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Knowledge creation and learning within the building project orientation of organizations

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Abstract

Project-oriented organization is characterized by technological and organizational innovations, as well as by generating a new managerial culture in organization when designing and implementing projects. Preferentially, the project orientation has to be fully supported by top management of the enterprise. The strategic thinking of executives must be a basic presumption. Building of project-oriented organization is a complex process, which should be conducted in several areas of activities of an organization. A model of developing current organization to mature one consists of five areas and five levels. This paper contains results from research of small, medium sized and large enterprises in terms of application building of project orientation. Levels of project orientation were examined on the ground of above mentioned model.

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development of society brings harmony between both economic progress and protection (preservation) of living environment. In the area of business management this is expressed by effective activities of business organizations generating profit concurrently with being regardful to nature around (environmental behavior

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of organizations). One of the means to ensure effective activities in business organizations is the application of project management and gradual building of a project-oriented organization. Majority of projects designed and implemented within businesses, especially focused on manufacturing, respect environmental issues and pay attention to living environment.

Modern concepts of management emphasize project management, which is carried out by high quality of information. Project is not only a tool for technological or organizational change, but also a tool for generation of new knowledge within the organization [1]. The most important information needed for managing projects (from which the corporate knowledge arises) is located in the memory and experiences of employees (tacit information, tacit knowledge). A good project-oriented organization strives to use modern information technologies for formalization of tacit knowledge as much as possible in order to be downloaded into the information system [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8]. Thereby it can be used as a basis for gaining new information by using advanced techniques (data mining, knowledge extraction, knowledge discovery). This new information can facilitate competitiveness or predict further development of an enterprise.

Developing only project management within the organization would lead to situation when certified project managers have no partners in preparation and implementation of any project. That is why next areas of overall activities (no functional processes as marketing, accounting, production, etc.), which support the project management development should be developed. [9]

Development of project management and supporting areas of activities of an organization is introduced in an integrated model of the transformation process leading to the project-oriented organization, which shows five developing areas of an organization from current through mature in five levels. (Fig. 1)

The model examines following areas: Communications, Knowledge development, Project management development, Training and development of employees, and Organizational standards & norms [10,3]. Communications is fundamental for effective management, especially when modern applications of Business Intelligence and Collective Intelligence are employed. [11] Shared tacit knowledge within the project team-work gives a chance to enhance the overall organizational culture. [12]

Project Management development is a backbone of the building process. Training and development provided meaningfully as a program supports the enhancement of qualifications. [13] The development of standards and norms formalizes all achievements into formal documents serving especially for controlling.

Application of the model is useful for organizations not only because of finding the actual evolution level on which they are within the particular area, but also because the model offers what activities should be done to reach the next level. Higher level of project orientation means more effective operation of the organization as a whole in profit creation, saving sources and more responsibility in terms of living environment.

Partial research activities within our research project are focused on finding the real state of using project management in business organizations and level of their project orientation. The means of gaining data is a questionnaire, where methods of statistical apparatus are applied. The questionnaire consists of two main parts. The first part gains information about organization structure of respondent and its utilization of projects and project management in domestic and international context. The second part is specifically focused on „An integrated model of the transformation process leading to the project-oriented organization“. The interviewed organization reveals levels where they are situated in individual area of activity.

2. Research framework and methodology

The research framework includes the creation of a model of measured indicators, questionnaire survey, and evaluation of received data, comparison and formulation of results. The research process model is shown in Fig. 2.

The reached maturity level of enterprises in project orientation has been tested by means of developed model and questionnaire. The questionnaire was focused on typical characteristics of above mentioned areas according to “Integrated model of transformation process leading to the project-oriented organization”. During the assessment a model of calculation was applied, on the basis of which, consequently, it was possible to align enterprises to individual levels of maturity model.

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