116]).

Finally, an effective project is the one wherein the work of project team members was noticed and appreciated, which was reflected in e.g. subsequent interesting professional proposals. It should be explained here what types of correlations may occur between the project team members and the enterprise wherein aproject is implemented. Both a team manager and project work performers may be:

a)   related with an enterprise regardless of the project, i.e., employed pursuant to an employment contract concluded for an indefinite or definite period, cooperating permanently as sole traders, etc.,

b)   procured only for the period of project duration (e.g., employment contract for the period of completing specific work, personnel leasing), which is a consequence of meeting the postulate of quantitative flexibility, i.e., adjusting the labour outlay level to requirements.

The image of a "professional" may be acquired even in a project which did not meet the previously assumed parameters, e.g., was completed with a delay. This concerns in particular people who are characterised by the first type of relations with anenterprise. This is confirmed by the results of own research.

It seems that a project cannot be successful from the point of view of acustomer if it is not evaluated as effective by project team members. However, own research conducted in 2011 proves that the satisfaction extent from the performed work and the course thereof is not measured after completing aproject in the majority of the surveyed companies.

The foregoing reveals a particular task for aproject manager or HR manager (if this department plays the role of a business partner in project organisation). This task is to recognise the expectations of project work performers well beforehand. Such stakes should be taken into account at each project work stage, and at the end of aproject, the completion level thereof should be verified.

4. Conclusion

The capacity of an organisation to initiate and make changes is regarded as a *sine qua non* condition for the duration and development of anorganisation. Repeatable routine actions are becoming less important in favour of unique and complicated undertakings, i.e., projects.

Projects – like all human activity – are subject to evaluation. It is normally assumed that project effectiveness criteria are quality, cost, and time. The term project effectiveness may be interpreted in different ways, though. Therefore, it is worth determining the stakes of different entities involved in aproject prior to the commencement of project implementation, including project team members as people who have direct influence on meeting customer's requirements.

The relevant literature review and own research allow stating that the members of project teams have specific expectations towards project work. This bundle of expectations should be skilfully combined with the stakes of the remaining groups of project participants. A significant – albeit neglected – action is also examining the level of project goal accomplishment from the point of view of not only acustomer but also of aproject team member. This will undoubtedly add to the professionalism of actions in the "human-work" field in a project. The results of such an examination may contribute to the streamlining of the process of managing subsequent undertakings. Finally, monitoring moods of project work performers is favourable to creating the organisational culture which is conducive to project management.

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EFEKTYWNOŚĆ PROJEKTU
W OPTYCE JEGO WEWNĘTRZNYCH INTERESARIUSZY

Streszczenie: W artykule podjęto problematykę oceny efektywności projektu. Skupiono się przy tym na oczekiwaniach wewnętrznych interesariuszy projektu, tj. członków zespołu projektowego. Przegląd literatury przedmiotu oraz badania własne pozwalają stwierdzić, że zaniedbuje się kwestię rozpoznawania oczekiwań zespołu wobec pracy projektowej, a także badania satysfakcji z pracy po zakończeniu przedsięwzięcia. W artykule postuluje się nadanie temu większej rangi, gdyż przyczyni się to do profesjonalizacji działań w obszarze „człowiek – praca" w projekcie i usprawnienia procesu zarządzania kolejnymi projektami.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie projektem, efektywność projektu, interesariusze projektu, zespół projektowy.