Soft Project Management Toward Socio Faculty Development

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Abstract

Activation in management of societal projects seems still difficult. Especially, in the case of projects that include various stakeholders, it is necessary for project leaders to adopt transparent process-explanation. As a methodology for their willing participation, we can expect the problem solving by a soft-approach, which is clearly different from the conventional plant-typed one. The soft-approach is the creative problem solving which is mainly based on the activity of improvement and review of socio faculty development. In this paper, as a study on the guideline for soft project management toward socio faculty development, the approach coordinator for segmental committee-typed problem solving is advocated. The roles and concrete activities of the approach coordinator including the working groups are mentioned.

Keywords: Socio Faculty Model, Approach Coordinator, Transparency and Relativity, Substantial Value of Critical Awareness, Approach Evaluating

1. Socio Faculty Model

As the normative characteristics for the socio faculty development, there are three-typed properties, which are subjective property of self-esteem, restrictive property of accountability and active one of continuous learning as shown in Fig.1. Self-esteem is a normative subjective property. The project member should perceive various problem situations keenly and break through initiatively. Especially he should have responsibility on his decision and skill to esteem himself independently. Accountability is a normative restrictive property. Until now, Japanese people have not lessoned to externalize his idea generation in school days consciously. Further they don’t have recognition to have accountability to their idea in public. The accountability seems to be restriction for us to overcome. Actually in socio framework, all of the project member have to think; “which idea is desirable and feasible?” “What effects are expected?” from the viewpoint of “Cost to Satisfaction”. Accordingly he must think to have accountability to his original opinion through conversations. These conversations mean not only verbal dialogue to the other but also self-conversation by using externalizing tools. Society is an endless open system. It is a knotty and rapid changing problem situation. It has been producing both effects and next causes. In this system, project members have to collaborate to learn their problem situation continuously with accumulative process thinking.

Visions for socio faculty development

As feasible self-esteem members, new typed project leader [Takemura2000a] and delegated working groups are advocated. For self-reproductive continuous learning, collaborative-arbitration feedback typed workflow is adopted. For accountability, the transparent process and relativity for group decision making are discussed. To promote accountability, some externalizing tool, for example AT-Method [Takemura2001], can be utilized.

2. Faculty development typed project

Characteristics of three projects are shown in Table 1. The plant development typed project in which a project manager leads the other member corresponds to the activity of the decision making type of ‘Attendance-Judgment’. For the consensus building, it would be most desirable for all the participants to commit to negotiate each other. In this ‘commitment-negotiation’ type, a group member can dialogue thorough all the process of learning activity. The most important role of a project leader: facilitator is to activate their dialogue. He has no necessity to explain the objectivity or well-grounded reason of their decision. He has no right to
Table 1 Characteristics of faculty developed typed project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Self Learning</th>
<th>Faculty Development</th>
<th>Plant Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Leader</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Approach Coordinator</td>
<td>Project Manager (Supervisor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation type &amp; Decision Making Type</td>
<td>Commitment-Negotiation</td>
<td>Collaboration-Arbitration</td>
<td>Attendance-Judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>big</td>
<td>small</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>small</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>dispersion</td>
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</table>

obtain the participant’s decision. They must charge themselves with all the responsibility. However, except small group cases, there are a lot of fetters to realize ‘commitment-negotiation’ typed consensus building. Those may be caused by the old typed Japanese education and its cultural climate. Therefore, the bereaved project: ‘collaboration-arbitration’ type is expected for practical consensus building. Now it is important to prepare the workflow of this typed project. And on this project management, a project leader of a working group has special characteristics. His authority is not bigger than the project manager (or supervisor). His accountability is bigger than the project manager, and his responsibility is dispersed in stakeholders. It is necessary for him to equip dialogue ability to stain participant’s satisfactory relationship of mutual trusts as well as facilitator. And he must give account of transparent approach process and relativity to all the participant-stakeholders. This typed leader is named ‘approach coordinator (A.C.)’.

3 Collaboration-arbitration typed workflow

The workflow for continuous learning activity is described as shown in Fig.2.

Some characteristics of the workflow

1) Substantial value of critical awareness

An awareness of the issues means the gap between one’s target and present situation. His critical mind always changes and repeats endless self-awareness. The person has been dealt with this as no value. However there must be a man who is willing to pay some money if his problem may be resolved. Therefore critical mind is valuable. Problem situation is an entity derived from stakeholders’ critical minds. The substantial value of critical awareness shows a value of this entity. The objectifying as a value can trigger off a resolving action.

2) Approach evaluating

a) Evaluation of approach documentation
b) Satisfaction check by using a thinking backward sheet
c) Change of critical awareness value

The change of critical awareness value is lastly calculated from following formulation.

$$\text{Change of Critical Awareness Value} = \frac{\text{Next Critical Awareness Value} - \text{Previous Critical Awareness Value}}{\text{Critical Value of Change}}$$

If the calculated value of problem environment is no more than 1, it is recognized that A.C. and stakeholders can success in their project. If more than 1, some stainable problems may come into existence.

References

