

DIGITAL SOCIAL IMPACT



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Lessons Learned

Description

LESSONS LEARNED

This lessons learned activity is useful to establish and sustain a culture of consistent project management improvement.

[Course Configurator](#) > [Step 3: Reflect](#)

Best used for

Reflecting on Impact and project implementation

In the context of Digital Social Impact courses and learning activities

A lessons learned session focuses on identifying project successes and failures, and includes recommendations to improve future performance on projects. It is an important activity when it comes to digital social impact projects

Main Target Group

Students with facilitator

Potential tools for digitising this activity

To obtain optimum results, the lessons learned sessions should be facilitated by someone other than

the project manager. The facilitator could be an external partner and the session could be done virtually using a video call and a collaborative jamboard.

Additional Resources

[Lessons Learned approach as profiled by the Project Management Institute](#)

Step by Step

1 Applying lessons learned contains three processes: analyze, store, and retrieve

2 Students should conduct a Root Cause Analysis which is a technique used to identify the underlying reason or condition that causes the occurrence of an undesired activity or state. The objective is to identify reoccurring problems in late or failed projects. Once the root causes are identified, steps to eliminate them can be determined. The analysis should provide true causes, not symptoms. In addition to root causes, the analysis should also identify best practices so they can be incorporated into existing methodologies, processes, procedures in the future. The analysis should also look at risks. Risks should be reviewed to determine if there is something that can be done to actively address risk mitigation in future projects or scenarios.

3 Storage allows for more consistent data collection as well as provides a means for easier retrieval. This is typically done via a lessons learned template which includes fields such as: category, lesson learned, action taken, how did you arrive at the action taken, root cause and keywords. Keywords are ultimately one of the determinants of success in utilizing lessons learned (Prichard, 1997, p. 94), and are essential for easy retrieval.

4 The last but certainly not least activity is to retrieve lessons learned. By having a lessons learned repository with keyword search capability, the project manager can retrieve lessons learned and review them prior to starting a new project. The review lessons learned from various digital social impact projects can provide an opportunity for peer learning for students. Two things can occur with these lessons. The students can meet with previous project leaders and discuss the project approach, which includes lessons learned from previous projects. And the students can make discussing lessons learned from previous projects an agenda item during the kick-off meeting.