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COVER PAGE AND DECLARATION

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The future of project management challenges, methodologies and new technologies

Introduction

Project management according to the Project Management Association (Britain) is the application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve defined project objectives according to project acceptance criteria within agreed criteria. Project management has final deliverables constrained by a limited time frame and budget.

One of the key factors that distinguishes project management from mere “management” is that it has an ultimate accomplishment and a limited time period, unlike management which is an ongoing process. Because of this, a project professional needs to have a wide range of skills; Often technical skills, and certainly people management skills and good business awareness.

The following is an account of the definition of project management developed by the American Project Management Institute (PMI):

More specifically what is a project? It is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. The project is temporary because it has a specific beginning and end at a specific time, and therefore there is a definition of the scope of work and the resources required for implementation.

The project is unique because it is not a routine process but rather a specific set of processes designed to achieve an individual goal. Therefore, a project team often includes people who sometimes do not work together and sometimes consists of different organizations, with team members spanning multiple geographic regions. Examples of projects: developing software to improve a business process, constructing a building or bridge, relief efforts after a natural disaster, or expanding sales into a new geographic market. All of them must be managed expertly to deliver results on time within budget, and the learning and integration that organizations need.

An overview of the company whose project management processes we are analyzing and our recommendations for:

(Levels), is a local Saudi company, specialized in contracting and furnishing for hotels and commercial projects. 2008 was their beginning, and they were able to prove their worth and ability

through professional work which is based on quality and speed, within a short period of time. In (Levels) they have a very ambitious and efficient leadership vision that enabled us to work with the largest local and international companies. their headquarters is located in Jeddah, while their projects are extended throughout the Kingdom.

1- Types and sections of project management

Project management then applies knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements.

It has always been practiced informally but began to emerge as a distinct profession in the mid-20th century (key milestones in the evolution of project management). The Project Management Institute's Project Management Body of Knowledge - the PMBOK® Guide - identifies recurring elements:

Project management processes are divided into five groups:

- Preparation operations
- Planning processes
- Implementation processes
- Monitoring and surveillance operations
- Closing.

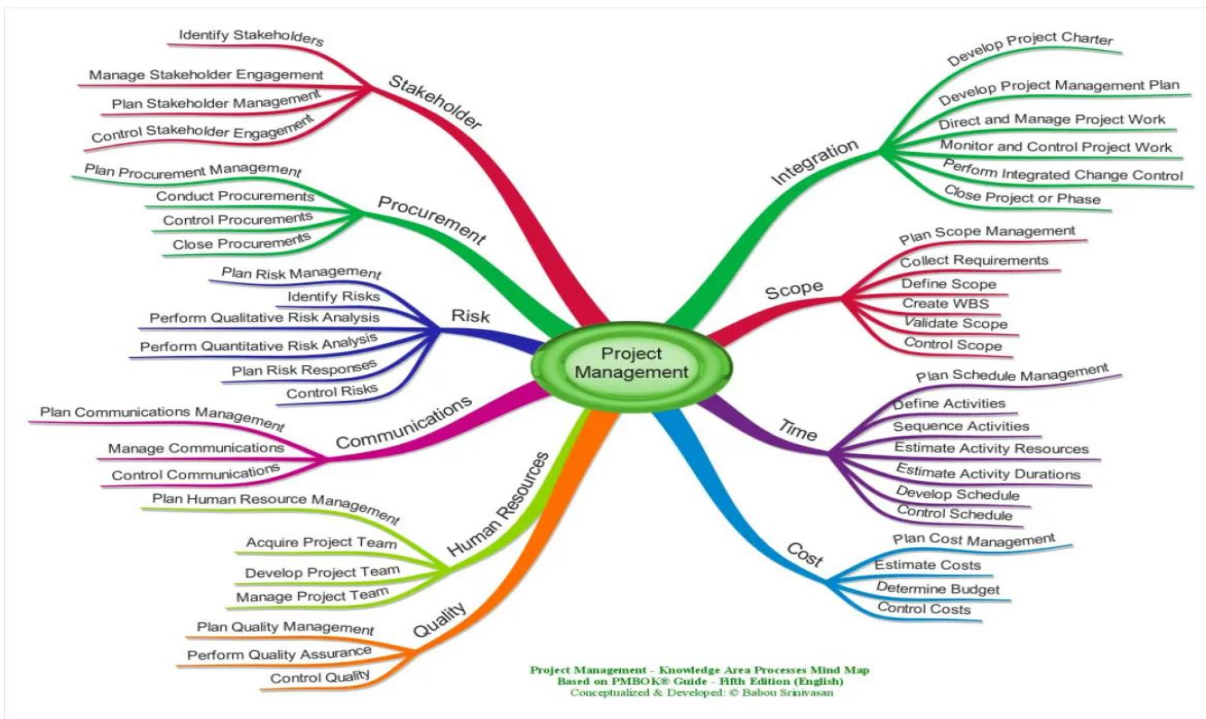
Knowledge in project management is based on ten areas:

- Integration management
- Manage scope of work
- Time
- Cost management
- Quality Management
- purchase management
- Human Resource Management
- Communication management
- Risk Management
- Stakeholder management

All types of management are concerned with this knowledge as well, of course, but project management brings a unique situation shaped by the focus on objectives, resources and schedule for each project. The value of this focus has been proven by the rapid and global growth of project management:

- As a recognized and strategic organizational competency
- As a subject of training and education

- As a career path.



2- The challenges facing Levels and our suggestions for how to overcome them:

The Project Management Office (PMO) may face challenges that prevent it from achieving consistent performance that advances the organization, one of the most important of which is the lack of appreciation for the critical role that the PMO plays as a representative of the best standards and best practices in the organization, as it today has access to tools Strategies primarily directed at achieving clarity, efficiency, and productivity regarding collaboration between team members and the remote work environment. Stay tuned as we discover together in this article the challenges that project managers and PMOs face and offer recommended solutions to deal with them.

Resource Management

Resource management is one of the most difficult challenges facing project management, as every project manager looks for ways to increase efficiency with the least amount of resources when planning the project at its various stages. Challenges a PMO may face when it comes to resource management include:

- Proper planning or measuring return on investment (ROI)
- Anticipate project delivery gaps or inconsistencies before they occur
- Avoid allocating resources that constitute a burden on the work team
- ✓ the solution

Dealing with challenges such as dispersed staff units or others is very difficult, and to effectively manage the various resources in any field or project, you need to comprehensively understand the objectives. For example, wasted resources can be reduced by ordering needed materials in a timely manner, preparing an accurate budget, coordinating, scheduling, and managing personnel. You can achieve better results by:

- ✓ Develop and implement a unified system for documenting and allocating resources
- ✓ Improve resource forecasts during the planning phase by paying attention to the following:
 - ✓ Clarify the scope of the project
 - ✓ Identify potential risks
 - ✓ Take precautions for unexpected costs or project constraints
 - ✓ Take advantage of underutilized resources, for example by using multi-skilled individuals to control the flow of tasks
- ✓ One of the things that has the greatest impact on the project life cycle and its objectives is the comprehensive view provided by the relevant software systems, which is not limited to a specific platform, but is an aid in visually managing project resources, as it allows you to see, monitor and act quickly in the event of a crisis. Possible or occurrence of something that hinders the workflow and performance. In addition to speeding up project implementation, using these programs enhances the spirit of collaboration, which is a huge advantage for teams working remotely.

Inaccurate collection of project requirements

Understanding stakeholders' needs and what they intend to deliver is essential to project success. Unfortunately, many projects start with minimal requirements, which increases the risk of collapsing due to not fully understanding stakeholder needs. The most common mistakes made when gathering requirements include:

- ✓ Make assumptions based on previous projects
- ✓ Not separating the needs of stakeholders from the goals of the organization
- ✓ Failure to clearly define agreed-upon project requirements

the solution

There is no doubt that the remote working environment lacks physical presence. This means that mutual understanding can be disturbed and important information that would help clarify context in joint projects is lost. To overcome some of the challenges a PMO may face with requirements gathering, key users must be involved from the beginning and consider the following:

- ✓ Prepare and ask guiding questions to better clarify project requirements
- ✓ Analyze these requirements using the SMART tool i.e. ensuring that they are Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic, and Time-bound
- ✓ Create and share a detailed statement of requirements before starting any new project
Clients, sponsors and stakeholders all need to agree and sign off on the fact that only what is stated in the statement will be delivered, and you can build a prototype depending on the scope of the project to help clarify, confirm or modify their requirements.

Changes in project objectives

Project managers and PMOs invest a fair amount of time planning project objectives to ensure the most promising results as circumstances allow. However, stakeholders and internal teams may also spend the same amount of time making changes to the scope of work, the deployment process, or the goals of the project itself.

There is no doubt that change is inevitable in the management of any project, but frequent adjustments and feedback without an agile approach to project planning and implementation may cause problems in the short term. The sudden shift to remote work in response to the Corona virus, for example, has increased the challenge of managing teams. Agile, particularly in relation to:

- ✓ Instant communication
- ✓ Solve problems simply
- ✓ Make the right decision quickly
- ✓ Remote work is also likely to reduce efficiency and cohesion – two important components of successful project management.

the solution

- ✓ Managing change effectively

The good news is that you don't have to use custom agile tools to flexibly face change, you just have to design a well-organized change management process as well as a strategy to effectively handle modifications when they happen. The change process may occur initially as follows:

- ✓ You receive a formal request to change the project from the sponsor
- ✓ Evaluate what is needed in terms of materials, hours, permits, and other resources
- ✓ Evaluate the impact on budget, scheduling, deliverables, and quality assurance
- ✓ You submit your results and then wait for your recommendations before implementing

To implement this process efficiently, you need to build a change request template for your organization along with a list of changes and a process map to guide stakeholders and team members toward implementing the mentioned steps. You should be prepared to communicate

with your team members that their roles may change due to any adjustments, and be prepared to answer their questions or address their issues.

Poor communication

One of the biggest challenges a project management office faces is how to keep both sponsors and teams in check and constantly updated to ensure results are delivered on time. Poor communication can compromise project outcomes, including:

- ✓ No or limited purchases and commitment.
- ✓ Misunderstanding of expectations or goals.
- ✓ Teams move in different directions.
- ✓ Conflicts and failure to meet deadlines.
- ✓ Low productivity leading to time and cost overruns.

Both lack of and too much communication are common problems for project managers and lead to decreased efficiency or engagement. You have to find a way to address the problem and build a bridge between team problems and stakeholder requirements – especially when obstacles become more severe or changes become inevitable.

the solution

- ✓ Improve project communication

- ✓ Be sure to follow up with stakeholders appropriately to ensure that the needs of the people you are communicating with are being met. You could, for example, send a brief email questionnaire early in the process to find out:
 - What is the most appropriate way to communicate?
 - What are the least effective methods?
 - What can you do to improve your communications?

Delegate communication to a team member on your behalf who is qualified to discuss the finer points of a product or process.

Don't miss the opportunity to take advantage of group project platforms. Whether you're using a communication platform like Microsoft Teams - or a visual mapping platform - a collaborative approach is guaranteed to streamline communications with everyone involved in your project, helping you move from inception to implementation by giving you a comprehensive view on the best option to devote your time and effort to. It allows the people you work with to share project information quickly and reliably.

Maintain proper planning, especially visual planning, as it will go a long way toward overcoming many of the project management challenges a PMO faces when supervising remote teams.

3- The new methodology that Levels will adopt over the next three years

Agile is a methodology (method) for managing software and non-software projects that focuses on building the product in several stages and short periods of time, and each stage generates a product that is distinct from the previous one with additional characteristics. This (interim) product is considered a real product that the customer (customer) can interact with. The purpose of this is to bring the product closer to the customer (customer) in order to measure his satisfaction with the stages of development of his product. Agile is applied in several ways, including Scrum and Kanban.

What is Agile?

Agile revolutionized software project management, where traditional methods of building software such as Waterfall were used. Which was a sequence of a set of steps: analysis and requirements gathering (in which all program requirements are written), design (which is intended to design the system and not graphic design), development (programming), testing and integration, then maintenance.

Traditional methods were unable to keep pace with the development of software and the rapid changes in life and keep pace with the development and change of project requirements. By relying on traditional methods, the project requires a long time to complete, and this necessarily requires a large cost, and the cost of redesigning, developing and changing (to suit changing requirements) is very large. .

The Agile method is completely different from traditional methods, as it focuses on certain characteristics, which are implemented in a short time and presented to the customer. Here the customer (client) can see more how his idea was implemented, and we can see his reaction when he sees the product. If there are modifications or changes, we can easily and quickly make them, and then move to the next feature until the project is fully built.

In general, the customer cannot express his idea and exactly what he wants from the beginning. He has an idea, an explanation of his idea and how he imagines the software, but how to implement it and the characteristics he wants remain vague until he sees a product with his own eyes, so he can evaluate whether this is what he wants or not.

Agile values:

It is called the Manifesto for Agile Software Development, and it includes four principles for managing agile projects.

- Working software over comprehensive documentation: That is, in the Agile method, we care and focus on producing a software (product) that works with certain basic characteristics, and it is not important to write documentation of the stage with the details. This does not mean staying away from documentation, but rather documenting Only important things, such as how to operate the product, are usually done after ensuring that the product works with the required characteristics. We must not busy the team by writing detailed and boring documentation for the product before the product works 100% correctly. There is no importance for detailed documentation when the product does not work!

“Documentation means writing down the working mechanism of each part of the project in detail in the form of documents, whether paper or electronic.”

- People and the interaction between them are more important than processes and tools (Individuals and interactions over processes and tools): that is, attention and focus on team members and the interaction between them instead of focusing on the work tools and the flow of processes used to build the product, as the tools will do nothing without people who are able to use them properly. True to accomplish the thing required of them.
- Cooperation and participation with the customer (client) in building the product is more important than negotiating contracts: Contracts in general are inflexible, especially in emerging projects. When the customer (customer) explains his product and how he envisions it, the product is often not clearly defined. That is, the customer does not give the necessary details to build the product correctly, so when signing a contract at the beginning of the work (the tasks, cost, time are determined), we have determined what we will do and what will be produced, and therefore modification becomes very difficult because the modification requires time, effort and cost, and often results in problems with the customer. In agile, the customer (client) is involved in every step, and this is what gives the customer (customer) a greater understanding of what he wants because he sees the product itself, and thus modifying or adding to the product is easier and more flexible, and gives him a complete perception of The cost he will pay.
- Responding to change over following a plan is more important than following the plan established in the workflow: that is, paying attention to implementing the changes requested by the customer (customer) when presenting the product to him. His comments take priority over what is planned for the product. As we mentioned previously, the customer cannot fully describe the product from the beginning of the project, and this does not mean that there should not be a plan. Agile plans are general plans at a high level and not a plan with details.

This does not mean at all that the points that were preferred (the least important) have no value, but rather here the setting of priorities is in favor of the Agile values.

Agile principles:

There are 12 principles of Agile as mentioned by agile manifesto

- Gain customer satisfaction by providing an effective and usable program (product) and adhering to delivery times.
- Acceptance and welcome of changes in requirements by the customer, even at an advanced stage of development.
- Deliver usable software in the shortest possible time and at regular intervals.
- Programmers and technicians must work closely with each other on a daily basis throughout the project.

- Direct face-to-face conversations between team members are the best and fastest way to transfer information between the team (usually team members meet daily in the morning for a stand-up meeting for 10-15 minutes)
- Building projects based on motivated individuals, giving them the environment and support they need, trust, appreciation and empowerment, is the appropriate environment to motivate them more to make the project successful.
- Software that works (a usable product) is the main measure of progress.
- Agile encourages the continuous development of individuals, their skills and their knowledge. Sponsors and developers must be able to maintain a constant rate of progress.
- Continuous attention to excellence and quality in technical development and design.
- Simplicity is an essential, vital and important part of Agile, that is, reducing unimportant and unnecessary work.
- Self-organizing teams provide the best requirements, structure and design.
- Work teams evaluate and monitor their work to become more effective, and then adjust errors and behavior at regular intervals.
- Agile depends primarily on individuals, so attention to individuals is considered the cornerstone of the success of projects

Benefits of using agile:

Using the Agile methodology has many benefits and advantages in project management. It helps work teams manage projects more efficiently, while providing high-quality products, and maintaining the budget within its expected limits. Teams work as a single unit in harmony with each other, and respond to changes in requirements in a manner Effective, and here we will explain some of the most important benefits of using Agile:

- Customer confidence and risk reduction: By involving the business owner in the project at every stage of the project, this step provides a high degree of cooperation between the team and the customer, and this gives a good opportunity for the team to understand the customer's vision more, and an opportunity Also, the customer can give his opinion and direct feedback so that the discussion can take place and the team can make adjustments. This, as a result, gives greater confidence on the part of the customer (client) to the team that is completing his project, and the customer (client) also understands that his project is under work and growing very quickly.
- Early delivery of an initial product: As we mentioned previously, this depends on the time stages in project management, and each stage results in a usable initial product, which provides a great opportunity for the customer to launch his project early until the final versions are released.
- Expectation of costs: Since each stage is specific to a period of time, and also specific to specific tasks (that is, the characteristics that will be produced at the end of the stage were established from the beginning of the stage), it is highly predictable of costs, and this gives the client greater knowledge of the cost that he will pay for each stage until Finish the project.

- Allowing for change in requirements: Since the work is done in stages, and each stage has its own requirements, the client is able to change either at the end of the stage (where he finds some errors or problems) or even at an advanced stage if he wants some additions, so they are scheduled for a new stage of time.
- Focus on the value of the work: Since the customer (client) has been involved in the project since its inception, this step gives the team a greater understanding of the priorities of the customer (client) and what is of value to his activity, and here work is done to provide these features and characteristics that give greater value to the customer.
- Focus on users: Since each stage results in an initial product, this gives the customer (customer) and the team a great opportunity to work with real users to try the product, give feedback, and understand their requirements more, and this gives a great opportunity for change to complete the stage error-free.
- Improving quality: Using the Agile method, the concept of time stages, and dividing the project into units that include specific features, the focus on development, testing, and modification becomes very large, and quality is improved by quickly finding problems and defects and determining if there is incompatibility early.

Agile Cons:

Certainly, every method of project management has drawbacks, some of which remain negative, and some of which are avoided after working on a group of projects and gaining the necessary project management experience. We mention some of the drawbacks here:

- At the beginning of large projects, the team is generally unable to determine the true time and cost of the project life cycle, especially if the team is new to working in this methodology.
- Commitment to daily meetings (which take place face-to-face) between the entire team members. Yes, this method is very good, but it is exhausting and requires a lot of time and effort from the team members.
- Sometimes the business owner (customer or customer) is not completely free to hold meetings with the team (because agile requires periodic meetings and close periods between the team and the customer), and other times he delegates a person from his side to follow up on the progress of work, and his decisions or observations are not Her place. This leads to project delays, team frustration, and constant change in requirements.
- The lack of detailed documentation of the project stages leads to difficulty integrating new team members into the work.
- Changes in project requirements sometimes lead to a complete change in the course of the product if the customer is very new in his ideas.

- Lack of clarity with the customer (customer) in his comments and feedback on the initial products, sometimes leads to focusing on certain characteristics of the work team that are not what the customer (customer) aspires to.

4- Artificial intelligence and project management

This week we'll look at how AI can improve project management. Smart applications and tools that rely on artificial intelligence are used to facilitate and organize the project management process in various fields.

Benefits of artificial intelligence in project management

Analyze data and provide valuable insights: Using AI, large amounts of available data can be analyzed and valuable insights can be extracted. These insights can help make better decisions and improve project performance.

Intelligent planning and scheduling: Artificial intelligence applications can improve the planning and scheduling process for projects, saving time and effort. AI can identify schedule discrepancies and provide recommendations for necessary adjustments.

Risk forecasting and management: Risk forecasting is an important part of project management. Artificial intelligence uses advanced analytics to identify potential risks and provide strategies to manage them effectively.

How does artificial intelligence work in project management?

Here we will learn about some of the methods and applications used by artificial intelligence in project management:

1. Data analysis and machine learning

The artificial intelligence strategy in project management depends on analyzing data and extracting useful patterns and reports. Artificial Intelligence uses machine learning techniques to analyze data and predict future outcomes.

2. Intelligent robotics and automation

Intelligent robots can perform specific tasks in the project management process more efficiently and accurately. These robots use artificial intelligence techniques to make decisions and carry out tasks.

3. Specialized artificial intelligence applications

There are many specialized applications and tools that rely on artificial intelligence in project management. Among these applications: data analysis, project planning, risk forecasting, and communication and collaboration tools.

Best practices for using artificial intelligence in project management

1. Establish a clear strategy

A clear strategy for using artificial intelligence in project management must be developed. Specific goals must be defined and appropriate methods for implementing them identified using available technology.

2. Training and team qualification

The work team must be trained and qualified to use applications and tools based on artificial intelligence. This procedure helps improve the team's efficiency and enhance its ability to use modern technologies.

3. Monitor and evaluate performance

The performance of systems and applications based on artificial intelligence in project management must be monitored and evaluated. This procedure helps improve processes and detect errors and potential improvements.

AI project management is an exciting and innovative technology that improves the efficiency and accuracy of project management. With advanced analytics and data-backed predictions, AI can contribute to project success and improved performance.

- **Common questions**

1. Can artificial intelligence be used in project management in all fields?

Yes, AI can be used in project management in all fields, from IT and the construction industry to marketing and retail. Smart technologies can be applied in project management regardless of the type of industry or sector.

2. Will artificial intelligence replace human management in project management?

No, AI does not replace human management in project management, but rather acts as a supporting tool. AI helps improve operations and make better decisions, but human management is still necessary to coordinate, direct, and solve complex problems.

3. Does using artificial intelligence in project management require complex technologies?

Using AI in project management may require some advanced technologies, but some simple applications and tools can be easily used by small and medium enterprises. Technological advances and the availability of tools depend on the resources and specific needs of each project.

(AI is not taking your job. The people who use AI are the ones who will take your job)

5- Important Features to Look for in a Project Management Tool:

There are hundreds of project management apps and tools available online, but not all of them are useful or worth their price. To ensure that the tool you are using can help improve the project, here are a few features to look for:

- **Planning** – The most essential feature of any management tool is one that allows project planning and task delegation. There should be one place in the app where you and your team can view calendars, workflows, templates, folders, tasks, and subtasks.
- **Collaboration** – Communicating with the team should not only be done through email. A good project management tool should allow you to assign tasks, post comments, and organize dashboards, which can all be viewed by the team.
- **Documentation** – Missing files are usually common in ongoing campaigns. You can prevent this by keeping all documents in one place, making it easy to edit and save different versions.
- **Evaluation** – Tracking the project's progress and the team's productivity is essential in meeting the project deadline.

The Future of Levels company

Analyze the skills required in the future for the project manager

A project manager in Saudi Arabia needs to hone a set of skills to meet emerging challenges. According to project management surveys, flexible leadership, collaboration, and emotional intelligence are among the most important skills a project manager must master. The project manager must also hone competencies in areas such as data-driven decision making, learning speed, technical skills, and assessing the environmental impact of the project, given the radical transformations projects are witnessing today towards sustainability and digitalization.

The role of technology in reshaping project management functions:

It is necessary not to exaggerate the role that technology will play in shaping the future of project management jobs - at least in the coming years. Although a Pwc study indicates that artificial intelligence accounts for 12.4% of GDP, equivalent to approximately \$135 billion, the work of advanced project management software, artificial intelligence and automation will be limited to replacing standard and repeatable processes, simplifying complex processes and improving communication between team members. And developing insights based on data in real time. Programs will not be able to replace the human element during the coming period, as artificial intelligence products need human scrutiny to approve them and ensure their authenticity.

Challenges and opportunities in the future of project management careers:

With all the development that the world of project management has witnessed and will witness in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the goal of Vision 2030 to reduce the unemployment rate from 11.6% to 7%, there are clear challenges facing the project management specialty, and perhaps the most important of them is adapting to the rapid change that is taking place in technologies, and raising the skills of the workforce. , commitment to comply with 2030 visions, and many other factors.

- Despite all these challenges, many opportunities accompany the emergence of these challenges, as the high degree of complexity of projects will lead to the creation of more specialized roles, and the Kingdom will be able to reach innovative solutions through project managers working in the Kingdom addressing requests for sustainable practices.

6- Conclusion

In the scene of rapid growth witnessed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the world of project management, adopting advanced technology and skills will open a promising future that turns the challenges facing the Kingdom into opportunities that can be used to develop non-oil revenues and reach a high degree of economic excellence for the Kingdom.

Saudi Arabia is undoubtedly on the verge of tremendous development. If Levels Company is unable to keep pace with this development and bring great international expertise that will help it, then the train will be missed and many opportunities will be lost that will be for the benefit of companies that have realized the requirements of the future market, which certainly includes new project management methodologies.

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