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INFM 205

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Capstone Reflection – Lessons Learned Paper

Key Takeaways from the Course

Because of this course, I have developed an understanding of project management and its application to informatics. I noted the balance between technical needs and organizational goals, which continues from planning through execution. This course emphasizes essential project management skills such as setting clear objectives, ensuring transparency, and fostering teamwork to achieve common goals. I valued how clear communication, risk control, and stakeholder alignment all played crucial roles in a project's success.

What Concepts, Practices, or Tools Stood Out to You?

Several tools and practices introduced in this course considerably impacted how I handle project management. For example, Gantt charts helped me visualize a project timeline, its dependencies, and the distribution of work. While reducing scope creep, RACI matrices clarified roles and responsibilities. Learning to use risk registers gave me a method for anticipating challenges and developing mitigation strategies when situations arise. Additionally, stakeholder maps expanded my understanding of their influence and expectations.

Applying these tools helped me to focus on planning and initiative. I now view documentation as a critical component of success, though it has taken on a new level of importance that differs in some respects from the requirements of my current role.

How Has Your Understanding of Project Management Evolved?

I shifted my understanding of project management from a linear, step-by-step process to a dynamically adaptive discipline, especially in Agile environments. I learned that project managers must adapt to changing requirements and stakeholder expectations while also adhering to technical constraints. I am now better equipped to anticipate change and prioritize adaptability in my own projects. In my current role, I have gained a greater appreciation for interpersonal skills such as communication and negotiation. Working with both technical teams and non-technical clients has highlighted the importance of communicating technical topics clearly and accessibly to non-technical stakeholders. This has become an essential transferable skill I have been practicing in my current role, and the insights I gained during this course have been especially relevant and informative.

I have noticed that informatics projects are influenced by the interplay among data, technology, people, and policies. These kinds of projects generally involve managing systems that ensure interoperability and regulatory compliance. Working in the field of informatics will involve understanding organizational workflows, user needs, and the operation of information systems. Because of this, it is essential to engage stakeholders, adopt an iterative development approach, and regularly validate a project's requirements.

What Makes Informatics Projects Unique or Complex (Compared to General PM)?

Informatics projects are more complex than general project management projects for several reasons. They have data governance, privacy, and security requirements. They also require interoperability across different systems, platforms, and organizational departments. They depend on high-quality, readily available data to function optimally and must comply with organizational policies and regulatory frameworks, including the Health Insurance Portability

and Accountability Act (HIPAA). These projects may require collaboration among stakeholders with varying levels of technical expertise.

How Does This Affect Planning, Communication, or Stakeholder Engagement?

Project planning needs to be thorough. Communication should be intentional and tailored to the audience. Stakeholder engagement should continue throughout the project lifecycle. Effective planning requires early identification of technical dependencies and timelines, allowing sufficient time for testing and incorporation. Communication should be tailored to the audience. While technical teams need detailed information, executives need brief summaries of risks and impacts. To maintain alignment on project goals, stakeholder involvement is essential, along with gathering feedback and building trust during the project lifecycle.

Applications to My Work or Future Goals

This course closely aligns with my professional aspirations in informatics and cybersecurity. I plan to apply my knowledge gained from academic projects to future leadership roles and projects. The tools I have gained, such as risk registers, stakeholder maps, and communication plans, will help me manage difficult situations and communicate effectively with various audiences.

How Will You Apply What You Learned to Future Academic, Professional, or Personal Projects?

I plan to integrate these lessons by incorporating project management tools into my everyday workflow to prioritize clear communication and remain adaptable. In an academic context, I will utilize the tools I have learned to coordinate research schedules and facilitate group projects. Professionally, I will utilize executive communication skills, perform

independent risk assessments, and align stakeholders with project objectives. In personal projects, such as volunteering or creative pursuits, I apply principles like setting goals, planning timelines, and focusing on incremental improvements. I intend to use Jira for my ePortfolio in INFM 211. This course has given me a measure of readiness and boosted my confidence as I begin pursuing my career in informatics.