



HEAVY MANUFACTURING COMPANY TRUSTS PMALLIANCE TO MANAGE A LONG-TERM FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT COMPLICATED BY A GLOBAL TEAM AND INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE.

A heavy manufacturing company asked PMAlliance to provide project management support for the development of its new assembly plant. The huge, global project team faced several significant challenges including communication hurdles, a mid-project scope revision, and a large, integrated technology sub-project.

CHALLENGES

MAJOR SCOPE REVISION MID-PROJECT

Mid-way through the facility startup project, the company decided to take over a major portion of the fabrications manufacturing process from a supplier. The decision necessitated adding 285,000 square feet of manufacturing space in the new facility as well as developing manufacturing procedures and integrating into existing key support processes. This challenging revision to the project's scope threatened to significantly impact the project's original budget and timeline.

LARGE, DIVERSE TEAM AND LONG-TERM TIMELINE

The new assembly plant project required coordinating a large, culturally diverse team of over 120 members located on four different continents as well as suppliers from around the world. Keeping team members, stakeholders, and suppliers informed and engaged over the project's two-year timeline presented a unique challenge.

LARGE, INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY SUB-

In addition to the mid-project expansion of the scope, company management decided to integrate a new facility-management system that operated every aspect of the business—from day-to-day shop floor operations to logistics, financials, and supply chain functions. Team members and facility employees needed to simultaneously learn and implement the new technology without sacrificing the delivery of any other aspect of the project or day-to-day operations of the company's other facilities.

SOLUTIONS

TRAINING

Our customized, structured approach for this manufacturing company began with our two-day Duration-Driven® Planning & Control course for the entire leadership team (a sub-set of the global project team). The course, based on PMAlliance's proven methodology, provided the leadership team with an understanding of the basic concepts of Duration-Driven Project Management and the tools utilized to control its facility startup project effectively. It also provided an opportunity to reinforce the importance of strong communication and collaboration to ensure the success of the long-term project.

DURATION-BASED ESTIMATES

PMAlliance's team of certified project management consultants implemented a world-class project management infrastructure to manage this complex, long-term project. They collaborated with leadership team members and other stakeholders to create a project charter that defined the project's remaining scope and objectives. This charter served as the foundation for a top-level schedule to identify major phases, project duration, and deliverables. The completed charter allowed the leadership team to forecast and assign resources and project activities to the members of the large, widespread team.

Working directly with the leadership team members, PMAlliance's consultants determined duration-based estimates for each team member's in-progress and future activities to be included in the project plan. The estimates provided the necessary information for PMAlliance's expert facilitator to determine the level of granularity (detail) to be included in the completed plan. The leadership team used the estimates to drive decisions concerning single points of responsibility for plan activities, see how plan activities inter-connected, and understand how an activity could impact the project's milestones and deadlines.

PMALLINCE SIMPLIFIED THE MANAGEMENT OF MULTIPLE TEAMS AND RESOURCES REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW FACILITY TECHNOLOGY.

COMPRESSION AND CONTROL

The project's aggressive timeline and mid-project scope revision required a multi-tiered project control strategy complete with streamlined schedule and proactive monitoring/reporting process. With the granularity and responsibility decisions made, our project management consultants were able to significantly compress the project schedule. The commitments were incorporated into a dynamic network-based project plan that combined activity durations with activity precedence relationships to calculate the expected finish date and critical path. Multiple tasks could be carried out simultaneously and the leadership team used the critical path to align the expected and targeted finish dates as needed.

With a newly compressed schedule that met the demands of this challenging project, PMAlliance instituted our Duration-Driven® project control process to continually monitor and update the project's real-time progress. With each activity update, this dynamic control process recalculated the expected finish date and allowed our consultant to assist the leadership team with identifying potential issues that might arise. If the project's calculated, expected finish date and targeted finish date did not align, the leadership team had the necessary information, in advance, to take the corrective actions required to keep the project on-schedule. Our Duration-Driven® project control process provided structure and flexibility to efficiently incorporate the mid-project scope revision (i.e., additional square footage). It also simplified the management of the multiple teams and standby resources required to test, integrate, and implement the new facility management technology without disrupting everyday operations at other facilities.

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ADD-IN TOOLS

In addition to the initial Duration-Driven® Planning & Control course, PMAlliance's expert consultants trained leadership team members how to use our proprietary project management software along with its customized add-in tools for Microsoft Project to create an easy schedule updating process. Our executive-level dashboard pulled live information from the overall project plan and summarized thousands of activities onto a single page. Along with providing an overall sense of the project's progress, the dashboard distilled a vast amount of technical project data down to the critically important highlights. The new software and training allowed the project leadership team to focus on the controlling path and review team member's updated activity durations in real time. The team could identify and resolve potential problems or delays as well as provide timely, detailed reports to the large, worldwide team.

FACILITATION

From the start of the new facility project, PMAlliance's team of certified project management consultants served as the primary facilitators for the implementation, ongoing control process, and communication to stakeholders and team members. Throughout the two-year timeline, our consultants led frequent on-site meetings and planning sessions with stakeholders and key suppliers from eight countries as well as quarterly facility tours for all key team members. With their expertise in facilitation and our Duration Driven Methodology, our consultants served as a neutral party able to see the big picture and level of granularity necessary to create and implement a successful project plan. Our Duration-Driven® project control process and consultants kept project team members and key stakeholders informed of real time activity progress via weekly project status updates outlining successes, issues, and risks. The rigorous communication process drove team member commitment as well as accountability to the elapsed time activity durations, and provided the necessary information to handle the critical challenges encountered throughout the project.

PMALLIANCE SUCCESSFULLY EXPANDED THE COMPANY'S EXISTING MANUFACTURING FACILITIES ON TIME AND UNDER BUDGET.

RESULTS

With strong leadership, cohesive teamwork, and a comprehensive Duration-Driven® project control process in place, this manufacturing company's new facility successfully rolled its first machine off the assembly line on time, under budget, and with no quality defects. Through PMAlliance's Duration-Driven® methodology, training and facilitation, the large, highly productive global project team worked off a single schedule that was flexible enough to absorb the significant change in scope and stay within the original timeline. Today, this manufacturing company continues to use PMAlliance's proven process and proprietary Duration-Driven® methodology, software, add-in tools, and web update system to manage adding new machine models to the facility's manufacturing capabilities.

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PMAlliance is a team of certified project management professionals who have years of real-world experience. We provide training, consulting, and project management office development services for our clients worldwide, from Fortune 1000 companies, to multi-national businesses, to entrepreneurial ventures.

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