MIT PORTAL PROJECT

15.568 Practical IT Management
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I. <u>Context for the Project</u>

Last summer, MIT IS&T received feedback from its trainers and support staff that users were having difficulty navigating MIT's web services in their current states. It felt that a portal was needed so that MIT employees could more readily navigate the services available to them. IS&T allocated a small percentage of its resources in order to create a business requirements document for the portal, and a functional design for the portal.

Although IS&T would like to go ahead with the project, they need to have the background information to assess what kind of time and resources will be necessary to complete the portal. They will use this information both to determine the project's priority (relative to other IS&T projects), and to resource allocation.

II. <u>Purpose, Objectives and Approach of the Project</u>

<u>Purpose</u>: Research existing portal implementations of similar scope to determine necessary costs and resources for the creation of and administrative portal at MIT. Determine whether a portal implementation should be created on top of the existing SAP web, or go to a new platform, and create documentation that will help IS&T determine the course of the portal implementation.

<u>Objectives</u>:
1. Determine necessary costs and resources, with specific attention to employee utilization
2. Identify portal implementation issues
3. Identify portal operational issues
4. Document best practices
5. Create reliable documentation that MIT IS&T can refer to when they undertake the project itself.

III. <u>Tasks, Milestones, and Deliverables</u>

1. Planning (~1 weeks)
   a. Preliminary Meeting with sponsors
   b. Collect existing documentation
   c. Create project plan
   d. Determine current situation
   e. Deliverables:
      i. Project plan 3/3
      ii. Contact List (with project plan)
2. Research
   a. Review existing documentation
   b. Meet with MIT IS&T personnel
   c. Get walk through of existing portal
   d. Create external interview guide
   e. Identify institutions and contacts – including non educational and non-SAP implementations - Three schools preferably with similar demographics, requirements, and SAP
   f. Conduct external interviews

- g. Deliverables:
    - i. Interview Guide
    - ii. Status Reports
3. Analysis
    - a. Synthesize – write ups of interviews
    - b. Assess MIT culture and adaptability to change
    - c. Deliverables:
        - i. Interview write ups
        - ii. Status Reports
4. Presentation
    - a. Deliverable: Presentation
5. Final Report
    - a. Deliverables: Outline, PowerPoint presentation

IV.   Uncertainties, Risks and Opportunities, and Planned Responses

There are many possible uncertainties and risks in this project.

1. Availability of information
    - a. We need to find comparable systems
    - b. Representatives from these institutions have to be willing to be interviewed.
    - c. Plan: If there are no comparable systems, we will examine the systems that do exist. Moreover, many possible institutions will be identified. Therefore, if there representatives from our top choice institutions are unwilling to talk to us, we will move to the next list.
2. Accuracy
    - a. Information needs to be accurate so that IS&T can trust the documentation. This may be difficult if the main information source is through interviewing outside sources.
    - b. Plan: The requirements document will be a starting point. Also, we will try to ask representatives for as many quantifiable data points as they are will to or able to give us.
3. Accurate comparison
    - a. Given MIT IS&T's preference for SAP, the team must be able to give an unbiased assessment and recommendation. This may be difficult.
    - b. Plan: Examine at least one non-SAP portal implementation and assess its relevance and feasibility to MIT. That way, other non-SAP possibilities will be examined.
4. Project management
    - a. Timelines may not necessarily be accurate. Some tasks may take longer than projected.
    - b. Plan: The timeline has plenty of leeway between each deliverable and a cushion of time before the final presentation. Therefore, if certain things take longer, the timeline can be adjusted without struggling to meet the final deadline.

V.   Critical Success Factors

1. External Interviews
    - a. Access – It is important that the team find contacts at institutions with portal implementations who are willing to speak with us
        - i. We will first use the business requirements documents that we have been provided by IS&T
        - ii. Next, IS&T will put us into contact with various consortiums that IS&T is a member of. These contacts will hopefully lead to interviews.
    - b. Accuracy – Because MIT IS&T will be depending on this information, it is imperative that the time, cost, and resource estimates be accurate, and not just anecdotal.
2. Internal Interviews
    - a. Portal walkthrough – The team needs to meet with the IS&T contacts to fully understand the existing functionality as well as the requirements to the new portal.
    - b. Access and communication – This problem will be addressed through biweekly meetings with key stakeholders.

3. Conceptual Understanding
    a. Needs assessment – The team needs to accurately understand exactly what is within the scope of the project. The purpose is not to build the portal, but to understand how IS&T would build it
    b. System – The team needs to learn and understand both the back end that the portal will provide access to, and what the portal will be replacing. This frames the questions that will need to be asked during the external interviews.

VI. Project Timeline

Deliverables	Date Due	Description
Project Plan	W 3/2	3-page initial proposal
Status Report	R 3/17	2-page update of project progress
Status Report	R 3/31	2-page update of project progress
Status Report	R 4/14	2-page update of project progress
Status Report	R 4/28	2-page update of project progress
Project Presentation	R 5/3	Presentation either on 5/3 or 5/5
Report	R 5/5	20-page final report
Internal Interviews	W 3/16	Interviews with UI, Architect, PR, MIT employees
External Interview Template	W 3/30	Questions for consistency when interviewing non-MIT university portal administrators
External Interview Completion	W 4/13	non-MIT university portal administrators all interviewed
External Interview Writeups	T 4/26	"Case-study"-like summaries of portal implementations
Pick Interview Candidates	W 3/16	Work with Steve Landry to select interviewees
Meeting with Wayne, Steve, Kevin	W 3/16	Bi-weekly meeting with status reports
Meeting with Wayne, Steve, Kevin	W 3/30	Bi-weekly meeting with status reports
Meeting with Wayne, Steve, Kevin	W 4/13	Bi-weekly meeting with status reports
Progress Assessment w. Prof. & TA	T 4/5	Progress meeting

VII.   <u>Gantt Chart</u>

22-Feb	1-Mar	8-Mar	15-Mar	22-Mar	29-Mar	5-Apr	12-Apr	19-Apr	26-Apr	3-May	10-May

Project Plan

Pick Interview Candidates

Meeting with Key Players

Internal Interviews

Status Report

External Interview Template

Meeting with Key Players

Status Report

Progress Assessment w. Pr

Meeting with Key Players

External Interviews

Status Report

External Interview Writeups

Progress Assessment w. Pr

Status Report

Project Presentation

Report