LEARNING ACTIVITY
'Painting the living room'
Ent-teach Unit 6 Project management

Description learning activity

You and 3 friends decide to paint your living room. In order to complete this project, you decide for a proper task planning and task scheduling. You are the Project Manager and you are required to prepare the Project Planning i.e. to prepare the Work Breakdown Structure as well as the Project Schedule to complete the project on time and to the highest level of quality. You are required to use the document in Annex 1 as Task Scheduling Program.

The content of this activity in order to be student friendly and interesting could be organized as PowerPoint slide show or in an interactive way in order to accomplish the greater engagement of the students.

The activities of this training exercise simulate real life situations concerning Project Management, such as:

- project planning,
- task scheduling,
- work breakdown structuring
- task monitoring and controlling

The students that conclude the activity will be able to comprehend the module and its parameters (Project Planning Project Scheduling, Project Controlling) in order to be able to successfully ensure that a Project as simple may seem, it needs proper management in order to be ensured that it's been completed on time and to the required quality standards.

Problem

The problem that is being defined through this learning activity is how you manage people, time and materials in order to successfully complete a project on time and to the required quality standards.

Concerning Project Management, theory is best for teaching the module but practice in PM training activities is better for learning and comprehending the true value of it. Only dealing with real life simulating situations which have to do with task organising, task scheduling, assigning people proper tasks with deadlines, a student can understand and capitalise his theoretical knowledge in Project Management.

Timeline

The specific learning activity must take place after the students have completed their curricula regarding Project Planning and Project Scheduling. It's an activity that could be concluded during one day and it could provide a useful tool for evaluating whether learners have fully understood the parameters of the module.

Target audience

Potential learners of this learning activity could be management or marketing oriented VET students as well as any SME businessman or employee that would like to master his/her abilities in Project Management.

The needs of the potential learners vary. In general the activity satisfies the need for knowledge in Project Planning, Task Scheduling, Task Monitoring and Controlling.

Goal

The goal is to emphasize that Project Management is one of the most important elements of entrepreneurship. The purpose of this learning activity is to demonstrate that Project Planning plays a vital role in the success of a project. To foresee or predict as many dangers and problems as possible; To plan, organise and control activities so that the project is completed successfully on time and within budget. The ever-present element of risk and uncertainty means that events and tasks leading to completion can never be foretold with absolute accuracy. For some complex or advanced projects, even the possibility of successful completion might be in serious doubt.

Learning outcomes

With the completion of the specific learning activity the learner will be able to:

- Determine the importance of using effective Project Management techniques in simple day-to-day tasks and projects
- Manage time, people and materials in order to successfully complete projects within specified deadlines
- Explain the project planning process
- Explain the process of project management monitoring and controlling

Evaluation

Due to the nature of the learning activity, and PM in general, the only credible way of knowing whether the learning activity accomplished its educative purpose, is by actually re-engaging the students in more similar PM learning activities. PM has too many unstable factors and it's too practical for a trainer to know beyond any uncertainty that the learner really understood what PM is all about. Feedback from the learning activity will be collected through a private interview with each learner and using a questionnaire.

Technology

Because of the simplicity of the tasks MS Excel will be used in the analysis of the Task Scheduling Program of the learning activity. MS Excel will assist in calculating the exact totals of the tasks and the actual allocation of people in order for the project to be completed on time. It should be noted here that there are plenty of software programs for Project Management in the market, emphasizing the importance of PM in everyday business activities and the projects' continuous increase in complexity.

Methods

Indicate milestones in the Task Schedule. Milestones are identifiable points in a project that require no resources or time. They are simply a key point in time. They can also help the Project Manager group the project into phases. Milestones in this project might be:

- Have paint colour chosen
- Have room cleaned out
- Get painting complete
- Have room put back together

Try to include deliverables with the milestones. This way you have tangible results at various stages in the project,

Make sure to include lag and lead time in the tasks. Keep in mind that there is little to no time allotted for the paint to dry between coats. The project will definitely fall behind schedule.

For a team project such as this, a large copy of the Task Schedule should be posted, preferably in a graphic format to draw attention, in a place where everyone can see. This way every member of the Project Team has a wide knowledge of the Tasks and their exact implementation phase and this fact excludes

Team

A team of 4 people will be needed for the completion of the learning activity. One Project Manager and three Project Officers. The team members should be communicative, persistent, dedicated and to have team-spirit.

Resources

The resources for the specific learning activity is time (i.e. the estimated time calculated by the project planning for the completion of the Project), human resources (i.e. the Project Team consisted of 1 Project Manager and 3 Project Officers) and materials (i.e. paint, brushes, etc.). Because of the lack of unlimited resources it is suggested as a project implementation priority, to program tasks where resources can perform activities simultaneously, in order to save time and speed up the completion of the Project.

TASK SCHEDULING PROGRAM

Task	Calculated time	People required	Start time and date	End time and date

List materials required for this project:

List people required for this project: