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Importance Skills in Project Management

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TREO Talk Paper

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Abstract

The importance of project management is increasing in general and in computing education in particular; Computer Science (CS), Software Engineering (SE), Information Systems (IS), Library Science (Kinkus, 2007), and Information Technology (IT) all have begun to deliver new initiatives via projects. Historically, the demand for project managers has been strong (Herzberg, 2006) and Project Management Institute (PMI) reports that currently there is a dramatic increase in the number of jobs requiring project management skills especially in developing countries with overall job growth expected to be around 33% (Project Management Institute, 2017). Thus, the demand for capable team and project managers to lead IT acquisition, development, and implementation projects is increasing. Additionally, the demand for new entrants into project management is increased by the large number of project management (PM) professionals retiring from the workforce (Project Management Institute, 2017). PMI additionally predicts that over the next decade, demand for project managers will outstrip the demand for other professions (Project Management Institute, 2017).

Since good PMs are in high demand and short supply, employers are placing increasing pressure on higher education to better prepare students to contribute to project teams and assume PM positions. However, PM's perceived importance and perception of which skills are important for success among working professionals has not received much attention. As educators aspire to prepare students for the PM positions and their challenges, they should be aware of the perceptions of working professionals who have experience with many projects that they succeeded or failed about the importance and necessary skills in successfully completion of a project. This proposed research seeks to understand how practicing PM professionals view the relative importance of various technical and soft PM skills and compares those with perceptions of students taking a PM course about importance of PM skills necessary to successfully complete a project. Further, the PM educators will be surveyed about their perceptions of the importance skills necessary in successfully completing a project and should be taught to students.

There has not been the integration of research on the required skills with the project management course offered at the undergraduate level. The primary purpose of this research is to fill this gap in the academic research stream. We seek to gain insights into how working professionals, educators and students perceive the required skills needed to be a successful project manager. This research will help align PM course offerings to PM technical and soft skills.

References

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