

22nd September 2023

PM Case Study 3-Kombs Engineering:

1. Why did Prylon give Mannix corporation a third chance?

Going into a competitive bidding or tender process again would be a huge schlep and time delay for their business. Another 18-month schedule was just not feasible for the running of their business.

2. Do projects go from green to red overnight? If they do, then what is the most likely cause?

No they do not. There is usually a build-up of activities or signs that the project is going in this direction. If they do, then it is most likely that planning was not done properly from the onset and risk mitigation was taken very lightly.

3. Should a firm-fixed-price contract have been awarded from the ErP effort?

No, I don't think so as this contract type places upon the contractor at full risk and then the full responsibility for all costs and resulting profit or loss.

4. Is it reasonable to expect that requirements will change during recovery?

The project's requirements will change during recovery to meet the new goals of the project and its objectives if they have changed during the recovery process.

5. What is the ultimate goal of a recovery project?

It is no longer to finish on time and the timeline has been jeopardised already, the goal is now to finish with a value add for the customer and the stakeholders that are involved.

6. Do stakeholders expect trade-offs during recovery?

Yes, they do. They will expect durations to be shortened, additional resources to be added, etc but they are not willing to provide anything additional from their side.

7. What generally happens to constraints such as time and cost during recovery?

During recovery, a huge knock is taken on time and cost as the requirements will have to change. Constraints like cost become huge and a lot of resources are required. It is not to finish on time as well but to finish with value and benefit.

8. Why was morale low when Jerry first took over the project?

The team went through two project managers who did not offer them any solid foundation, motivation or end goal and gave them unnecessary additional work. They also had to work excessively long hours. This caused a lot of stress and pressure.

9. What are the characteristics of a death spiral on a failing project?

The inability to prioritise work. Negative loops within the project with no positive end goal in sight. A lack of innovation and good ideas by leaders contributes to this. A lack of strategic planning is also a key factor.

10. What was Jerry's intent in cancelling overtime and asking the team to stop working on the project for a few days?

He was to take a step back to review and consider all factors of the project. He wanted the team to take a breath and re-establish their work-life balance.

11. What were the risks in Question 10?

Cancelling overtime meant less time spent on the project.

It also gives the team time to consider moving onto other projects and not staying on this one.

12. As identified in the case, what were the life-cycle phases for recovery, and what is accomplished in each phase?

Understand – In this phase we evaluate what the project's end goal is meant to be. We collect everything related to the project (organisational processes, assets as well as enterprise environmental factors) and gain proper insights.

Audit - Here the review of the current status of the project is established. Team members and stakeholders are interviewed for their expectations in terms of risk, issues, etc.

Trade off – This is the evaluation to aid in the quality of the deliverable. What is first priority versus what can wait or be done later. What requires more intervention or resources. Here the determination of quality, time and cost is needed to be done.

Negotiation – here the project manager will present on the efforts that the team has put in and is willing to put in from the understanding and audit phase with the trade-off requirements set forth and highlighted. The project manager at this point will need to give reason as to why trust should be given to him to lead well.

Restart – Here the results of the negotiation is done and the approach that was decided on is explained so that the execution phase can kick-off with positivity and an end goal in mind.

Execution – Here all of the hard work done in the understand, audit, trade-off, negotiation and re-start phases are put into action. It is up to the project manager to lead and lead well for a successful delivery. All of the project methodologies must be followed.

13. Suppose that during the audit phase, Jerry discovered that one of the team members, who was a close friend of his, was the cause of most of the issues. How should Jerry handle the situation?

As a project manager, Jerry has the ethical responsibility to act with honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect. It is therefore his duty to ethically report this violation to the right people so that this does not affect the audit process, the client and the company.

14. What should Jerry do during the negotiation phase if Prylon corporation comes up with its own recovery plan and the plan is unacceptable to Mannix?

I think, Jerry should review the plan and substantiate why it is best to go with the plan that Mannix has put together. Make sure communication channels are open well to the stakeholders, keeping them informed that it is critical for the success of the project.