PROJECT QUALITY PLAN

Introduction

Every project delivers something at the end of the project execution. When it comes to the project initiation, the project management and the client collaboratively define the objectives and the deliveries of the project together with the completion timelines.

During the project execution, there are a number of project deliveries made. All these deliveries should adhere to certain quality standards *industrystandards* as well as specific client requirements.

Therefore, each of these deliveries should be validated and verified before delivering to the client. For that, there should be a quality assurance function, which runs from start to the end of the project.

When it comes to the quality, not only the quality of the deliveries that matter the most. The processes or activities that produce deliverables should also adhere to certain quality guidelines as well.

As a principle, if the processes and activities that produce the deliverables do not adhere to their own quality standards *processqualitystandards*, then there is a high probability that deliverables not meeting the delivery quality standards.

To address all the quality requirements, standards and quality assurance mechanisms in a project, a document called 'project quality plan' is developed by the project team. This plan acts as the quality bible for the project and all the stakeholders of the project should adhere to the project quality plan.

The Components of a Project Quality Plan

Depending on the nature of the industry and the nature of the project, the components or the areas addressed by a quality plan may vary. However, there are some components that can be found in any type of quality plan.

Let's have a look at the most essential attributes of a project quality plan.

Responsibility of Management

This describes how the management is responsible for achieving the project quality. Since management is the controlling and monitoring function for the project, project quality is mainly a management responsibility.

Document Management and Control

Documents are the main method of communication in project management. Documents are used for communication between the team members, project management, senior management and the client.

Therefore, the project quality plan should describe a way to manage and control the documents used in the project. Usually, there can be a common documentation repository with controlled access in order to store and retrieve the documents.

Requirements Scope

The correct requirements to be implemented are listed here. This is an abstraction of the requirements sign-off document. Having requirements noted in the project quality plan helps the quality assurance team to correctly validate them.

This way, quality assurance function knows what exactly to test and what exactly to leave out from the scope. Testing the requirements that are not in the scope may be a waste for the service provider.

Design Control

This specifies the controls and procedures used for the design phase of the project. Usually, there should be design reviews in order to analyse the correctness of the proposed technical design. For fruitful design reviews, senior designers or the architects of the respective domain should get involved. Once the designs are reviewed and agreed, they are signed-off with the client.

With the time, the client may come up with changes to the requirements or new requirements. In such cases, design may be changed. Every time the design changes, the changes should be reviewed and signed-off.

Development Control and Rigor

Once the construction of the project starts, all the processes, procedures and activities should be closely monitored and measured. By this type of control, the project management can make sure that the project is progressing in the correct path.

Testing and Quality Assurance

This component of the project quality plan takes precedence over other components. This is the element, which describes the main quality assurance functions of the project. This section should clearly identify the quality objectives for the project and the approach to achieve them.

Risks & Mitigation

This section identifies the project quality risks. Then, the project management team should come up with appropriate mitigation plans in order to address each quality risk.

Quality Audits

For every project, regardless of its size or the nature, there should be periodic quality audits to measure the adherence to the quality standards. These audits can be done by an internal team or an external team.

Sometimes, the client may employ external audit teams to measure the compliance to standards and procedures of the project processes and activities.

Defect Management

During testing and quality assurance, defects are usually caught. This is quite common when it comes to software development projects. The project quality plan should have guidelines and instructions on how to manage the defects.

Training Requirements

Every project team requires some kind of training before the project commences. For this, a skill gap analysis is done to identify the training requirements at the project initiation phase.

The project quality plan should indicate these training requirements and necessary steps to get the staff trained.

Conclusion

Project quality plan is one of the mandatory documents for any type of project.

As long as a project has defined objectives and deliverables, there should be a project quality plan to measure the delivery and process quality.

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