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EVALUATION OF PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS
In VOMARE -project

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Abstract

The purpose of the thesis is to study the achievements of VOMARE –project from the Finnish Lifeboat Institutions perspective. The organisation is a roof organisation for voluntary maritime rescue operation in Finland. The Finnish Lifeboat Institution is a lead partner in VOMARE –project which is EU funded project and the aim of the project is to start voluntary rescue operations in Estonia.

The theoretical part of the work is divided into two main categories; project management and planning a successful project. The project management section includes information about good project management, project management knowledge areas and the project lifecycle. The project planning section includes theories about project stakeholders, customer value and satisfaction, strategic planning and evaluating the project success.

The empirical part has two sections as well; research methods and findings of the research. The research methods covers research method used, data collection and data analysis. The second part has the results from the qualitative research. In the nest part the summary and conclusion of the research is drawn. The reliability and validity is been assess and possible further studies are mentioned. The thesis ends to the concluding remarks.

The result from the research is that the project was completed successfully. The project objectives were achieved and the project exceeded the expectations. Some difficulties and obstacles were on the way to the end of the project.

Subject headings, (keywords)

Project, stakeholders, project management, strategic planning, Project management knowledge areas, project lifecycle.

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Finnish Lifeboat Institution is the roof organisation for voluntary maritime rescue associations in Finland and it was founded in 1897. The mission of the organisation is to save lives and assist people at sea and on inland waters. The organisation also aims to promote safety on sea and good seamanship. The rescue work is based exclusively on the contribution of volunteers. There are only eight hired people working in the organisation and they are all working in the administration. There are approximately 60 rescue association throughout the country, from Ivalo to Hanko. The total number of members in the organisation is over 17,000. In addition, there are more than 2000 active voluntary crewmembers in total. There are over 150 rescue vessels and they complete over 900 missions annually. In 2010 they rescued approximately 30 people from death. The biggest supporter of the organisation is RAY, Finland's Slot Machine Association. The Finnish Lifeboat Institution was the lead partner in the VOMARE project.

The purpose of VOMARE, voluntary maritime rescue, project was to bring back the voluntary maritime rescue activities in Estonia and start cooperation between Finland and Estonia. Another important reason for the start of the project was the increasing number of traffic on the Baltic Sea. The value of the project was about 1M€ and the most important financier was the EU Interreg IVA –program. Other notable financiers and partners of the project were the European Regional Development Fund and Regional Council of Southwest Finland. Prior to the VOMARE project there was another EU funded project. The most important part of the project was taking four fully equipped rescue vessels from Finland to Estonia and replacing them with three new vessels. The project also included training the Estonian voluntary crewmembers.

I have been working in the Finnish Lifeboat Institution for over a year and also have worked in the VOMARE –project administrative tasks. The project is important for the organisation not only because of the value of the project but also because a lot of man hours were put into it. I personally feel connection to the project and to the success of it. However, I have written the thesis from outsider point of view and kept my personal view a part.

The aim of the thesis is to learn how well the objectives of the project have been achieved. The VOMARE –project is been important project for the organisation and there is a follow-up project in an early planning phase. Therefore, the organisation wanted to get knowledge about this project which could then be used in the next project or possibly even multiple projects.

The thesis is divided into three sections. First there is the theoretical framework of project management and project planning. The theoretical part goes deeper into the world of projects and gives the knowledge on how project should be managed and why planning is crucial in any project. Second part explains the research process and the findings. The research is qualitative research and it is based on two face-to-face interviews and one email inquiry. All the interviewees where key persons in the project. The last part is analysing and discussing the result. The summary of finding, assessing the validity and concluding the process can be found from there.

2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project can be defined in different ways; here are some definitions by English language dictionaries: “A planned piece of work that is design to find information about something, to produce something new, or to improve something.”(Oxford advanced learners dictionary 2005, 1207). “In school, a problem involving the theory of the subject matter, given to a student or group students to be worked out in practice.” (The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary 1999, 1008).

Could the Great Wall of China have been built with ingenious natural materials and a team of millions of people without project management? It is obvious that some form of project management has been from the early civilization. However, the modern sense of project management began in the 1950s. Earlier projects where managed on the ad-hoc basis using mostly Gantt chard or informal techniques and tools (www.projectsmart.co.uk). Under the topic of Project management can be found knowledge about good project management, the project management knowledge areas and the project lifecycle.

2.1 Desired Project Management

Project management is the art of planning, organizing and managing the resources in order to bring successful end to the project goals and objectives. A project is temporary endeavour with defined beginning and end. Furthermore, it has been started to bring forth beneficial change or added value. The major challenge of project management is to achieve all the project goals and objectives, in the limit of time and money. In project management there are barriers. Barriers are things that that can go wrong with project management. Firstly there is the poor communication. Furthermore, the project team does not know exactly what should be done and what has already been made. Disagreements are another huge obstacle on the way. Moreover, the customer and project management should agree on number of elements. Failure to meet the standards and regulations and poor management can cause difficulties in any project. Finally, if the project goals are poorly defined the project management can cause complications in the project (www.1bpt.bridgeport.edu).

The best way to clarify the unique role of project manager is to compare it with a functional manager. Functional manager working in an organisation is in charge of one functional department, such as marketing or communications. It could be said that they are the specialist on their field. They have some knowledge on everything going on in their own management area. Functional manager is also in charge of the department. However, the project manager is overlooking many functional areas in the project. Therefore, the project manager should have a wide background and knowledge. Project manager needs to have ability to but pieces together and should be skilled at synthesis. Functional manager however, needs to use more analytic approach (Meredith et al.1995, 110-111).

Another crucial difference between those two is that functional manager is direct technical supervisor. The functional manager has all the basic technical knowledge to oversee and advice. However, the project manager is a facilitator. She/he might have specific knowledge on few areas but not beyond those few. Therefore, it is important for project manager to facilitate cooperation between the people who has the expertise to the people who need it. Furthermore, the project manager is a facilitator whereas functional manager is a specialist (Meredith et al. 1995, 110-111).

The relationship between the project manager and the project team should be "collegial". Conflicts should be minimised, communication and cooperation should be a norm, and no one should be worried on who gets the credit. In such organisation the likelihood of achieving the project goals is high (Meredith et al. 1995, 112).

Product Data Management (PDI) system and Project Management Information (PMI) systems can be rather useful in supporting project work. The Project Data Management system (PDM) should be used to carry out the project, utilizing lifecycle, workflow and organisation modelling functionalities. Moreover, the Project Management Information system (PMI) should be used to high-level project scheduling, accounting and reporting project activities (Mesihovic et al. 2004, 389).

Project can be defined as one-time goal oriented activity. Moreover, some form of input is transformed into an output under particular set of constrains (figure 1). The three most critical constraints in any project are time, cost and performance. Therefore, the main objective of the project management is to compromise between those three constraints. "Milestone is an intermediate objective that defines an important, measurable event in the project and represents a result that must be achieved at that point." Milestones are good and clear way of monitoring progress, especially in large and long-term projects. Milestones provide a way of structuring the time schedule and they also give an early warning on potential delays. Milestones are an excellent way to present the project in more visible way to the project stakeholders (Mesihovic et al. 2004, 390-392).

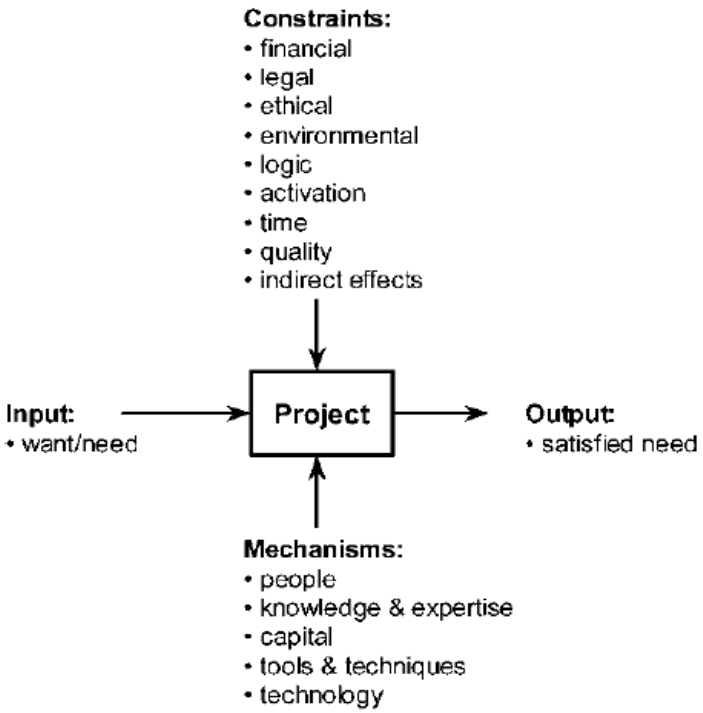


Figure 1. The project as an information conversion process (Mesihovic et al. 2004, 390)

2.2 Project Management Knowledge Areas

"The project management areas describe the key competences the project managers must develop." All together there are nine knowledge areas and these are divided into four core knowledge areas and four facilitating knowledge areas plus the project Integration Management (Schawable 2009, 9).

Every project management knowledge area has certain project management tools and techniques. The tools and techniques help the project managers and the whole team to carry out the work in the knowledge area. In 2006 a survey was conducted in order to define "super tools". All together projects and project manager from 753 different projects were asked to rate several project management tools based on the use and potential of the tools. The "super tools" are the ones that have high use and high potential to improve project success (Schawable 2009, 10).

2.2.1 Project Integration Management

The first project management knowledge area is called project integration management. Furthermore, it is an overarching function that affects and is affected by all the other knowledge areas (Schawable 2009, 9).

Project integration management needs to coordinate all the other knowledge area. It makes the decision based on what is the best interest of the entire project (Schawable 2009, 10). The project Integration Management can be divided into four sections; Project selection method, Project management methodology, Project management information system, and Expert judgment (A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, PMBOK Guide 2004, 85-86). Furthermore, the tools and techniques of this knowledge area are for example: lessons-learned reports, project management software, stakeholder analysis, and project review meetings (Schawable 2009, 11).

2.2.2 Core Knowledge Areas

The four core knowledge areas include project scope, time, cost and quality management. The core knowledge areas of project management lead to specific project objectives (Schawable 2009, 9).

Project Scope Management

Every project has to have a set of deliverables, these include budget of the project and expected finishing time. These are agreed upon requirements and extent of the project, tasks need to be completed prior to the closure of the project. These add up to the scope of the project. Amount of variation in the scope of project can affect the schedule and the budget (Koskela 2001, 28). The tools and techniques of project scope management are for example scope statement, work breakdown structure and requirements analysis (Schawable 2009, 11).

Work breakdown structure is when a project is broken into individual components in a hierarchical structure. This is necessary in complex projects but is also effective and useful in smaller projects. Such a structure defines tasks that can be completed

independently from the other tasks (Koskela 2001, 29). Work breakdown structure is important tool and can be tailored to be used in number of ways. It can illustrate how each piece of the project contributes to the whole project in terms of performance, responsibility, budget, and schedule. It also could list the wholesalers or subcontractors associated with specific tasks (Meredith et al. 1995, 116). Figure 2 illustrates the requirements when hiring a new person in a work breakdown structure.

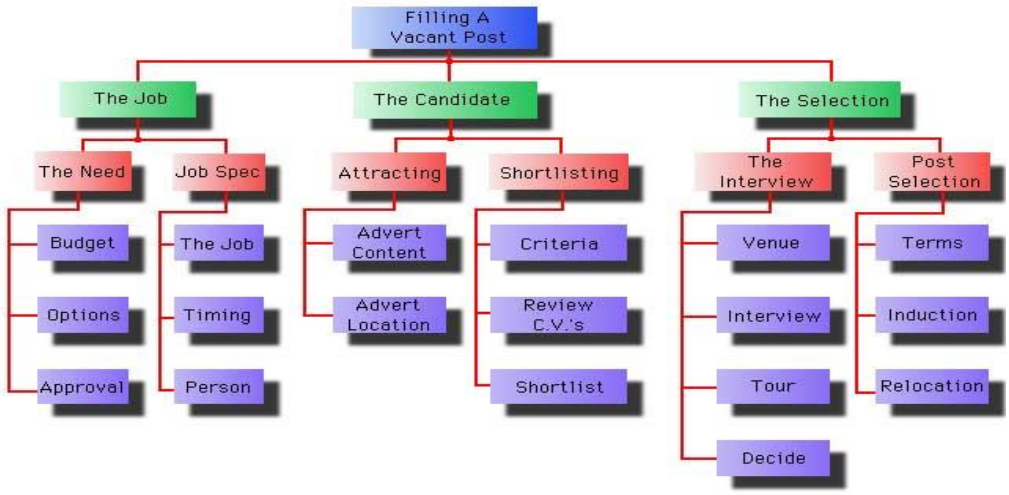


Figure 2. The Work Breakdown Structure for the requirements when hiring a new person (www.spottydog.u-net.com)

Project Time Management

Every project has a project schedule that indicates when each task should be completed and also when the project should be entirely completed. The project time management includes the following six processes; Activity definition, Activity sequencing, Activity resource estimating, Activity duration estimating, Schedule development, and Schedule control (PMBOK Guide 2004, 123). Project schedule is a fundamental tool for monitoring and controlling the project activities. The project schedule and budget are the two major tools for project management. In a project environment the schedule has a significant part, compared to normal day-to-day operations. In projects there might be multiple schedules and not all the project activities needs to be scheduled in detail (Meredith et al. 1995, 332-333).

The scheduling technique has a basic approach that forms an actual network activity and event relationship that portrait the relations between the tasks in a project. That kind of network is a powerful tool for planning and controlling a project. Furthermore, there are multiple benefits. Firstly, it is a reliable framework for planning, scheduling, monitoring and controlling the project. Furthermore, it illustrates the independence of different tasks, work packages and units. It also helps to ensure that proper communication takes place. The network determines the dates on which tasks may or should be started, if the project stays in schedule. Lastly, it determines the expected project completion date (Meredith et al. 1995, 333).

The main tools and techniques of project time management are Gantt charts, project network diagram and schedule performance measurement (Schawable 2009, 11). Gantt Charts is a chart developed by Harry Gantt in 1916. The chart gives a timeline for each activity and therefore it is really useful for planning and scheduling. The Gantt chart can be either Load Chart or Project Planning Chard. In Project Planning Chart the project is divided into smaller elements and every element has a given time line. The Gantt chart is really easy to understand because it is possible to see when activity starts and when it ends. However, developing the chart is not easy because the relation between different activities needs to be taken into consideration. Furthermore, the precedence relationship between activities should be known. The Gantt chart can be helpful in the project but other tools should also be used instead of using Gantt chart exclusively (www1bpt.bridgeport.edu).

Project Cost Management

The budget needs to be set before starting any project. Planning must be done carefully so that the project can be completed within the approved budget. The project cost management includes the three following processes; Cost estimating, Cost budgeting, and Cost control (PMBOK Guide 2004, 157). Developing the budget is not easy. Project needs to forecast the resources from four different angles; what quantity, quality, when they are needed and how much will they will cost. Uncertainty is always involved in forecasting. The budget gives a good baseline from which the differences between planned and actual use of resources can be measured (Meredith et al. 1995, 289).

The project budget is also a control mechanism in a project. Furthermore, it has a important role in the entire process of project management. It is clear that budgeting procedures must associate resource use with achievement of project goals or the control process becomes useless. The budget needs to be tied to achievements or otherwise the funds might be spend far in advance. Moreover, the management might misinterpret the true state of activities when the budget is overspend in one time period but expenditures are appropriate for the level of task completion. In a project the data should be collected and reported in a timely manner. In addition, if it is not been done the value of budget in identifying and reporting current problems and anticipating upcoming problems will be lost. It is said that the project budget is simply the project plan in another form (Meredith et al. 1995, 288). The tools and techniques of project cost management are for example cost estimates, cost management plans, earned value management, and project portfolio management (Schawable 2009, 11). The project budget can be done as Top-Down budgeting or as Bottom-Up budgeting (Meredith et al. 1995, 292).

Top-Down budgeting system means that expertise from top and middle management and also available data from past cases is been collected. Then the management estimates the overall project cost. After that the cost estimate is given to the lower-lever management. Furthermore, they are expected to continue the breakdown into budget estimates for specific tasks and work packages. After that the process continues to the lowest level. In the hierarchical planning system the budget is broken down and it starts from the top management or the most aggregated level. It is assumed that the lower-level manager will argue more if they feel they have insufficient amount of funds for the assigned project operations (Meredith et al. 1995, 292).

Bottom-Up budgeting are usually more accurate in detailed tasks. However, it is critical that all the elements are included. Furthermore, it is more difficult to develop a complete list when it is been constructed from bottom up than from top down. Top-down budgets are more common than bottom-up since the managements sees the process more risky. In the bottom-up methods the tasks, their schedules and their individual budgets are created following the work breakdown structure. The advance in bottom-up system is that the individuals closer to the project have more accurate

information than their upper-management and others that are not personally involved (Meredith et al. 1995, 292-293).

Project Quality Management

Project quality management is important because it makes sure that the project will satisfy all the needs why it was started in the first place. The project quality management includes the following; Quality planning, Perform quality assurance, and Perform quality control comply (PMBOK Guide 2004, 179). The project needs control to ensure that the project will deliver what was promised, or even more. The three elements that need the control are project performance, cost and time. The project management needs to be constantly concerned with those three aspects. Furthermore, those were only the mechanistic problems that could occur. Moreover, there are the human elements in projects that can go wrong and needs control (Meredith et al. 1995, 508-510). The tools and techniques of project quality management are checklist, quality control charts, quality metrics and maturity models (Schawable 2009, 11).

The two fundamental purpose of project control are the following: first, the regulation of results through the modification of activities. And second, the control of organisational assets. The project manager needs to guard the physical assets of the organisation, its human resources and its financial resources. Moreover, the control over those three aspects is different. The controlling a project is a complex process. Moreover, it is much more than just waiting for something to go wrong and then trying to fix it. Project manager needs to decide few things such as, what is to be controlled, how it is been measured and how much deviation from project plan is tolerated before acting. There are three basic types of control mechanisms in projects: cybernetic control, go/no-go control and post control (Meredith et al. 1995, 510, 513).

The cybernetic control is the most common form of control in projects. Automatic operations are the key feature in this type of control. Outputs are what is been controlled in cybernetic control. Go/No-go control means that the control takes a form of testing to see if some specific requirements have been met. Furthermore, it can be used for almost all the aspects of a project. The last one, post control, means that the

control is applied after the facts. Post control is directed towards improving the chances for further project with meeting their goals (Meredith et al. 1995, 513-520).

2.2.3 Facilitating Knowledge Areas

The four facilitating knowledge areas are human resource, communication, risk and procurement management. The facilitating knowledge areas of project management are the processes through which the project objectives are archived (Schawable 2009, 9).

Project Human resource Management

Human resource management is making sure that people involved with the project are effectively used. People determine the success and the failure of the project and that is why it has been said that the "people are the most important asset". The project human resource management includes the following; Human resource planning, Acquire project team, Develop project team, and Manage project team (PMBOK Guide 2004, 199). The tools and techniques of project human resource management are motivation techniques, team building exercises and project organizational charts (Schawable 2009, 11). Projects are typically involving multiple departments and therefore the project team should be multifunctional. Hence, the project management should select members from the appropriate functional groups. The project management needs a wide understanding on the matters concerning the project. However, project management should involve the team as much as possible instead of trying to do everything themselves (Lebow 1998, 36).

One problem in human resources is motivating the project members to accomplish the project tasks. The project manager usually has no control over the economic rewards and promotions of the project team. However, it does not mean that the project manager could not motivate the members. It is project manager's responsibility to ensure that the project work is structured in such way that it emphasises the motivation factors. It is important that the project team takes responsibility and that they feel accountable for delivering the project objectives. The advantages of empowerment of project team are that they feel more close to the project and also feel responsibility.

Furthermore, they should also receive timely feedback from operations (Meredith et al. 1995, 173-174).

Project Communication Management

Failure to communicate is said to be the greatest threat to the success of any project. It is said that even 90% of the job of project managers is communicating. However, people do not understand how communication affects the project as a whole and project managers do not take the time to make a proper communication plan. The project communications management processes includes the following; Communication planning, Information distribution, Performance reporting, and Manage stakeholders (PMBOK Guide 2004, 199). The tools and techniques of project communication management are: communications management plan, kick-off meetings, status and progress reports and templates (Schawable 2009, 11).

The project team should meet on regular basis and the minutes of the meeting should be widely distributed. The minutes will help educate and inform the team about the situation of the project (Lebow 1998, 36). The project monitoring system needs to be built so that it addresses all the levels of management. Furthermore, the reposts need to have the same frequency for the lower levels as well. Besides, the lower level personnel have a need for more detailed information about individual tasks. Reporting for top management usually does not include such detailed information (Meredith et al. 1995, 452).

Project Risk Management

Project risk is determined as an uncertainty that can have a negative or positive affect on meeting the project objectives. Good risk management can have a significant improvement in the chance of the project succeeding. However, it is frequently overlooked aspect of project management (Schawable 2009, 177). The project risk management processes include the following; Risk management planning, Risk identification, Qualitative risk analysis, Quantitative risk analysis, Risk response planning, and Risk monitoring and controlling (PMBOK Guide 2004, 237). The tools

and techniques of project risk management are: risk management plan, risk register and risk probability/impact matrices (Schawable 2009, 11).

Time and money are often the most uncertain factors in a project. Especially in a project from which the organisation has no or little experience from. In any project there are different areas of uncertainty. Firstly, the timing of the project and the cash flows. Secondly, the direct outcomes of the project and what will be accomplished. And third, the side effects of the project that could not be foreseen. Risk analysis is normally used for financial measures, although it could be used for almost any kind of variables (Meredith et al. 1995, 173-174).

Project Procurement Management

The project procurement management includes the processes of buying or acquiring the product or service from outside the organization for the project. The project procurements management processes include the following; Plan purchases and acquisitions, Plan contracts, Request seller responses, Select sellers, Contract administration, and Contract closure (PMBOK Guide 2004, 269). The tools and techniques of project procurement management are: make-or-buy analyses, supplier evaluation matrices and source selection (Schawable 2009, 11).

2.3 Project Lifecycle

Project life cycle is when a project is divided into project phases. It is done by the project managers or the organization to provide better management control. Project life cycle has all the phases of the project from the very beginning till the end of the project. The planning phase where the organization decided whether it should or should not undertake the project can be the first phase of the project life cycle or a whole another project. As it was emphasised in the beginning the planning is one of the most important stage in any project (PMBOK Guide 2004, 19-20). The project lifecycle is continuously under pressure. The rapidly changing environment is the trend today. In addition, it makes project more complex, expensive and time critical (Mesihovic et al. 2004 389).

Deliverables from one phase should be completed prior to the start of a new phase. Furthermore, the results from the phase are reviewed and approved. However, the schedule compression technique called fast tracking means that a new phase is started before the previous phase is been closed. Fast tracking is rather common way to operate in projects where the risks involved are deemed acceptable. The ideal project life cycle can be defined in multiple ways and many organizations have their own ways of doing it. However, project life cycle has three general definitions. Firstly, what work should be carried out in each phase. Secondly, who is involved in each phase. And finally, how to control and approve each phase. (PMBOK Guide 2004, 19-20).

At the beginning of the projects the costs and staffing level are generally quite low. However, the peak during the intermediate phase and often drop rapidly as the project draws to a conclusion. Figure 3 shows the typical project cost and staffing level across the project lifecycle in different project phases (PMBOK Guide 2004, 19-20).

Figure 3 can also be divided into four basic phases of projects (from left to right);

1. Starting the project (Initiation Phase)
2. Organizing and preparing (Planning Phase)
3. Carrying out the work (Executing and Monitoring Phase)
4. Closing the project (Closing Phase).

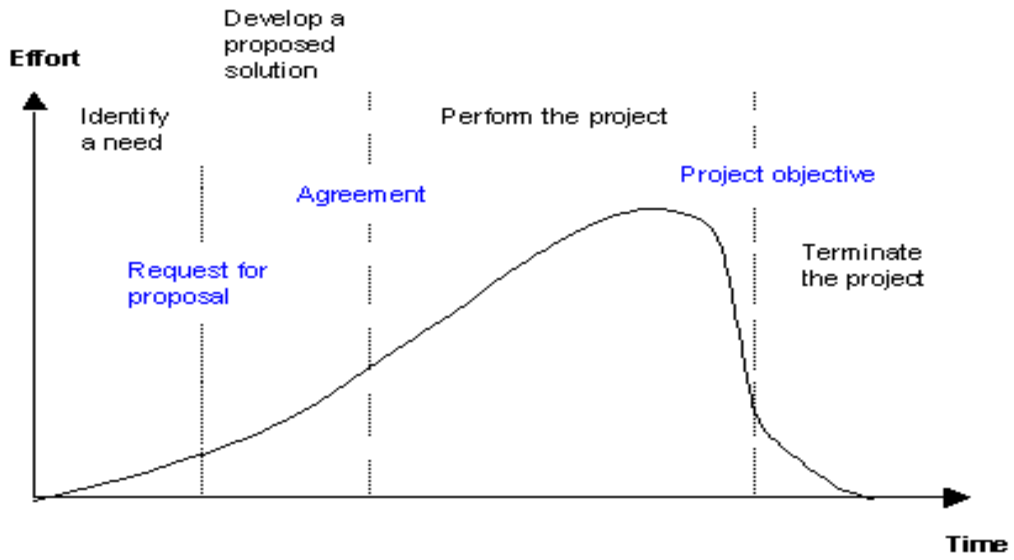


Figure 3. Project Lifecycle with different phases (valuemanagementpartners.com)

However, a project can be divided further into several phases. The four basic steps typically have the executing and monitoring phases in the same part called the carrying out the work. In the next section, project management process groups, an example of five phases is shown.

Project Management Process Groups

Each project can be divided into phases. One of the most common way of dividing is into five sections (figure 4): Initiation, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Closing. These five phases describes the project from start to finish. However, in the figure above the Executing and Monitoring Phases are both in the same section called carrying ou the work.

Initiation phase is the first of the project phases. In this phase the project is been established and all the preliminary work is been done. During the first phase the project manager is assigned and also the project stakeholders are identified. Rough estimates on project scope (goals, budget, timeline and other variables) are determined. The result from this phase is Project Charter. This document includes detailed list of project goals and sub goals (www.bringhthub.com). Initiation phase, also known as the start-up phase, is when the project is been born. In this face all the initial resources are draw together (Meredith et al. 1995, 13).

Planning phase is one of the most time consuming part in a project. The document in this phase should include specific list of things that need to happen so that all the goals and sub goals are met. This document needs to be in a form of tasks. Only after this a detailed project schedule and budget can be determined (www.bringhthub.com). Projects usually have a slow start. However, after all the preliminary work the project quickly builds (Meredith et al. 995, 13).

Execution phase can also be called the implementation phase. However, the name of the face is not nearly as important as the activity during the phase. In this phase the document made in the planning phase is put into work and all the actual work is been done. In this phase the project manager needs to manage the project budget and

schedule. Project manager also needs to communicate with stakeholders and craw reports concerning the project (www.bringhthub.com).

Monitoring phase is often also called monitoring and controlling phase. The phase number three (Executing) and phase number four (Monitoring) are extremely close together. However, they should not be thought as they are one and the same. Project tasks are typically not happening simultaneously. Typically when Task 2 is been executed (phase 3) the Task 1 is been monitored (phase 4). The movement between execution phase and monitoring phase should be seamless. In phase 4 the original project goal should be bared in mind to ensure the project sticks within the original project scope (www.bringhthub.com).

Closing phase is the final phase a detailed summary of the project is in order. It is important to know for example the total spending during the project and compare the information with the original project plan. Closing phase also includes evaluation to determine whether the project was a success or not (www.bringhthub.com). Finishing the project is another slow phase in a project. Completing the final tasks takes incredible amount of time, not only because multiple parts of the project needs to come together, but also because the team members might be avoiding the final steps of the project. Projects often have a slow-rapid-slow pattern. Meaning that after slow start there is a rapid progress but when getting closer to the end the speed gets slow again (Meredith et al. 1995, 13).

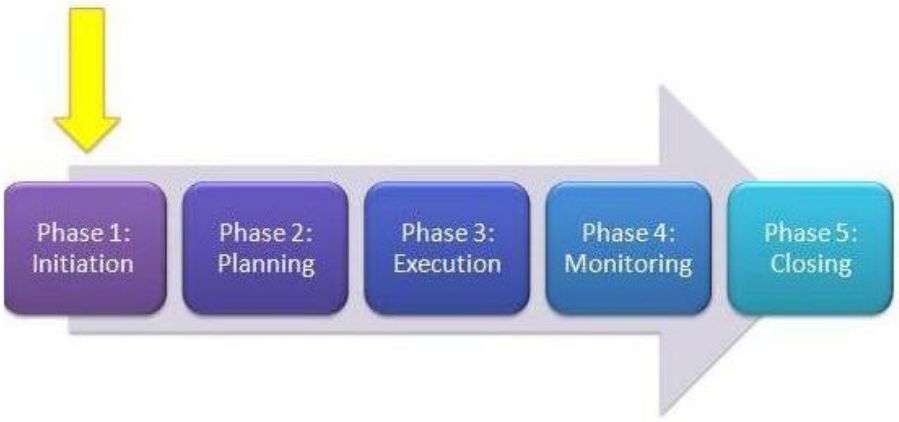


Figure 4. Project Management Process Groups (www.brighthub.com)

At the start of the project the project stakeholders have a high ability to influence the final characteristics of the project. As the project goes on the stakeholders ability to influence decreases. The same thing happens to the project risks and uncertainty. The level of uncertainty is high at the beginning of the project and also the risk of failing to achieve the project objectives is greatest at the start of the project. As the project continues and gets closer to the conclusion the degree of uncertainty and risks gets lower. Furthermore, the cost of changes is low at the beginning of the project. However, the costs of possible changes and correction of errors generally increases as the project continues (PMBOK Guide 2004, 20-21). Figure 5 shows the relations between the project time and the degree of the cost of changes, influence of stakeholders, uncertainty and risks.

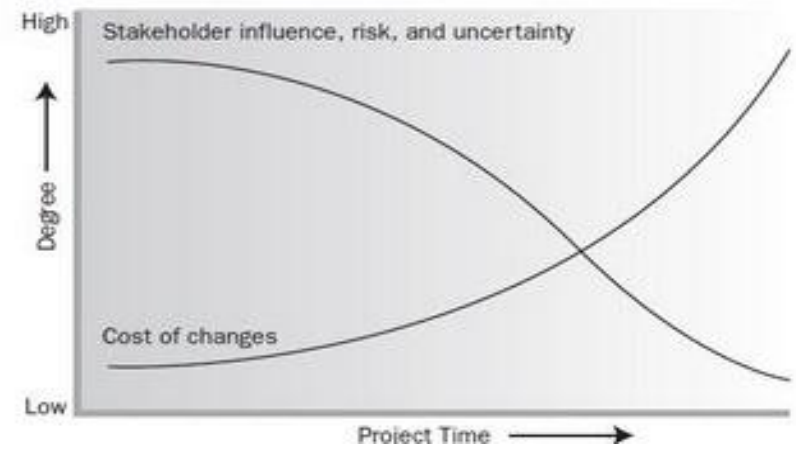


Figure 5. Impact of different variables over the project time (PMBOK Guide 2004, 21)

3 PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

The search for project theories can be disappointing. There are plenty of books written about projects. However, they usually do not use the term theory in the text. Furthermore, it is obvious that the methods and usage has developed and spread without the influence of basic theories. However, theories of project activities are as important as in any other field such as natural sciences (Koskela 2001, 28). Under the topic of planning a successful project there are theoretical knowledge about project planning, project stakeholders, customer value and satisfaction, strategic planning and evaluating the project success.

3.1 Planning a project

Project planning is the key to success. “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail” (Schawable 2009, 106). When starting any kind of project the plan is the first thing anyone should do. However, planning is often ignored in order to get to work. Good project plan often safes time, money and prevents from further problems. The plan of a project can be divided into four basic steps:

1. Project goals.
2. Project deliverables.
3. Project schedule.
4. Supporting plans (Koskela 2001, 28).

Jeff Lebows article, Planning and implementing a successful barcode system: a project primer has plenty of basic information that can be used for any project in order to make it successful. Typical project effects different departments in the organisation and therefore, the project needs active commitment from the management. Careful planning does not only ensure the success of the project but it can also increase the effectiveness of the project result (Lebow 1998, 34-35).

When undertaking a project some key elements are required for the success of the project. First of all, the team leader needs to have clear understanding on all the sections of the projects, such as technology and management. Although the team leader will not be doing all the work he/she should have all the strings to him/her self. Second, top management that is fully committed to the project. Project is more likely to be a successful when it has all the required and best resources. Third, project team should be committed but also diverse. Project team needs to give their best to the project. Therefore, it should be prioritised so that they would not need to work on other tasks at the same time. Distinct people with different backgrounds can bring value to the project. Fourth, enough resources (people, time and money) should be budgeted to the project from the early start. Finally, well-defined system requirements are required. The team leader needs to ensure that all the necessary elements for the success are in place (Lebow 1998, 34-35).

After the project has fulfilled the key elements some basic steps should be followed before starting the actual project. The priorities should be set together with top management. Appropriate project name should be chosen. The project name should emphasize the benefits of the project activities. Plus a set project milestone so that team will have periodic assessment. When organisation has a project in mind it is also important to asses the project scope (project goals, budget and time) and also the readiness of the organisation to undertake a new project. Finally, Project will not succeed on its own and therefore a lot of thought and planning needs to be put into it. Management needs to be fully committed to the project to ensure all the required resources. The project team needs to be developed and trained. All the members of the project need to be aware on their tasks and duties. Everyone should also be fully aware why they are doing the project (Lebow 1998, 34-35).

Performance Baseline

Performance baseline is also known as performance measurement baseline (PMB). It is the metric benchmark against which project performance in terms of time and cost is measured. Project managers often use PMB to determine the cost schedule variance and to display that information in an S-curve format (Figure 6) (Koskela 2001, 7). Ones the preliminary costs and schedules have been made and approved the PMB can be established. Typically the Performance measurement baseline does not change during the project life. Furthermore, the PMB gives the inside knowledge on how the project was suppose perform. As the project changes those changes should not be automatically updated into the PMB because the information of the original document is often needed. To answer questions such as why the current spending does not match the baseline are hard to answer without the original PMB (e-articles.info).

The performance baseline help management, project manager and team members. For management the PMB gives ability to follow and analyse the original project spending for the project over time. For team members it gives objective view on their target spending over time. The curve starts with Initiation phase and moves to the right. Next phase is execution phase and the last phase is closure. Initiation phase is when the project is only getting started and that is why the spending is low. The spending does grow significantly as the project gets started and gets closer to the end (e-articles.info).

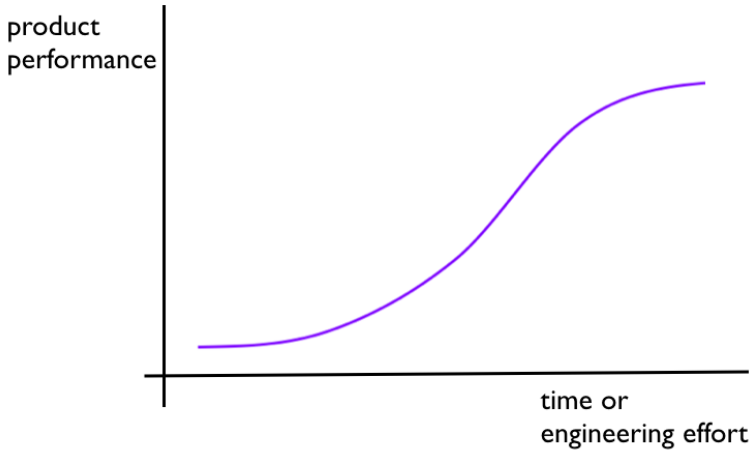


Figure 6. The S-Curve shows the project performance over the project time. (cheapseatsecon.wordpress.com)

3.2 Project Stakeholders

Each and every project has a set of project stakeholders. A project stakeholder is someone, individual or organisation, that is involved with the project. Stakeholders have really different connections with the project. Moreover, some stakeholders can be actively involved with the project where as other stakeholders are not involved at all (office.microsoft.com). Stakeholders can be within the organisation or outside the organisation, for example, project sponsors, or someone who might gain something upon successful completion, or someone to whom the project might have positive or negative impact. It is important to identify all the project stakeholders. Nevertheless, it might sound less difficult than it actually is. Leaving out an important stakeholder might harm or even kill the project. Project is successful when it achieves the project objectives and meets the expectations of the project stakeholders (cnx.org).

Figure 7 shows the different stakeholders. The project management needs to deal with people external and internal to the organisation. The project management has a little or no control over some of the stakeholders. Therefore, supplier who is late in delivering the crucial parts may setback the whole project schedule (cnx.org).

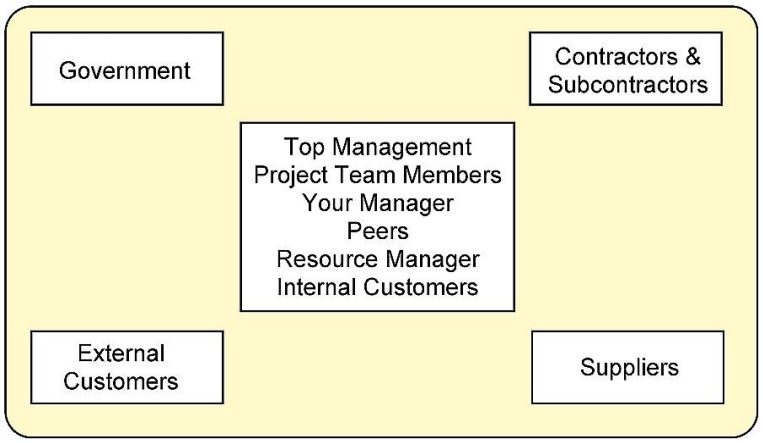


Figure 7. Project Stakeholder in and outside the organisation (cnx.org)

Top management support is important in a project. It can help with the resources; best staff for the project and enough time and money. Failure of a project can be quite dramatic to the top management. Especially in the cases when project has been large and expensive, which they often are. The project manager should support and work closely with the project team, especially because their priorities might be elsewhere. Peers are also project stakeholders. However, they do not have leadership responsibilities or accountability over the project. Project may need to deal with government tools and regulations and that make the government a stakeholder. Contractors, subcontractors and suppliers are stakeholders outside the organisation. These resources are harder to manage and problems occur easily. Number of problems can arise with suppliers, such as bad quality of work, exceeding costs and delaying schedule (cnx.org). The expectations of different stakeholders might be in conflict with each other. The project manager should balance and reconcile these conflicts. Managing stakeholders might also impose new requirements to the finish date, budget or scope (office.microsoft.com).

“The Business Excellence Index (BEI) is a means of measuring customers', employer’s and stakeholders’ satisfaction simultaneously within an organization in order to obtain a comprehensive evaluation of the organization performance.” (Kanji et al. 2000, 983). In order to achieve business excellence (i.e. stakeholder value) it is essential to give equal weight to all areas of enterprise (Kanji et al. 2000, 985).

Stakeholder analysis is a technique to identify the key people and gathering information. This information is analysed to determine whose interest should be taken into account and to whom they should really focus on (www.lachsr.org). After the stakeholders have been identified their influence and interest over the project should be evaluated. They might have a high power of low power concerning the project. Finally, a good understanding of the most important stakeholders should be made in order to win their support (www.mindtools.com).

3.3 Customer Value and Satisfaction

Customer value is fundamental to business. Yet it is often ignored (www.realinnovation.com). However, it is the customer who decides whether the product is a success or not. For that reason, it is important to be able to look the product or service from the customer point of view (www.cval.com). In many cases the company would make a great progress if they were aware of the differences between the consumer opinions and their own opinions (Dubrovski 2011, 924-925)

Customer satisfaction brings value to the company. The satisfied customer is the most effective and least expensive source of marketing. Different researches show that satisfied customer will tell his/her satisfaction to ten people who could actually become a new customer to that product/service. On the other hand, every dissatisfied customer will describe his/her dissatisfaction to at least nine other people (Dubrovski 2011, 924-925).

As the theory says the customer loyalty, which comes as a result from customer satisfaction, brings value to the company. However, most of these empirical studies have shown that there is no causal relationship between customer satisfaction and company's profitability. Thus, the results are in conflict with the theory in which the customer loyalty affects the earnings of the company. Nevertheless, Qianpin comes into conclusion in his research that high level of customer satisfaction and customer lifetime value could create more shareholders value. He also recommends that customer satisfaction surveys should be conducted routinely. What's more, the outcomes of the surveys should be analysed quite carefully. The author emphasises that customer-related strategies will guarantee success (Qianpin 2010, 647-654).

"Total Quality Management (TQM) is the culture of an organisation committed to customer satisfaction through continuous improvements." (Kanji et al. 2000, 979). Kanji suggested that in order to achieve customer satisfaction organisation needs to improve all the aspects of the operation continuously. Loyal customers are highly satisfied with the product or service. Some organisations have realised that a customer that complains is their best friend. Nevertheless, an organisation can only do something about the problem if it's told about it by its own customer. Customers are a huge asset of any organisation (Kanji et al. 2000, 980-982).

3.4 Strategic Planning

Mission and Vision are two totally different things. By making a clear mission statement and vision statements the organisation can effectively communicate its intensions. That way the organisation can more effectively motivate the employees and realize the common vision of the future (www.mindtools.com).

3.4.1 Mission Statement

Every organisation exists to accomplish something; to make cars, to produce milk, to provide services such as cleaning. In order to define ones mission the organisation should answer to few basic questions; what is our business? Who is the customer? What is our value to the customer? What will our business be? What should our business be? These might sound like simple questions. However, they are one of the most difficult questions any company or organisation will ever answer. Therefore, these questions should be answered thoughtfully and thoroughly. (Kotler & Keller 2009, 81-82). Mission is timeless concept and it is concern with the fact how the organisation is managed today and its purpose. Mission tells about the strategy of the organisation but also about the culture of the organisation (Campbell et al. 1991, 144).

Mission can also change over time. This is due to the new market conditions or taking an advantage of new opportunities. The mission of Amazon.com at first was to be the world's largest online bookstore. However, over time they changed their mission to become the world's largest online store (Kotler & Keller 2009, 82-83).

Mission statement is primary for internal use and the primary audience is the leadership team and the stakeholders (www.mindtools.com). On the other hand, Kotler and Keller suggests that a good mission statement should have five major characteristics;

1. Mission statement should only focus on limited number of goals.
2. It should stress the company's major policies and values.
3. They define the major competitive spheres within the company will operate.
4. Mission statement should take a long-term view.
5. The last but most important is that a good mission statement should be short, memorable and as meaningful as possible (Kotler & Keller 2009, 82-83).

3.4.2 Vision Statement

Vision and Mission can be one and the same. Furthermore, they describe the possible and desirable future state of an organisation. Moreover, it can include mission, purpose, strategy and vision. However, vision and mission are not quite the same. Vision refers to the future state of the organisation whereas mission normally refers to the present. After achieving the vision a new vision needs to be developed. Though, the mission can remain the same. Vision is more linked with the goals of the organisation. When the vision is accomplished it starts to lose power. Vision is a goal that might be achieved in next five or ten years. Therefore, it might lose the power of motivating (Campbell et al. 1991, 145-146).

Vision statement should tell the vision of the organisation in short. It should tell both the purpose and the values of the organisation. For employees it gives direction on how they are expected to behave and give the best of them. With customers it builds the understanding on why they should work with the organisation.

Only after organisation has made its mission statement it should move to creating a vision statement. There are few things that should be kept in mind when creating a vision statement;

1. The organisation should first identify the mission. Furthermore, the real human value should be uncovered from the mission.
2. Then the organisation should recognise what customers and other stakeholders would value the most in the process of achieving the mission. These should be then distilled into values that the organisation shall have.
3. Lastly the mission and vision should be combined and vision statement should be worked until it is it enough inspiring. It should energize and motivate people inside and outside the organisation (www.mindtools.com).

The vision of Amazon is "Our vision is to be earth's most customer centric company; to build a place where people can come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online." Amazon's vision statement describes the value, service and company's vision for the future and the importance should not be underestimated (www.samples-help.org.uk).

3.4.3 Project SWOT

SWOT analysis is an overall evaluation of company's strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. SWOT analysis is an excellent way to monitor the external and internal marketing environment (Kotler & Keller 2009, 89). SWOT analysis is the most widely used and recognised investigation method. It covers the organisations internal and external factors (figure 8). The idea is that all the relevant information should be assembled before making the strategy. Furthermore, it is building the strengths, eliminating the weaknesses, profiting from the opportunities and protecting against threats (Andersen 2008, 71).

Figure 8. SWOT analysis. (www.freshthinkingbusiness.com)

Strengths are internal characteristics that are helping to achieve the project goals. These things are good at the moment and they should be maintained, build and used as leverage. *Weaknesses* are also internal factors. However, they are negative factors in achieving the goals. Weaknesses are things that are not well at the moment. They should be repaired, changed or stopped. *Opportunities* are external factors and they are also helping the process of achieving the project goals. These are the things that are good for the future and they should be build and optimize. *Threats* are also external factors. However, they have a negative impact in achieving the goals. Threats are on the other hand the things that are bad for the future and therefore plans should be made to manage them.

SWOT analysis has a large following and that might be because it is easy. However, it also has been criticised. One criticism is that it often focuses on meaningless, unprioritised and unsubstantiated details. Sometimes the process does not get any further from than just getting the results from those four areas (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). People are often not instructed on how to identify the best strategy opinions (Andersen 2008, 71).

3.5 Evaluating the project success

The project success consists two parts, the first one is the project management success and the second is project product success. In project management success the focus is

on the project management process and in the successful accomplishment of the project meaning time, budget and quality. The project product success focuses on the product or service, which is the outcome of the project. Furthermore, project success = Project management success + project product success. The successful outcomes from them both are linked but the relationship between them is weak. However, project can be running over time or over budget and the project management can be a failure but the project product can be a success (gates.comm.virginia.edu). The project evaluation should include both process and outcome criteria. Three process-related criteria are: time, cost and product. Furthermore, the project should be accomplished with in schedule, within budget and the product/service should be according to the specifications. The three outcome-related criteria are: use, learning and value. Moreover, the product or service is used as it was originally planned, the project increases the stakeholder knowledge and prepares the organisation for further challenges, and the project will directly result in improved efficiency (Nelson 2005, 363-364).

Retrospective mean looking back and it is a method of evaluating project performance extracting lessons learned and making recommendations for the future. However, the use of it is not only limited for post-implementation phase. Retrospectives have multiple potential benefits. Organisational learning is important since the collective story should get out and make sure that even the individual stakeholders hear the whole story. Continuous improvements are needed in processes, procedures and culture. Better estimates can be achieved with retrospectives. Team building and improved recognition and reflection is important since the issues should be solved and the results reflected before moving to the next problem. Despite the obvious potential benefits of retrospective it is often not used. One reason might be the human nature that wants to but the past behind and move on with something new. Another reason is money since organisations typically do not like to spend money on projects that are already finished. Often when the retrospectives are done they are poorly conducted. Furthermore, they are seen as checklist items and lessons learned are not applied. In those cases the value is certainly difficult to see (Nelson 2005, 363-364).

If a project would be evaluated strictly by those six criteria (time, cost product, use learning and value) the result would be collection of all possible outcomes. Most

projects would definitely fail on at least one of the process criteria. Moreover, in a research made approximately 60% of the projects failed in at least one of process criteria (time, cost and/or product). About 40% of the project where considered as a total success. Whereas 5% where seen as total failures. Failed successes means that the project is seen successful from the process perspective but failures from the outcome perspectives. However, successful failure means that the project is seen failure from the process perspective and successful from the outcomes perspective. Additionally, project can still be a success even if it failures in one of the process or outcomes criteria (Nelson 2005, 363-364).

4 RESEARCH PROCESS

The word "research" comes from French language and it literally means "to investigate thoroughly". The word research is also used to describe the collection of information about particular subject. Data collection does not automatically mean that there is a research in question. Furthermore, the data collection needs to be systematic and with a purpose. The ultimate goal of any research is to gain knowledge and there is always theoretical knowledge on the background (wordiq.com/definition/Research).

4.1 Research Methods

The research can be done in two different ways; qualitative or quantitative method. In quantitative research the data is in the form of numbers and statistics and they are collected with tools such as questionnaires. In qualitative research the data is in the form of words, pictures and objectives. Qualitative data is richer but also more time consuming to gather than quantitative research (wilderdom.com). For my research process the natural choice was qualitative research. This was due to the research objectives; learning how well the objectives of the project have been achieved. The organisation was also involved with the project and I wanted to pay attentions to their needs as well. They felt that qualitative research would give them more that information which they wished to gain from the research.

Qualitative research involves small number of cases. Furthermore, it is concerned with the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals. The qualitative research aims to

answer questions which begin with why, how, what way. It is said to be subjective, holistic, descriptive and inductive. The criticism of qualitative research is that the result of the study may not be generalised to a larger population since the sample group is relatively small and the subject is not chosen randomly. Sometimes a smaller sample is necessary. This might be because very few subjects were available. This might happen with some ethnic groups or patients groups. However, the purpose of qualitative data is often not to generalise the findings to wider population (faculty.uccb.ns.ca). In my research the finding are only for internal use and will and cannot be directly used for other similar projects.

In qualitative research the data is collected through direct interaction with individuals. The data can be collected through one to one interviews or group interviews or by observing. In qualitative research it is necessary to use small samples because it is intensive and time consuming. Interview is the main type of data collection in qualitative research. The interviews can be highly structured, semi structured or unstructured. Highly structured interview means that the interviewer is asking each respondent the same questions in the same way. Therefore the tightly structured interview can be much like questionnaire. The semi structured interviews have a series of open ended questions. This provides an opportunity to discuss some topics in more detail. Sometimes the interviewee might have difficulties to answer some of the questions and the semi structured interview gives the interviewer chance to encourage the interviewee to give an answer. The unstructured interview has very little structure in it. Typically the interviewer goes into the interview with the aim of discussing number of topics. Qualitative interviews are semi structured or unstructured and relatively informal (faculty.uccb.ns.ca).

The research included three persons from which two are employees in the Finnish Lifeboat Institution. They were the Operations Managers and Financial Manager of the organisation. The reason why they were chosen is because of their roles in the organisation, and also because of their huge input to the project. They do not only have a vide expertise on the organisation but also a major role in the project. They were the project managers and a key person in the project. The research only included two interviews since the organisation, The Finnish Lifeboat Institutions, is relatively small organisation with only eight employees. All of the employees have had a role in the

project but for some the role was fairly small, therefore, I did not see it useful to interview all the employees. The purpose of the research was to have the key person's point of views. They both work so closely with the project that it was clear that I would be able to get all the necessary information from them. The third person in the research is the team leader from Estonia and she was the project coordinator. However, she had a huge role in the project and could be said that she was more like a second project manager. Since I did not have a chance to meet her face-to-face she answered the questions via email.

For my research process I decided to use semi structured form. This because the purpose was to gain information to specific questions set beforehand. I decided not to use observing. That is only because that would have needed some previous knowledge and training on the area. Since one of my interviews were made via email observing was not possible. The two interviews were quite short since the interviewees had the questions beforehand. Furthermore, they had the questions before the interview since the purpose was to get them familiar with the topics at beforehand. Hence, the interviewees knew the questions the interviews were quite short. The structure was based on the theoretical part of the work. The structure of interviews was simple and the questions were divided into seven sections (see appendix 1); Background and planning the project, Project stakeholders, Project management and team members, Project resources and scope, Project mission, Project SWOT and Project lifecycle. The structure form also helped the interviewees to answer the questions since they only needed to think one category at the time. Furthermore, it helped to divide the project into smaller sections.

4.2 Data collection

The data collection is the most important part of research project. Creating research questions is really time-consuming and challenging (Schwab 2005, 39). However, Interview is a great way for the interviewee to interact with the interviewed. Interview can be face-to-face. When meeting the interviewed face-to-face it is much easier to interact. However, in some cases it might not be possible to meet in person and the interview needs to be done via phone of email. Successful interview takes time and it

should be planned and practiced well in advance. Data collection is much more than just words and numbers (Spatz et al. 2008, 318, 365).

Interview is a good way to collect information. Furthermore, advance is the interaction and it is also possible to reach the interviewees even after the interview to supplement the answers. However, every coin has two sides and interviews have some disadvantages. It is not only time consuming but also has multiple sources for errors. The interviewee might feel the situation scary or even threatening (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 193). My interviews were made at the work place of the interviewees in order to make it as confortable for them as possible.

I interviewed two persons for my research plus I had one email inquiry. All the interviewees had an important role in the project and that is the main reason why they were chosen for my research. One of the interviewees was the project manager, other one the team leader and the last one was team member, which however, did all the money related tasks in the project.

They were supposed to be all face-to-face interviews. However, I wanted to interview someone from Estonia as well and due to the distance and language barriers I decided to send the questions via email. However, I am pleased that I was able to conclude Estonia to my research as well and get a little broader view to the topic. The two face-to-face interviews were with the employees of The Finnish Lifeboat Institution. Those two interviews were made in Finnish although the questions were in English. I decided to make it this way since I knew I would get a bit more out of the interviews if the interviewees were allowed to talk their native language.

Since I only had a few interviews I had a relatively lot of questions. The two face-to-face interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each. However, it is quite difficult to say anything about the inquiry made via email. Moreover, it seems that the interviewee had taken time to answer the questions. The two face-to-face interviews were organised at the work place of the interviewees to make the situation as pleasant and natural as possible. All the interviewees were busy and reserving a time for the interview was difficult. Since the interviews did take place at the work place in the middle of the day interruptions were impossible to avoid. Both interviews were

interrupt couple times because of phone or by a colleague. The interruptions divided the interviews into two parts. After interruption it was a bit difficult to continue with the same focus. The first interviewee answered the questions in short and after that started to tell things not so important to the subject. However, the second interviewee answered the questions in short. Therefore, it was important to ask the questions again or ask a follow-up question in order to get information out of the interviewee. We did not have scheduled times for the interviews so they were done in the middle of the work. That means that the people might have had their work things on top of their minds.

The questions were in English and the interviews completed in Finnish. This might also bring some inconvenience to the answers since they need to be translated. Since I did not have opportunity to use recording machine I were forced to write everything down while interviewing.

4.3 Data Analysis

In interviews it is crucial how the interviewer interprets the answers. The material got from interview can be limited to the situation. Furthermore, the interviewee might talk differently in the situation than she/he normally would. This should be taken into consideration when analysing the results. Moreover, the results should not be exaggerated. Analysing, interpretation and conclusion is the core point in the research. In the analysing part the researcher will find out what kind of answers she/he will get to the research questions (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 194, 207).

I had eleven pages of data from my interviews to analyse. The next step after the data collection is to analyse the data. Since all the interviewees had the same questions the the answers can be collected and put together in a similar way. The next step was to write all the answers to computer and list each answer under each question. I needed to go through every question and every answer one by one. After that was done I started to edit into more texts form. I deleted the questions and included the question to the answer. So that the answer tells what the ordinary questions was about. Also some irrelevant information was deleted and the important parts were emphasised. After that I had four pages of text from my interviews to analyse. The next step was to have a

look at the findings. Moreover, what similarities and differences could be found from the answers and that is reported next.

5 FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The questions of the interviews were divided into seven sections and here the questions are opened under each theme. The themes used in the interviews were the following: Background and planning the project, Project stakeholders, Project management and team members, Project resources and scope, Project mission, Project SWOT and Project lifecycle. However, project mission, project swot and project lifecycle are all under the section of strategic planning.

5.1 Background and planning of the project

Finland and Estonia have a long history with cooperation together. All the interviewees had a bit different views on where the project idea came from. However, they all agreed on that there has been cooperation between Finland and Estonia and it's a follow-up from previous project. All the interviewees agreed that the project name is an abbreviation and the Estonians came up with the name.

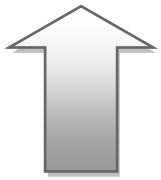
One of the interviewees had no previous knowledge from a similar project. However, two other interviewees had some kind of knowledge. The other one had experience from a last project which had a lot of similarities with this one and the other had a long, about 20 years, experience on working on different projects. Therefore, it could be said that they had rather good basis for starting a project. Someone had a wide expertise on working in projects. Moreover, the others had excellent knowledge from the field of voluntary maritime rescue work. The key persons had really wide knowledge to start such a project.

Altogether they thought that the organisation in Finland was more or less ready to undertake such a project. However, one of them said that the organisation probably did not know how much work there would be in the project and how much time it would take. Although the organisation had some knowledge, from earlier project which was smaller but still a bit similar. One of the interviewees however, said that the Finns

were ready but the Estonians were not. That was because the field of operation, voluntary maritime rescue operation, was new for everyone in Estonia.

All the interviewees agreed that the project was planned well. Furthermore, one said that he would do absolutely no changes if they were starting the project now. However, two of the three said that some small improvements could have been done. More time should have been put to the planning so that the actions would have been 100% in the right places. They did understand the importance of planning a project. Moreover, the project was exceptionally well planned but some chances would have been made after all.

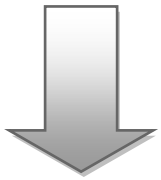
They all agreed that the project had a set of Milestones and those were set in a project plan and they were the reposting system about the project to the secretariat. The reporting inside the project was not so strict and they had project meetings and monthly reporting system. One of the interviewee pointed out that the reporting outside was sufficient. However, he said that there could have been less reporting inside the project. Figure 9 shows the positive and negative sides of the background and planning of the project.



\+ Broad knowledge from the field

\+ Long cooperation together (Finland & Estonia)

\+ Expertise from project-work



\- Readiness in Estonia to undertake such as project

\- Project plan (some improvements needed)

\- Strict project reporting

Figure 9. Advantages and disadvantages of the background and planning of the project

In order to sum up the background and planning of the project the project fulfilled all the requirements for starting such long and extensive operations. The importance of

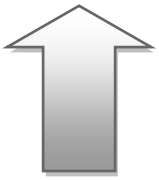
planning was recognised. Furthermore, all the essential and necessary pieces where in right places for the project to achieve all the goals.

5.2 Project Stakeholders

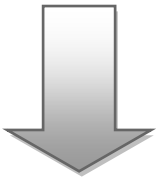
The management of the project was very clear. All the interviewees agreed on who was the project manager and who was the team leader. They all were also pleased with the project management and though that the project management had been sufficient and successful. Furthermore, they all said that there were no problems with the project management or with team leader. None of them underestimated the importance of project management. Moreover, they all agreed that successful project management was definitely one key element in the project.

Nobody had a clear understanding on how much there were members in the project team. That was because the number varied from time to time but they said that there were persons from 8 to 20 people involved. All the interviewees said that the Estonian team members were highly devoted to the project. However, one of them pointed out that the Finns were not as devoted as the Estonians. He said that the reason was that some of the Estonians were hired for the project but Finns were doing the project on the side of their normal work. Estonians were also doing the project for themselves. They all agreed that everyone working in the project was mostly aware on their tasks and duties. Two of the interviewees also though that the Estonians were fully aware on the purpose of the project. One also said that the reason why team members were not always fully aware on the purpose of the project was that the duration of the project was so long, 2,5 years.

They did not think that there were any major problems with the communication. Furthermore, they all did point out that there were some small problems such as language and communication outside but did not see those as huge difficulties. Figure 10 demonstrates the positive and negative effects of project stakeholders had to the project.



+ Clear project management
+ Devoted project team
+ Estonian input to the project



- Long duration of the project
- Language barriers
- Motivation of Finns (doing the project on a side of normal work)

Figure 10. Advantages and disadvantages of the project stakeholders

To summarise the key findings of project stakeholders one of the major reasons for the successes of the project was definitely the project management and highly committed team leader. The project could not work without project team that was dedicated to the project and wanted to push the project towards successful ending.

5.3 Resources

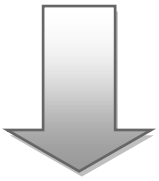
Two out of the three interviewees said that there were absolutely not enough resources and the last one said that there were mostly enough resources. The two who had said about the lack of resources would have added resources to human resources. They agreed that one extra person for administration would have been absolutely necessary. Only that way they could have had 100% out of the time and money put into the project. Two of the interviewees would also have added money to Estonian budget. They were all positively surprised that people were highly committed to the project. The team members had been active and devoted in Finland and in Estonia.

Two of the interviewees though that the project budget was good and realistic. That was because the budget was well planned. However, the last one said that the project budget could have been planned better. She pointed out that Estonia would have needed more money and Finland as well due to the fact that prices of the boats went up. However, two interviewee said that with some hired help to administration they would have been able to take 100% out of the budget. Furthermore, two of the

interviewees thought that everyone had gained a lot more from the project then it was spend. The two interviewees from Finland pointed out that the most significant part, for Finland, was still yet to come, meaning the boats. However, the one interviewee from Estonia was happy with what was gained but didn't think more was gained than spend. Figure 11 reveals the situation of the project resources.

\+ Well planned budget

\+ Dedicated human resources



\- Lack of human resources in administration

Figure 11. Advantages and disadvantages of the resources used in the project

To sum up the resources the demand for project resources might not have been totally clear when starting the project. The highly employing administration would have needed more outside work force. Nevertheless, the project generated a lot of good and a lot was gained within the project.

5.4 Strategic Planning

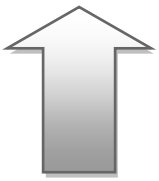
Under the topic of strategic planning there are three smaller subjects, Project Mission, Project swot and Project Lifecycle.

Project Mission

All the interviewees agreed that everyone who was involved in the project was aware of the mission of the project. Furthermore, two of the interviewees said that the mission of the project was accomplished and even exceeded several time. However, the third was more sceptical and said that the project was almost accomplished. Nevertheless, she only pointed out that the supplier had not been able to deliver the

boats, but in this case the project has been a victim of the circumstance. The boats were definitely the only problem they had with suppliers.

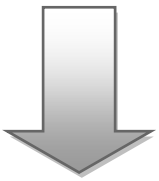
The three interviewees said that the new boats which are coming to Finland are one of the most important things Finnish Lifeboat Institution has/will gain from the project. They still have not got the boats but they are still financially a huge part of the project. All of the interviewees told cooperation with Estonia and Baltic region was important thing gained from the project. They also thought that the project did support the mission of the organisation. Figure 12 shows the positive and negative sides of project mission.



\+ Supports the mission of the organisation

\+ New rescue vessels to Finland

\+ Safety on Baltic region



\- Supplier difficulties on delivering the rescue vessels

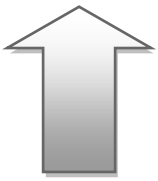
Figure 12. Advantages and disadvantages of the project mission

To summarise the key findings from project mission it is clear that the mission of the project was clear for everyone working in the project. There were criticism towards the project and accomplishing the project goals. However, no one disagreed on the fact that the project was important and that important cooperation between those two countries was generated.

Project SWOT

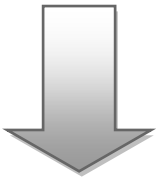
The strength of the project was said to be the strong expertise and the enthusiastic project team. For weakness the two interviewees told the EU bureaucracy with the entire reporting system. The third pointed out the lack of time and money. They all though that the opportunity of this project was to use the same concept in Estonia

because in Finland they have learned that this voluntary concept is good and it works. They also shared a common view on the threats of the project. Furthermore, they said it to be the good work done in Estonia might get buried under the lack of money and resources. Figure 13 demonstrate the project strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.



\+ Expertise

\+ Good and working concept



\- Bureaucracy

\- Lack of time and money

\- The uncertainty of continuation of operations

Figure 13. Advantages and disadvantages of the project SWOT

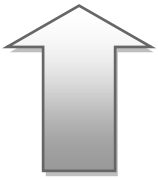
To summarise the project SWOT in short is that the project had many strengths. Furthermore, not only experienced and devoted project team but also well working concept. However, the project also had a set of obstacles and difficulties. It is not easy to export good concept to another country and culture.

Project Lifecycle

The planning of the project was started in the end of 2008 and it took couple months to plan it. The project lasts 2,5 years and will end in 2011 spring. Two of the interviewees said that the project had enough time to accomplish all the goals. Conversely, the third interviewee said that in her opinion there was not enough time. The project will end but the next project is similar to this project.

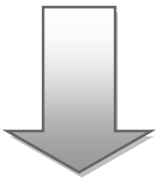
Two of the interviewees said that the most valuable thing they gained from the project was to learn to know the EU bureaucracy and also the new experiences. They all would undertake a similar project again. However, one of the interviewees was more

sceptical than the others. He said that he should really weigh the pros and cons. He would start a similar project again, but only in case the benefits are high enough and the project has a good change to be successful. Furthermore, they all had a positive feeling about the project. They also had some negative feelings towards the project. One said that the timetables and the bureaucracy were negative things. For someone else it was the laborious of the project since it was done at the side of normal work. However, all said that the project was really successful. Figure 14 illustrates the project lifecycle and the negative and positive sides of it.



\+ Enough time

\+ Experiences and knowledge



\- Long duration

\- Laborious of the project

Figure 14. Advantages and disadvantages of project lifecycle

In order to sum up the project lifecycle and the key thoughts from the project the project has plenty of time to accomplice all the project goals. However, the long duration of the project was also seen as negative thing. The project also created positive and negative thoughts in the participants.

6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the research results can be found at the next part. Moreover, it sums together the interview, what came up and what were the main findings from the interviews. In the next part are also subjects for further studies and assessing the reliability of the research.

6.1 Summary and conclusions

The core objective of the research was to find out whether the project achieved all the project goals or not. In this part we have a look at the results and discuss the findings based on the interviews and the theory.

The project started in 2008. First couple months were devoted to the project plan. Every interviewee thought that the plan was made well. Nevertheless, some more time could have been put into it. Altogether the project was planned to last 2,5 years. Not everyone was familiar with working in a project or the concept of the voluntary work. The project had a wide range of stakeholders from governments to the voluntary sea rescues.

The biggest setback in the project is the delivery of new rescue vessels. Moreover, those vessels are now approximately one year late and it is due to the problems of the supplier. Another smaller problem was the budget and human resources. The project should have had hired full time worker for administration. However, the interviewees were all very pleased to the project and its performances.

The project fulfilled all the requirements for starting such long and extensive operations and all the essential and necessary pieces were in right places for successful project. Project stakeholders were one of the major reasons for the successes of the project, the excellent project management and highly committed team leader made excellent and systematic work. The project could not work without project team that was dedicated to the project and wanted to push the project towards successful ending. The demand for resources might not have been totally clear when starting the project. The highly employing administration would have needed more outside work force. It is obvious that the mission of the project was clear for everyone working in the project.

There were also some criticism towards the project and achieving the project goals. However, no one disagreed on the fact that the project was important and that important cooperation between the two countries was generated. The project had plenty of time to reach all the project goals. However, the long duration of the project

was also seen as a negative aspect. The project created positive and negative thoughts in the participants; however, they all thought the project was a success.

The theory of project management emphasizes the fact that the project manager should have a clear understating on all the sections of the project. He/she does not need to be an expert in the field but should have sufficient amount of knowledge to build cooperation and solve problems (Meredith et al. 1995, 110-112). In VOMARE – project the project manager had a wide knowledge from the field of voluntary maritime rescue. The project management in the project was said to be sufficient and successful.

Resources such as human resources and budget needs careful planning and effective use. The people working in the project are one of the key elements for the project and also for the success of the project (PMBOK Guide 2004, 199). Therefore, it is important to select appropriate people working in the project (Lebow 1998, 36). Along the human resources the budget is also really important for the project. The budget should be one of the very first steps of the project. Moreover, it is difficult to plan a project if there is no information on how much can be spent (PMBOK Guide 2004, 157). Both the human resources and the budget got some criticism in the research. However, the interviewees were more or less pleased with the budget. However, they were not able to take most out of the budget due to the lack of human resources.

The success of a project can be evaluated in many ways. The simplest way is by evaluating the project management success and project product/service success (gates.comm.virginia.edu). However, project can also be evaluated with six criteria; three process-related criteria (time, cost and product/service) and with three outcome-related criteria (use, learning and value) (Nelson 2005, 363-364). Evaluating the project from the two perspective method it would mean that the project was success. Furthermore, the project management was a success and there were no criticism towards the project service success. When evaluating the project with the six criteria the project can still be seen as successful. The project was accomplished with in time and budget and the service was according to the specifications. Moreover, the project resulting service was used as it was originally planned, the project increased the stakeholder knowledge and it prepared the organisation for further challenges.

Table 1 sums the main points of the results. After each theme there are the main findings from the interviews and after that what did the theory have to say about the subject. It is really narrow way to look some of the key elements in the research. Nevertheless, it shows the results in an easy and clear way.

Table 1. Summary of the key findings

Themes	**Results of the study**	**Theory**
Planning the project	- Well planned - Only small improvements - More time should been put into the planning	Planning is vital for successful project and it should not be overlooked (Koskela 2001, 28)
Stakeholders	- Everyone had a understanding on project stakeholders - Some of them were more important than other	It is important to know the project stakeholders and take them into consideration accordingly (cnx.org)
Project Management	- Common view on who was the project manager - Project management worked and was sufficient - No problems with communication	Project management is the based for the success of the project. Communication should be good to all stakeholders (www.1bpt.bridgeport.edu)
Team Leader	- Excellent team leader - Team leaders output was recognised and appreciated	Good team leader keeps everything together and makes sure that the team members knows what should be done (cnx.org)
Team Members	- The purpose of the project was somewhat clear to the team members - The tasks were clearly pointed out - Team members were fully devoted to the project	Team members need to be devoted to the project and fully aware on their tasks. They also need to know the reason for the project (Lebow 1998, 34-35)
Resources	- Not enough resources in the project - Human resources should have been added to the administration - Budget could have been a bit bigger as well	Researches such as time, money and people add up important part of the project. Those variables need to be well planned because a changes in project budget afterwards can be expensive and difficult (PMBOK Guide 2004, 20-21)

As a conclusion it could be said that the project did accomplish all the project goals and therefore could be said that the project was successful. The interviewees agreed on many things, and disagreed on couple relatively small matters. However, they all felt lucky and proud to be part of such project. There was nothing in the research that would suggest that the project would have failed.

6.2 Reliability and validity of the research

In a research you should avoid making mistakes. However, the reliability and validly can vary from one research to another. Furthermore, every research should assess the trustworthiness of the research. For assessing the trustworthiness few methods and measurement techniques can be used (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 213).

The reliability measures the repeatability of the research result. The reliability of the research means that the result of the research gives non-random results. The reliability can be discovered in multiple ways. For example if two researches get a same result or incase one person is explored twice and both times the result is the same, the research can be taken reliably (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 213). Reliability is used more for quantitative research.

The other term used for assessing the credibility of the research is validity. It is more used in evaluating qualitative researches. Validity means that the research method measures exactly what is supposed to measure. The metrics and research methods do not always match with the reality that the researchers believe. When answering a questioner you might understand the questions differently than the author had meant them and answer based on his/her own understanding (Hirsjärvi et al. 2003, 213). The validity can be achieved by explaining the whole process in details and the research can be seen as transparent. Moreover, it means that the research can be followed in as detailed as possible. The transparency is important for the research. Furthermore, the opinions and thoughts of the interviewer are also included.

I would say that my research is valid. Furthermore, I think that my research investigated exactly what it was supposed to investigate. The questions of the interviews were quite basic questions and they were fairly simply formed. Moreover,

they were formed based on the theoretical part of the work and the project itself. Additionally, the interviewees had a chance to ask explanation to the questions. The fact that the questioner was not formed in a scale form also supports the fact that the research was valid. The question form used in the research gives the interviewees an opportunity to answer the questions in more detailed way. The interviewees did not have a change to use "I do not know" –answer in the questions. The interviewees answered to almost all the question. Furthermore, each of them skipped approximately one question. This might be because they did not understand the question or they did not see it relevant. However, the skipped questions did not cause any harm to the research.

The accuracy of the research can also be evaluated from the interviewees point. It means that the interviewees participating the research where chosen correctly. They had all the necessary knowledge for the research. Choosing the right people was fairly easy for my research since the three interviewees were the major members in the project. Furthermore, the key persons were easy to identify and to conclude to the project.

It is not easy to evaluate the accuracy of the results. The interviewees might colour the facts or say different things to be more socially acceptable. Furthermore people might intent to give desirable answers. In this case they might suggest that the project was more pleasant and successful then it actually was. Nevertheless, I feel that the interviewees were mostly trustworthy and gave realistic view on the project. They were also critical towards the project and the project actions. Therefore it could be said that they were answering the questions honestly.

The third "interview" which was made via email was most demanding. Furthermore, it is hard to say if the person understood the questions correctly and the answer was what desired. It is also hard to say anything about the interruptions. It is also hard to say how much time the interviewee took to answer the questions. Nevertheless, the answers were included in data in the similar way as the interviews and therefore it brings additional value to the project.

6.3 Subjects for further studies

Research can never be perfect and there are always things that could be done differently. Moreover, the research can also be taken further and research the subject in another point of view or with different research method.

The aim of the thesis is to learn how well the objectives of the project have been achieved. In the research I only investigated the results obtained from the project experts such as project manager and team leader. However, investigating the volunteers might be a good idea for a further study. In my research the voice of the volunteers was not taken into consideration. As I found out in my research the volunteers could have been taken into account better than they were.

Researching the volunteers should be done as a quantitative research. This is because there are quite a lot of volunteers and qualitative research would take just too much time and be too complicated. When researching the volunteers there should be volunteers from both countries, Finland and Estonia. Interviewing the Estonians would not be as easy as interviewing Finns. That is purely because they do not speak English or Finnish. Naturally this kind of research could give totally different result since in my research I only investigated the thoughts of the people in the project management and administration. However, I feel that getting the responses from the volunteers would be important because they are the ones doing the voluntary work.

One interesting possibility could have been to interview someone from the technical secretariat. Out programme manager would probably have been able to give her own, and again different, view about the success of the project. The secretariat is working closely with the project from start to finish. Therefore, I feel that they could have a lot to give for a research. Researching other stakeholders which were working closely with the project might also been interesting to investigate. Such possibilities from Estonia could have been the municipalities, border –and rescue guard. The project funding organisations from Finland might be a good subject for further studies.

7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The whole process was a huge learning process for me. I learned a lot about my own use of time. When I started the writing process I only had the deadline in mind. Perhaps a schedule would have made it easier to divide my time to the different aspects of the process. Furthermore, in the beginning it was hard to realize the overall size of the work. Hence, in the beginning I felt that there was much time and it was a bit hard to get on with the writing. I know that I get the most out of myself when working under pressure.

My own link to the project as a one of the project members has caused some challenges along the way. I have done my best at keeping my own views and opinions apart and not letting them affect the final outcome. I have to say that it was not as easy as I thought at first. However, I feel that I was able to write the thesis in a neutral way. Moreover, when my thesis process was started the VOMARE –project was already coming to an end. Therefore, it was clear that the project was not a huge failure and that it did succeed in some of the areas at least.

I believe I was not as good an interviewer as I could have been. I now understand that I should have taken some time to learn to understand how to conduct an interview. Perhaps if I knew better what I should have done, I might have got better answers to my questions. Moreover, the questions probably should have been formed in a different way to get more out of the interviews. After the interviews I realised that I also could have done test interviews to test my own abilities but also test the questions. Furthermore, I would have learned if the questions served the purpose. It also might have been wise to let the interviewees know why they are answering the questions and what the purpose of the research is.

Nevertheless, my overall feeling about the data collection and the whole process is positive. There are not many things I would do differently. However, I most likely would reserve more time for the whole process. I now realise the fact that writing process would have needed more my undivided tension. Also getting to know the field of study would have made the process easier. Naturally, the field of the study was not totally new for me since we have had project studies and other related studies in the

degree. However, since I only had some basic knowledge it took quite a lot of time to get myself familiar with the topic. Personally I am really interested in the project and working as a part of project. Therefore, I feel that the study will be useful for me even later on. I was able to get a better understanding on the different and complex sides of project work. The process cleared my vision and passion towards project work.

I strongly believe that the Finnish Lifeboat Institution will be able to benefit from the research. Planning of the next project is on the way. Moreover, if the next project gets approved the organisation will definitely be able to benefit from the research. They will be able to see the results and pay more attention to some of the key points of the research and hopefully be even more successful with the next project. I strongly believe that this study will not only be useful for the organisation but also for me personally. I feel that I gained more from the process than I would ever even imagine.

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Appendix 1 (1)

Interviews

BACKGROUND AND PLANNING THE PROJECT

- Where did the project idea come from?
- Did you have any previous knowledge from similar project?
- Where does the project name come from?

- Was the organisation ready to undertake such a project?
- Was the project planned well enough?
- Would you plan differently if you were starting the project now?
- If yes, what and why?
- Did you have project milestones set in the project plan?
- What reporting systems were used in the project?

PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

- Can you name the project stakeholders?
- Did the project have full support from stakeholders, such as board of trustees?
- Did the suppliers meet the standards and requirements?
- What was the role of government concerning the project?
- What was the biggest complication with the stakeholders?
- How much where there smaller complications with the stakeholders?
- What has been the response from the volunteers regarding the project?
- Do you feel that the volunteers' views have taken into account well enough?

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TEAM MEMBERS

- Who was the project manager, what about team leader?
- Was the project management sufficient and successful?
- Were there any problems with the project management?
- Did you face any problems with communication or disagreements?

- How many members where there in the project team?
- Was the project team been devoted?
- Was everyone aware on their tasks and duties?
- Were the team members full aware on the purpose of the project?

Appendix 1 (2)

Interviews

PROJECT RESOURCES AND SCOPE (goals, time, budget)

- Was there enough resources?
- If not, what resources would you have added?
- Any positive surprises with the resources?
- What would you say about project budget?
- What was gained with the money that was put into the project?
- Do you feel that more was gained than spend?

PROJECT MISSION

- Was the project team and stakeholders aware on the mission of the project?
- Was the mission of the project accomplished?
- If not, what was stopping to meet the mission?
- What did Finnish Lifeboat Institution gain from the project?
- Did the project support the mission of the organisation?

PROJECT SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat)

- What were the strengths of the project?
- What where the weaknesses of the project?
- What were the opportunities of the project?
- What were the threats of the project?
- Can you name some unfavourable or favourable factors in achieving the project goals?

PROJECT LIFECYCLE

- When did the project start?
- How long was the project?
- Did the project have enough time to accomplish all the goals?
- What is the future of the project?

Appendix 1 (3)

Interviews

- What is the most valuable fact you have gained from the project?
- Would you undertake a similar project again?
- What are the main feelings about the project?
- Any negative feelings towards the project?
- Would you say that the project was successful?