

Assessment and self-assessment of project manager

Evaluarea și autoevaluarea managerului de proiect

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Abstract

The activities for projects preparation and progress are run within a hard and hostile environment, requiring the project management to perform an assessment/self-assessment before getting involved in activities specific to investment and production processes. The paper presents a series of criteria that must be taken into account, such as: the health degree and the efficiency, social obligations towards family (parents, children, relatives, etc.), the training degree within business, efficiency within run activities, past incisiveness and initiatives, capacity to plan an action, to lead and make decisions: flexibility degree, accommodation to new situations, perseverance degree and complex approach of the business, capacity to observe the principles of business ethics.

Keywords: *project manager, ethics, competition, objectives, prices*

Rezumat

Activitățile de pregătire și derulare a proiectelor se desfășoară într-un mediu dur și ostil, fapt ce impune, managerului de proiect înainte de a se implica în activitățile specifice proceselor investiționale și de producție, o autoevaluare/evaluare. În lucrare se prezintă o serie de criterii ce trebuie avute în vedere cum ar fi: gradul de sănătate și puterea de muncă, obligațiile sociale față de familie (părinți, copii, rude etc.), gradul de pregătire în domeniul afacerii vizate, eficiență în activitățile practicate, incisivitate și inițiative avute în trecut, capacitatea de a planifica o acțiune, de a o conduce și de a lua decizii, gradul de flexibilitate în acțiune, de adaptare la situații nou apărute, gradul de perseverență și de abordare complexă a afacerii, capacitatea de a respecta principiile eticii în afaceri.

Cuvinte-cheie: *manager de proiect, etică, concurență, eficiență, competiție, obiective, prețuri*

JEL Classification: L83, O22, O32

Introduction

In order to ensure the fulfilment of tasks related to obligations arisen from drafting and leading a project, each possible project manager or employer of a project manager must consider a series of assessment/self-assessment criteria.

In order to establish these criteria, the basis is the objectives each project leader must aim at. In general, these refer to: obtaining the engagement, forming an efficient team from a structural and value point of view, mobilization for the achievement of the goal, efficient use of resources.

These goals require certain qualities to the project manager, out of which the most important are: the capacity to negotiate and seal deals, the capacity to work with people, to mobilize them in order to use them at the level of knowledge of each of them, leading and professional experience, the desire to learn and achieve performances, the power to undertake the business risk etc.

Besides the above mentioned factors, the leader must also have other qualities: moral and professional integrity, analytical capacity, power to adapt to change, imagination, desire to work, flexibility in relationships with people involved in the project (beneficiary, team members etc.)

Self-assessment and assessment criteria of the project manager

The complexity of problems specific to a project manager (Project Management Institute 2000) entails a self-assessment of the person who wants to undertake such a status. The project manager's potential must answer to most of the questions (Vasilescu, 2009), out of which the most important are:

- The health degree and the efficiency, the measure in which the totality of physical and intellectual abilities allow him to approach such a responsibility.

- Social obligations towards family (parents, children, relatives, etc) Any project is run under risk and uncertainty conditions, aspects that can influence not only the project manager but also the related people, due to the undertake of managerial responsibilities must also be analyzed through the effects it can generate towards the family especially in case of a failure.

- The training degree in the field of respective business. Practice demonstrated that few project managers that succeeded in other fields of activity than the ones they had specialized knowledge for, respective qualification. It is true that, during the past few years, such situations arose, but they had a cyclical character determined by the transition period from centrally planned economy to market economy, with all their complex character.

- Efficiency of activities, past incisiveness and initiatives. The assessment of own activities, of the way you solved problems, the propositions and results achieved due to your own initiatives can be hints that you have or not managerial qualities in the project field.

- The capacity to plan an action, to lead it and to make decisions. Each project is based on a plan based on a clear image of the business which assesses the success chances under certain conditions and that provided a chance to achievement to the initiative. Such a plan can only be drafted by a well informed person that owns specialized knowledge in the planning field.

The business success also depends on the measures taken for the production organization, staff and business management etc, as all these aspects are based on certain qualities the future project manager must own.

- Concurrence and self-satisfaction spirit. Under economical freedom conditions, the achievement of own interests – a profit as higher as possible for the effort performed – involves a maximum competition between the participants to the economical process. Competition resulted from the limitation of resources, the interactive character of decisions made by participants to the economical process and the absorption power of market which is relatively limited leads to rivalries and disputes between the subjects on the market. In this context, each project manager must own qualities that allow him the access to resources, to commodity markets and to ensure him the maximization of economical efficiency of activity.

- The flexibility degree concerning the activity, the accommodation degree to new situations (Toffler, 1999). Market economy must be a flexible economy that ensures a continuous accommodation of offer to demand. Modern entrepreneur must answer promptly to market signal provided by the maximum quantity that can be bought at a certain price or a maximum unit price that can be paid for a certain quantity. This leads to the fact that the project manager must show not only flexibility in his actions but also power to make decisions which are sometimes less favourable on short term but that have special effects on future (maintaining the market, the clients, the prestige etc.)

- Degree of perseverance and complex approach of business. Any project is a business run under uncertainty and risk conditions which require for any decision to be based on a deep economical analysis based on economical efficiency calculations. Perseverance must have a relative character and must rely upon the sensitivity degree of the project at certain unfavourable situations that can arise during the development of economical, investment and production processes. An intelligent project manager neither he gives up the business when a negative situation arisen nor he continues to do mistakes until there is nothing to recover from the expenses.

Taking into account that only a good manager can ensure the functions of commercial companies, the fine progress of a business and the fact he has an important role because a good manager ensures the success of a weak business and a less good manager can bring a prospering business to bankruptcy, assessment

must be performed sincerely and objectively, in order to allow the detection of manager qualities, non-qualities for any potential project manager (Dumitrache, 2003).

The capacity to observe the principles of business ethics

Managerial ethics issue is very important because each project is unique, the team changes permanently the beneficiary and any potential client takes regard to the professional capacities of the team, its previous results, the reliability degree etc.

Managerial ethics within project activity is very necessary but difficult to accomplish. On one hand, the market economy principles must be observed and on the other hand, social aspects within this field must be considered.

Regarding the legal framework, the elaboration of laws on different level is required, for project managers but also their beneficiaries to comply with. The widest level is the one related to international organizations laws (the European Community has laws regulating distribution and price policies in all member states) than at each state level, at regional and local level. Along with these, there are functioning regulations.

The main problem that must be analysed within this context is price fixing. Price fixing on horizontal through which competitors meet (offer and demand) is illegal. "Price fixing" is a significant offence because it impairs the principles of market economy. In our country, due to the lack of an appropriate legal framework and real competition in the field, this kind of prices are used, with negative influence over project consumers but also over the entire economical activity, in general. The representatives of project teams that participate in this kind of meetings must show their non-compliance with the initiative and leave the meeting.

Another form of price fixing, mainly in constructions, is the vertical one when a manufacturer fixes the supplier price for certain merchandise (cement, gravel, building machinery etc) This method must also not be applied because it breaches the action power of the supplier. Relationships between producers and suppliers of products within the construction field are complex and complicated relationships, requiring their regulation through a specific legal framework.

The relationship between producer and supplier does not focus only on prices but also refers to the vertical division of markets, the exclusive distribution and contracts concluded.

The vertical division of markets through which producers designate each action areas are unclear and complex, the producer has a final say, breaching many times the initial agreements, without the possibility to sanction the inobservance of the initial agreements.

Exclusive distribution is based on agreements between producers and suppliers, through the latter have exclusivity, total or partial, in selling certain products. This sale form is applied less in the field of constructions and between Romanian companies and its disadvantage is the fact that it decreases competition and a high price can be maintained, required by the supplier. Actually, this type of contractual relationship is applied for certain important products (paintings, technical apparatus, machinery etc.)

Concluded contracts are favourable especially from the producer's point of view because it requires to the supplier to approve the purchase of a product in exchange for some facilities of purchasing another products, more attractive. This way, the supplier is forced to purchase a wider range of products, some of them being more difficult to sell. In this case, the supplier must only make a decision after their fundamental analysis.

Another aspect of managerial ethics is communication that can sometimes involve fraud through sale or advertising, commercial bribery, pressures in the field etc.

Fraud through sale or advertising became very extensive in our country and there are no clear concerns in order to fight it. To this effect, more and more trade marks similar to trade marks already used and appreciated are used, the so-called counterfeit products; the false presentation of advantages resulted from the use of certain products; ambiguous or partially true formulations in the product presentation etc. Fraud through sale and advertising is not approached almost at all, mainly regarding small activities, small consumers.

Commercial bribery, by means of which actions of an employee or of a business partner are influenced, is a delict very often encountered in the field of tenders for important projects characterized by high investments.

Pressures are mainly done for the assignment (attainment) of certain projects by certain persons that have economical, party, social interests.

All these aspects arise due to ignorance, lack of knowledge and understanding of laws but also due to the inobservance of managerial ethics imperatives.

Conclusion

Project managers have significant influence within financial, productive and human domains. They make decisions that affect clients, collaborators, employees, family etc. This influence involves responsibility and must be used carefully. It is true that the relationship ethics-profit is not always a smooth one,

but the manager must find the way of understanding and observing the power they have.

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