Critical Thinking

Successful Managing an International Project

Ayman A Melouk

MSc Project Management

Many questions appear to recognize and identify the key to successful managing an international project, it is part of Globalisation subjects, where there are no limits between nations when putting policies and goals for organisations, how far the effectiveness of culture and culture perspectives from these reasons? Is it one of them or it's the one and the only, no matter neither the place nor time? Reaching the reasons for this success, is the main point for this paper to discuss.

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1 Introduction

1.1

Effective management is not easy. There are many ideas to integrate, a wide range of business needs to meet, and complex organisational (and cultural) issues to address. These subjects collecting together a number of 'critical success factors' for management projects, and they do not provide an exhaustive list, but they offer a series of principles which can be used to guide the planning and implementation of management activities, from the outset, it must be known that, this subjects concern on organisational, cultural and strategic factors that must be considered to improve the management within organisations in the international projects. Other point of view, there are many consideration to understand how can any firm transfer its policies, goals and direction to be an international one, leaded by many ways of creating aspects of success, for that and to be successful in managing international Project, you must understand critical cultural differences and best project management practices, as well as their implications on the design and execution of international projects. Successful project managers tailor team communication to expectations and preferences, initiate international projects effectively, master the virtual team challenges of distance, culture, and languages, and execute the right strategies to anticipate, prevent, and/or resolve conflicts. An effective manager pays attention to many facets of management, leadership and learning within organizations.

1.2

However, culture as one of many reasons to success, but in many organizations or firms it might be the most important one, that lead us to ask; what is culture?, and how it can effect on organizations to lead this organizations to reach their ambitious for success?

2   What is management?

2.1

The concept of "management" often refers to managing people (primarily the directing function of management). The foundation of management theory has been developed in the academic literature by several management theorists. The management process has been viewed as both an art and a science, when these management skills are practiced successfully, they are more like an art than an exacting science, but conceptual management mainly based on skills developed through experience. There are many challenges that need to be overcome when planning and implementing management projects.

2.2

Frederick W. Taylor is generally considered the father of "scientific management." He believed that management should use scientific methods to make decisions and to evaluate alternative courses of action. These methods approach requires such as; valid, reliable information be obtained as a requisite to decision making and maintaining rigorous controls to monitor this decision. Henry L. Sisk, PhD, defines management in his book Management And Organization as the "coordination of all resources through the processes of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain stated objectives".

2.3

Coordination one and important basic functions of management. Henri Fayol, believed that managerial success was not created by inspirational leadership alone, but was the result of applying a set of sound management principles to coordinating group work activities. In his book "General Principle of management" (1949), he presented his 14 management principles to important guidance to the coordination or administrative role of the successful management effort, recently with all these modernism in every part of life, they are the basic of modern management practice today, we can explain them in three main groups:

First principle: deal with the challenge of increasing efficiency, we find it in:

1. **Division** of work suggests that management divide the work among individual employees and create groups of specialists to handle similar job functions. We can see how this principal increases individual employee skill level, reduces learning time by reducing the number of employees, learning new tasks, and measures overall efficiency by not changing employee tasks.

Second group of principles: address management concerns for human relations problems, we can find them in:

2. **Subordination** of individual interests to the general interests of the organization requires.

3. Equity is defined as kindliness, justice, and fairness in maintaining organization--employee relations. Employee policies should be applied equally and fairly.

4. **Stable** tenure for personnel is desirable to generate a feeling of security among employees and to enhance employee performance.

5. **Employee initiative** can be improved by providing a system that seeks and recognizes employee suggestions for improving work methods. Employees will take on greater initiative if their ideas are heard and considered by the organization.

6. **Esprit de corps, or team spirit**, should be accomplished by unifying all divergent employee groups and by boosting employee morale.

Third group of principles: improve the administrator's role in the management process, as they are:

7. **Authority** is the right to give orders and should be accompanied by an equal level of responsibility without granting the commensurate authority.

8. **Discipline** will result from the respect shown by both management and staff for the written policies that govern their work conduct. All work agreements between employees and the organization must be equitable and clearly stated.

9. **Unity of command** states that work orders should originate from one source.

10. **Unity of direction** requires that for each business plan or major organized initiative, there should be one manager directing the employees.

11. **Remuneration** should be accomplished through a payroll method that wages paid should be equitable and satisfactory to employees.

12. **Centralization** occurs when the organization places more authority and responsibility in the hands of management. Organizations can decentralize by shifting more authority to subordinates.

13. **Scalar chain** requires that definite lines of authority be established from the bottom to the top of the organization.

14. **Order** includes the concept of "a place for everything and everything in its place".

3   Culture as part of successful management

3.1

Culture is a term that has different meanings; there is a list of 164 definitions of "culture". However, the word "culture" is most commonly used in three basic senses:

- Excellence of taste in the fine arts and humanities, also known as high culture

- An integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for symbolic thought and social learning

- The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution, organization or group.

3.2

The culture of an organisation consists of mixed between values and beliefs of the people and their behaviour in that organisation. where, employees know what is expected of them. The culture of an organisation is often established by management and its policy decisions. Both values and beliefs of the organisational culture usually support the organisational goals. As an example, if your business has a positive and helpful organisational culture this can help motivate staff or at least prevent them from becoming dissatisfied. On the other hand, if the culture/morale of your business does not satisfy your staff needs then it will probably become a demotivator, and less inclined to want to work towards the organisational goals

3.3

A great effort must be motivating us to understand other cultures which contain of differences of Perception of time, Nonverbal behavior (Personal space), Context, Language/knowledge of other cultures and religion. More understanding culture will drive us to obtain value differences across cultures regarding to its dimensions which are:

- Cultural dimensions seem to affect a number of important work outcomes such as communication style, motivation, and preferred leader style.

- Subsequent research suggests the need for a fifth dimension: the extent to which people are oriented to the present or recent past.

3.4

One of the clearest example to understand how culture affects on decision makers working in any firms as an international business. This kind of business defined as; collaborative projects extending across national boundaries introducing project challenges. This kind of business contains with several people from multi-nations with different culture, from different background and from different value systems must share authority, responsibility, and decision-making. They are working together in a project or a job, and maybe the place of the project in deferent area, which means that they have to mange to success no matter how they will face any problems belong to these difficulties.

4 An international management and managers

4.1

Globalisation and rapidly developing technology shows we are in a period of intense and terrible competition. To identify an international management "the process of applying management concepts and techniques in a multinational environment and adapting management practices to different economic, political, and cultural environments". According to one set of researchers, there are four basic phases that companies go through as they evolve internationally:

a. Firms are largely **domestic** players; this firm can export some of their products or services across borders.

b. **International** firms are those that have responded to domestic competition by expanding their sales abroad.

c. The **multinational** stage which operate extensively in other countries.

d. Firms are considered **global** to compete successfully, these firms must produce high quality products that can be sold anywhere across the globe.

4.2

Six key aspects of international business contact which are: trust, commitment, success, working together, attitudes to time, decision making. Previous studies present different approaches to managing organizations and reaching success in a multi-project environment. The challenges and characteristics of novel management of project-oriented organization that effected as a key to successfully manage an international project, there are some other factors that are considered more important than culture such:

1. An understanding of international trends and the common process/stages of doing international business can prove useful.

2. Even small and mid-size firms are conducting business across borders today.

3. Costs associated with better understanding of cultural issues are less than those associated with typical political and legal problems, but the payoff may be greater.

4.3

In the other hand, one of the important reasons in achieving success; looking for the skills belongs to human attitude, it is important to search about "Effective Management Skills" to improve people and organization to be effectiveness and efficiency. Active management is part of these complex environments. The effective management styles can determine the attitude of the organisation, the productivity of its staff, and, ultimately, success or failure. Management utilises planning, organisational and communications skills. A manager should have the ability to direct, supervise, encourage, inspire, and co-ordinate, and in doing so facilitate action and guide change. These skills are important in leadership also, but even more so are qualities such as integrity, honesty, courage, commitment, sincerity, passion, determination, compassion and sensitivity. Other skills for manager to be creative like:

- **Problem solving**: how to describe and analyse, identifying causes, developing options and implement and evaluate the effective decision
- **Communication**: listening, presentation, feedback and report writing skills
- **Conflict management**: identify sources, functional and dysfunctional, Understanding, Choosing the best strategy for dealing and developing skills in promoting constructive conflicts in organization and teams.
- **Negotiation**: Distinguishing, positioning, Identifying common mistakes, Developing rational thinking and Developing effective skills in negotiation.
- **Self-Awareness**: Understanding the concept, Evaluate the effectiveness, Developing creative and holistic thinking, Understanding the importance of emotions in works, Understand of self-motivation and Effectively managing self-learning and change

4.4

Finally, there are some other factors that are considered more important than culture such as the quick response in resolving problems, communication, maintaining a positive working environment, etc..., and it was found out that two types of success factors must be taken in consideration when making decisions on projects; first issue is about results-related factor contribute directly to success, and the second issue is process- and resource-related factor which is more like enabler type success determinant. The success of first issue measure the benefits of the project outcome for the company and stakeholders, strategic importance of the project results, risks, and importance of the project results.

5   Conclusion

- Managing project-business successfully requires successful management of projects. Company's business objectives and goals should be interrelated, and one of the important point that, international construction projects are not only high scale but also high profile.

- Developing effective management skills to deal with specific challenges and problems of each organization is the urgent needs of many businesses and organizations in the global competitive environment, rapid changing of technology and environment.

- The aspect of culture is very important, and it acts as doing different things by different people in different fields at the same time, but knowledge of culture of certain people doesn't mean the only way to successful project, many other aspects must be taken in mind especially for decision makers.

- It could not been possible to define a main key to successfully manage an international project due to the nature of management as it requires a multi factor combination which will lead to achieving aims and goals of the project.

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