

Approaches to Project Management

1. B – Agile approach

Key word to notice in this passage is “change”. The probability of modifications being made to the system is high meaning changes may need to be made at late stages of the project. For this reason a flexible approach to the project management should be adopted and an agile approach selected. This will allow the project framework to be met even if modifications are required at undesirable times. The cost of implementing these changes would be kept to a minimum since the project management style is prepared to deal with such circumstances. A waterfall approach would not satisfy this project as it does not allow for such changes to be dealt with as effectively as an agile approach.

2. A – Critical path

Critical chain is a method of project management that puts emphasis on the resources required to complete a task. These resources are both flexible in their start time and tasks can be switched in terms of their order to produce effective results. This is in contrast to critical path which puts more emphasis on task orders.

3. True

An agile approach to project management allows flexibility between the stages of a project. The ability to shift emphasis between certain tasks at any stage in the project allows for any late changes or errors to be implemented effectively. With certain tasks not completed and set aside, the realisation that further implementation may be required means any changes can be implemented with much less effort than a waterfall approach. This in turn reduces the cost of changes being made to a project. The extent of savings on any changes being made depend upon the stage at which they are implemented. If this is done at a late stage the savings are at a maximum as described in the agile approach diagram in the lecture slide pack.

4. Answer:

BP’s project management style is known in the company as MPcP (Major Projects Common Process). It is designed to allow a variety of different types of projects to be carried out exceptionally. The company prides itself in its excellence of service so it must carry out all projects to a high standard to sustain this. Their PRINCE2 structure lists a set of guidelines but the company expect employees to be innovative in their approach to projects. As in all PRINCE2 structure the approach is split up into a number of manageable stages:

- Appraise
- Select
- Define

Execute
Operate

This relates directly to the phases laid out by the PRINCE2 structure:

Starting and initiating a project
Planning and directing a project
Controlling a stage and managing product delivery
Managing stage boundaries
Closing a project

All the work that has been done in each phase of the project approach gets scrutinized by the senior engineers and technical authorities at BP in order to ensure quality of delivery. The requirements at each of these gates has to be signed off in order for budget to be released for the next phase of the project.

5. Answer:

The PMBOK (Project Management Book of Knowledge) is a guide that presents terminology and guidelines for effective project management. The guide is process based meaning that it describes work as being done by processes. Each process is described in terms of three stages. Inputs include documents and designs, tools and techniques refer to mechanisms applied to the inputs and outputs describe documents or products for example. The five process groups and the nine knowledge areas as stated in the lecture slides are as follows:

Initiating
Planning
Executing
Controlling & Monitoring
Closing

Project Integration Management
Project Scope Management
Project Time Management
Project Cost Management
Project Quality Management
Project Human Resource Management
Project Communication Management
Project Risk Management
Project Procurement Management

Each of the nine knowledge areas contains processes that must be completed in order to carry out the tasks effectively. These processes fall into one of the five groups as stated above. This creates a matrix structure which allows processes to be related to one knowledge area and one process group.