

Project Management and Planning Techniques

- A project is a collection of several activities or jobs with a definable finish essential to achieve a specific objective.
- Project management is a tool of management for planning and control. The objective of which has been defined as an attempt to make the most efficient and effective use of resources, viz manpower, equipment, facilities, materials, money, technology and information , so that the organizational objectives and goals can be achieved within budget, on schedule and at the desired performance, technology level, while adhering to the ever changing environmental input factors, like legal, social, political, economical and technological.

Following results are expected from project management

- Attainment of project objectives in a timely manner with in budget.
- Progress reports with deviations from plan highlighted.

Significant decisions to top management for approval

- Project management can also be defined as an art and science of mobilizing and managing the people, materials, equipment and money to complete the assigned project work on time within budgeted costs and specified technical performance standards.
- It aims at achieving the specified objectives efficiently and effectively by managing human energies and optimizing the non-human resources placed at their disposal.
- Traditionally management functions are grouped as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling.
- In project management , these functional areas with some adjustments on account of the special characteristics of construction projects, are grouped as planning, organizing, procuring, directing and controlling.

Planning Techniques:

- Planning is a mental process requiring the use of intellectual faculties, imagination, foresight, sound judgement etc. to decide in advance as to what is to be done, how and where it is to be done, who will do it and how the results are to be evaluated. In other words, planning is the process of thinking before doing.
- Planning is necessary to ensure proper utilization of resources to achieve the objectives of the enterprise. In planning , a manager searches for the alternative courses open to him, and then select for these alternatives to determine general and specific objectives and detailed means for achieving them.
- Planning is a thinking process, the organized foresight, the vision based on facts and experiences that is required for intelligent action. Therefore planning is fundamentally a mental predisposition to do things in an orderly way, to think

Features of planning:

1. Planning is a goal oriented.
2. Planning is looking ahead.
3. Planning is an intellectual process.
4. Planning is designed for efficiency.
5. Planning involves selecting best alternatives.
6. Planning is continuous.
7. Planning minimizes uncertainty and risk.

Importance of Planning:

- Planning is an initial and most important function of the management. Planning precedes the execution of all other management functions for the accomplishment of objectives.
- All other functions of the management also require planning without which managers may not even have a clear idea of what they need to organize.

- Without a plan , a manager cannot lead with confidence and he cannot expect for achieving his goals, and he cannot know as to when and where he has deviated from his path.
- Planning contributes to better management in the following ways:
 1. Planning helps to focus the attention of employees on objectives or goals of the organization.
 2. Planning makes systematic , integrated and orderly efforts possible and avoid random activity.
 3. Planning enables an enterprise to assess the future and get prepared for meeting the future challenges. It minimizes uncertainty and risks.
 4. Planning improves efficiency of operations.
 5. Planning helps in maximizing the resource utilization.
 6. Planning facilitates in effective delegation of authority and in

Types of Plans:

Plans can be classified in to following categories

1. Standard or repeated- use plans.
2. Single use plans
3. Enterprise plans
4. Time plans

1. Standard or repeated- use plans:

- These plans are used again and again and are repetitive in nature. These plans lead to the development of policies, procedures and rules.

2. Single use plans:

- Single use plans are drafted to meet a particular situation and are not meant to serve as standing guides to thinking and action. Single use plans include budget, programmes, projects etc.

3. Enterprise plans:

- Number and kind of plans in any enterprise depends upon the organization setup. In an organization, having number of divisions and functional departments and where over all planning is done at the head quarter level, different kinds of plans are divisional plans, functional departments plans, regional plans and corporate plans.

4. Time Plans:

- According to the time plan , a plan may be either (a) short range plan , generally for a period of one year, or (b) medium range plan, generally for a period of 1 to 5 years , or (c) long range plan , generally extended for more than 5 years.
- In some cases planning for a week in advance is sufficient, while in some others the period desired may be five years or more. Even in the same firm, different plans of different planning periods are prepared.

Essential Requirements of an Effective Plan:

- In order to be effective , a plan should possess the following characteristics so that it can help in better management of the firm,
 1. The plan should be specific.
 2. The plan should be logical.
 3. The plan should be complete and integrated.
 4. The plan should be flexible.
 5. The plan should be capable of being controlled.

Strategic planning:

- As we know that strategy refers to the determination of the purpose and the basic long term objective of an enterprise, and the adoption of course of action and allocation of resources necessary to achieve these aims.
- Strategy can also be defined as the broad programme for defining and achieving an organizations objectives and implementing its missions.

- Strategic planning establishes long term goals. The detailed methods for achieving these goals are related to current environmental conditions . Long term goals of the Strategic plan provide the constraints for setting intermediate and short term goals.
- Strategic planning process consists of following steps:
 1. Analyse the environment.
 2. Identify company strength and weakness.
 3. Identify risks and opportunities.
 4. Define product scope.
 5. Define competitive edge.
 6. Establish objectives and measures of performance.
 7. Determine development of resources.

Corporate planning:

- It is a formal systematic process of planning for the company as a whole on a continuous basis over a period of three years or more.
- It is a continuous process of making present risk taking decisions systematically and with the best possible knowledge of their probable outcome and effects, organizing systematically the efforts and resources needed to carry out these decisions and measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organized systematic feedback.
- Corporate planning is used as a guide for conducting the affairs of the company. An effective Corporate planning should establish a proper combination between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the organizations.
- Therefore corporate planning in a company envisages¹¹ a

Thank You