Choosing a Project and Defining the Stakeholders

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**Project Name: WAVE**

Project is an endeavor undertaken to accomplish a unique product or service by making use of organizational resources. The organization transacts through a traditional software system which has been there for past 10 years. Earlier when the scale of organization was small, the system worked well. However as the organization’s scale increased, complexities increased and more people and processes were added. These new processes cannot be mapped to the existing software and require an upgrade to a new version of the software. It has resulted in loss of information and confusion leading to delays in production, mistakes in accounting, increase in customer complaints and ambiguity among employees. Even after upgrade it is not certain whether software would be able to manage all current as well as future requirements of the organization. When alternatives to this software system were analyzed, ERP was on top of the list. It is a tough decision to initiate this project as the project would require extensive time, resources and finances. However, looking at the long-term benefits, it is a step towards betterment of organization from all perspectives. ERP would integrate all data and processes of the organization into a unified system. Different processes like accounting, human resource management, customer relationship management, inventory management, etc. can be integrated

The selection criteria for the project were based on benefit measurement. Since there were other projects also in consideration, benefits of all were compared. The ERP project had highest score when benefits were quantified. Apart from benefits approach, answers to following questions were sought for all projects:

* Would this project increase long-term organizational value?
* Would there be cost savings if the project is implemented?
* How long will the benefits last?

# Stakeholders

Given the complexity of project, understanding interactions of stakeholders’ of the project is important. For Wave, following stakeholders have been identified:

**Senior Leadership:** Senior leadership of the organization comprising of CEO, CFO and CIO require information generated from the project to measure how well strategic objectives of the company are met.

* CEO: Even if CEO is not available for intricate details of the project, his/her support throughout the project would ensure that other stakeholders understand the importance of the project and participate to maximum possible extent.
* CFO: While CFO is well versant with existing accounting system, he has to understand how the new system would improve the way accounting is done.
* CIO: The knowledge of CIO regarding hardware, software, is critical for deployment of new system. CIO can help in creating a network infrastructure that hosts the ERP system.

**Project manager:** Project manager is the single point of contact for all queries, tasks, processes related to the project. With support from senior leadership, project manager takes decisions for timely implementation of ERP. He has to ensure that project is on track and at the same time team understands requirements of the project.

**Sales and marketing:** Needs of sales and marketing team have to be balanced with needs of business. Hence, inputs from this stakeholder group are important in deciding on functionalities of ERP.

**System Users:** System users are the ultimate users of new system who would use it everyday to process business transactions. This is an important group of stakeholders and their needs are important just as other stakeholder groups.

References:

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