PROJECT MANAGEMENT: A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH OF YES PRACTICE

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Abstract

The 21st century is the age of the knowledge economy. In order to promote peoples’ abilities, the Asian governments are not only doing their best to improve themselves through educational resources and environmental funding, but also by encouraging people to study abroad, to obtain global knowledge, ideals, and thoughts in order to increase their own competitive abilities.

YES, founded in 1965, is an educational guide for students who want to study abroad in the U.S.A., Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The mission of YES is to provide excellent quality services to help students to obtain their dreams of studying abroad, progress professionally, and obtains new knowledge, ideals, and benefits, widening their present paradigms.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education in Taiwan, the number of Taiwanese students who studied in the USA declined 25% from 2002 to 2003 (Ministry of Education in Taiwan, 2004). Presently, YES is focusing on the Taiwanese market, which unfortunately is shrinking. The declining consumer rate for YES’s services creates deleterious effects for the organization, and these need to be resolved immediately.

There is a new project to implement in order to increase YES’s net income from USD8 million in FY 2008 (09/01/2007 to 08/31/2008) to USD10.4 million in FY 2009 (09/01/2008 to 08/31/2009), a 30% increase. The project manager implements this project according to Billows (2002) 19 steps in five phases by Microsoft software of Project Management. The phases include initiation, planning, executing, controlling, and closeout, and are consistent with the PMI philosophy.

Key words: project management  PMI
1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is the age of the knowledge economy (Rodd, 2002). In order to promote peoples’ abilities, the Asian governments are not only doing their best to improve themselves through educational resources and environmental funding, but also by encouraging people to study abroad, to obtain global knowledge, ideals, and thoughts in order to increase their own competitive abilities.

YES, founded in 1965, is an educational guide for students who want to study abroad in the U.S.A., Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. YES has a diversified family of companies, including an English language school for the entrance examination such as TOEFL, GRE, or GMAT. An application counseling office for individual students’ needs, and the YES Education Foundation, a non-profit organization, help students’ learning. YES’s headquarters are located in Taipei, with branches in Chiayi, Tainan, Taichung, Hsinchu, Chungli, Kao Hsiung, and Hualien (YES, 2004).

YES wishes to be the leader for language training purposes by maintaining its existence in Chinese society, within the realm of study abroad counseling. YES has obtained outstanding respectability and reputation through educational means, promoting the process of learning in Taiwan. Moreover, because YES believes in giving back to society, the YES Education Foundation was founded to help support Chinese education. For this purpose, YES integrates information and resources to supply students with many free services, so students not only accept English language training, but also have the opportunity to visualize their study plans with effectiveness and efficiency. YES allows for relative discussion groups as well.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education in Taiwan, the number of Taiwanese students who studied in the USA declined 25% from 2002 to 2003. The number of Taiwanese students who studied in Canada during that same period declined 25.5%. The number who studied in the UK declined 30.2%. The number who studied in Australia dropped 2.5%; and the number who studied in New Zealand went down by 22.8% (Ministry of Education in Taiwan, 2004). YES’s net income also declined about 20% in 2003 compared to 2002.

The mission of YES is to provide excellent quality services to help students to obtain their dreams of studying abroad, progress professionally, and obtains new knowledge, ideals, and benefits, widening their present paradigms (YES, 2004). The purpose of the project is to increase YES’s net income from USD8 million in FY 2008 (09/01/2007 to 08/31/2008) to USD10.4 million in FY 2009 (09/01/2008 to 08/31/2009), a 30% increase.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Many believe that modern project management was born between the 1940s and 1960s, when massively engineered, complex military and government projects prompted managers to develop management techniques such as the Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) and the Critical Path Method (CPM), and these techniques and others assisted project managers with planning and control aspects of complex projects (Van der Merwe, 1998).
Project management characteristics include temporary, unique products, services or results, and progressive elaboration (PMI, 2004). Billows (2002) indicated that project management includes 19 steps in five phases, and the five phases are initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing processes. Projects are different from operations. Projects are temporary and unique, and operations are repetitive and ongoing (PMI, 2004; Zanoni & Audy, 2004), but both of them still share many same characteristics as follows: 1) performed by people; 2) constrained by limited resources; 3) planned, executed and controlled (PMI, 2004).

In 2004, Zanoni & Audy’s theoretical literature indicated that the initiation considers the necessary processes to assure that the project will be accomplished. The planning process aims to plan and keep a possible work scheme to reach the objectives of the project, involving scope setting, activities planning, the budget estimates, and the project plans. The execution consists of coordinating people and resources to execute the plan and involves quality guarantee, information distribution, and providers selection. Monitoring processes aims to assure that project objectives are being reached through monitoring and appraisal of its progress, controlling changes, costs, quality, and risks. Finally, the closing formalizes the project or phase acceptance, ending organized. (P.30)

Increasingly, organizations are adopting and adapting the formalized best practices embodied in the Project Management. This knowledge structures of project management into five groups of interrelated processes that occur throughout the project lifecycle (Beise & Niederman & Mattord, 2004).

Beise & Niederman & Mattord (2004) indicated that the project managers are also categorized into nine knowledge areas including project integration, scope management, cost management, time management, human resources, communication, quality, risk, and procurement. Each category has formally prescribed inputs, processes, outputs, and tools (Beise & Niederman & Mattord, 2004).

3. METHODOLOGY

The project manager implements this project according to Billows (2002) 19 steps in five phases by Microsoft software of Project Management. The five phases include initiation, planning, executing, controlling, and closeout, and are consistent with the PMI (Project Management Institute) philosophy. The 19 steps are as follows: 1) scope initiation and MOS (Measure of Success); 2) scope definition and planning: high-level achievement network (HLA) and communication and collaboration; 3) charter: assumptions, constraints, and risk; 4) charter: authority, resources and change control; 5) broad brush plan approval; 6) summary tasks and subtasks; 7) assignments and micro-management avoidance; 8) task sequence; 9) predecessor network: danglers in the network; 10) assigning durations and people; 11) calendars; 12) critical path; 13) final review and approval; 14) team leadership; 15) team culture and conflict; 16) creating the baseline; 17) status reports; 18) problem-solving and reporting; 19) project closing.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1. Phase 1: Initiation
4.1.1. Step #1: Scope Initiation and MOS (Measure of Success)

In Taiwan, the most popular countries people want to study abroad in are the English-speaking countries. The U.S.A., Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, account for more than 98% of the people who study abroad (Ministry of Education in Taiwan, 2004). Presently, YES is focusing on the Taiwanese market, which unfortunately is shrinking because of economic problems, a decrease in the birth-rate, and the fact that a great portion of Taiwan’s population is migrating to Mainland China. The declining consumer rate for YES’s services creates deleterious effects for the organization, and these need to be resolved immediately.

A critical task in exploring the firm-level antecedents of organizational scope is the identification of the specific firm-level commitments and capabilities that a firm may exploit through its vertical integration decisions (Leiblein & Miller, 2003). YES’s scope is to offer experience and information for people studying abroad in Taiwan, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore, while expecting to obtain a great number of students from various databases, utilizing practical materials to receive an immediate, accurate response. After YES implements this new project, it will be able to achieve goals that will increase revenues and cut costs down in order to meet the performance of MOS for the benefit of stakeholders, and the MOS is to increase net income from USD8 million in FY 2008 (09/01/2007 to 08/31/2008) to USD10.4 million in FY 2009 (09/01/2008 to 08/31/2009), a 30% increase.

4.1.2. Step #2: Scope Definition and Planning: High-level Achievement Network (HLA) and Communication and Collaboration

HLA 1: Downsizing branches in Taiwan and expand into international markets
1.1: Perform due diligence to determine which branches will be maintained.
1.2: To expand and focus international markets in Asia (Mainland China: Shanghai and Beijing, Hong Kong, and Singapore).

HLA 2: Setting up profitable units
2.1: To cooperate with a YES school to set up a new school in Mainland China.
2.2: To set up only two most profitable departments of application counseling offices and English language schools in HK, Singapore, Beijing, and Shanghai.

HLA 3: Reducing overhead and material costs by USD 1 million
3.1: To appoint the CEO to be the vice president and chairman of the YES International Educational Foundation in Taiwan.
3.2: To make vice presidents responsible for either an application counseling office or an English language school, and to have only one manager for the other department in HK, Singapore, Beijing and Shanghai.
3.3: To print books in Mainland China (the lowest printing cost) and then ship them to its branches.
3.4: Creating new visions for classes by Internet.
HLA 4: Establishing a communication nucleus and tracking performance

4.1: To contact foreign universities or institutes, then share all information with its branches monthly.
4.2: To survey and analyze students’ satisfaction with YES’s services.
4.3: To monitor all communicative activities internally and externally and track performance of revenues and expenses in order to meet MOS.

The following key members have been identified: (a) the CEO; (b) the team leader, Mr. William Tu, charges all matters for the project; (c) Mr. Jacky Chih is responsible for domestic matters; (d) Miss. Emma Tang and Miss Alice Lu account for international matters; and (e) Miss Candy Tu is responsible for all documents and reports for team members. There are three units including training, marketing and operation management will be an integrated cross-functional supporting body because the program involves multiple functions and directions in goal reaching (Fang, 2004). In order to enhance the efficiency of the project, the project manager, William Tu, needs to coordinate the key members as a team. The collaboration in the members determines the success of this project.

4.1.3. Step #3 Charter: Assumptions, Constraints, and Risk

“Force Field Analysis is a useful technique for looking at all the forces for and against a plan. It helps you to weigh the importance of these factors and decide whether a plan is worth implementing. Force field analysis also helps to strengthen facilitators and to minimize the effect of barriers in projects” (Mind, 2004, p. 1). The facilitators include the CEO of YES, market share, professional imagine and same culture and language. The barriers include the Chinese Government, working attitudes in different areas, duplication of staff at headquarters and branches, and new entrants into the markets. Furthermore, the project will require those team members to devote more their time in this project; however, the outcome will be a better reward for their hard work.

“A downsizing plan should be included in the strategic management plan of all organizations, regardless of whether they plan to downsize or not” (Davis, 2003, p. 181). The high operating costs unfortunately are creating low economic benefits for the following branches in Taiwan, which are part of YES: Chiayi, Hsinchu, Chungli, and Hualien. YES should close its doors or franchise the branches in areas of Taiwan and avoid employees’ opposition. To expand international markets, the authors recommend that YES focus on the markets in Mainland China (Shanghai and Beijing), Hong Kong, and Singapore as a beginning step, because there are many more Chinese in those areas. This might alleviate some of the problems or conflicts by minimizing language barriers and cultural practices.

YES’s organizational structure should be designed to: (a) create a geographic organizational structure for the benefit of obtaining markets, to flow directly into local sectors, for positive results; (b) the structure levels are as low as possible because more levels will lead to the problems in communication from managers to employees; (c) these face-to-face services reduce the time to markets, and supply strong regional relationships with customers; (d) this regional presence helps YES monitor local regulations and provides the market feedback in order to track the regional markets; and (e) it is easy to duplicate and set up successful experiences to
new branches in other countries. In order to build good communication in organizations, YES should set up an independent Communication Center, which will be linked to the CEO directly. The Communication Center will be responsible for the management of all communicative activities internally and externally.

Facing the new markets, YES should adopt different strategies between Taiwan and Mainland China, because it is not easy for people who live in Mainland China to apply for F-1 visas to study in USA. The market in Mainland China will focus on people who want to study in England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Moreover, China’s government does not allow foreigners to wholly own a company that services people who want to study abroad, so YES will take the way of joint ventures to set up two brands in Shanghai and Beijing. YES, therefore, takes three advantages from the joint venture structure: (1) losing strong foreign nationalistic sentiment, (2) acquiring expertise, tax, and other benefits, and (3) diversifying risks.

4.1.4. Step #4 Charter: Authority, Resources and Change Control

Work teams play an important role not only in traditional projects, such as new product developments, systems design and construction, but also in implementing organizational change, transferring technology concepts, and in running election campaigns (Thambain, 2004). The authority will be effective and sufficient, and provides support in human resources and finances. The team leader is responsible for setting up meeting dates (once per week). The CEO also discusses the project with all staff during regular meetings (once a month) to collect more suggestion and comments in order to successfully complete the project.

All team members are from inside YES, and their duties are appointed in accordance with their professional specialty. There are no extra salaries paid, so the employees’ salary is not increased. An office for five members is offered, and all equipment, including desks, chairs, computers, telephones, etc., are also moved from inside YES in order to make the budgets for the team members as low as possible. The expenses of team members include business trips, room and board, and overtime pay. The expenses will be reported to the financial department after completion.

In 2005, Waldron indicated that “choices companies make for effective change include just in time manufacturing (JIT), flexible manufacturing systems (FMS), total quality management (TQM) and world-class manufacturing (WCM)” (p. 244). In recent years, people assume that the Internet will change everything, rendering old rules about companies and competition obsolete (Porter, 2001). YES will not only provide on-ground courses in Taiwan, but will also provide some courses online, to teach e-business strategies and a new economy. For setting prices to final customers, YES establishes prices that will be charged for separate services, not just whole packages. YES’s pricing strategies are based on costs, demand, or the price of competing service in different demands.

4.1.5. Step #5: Broadbrush Plan Approval

The MOS, HLAs, sub-HLAs and charter will be discussed and reviewed with team members, and are approved by the CEO. There are two ways in which staff will communicate
informal networks and formal networks. Informal networks are already in place and team members have open access and each other through face-to-face meetings, letters, memos, telephone calls, e-mail reports, or documents. Team members make themselves easily available to the project manager in order to deal with any problems. There are also formal processes for the CEO, project manager and team members to support and advise monthly. This process is documented and the team members receive written and verbal feedback. The CEO or project manager meets with team members and the meetings are recorded. There is clear guidance to ensure a meeting with team members who have problems implementing the project.

The project has to be guided by highest quality and business conduct. The team members must follow the YES’s corporate governance and abide by the highest standards of business ethics as follows: 1) to avoid conflicts of interests; 2) to fair dealing; 3) to protect company’s assets and properly use them; 4) to keep confidentiality; and 5) to develop corporate opportunities.

In the project, other deliverable are four branches which will be closed in Taiwan, and four to be set up in Mainland China (two branches), Hong Kong, and Singapore. The organization structure is also changed to geographic organizational structure in order to face more complicated situations. Quality of services in China’s branches needs to improve because China lacks professional skills today. Taiwan’s company will create some data for employees, human resource, financial statement and operation in Mainland China. Each branch will be responsible for its own revenues, as it is related to salaries and bonuses. This is a pilot plan for YES to run international markets. If the project can be implemented successfully, it is easy to duplicate and set up the experiences to new branches for future expansion in other countries such as in Japan or South Korea.

4.2. Phase 2: Planning

4.2.1. Step #6: Summary Tasks and Subtasks

The CEO is going to authorize the team leader to carry out its new project, and to formalize a goal for this team at the end of May in order to clarify the team position and function. All tasks and subtasks entry of HLA1, 2, 3 and 4 could be set before June first, 2008.

4.2.2. Step #7 Assignments and Micro-Management Avoidance

This dimension is made up whether managers permit the employees to take part in important decisions that are relevant to the team’s goals, practice manners, tactics, and strategies. Moreover, it includes whether managers encourage employees to express their own opinions in important issues.

The leadership behavior of the CEO tends to democratic behavior which means team members make themselves easily available to the CEO or project manager in order to deal with any problems. For resolving potential conflicts of interest, when the project manager obtains the necessary information or problems from their employees, they will share the problems with individual or as a group, and get collective ideas and suggestions from them, and combine their ideals, evaluate alternative options, and attempt to reach agreement on a solution. This
communication is not just from the highest to the lowest levels – the CEO to the employees, and flow is from the lowest to the highest levels – the employees of the CEO.

4.2.3. Step #8: Task Sequence

The HLA 1 and 2 include two WBSs; HLA 3 include four WBSs; and HLA 4 include three WBSs. Task sequence and predecessor network for WBS of HLA1, 2, 3 and 4 are ranged before June 9th, 2008.

4.2.4. Step #9 Predecessor Network: Danglers in the Network

According to the task sequence of step #8, the network diagram of PERT chart is runned by Microsoft software of project management, and it appear two different color boxes. The red boxes indicate a critical success of the project and the figure should not have any dangler which doesn’t have a successor.

4.2.5. Step #10: Assigning Durations and People

There is a recurring at 4.3: To monitor all communicative activities internally and externally and track performance of revenues and expenses in order to meet MOS. The start is 12/26/2008, and the finish day is 8/25/2009. There are total nine times to monitor all activities. There are five people including the team leader in the project. The project does not extend beyond the planned completion date. It is not necessary to change completion date in the MOS. There are three people who are William, Jacky and Alice over-allocated. It is also add a lag time of five days at subHAL 3.2.

Project manager assigned 50% to Jacky at subHAL1.1; assigned 50% to Jacky and Alice at subHAL1.2; assigned 50% to William at subHAL2.1, and assigned 50% to Emma and Alice at subHAL2.2. The project from Figure 6 step 10 is now extended beyond the planned completion date. The change completion date changes to 10/3/2009 in the MOS. In order to meet the date of MOS, project manager assigned 50% to Candy at subHAL1.1 to help Jacky. The duration is from 350 days to 322.25 days, and the finish day is changed from 10/3/2009 to 8/25/2009. Assigned additional work to Candy is communicated by project manager, and promised by Candy. Assignment of people to tasks with leveling resources for over-allocation, project manager used the "Automatic Levering" tool that resolved the over-allocated problem, and everything was done. Project manager does not need to do other change.

The total cost is NT USD2,054,000. The most expensive of HLA is NT USD 788,000 at HLA 1. The fixed cost added at subHLA 1.1 is NT USD60,000. The cost includes the fees of consultants of due diligence. The fixed cost added at subHLA 1.2 is NT USD200,000. The cost includes the fees of people who go abroad to Shanghai and Beijing, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The fixed cost added at subHLA 2.1 is NT USD120,000. The cost includes the fees of people who go abroad to United States. The fixed cost added at subHLA 2.2 is NT USD200,000. The cost includes the fees of people who go abroad to Shanghai and Beijing. The fixed cost added at subHLA 3.1 is NT USD5,000. The cost includes the fees of meeting to buy snack and beverage. The fixed cost added at subHLA 3.2 is NT USD5,000. The cost includes the fees of meeting to
buy snack and beverage. The fixed cost added at subHLA 3.3 is NT USD100,000. The cost includes the fees of print books in Mainland. The fixed cost added at subHLA 3.4 is NT USD50,000. The cost includes the fees of creating new website vision. The fixed cost added at subHLA 4.1 is NT USD50,000. The cost includes the fees of telephone, fax and postage. The fixed cost added at subHLA 4.2 is NT USD20,000. The cost includes the fees of copies and survey. After added the fixed cost, the total cost is increased from NT USD2,054,000 to NT USD2,914,000.

Two materials including laptops and paper are added. Two laptops cost NT USD 90,000, and paper of 200 reams costs NT USD 14,000. After added the material costs, the total cost is increased from NT USD2,914,000 to NT USD3,018,000. The material cost only increased at subHLA 1.1 from NT USD368,000 to NT USD472,000. Presently, HLA 1 is the most costly, and it is NT USD1,152,000. The subHLA 1.2 is the most costly, and it is NT USD680,000. From the Figure 9, project manager has to track subHLA 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 carefully in term of its potential cost if it dose not stay on schedule. From the variable cost (Figure 7), fixed cost (Figure 8), and materials cost (Figure 9), I can distinguish the different costs clearly, and the three different are inputted into software.

4.2.6. Step #11: Calendars

The project start date is 6/1/2008; finish day is 9/5/2009; and the duration is 329.25 days. During the duration, there are 12 holidays added to non-working time, and the project manager adjusts MOS date to 9/6/2009, and do not adjust others including Start and Finish dates. The subHLA 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.2, and 4.3 extend beyond the planned finish date for the project. The subHLA 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 4.3 extend beyond the planned start date for the project. The duration is also changed from 329.25 to 318.25 days for the project. The duration is changed from 196.25 days to 186.25 days in recurring tasks of subHLA 4.3, and three start and finish days are also changed in recurring tasks of subHLA 4.3. There is no people over-allocation after the calendar changes.

The finish date will be 9/6/2009. It is accepted by the CEO and team members because the date only postpone for one day. The duration is changed from 329.25 to 318.25 days after the calendar changes of the project. All holidays are according to government regulation, CEO has proved the holidays before. The day only change is on 9/5/2009 because it is accounting period of YES. It is accepted by the CEO and team members because accountants have to report YES’s account to government, and the date only postpone for one day.

4.2.7. Step # 12: Critical Path

The duration could be derived by identifying the critical path, which is the longest path of linked tasks in the PERT/CPM network. By identifying the critical path, schedulers had a way of identifying which tasks needed to be monitored closely in order to avoid schedule slippages and which tasks needed to be adjusted in order to accelerate the project schedule (Frame, 2002). The critical path-it helps determine the current "most critical" activities to allocate resources. In Figure 12, the critical path is presented by red color. It is clear that the critical path is short and
located at the end of subHLA 4.3 of this project. William and Candy need to pay more attention to this part in order to ensure the project to a successful close.

4.2.8. Step #13: Final Review and Approval

The project manager obtains an approval and authority from the CEO. After that, the project manager is authorized to execute and control the actual situation. The CEO will also provide full support to implement the project. In addition, the project manager will schedule day-to-day models of communication and weekly reports to the CEO. It is also helpful to get appropriate budgets, personnel, equipments, and other necessary resources from other departments.

4.3. Phase 3: EXECUTING

4.3.1. Step #14: Team Leadership

In 1985, Bass indicated that there are two leadership styles of transformation and transaction. Transformational leaders are able to increase and create the confidence and motivation of their subordinates to achieve their goals beyond expectations, and a transactional leader clarifies his/her subordinates’ role and exchanges rewards contingent on their performance (Blackwell, 2004). The style of transformation leadership will be used to the team members. The leadership will increase communication among the team members, trust each other, and reach MOS.

4.3.2. Step #15: Team Culture and Conflict

Billows (2002) indicated that every project team develops a unique culture as the people work together. Sometimes that culture encourages interdepartmental bickering and blaming others for problems and failures. Other times the culture may encourage strict compliance with the rules and discourage creativity and innovation.” “While every member of the team influences the culture, the project manager’s style is of paramount importance. Specifically, the way in which the project manager makes assignments and what the project manager rewards have important impact’s on the overall team culture (Billows, 2002).

For the project, project manager is going to take some approaches in order to achieve a strong orientation and reach the MOS as follows: (a) respecting everyone’s ideas and opinions, (b) promoting consistency and fairness in managing people, (c) creating a consonant working environment, and (d) creating a reward system in order to stimulate their creativity as well as efficiency.

4.4. Phase 4: CONTROLLING

4.4.1. Step #16: Creating the Baseline

Each project management team should study the starting position and consider alternative courses of action for meeting the required project completion date. While a complete analysis of
the network is not essential at this point, the group should at least identify critical and sub-critical paths, and carefully investigate activities that are likely to be completed during the first decision report period. Once a decision has been made, activities completed during that period cannot be changed. During the simulation, the player is continuously confronted with a number of valuable concepts used in project scheduling, such as the earliest activity start/finish, the latest activity start/finish, the activity slack, and the deadline slack (Vanhoucke & Vereecke & Gemmel, 2005). Free slack shows that HLA 1 has 27.5 days; HLA 2 has 178.25 days; HLA 3 has 27.5 days, and HLA 4 has 0 days. The subHLAs 2.1 is 80 hours. The free slack of subHLAs 1.1, 2.1, and 4.1 is 0 days.

4.4.2. Step #17: Status Reports

In 2003, Nanda indicated that “there are various reasons why such schedule slippages occur. The two most common are: (1). Lack of employee participation. Usual employee job responsibilities take precedence over participation in the implementation effort. (2). Inadequate project management. The corporate quality department lacks an effective means to monitor and report progress against the established schedule” (p. 104). There are three subHLAs which are 1.1, 2.1 and 4.1 tracked, and the status day is on 9/7/2008. The end date of subHLAs 1.1 is on 9/6/2008; 2.1 is on 10/19/2008, and 4.1 is on 7/12/2008. The duration of subHLAs 1.1 is 70 days; 2.1 is 100 days, and 4.1 is 30 days. Critical path is only on subHLAs 4.3.

An important point made in the report is the need to set measurable indicators of progress towards the project's objectives. Status indicators give project managers little guidance on how to monitor progress (Choo, 1995). The percentage of work complete on subHLAs 1.1 is 100%; 2.1 is 80%, and 4.1 is 100% based on the status day 9/7/2008. The duration of subHLAs 1.1 is 70 days; 2.1 are 100 days, and 4.1 are 30 days. Critical path is only on subHLAs 4.3, and does not have any change.

At great cost in time, money and the work focus of managers and human resource departments, organizations have measured indicators which are suitable for quantification in order to match indicators in other organizations identified as having ‘Best practices’ (Swain, 1999). The actual work done on subHLAs 1.1 is 560 hours, and 4.1 is 120 hours based on the status day 9/7/2008. The work remaining on subHLAs 2.1 is 80 hours. The duration of subHLAs 1.1 is 70 days; 2.1 is 100 days, and 4.1 is 30 days. The critical path is only on subHLAs 4.3, and does not have any change.

The Microsoft software of project management allows accurate forecasting of timescales, budgets, resource management, cost control, baseline and cost tracking, and critical path analysis. According to the status day 9/7/2008, the HLA 1 has total cost NT USD1,152,000, and still remain NT USD680,000. The HLA 2 has total cost NT USD832,000, and still remain NT USD480,000. The HLA 3 has total cost NT USD688,000, and still remain NT USD688,000. The HLA 4 has total cost NT USD346,000, and still remain NT USD200,000.

Non-analytical approach is to track costs, and typically shows the graphic depictions and visual or graphic status. It will show whether or not a project is “on time” and if it is “within budget”. The Earned Value Management (EVM) is an analytical method to track the budget
This approach includes three approaches including (a) 50-50 rule for measuring work performance, (b) 0-100 rule to calculate earned value, and (c) cost and schedule variances. Analytical approaches give us a method for calculating the percentage of the job that has been achieved. It also lets us measure the ‘burn rate’ of our expenditures, thus allowing us to calculate the budget impact of our performance (Frame, 2002). If given the option of choosing between the analytical approaches of the 50-50 Rule for Measuring Work Performance and the 0-100 Rule to Calculate Earned Value, this Project Manager would choose the 0-100 Rule to Calculate Earned Value because it makes no sense, and any incomplete task bears no value at all (Frame, 2002).

Warhoe (2004) indicated that “Earned Value Management is a system that incorporates the organized components of the project's schedule, budget estimate and scope of work into a process by which the project's forecasted costs at the end of the project can be more reliably determined.” (p. 72). The Earned Value Schedule Indicators will be conducted in order to track costs and schedule variances. There are five columns in the Table 5, and named as follows: (a) Budgeted cost of work scheduled (BCWS), (b) budget cost of work performed (BCWP), (c) schedule variance (SV), (d) SV %, and (e) schedule performance index (SPI).

Schedule Performance Index (SPI): Portion of job achieved. The formulation of SPI is BCWP/BCWS.

(a) From SubHLA 1.1, Budgeted cost of work scheduled (BCWS) is NT USD472,000, and budget cost of work performed (BCWP) is NT USD472,000. The SPI is NT USD472,000/NT USD472,000 = 1. It means that portion of job of SubHLA 1.1 achieves on time according to the project schedule. Schedule Variance (SV) is NT USD0.00 (BCWP - BCWS). It means that SubHLA 1.1 is accomplished completely through this amount of budget.

(b) From SubHLA 2.1, Budgeted cost of work scheduled (BCWS) is NT USD308,000, and budget cost of work performed (BCWP) is NT USD308,000. The SPI is NT USD308,000/NT USD308,000 = 1. It means that portion of job of SubHLA 2.1 achieves on time according to the project schedule. Schedule Variance (SV) is NT USD0.00 (BCWP - BCWS). It means that SubHLA 2.1 is accomplished completely through this amount of budget.

(c) From SubHLA 4.1, Budgeted cost of work scheduled (BCWS) is NT USD146,000, and budget cost of work performed (BCWP) is NT USD146,000. The SPI is NT USD146,000/NT USD146,000 = 1. It means that portion of job of SubHLA 4.1 achieves on time according to the project schedule. Schedule Variance (SV) is NT USD0.00 (BCWP - BCWS). It means that SubHLA 4.1 is accomplished completely through this amount of budget.

Step #18: Problem-Solving and Reporting

Management consultants and turnaround specialists have some things in common, most of which probably are obvious. For example, the diagnostic, problem-solving aspect; the need to understand the parts of a business as well as how they fit together; addressing issues of leadership, finance, organization—and so on (Sargeant, 2005). To ensure the success of the project, the essence of continued improvement is the skill to solve problem effectively and efficiently.
There are three scenarios could be happened in this project as follows: 1) Ahead of schedule – cost variance is fine with respect to resources: Ahead of schedule in this project may be encouraged by project manager, but the cost should not be increased; 2) Slippage in Schedule extending the completion date significantly and over-budget in human resources: Over-budget in human resource could happen because there is not everything in control by project manager, such as unstable policies in Mainland China or alliance with YES institute. If this project delays, it will increase the cost of human resource because the CEO will pay to finish the left work; 3) On schedule, but over budget in human resources: The most important to this project is to finish it on schedule in order to achieve the MOS. This over budget in human resource could be happened if unexpected matters occur. However, if everything is in anticipation, and budget in human resources is increased, the project manager will be responsible for this situation, and it could be a lesson for next project.

4.5. Phase 5: CLOSING

4.5.1. Step #19: Project Closing

The final step of close-out is to recognize outstanding achievement and celebrate the success of completing the project. Not only outstanding individuals but also the whole team should be publicly recognized and rewarded. Five end-of-project reports are listed including completed tasks, critical path, in progress tasks, budget report and project summary. The Project Manager will be ease to track the condition of whole project and the data of this overview report are very clear and they are easy to understand. The project manager will know which tasks have been completed; which tasks is in processing; which tasks are not been completed, and which tasks will pay more attention to it. The project manager will be easier to control and track whole achieved percentage of scheduled progress in order to achieve the MOS.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The project manager implements this project according to Billows (2002) 19 steps in five phases by Microsoft software of Project Management. At the beginning of initiating process, it was hard to define the project scope and planning. How each HLA and subHLA cut down the scope to a measurable success and then implementing the achievement network; all of this require a logic and understanding of what this project want to accomplish. Second step was planning stage, and I learned the task sequence of predecessor or successor network. For the predecessor, I had to make sure every task is to connect to each other. Afterward, I learned how to assign people, costs and materials to all tasks without over allocation. One of the most important tasks here was the critical path. Project manager needed to pay more attention to the path in order to ensure whole project success.

During the executing process, I learned what kind of leadership style I am. The style of transformation leadership was used to the team members. The leadership will increase communication among the team members, trust each other, and reach MOS. By understanding my style, I will be able to see which capabilities that I don’t have so I can improve myself. I also realized my characteristics of conflict resolution from doing the project. Collaboration,
compromising and accommodation will be my favorite ways to resolve conflicts. In the controlling process, project manager needed to track whole schedule and variance costs in order to ensure the project was in control. The earned value management provides a new perception to see how effective is the project running on schedule and on budget. It is important to keep tracking costs variance and schedule variance so the project will not run into problems of over-budget and running out of times. The final stage of the project cycle is to close-out the project. The most important thing is to learn the lessons from the project in order to avoid similar mistakes for next project. In addition, recognition of outstanding individuals and the team are also important.

Modern organizations face a very dynamic environment for which it is imperative to re-think unique strategies that are more aligned to stable conditions (Bellamy & Becker & Kuwik, 2003). YES needs to continue to implement outstanding strategies, and attract more students, well-known faculty and educational resources, as well as upgrade its software capabilities and hardware facilities, with the support of outstanding alumni, whose experiences will help create positive images to virtually allow YES to foster study abroad opportunities to a greater number of students. This research limited the case study of YES. For future study, this research work will need to be extended to other case studied, such as ERP in other industries and organizations.

REFERENCES


