Mini-Case Study: Managing Change at Global Green Books Publishing

Global Green Books Publishing is producing customized eBooks for a local college. It has just received a large order for a new eBook on *Strategic Human Resource Management in a Global Context* from a senior professor in the business school. This distinguished faculty member is dissatisfied with the current textbooks, and wants a customized eBook for use with her on-campus courses, graduate seminars, and her executive education courses. This is the most complex eBook that Global Green Books has undertaken. Because this project is so important to the professor, and will be used in so many different settings with different schedules, the professor made sure that she had her complete eBook request in early to allow sufficient time for production.   She had selected a broad set of the best papers and had written an introduction and background, along with discussion questions for each section. This meant that this project was going to have an extensive set of permissions to acquire before production could happen, as well as a large amount of desktop publishing for the new materials written by the professor. She was quite certain that she had given Global Green Books more than enough time to have her eBook ready before the first class needed it.

This large eBook went through the check and verify order step with a bit of back and forth with the professor to verify the information needed for the extensive number of permissions, so that started the project off with a bit of a delay. Because there were so many permissions, the Supervisor who planned this project, accelerated the work on obtaining permissions to make sure that all the permissions were received before they needed to start assembling and collating the eBook in production.

As the Publishers Liaison worked through the extensive list of permissions, the Customer Service Representative for the business school at the college started receiving several inputs from the college about this project. One set of inputs was a continuing series of requests from the professor. As new papers were released, she wanted to make a number of additions to the eBook. Also, as time went on and she had more time to review her eBook plans, she started identifying some changes that she wanted to make to her planned eBook.

Another input came from the business manager at the college bookstore, as he was quite concerned about the projected cost of this eBook. Because this eBook included so many reprints of existing articles and chapters, the estimated cost of the book was quite high. The college expected their eBooks to be delivered at a low cost, as its bookstore costs had to cover the bookstore overhead (servers for sales and distribution of the eBooks and marketing costs) and the bookstore's markup, as well as the costs of the eBook from Global Green Books. The Global Green Books costs had to incorporate all the permissions costs, as well as all of the desktop publishing and production costs.

The Customer Service Representative communicated these issues to several people within Global Green Books: the account manager for the college account, the supervisor managing production for this eBook, the Publishers Liaison obtaining permissions for this book. The account manager was concerned about upsetting this important customer, the supervisor didn't know how these various requests could all be accommodated or how it would impact his project, and the Publishers Liaison was worried both about added costs for new permissions and the

time it would take to get them and the costs they had already expended for permissions no longer needed.

And the professor's requests just kept coming, at an increasing rate as it got closer to her deadline for needing this eBook.

The supervisor was starting to make some estimates of what each change requested by the professor would cost

- An extra $500 for each new permission needed, in addition to the $500 already spent for each permission already acquired that can no longer be used
- Two hours of Publishers Liaison effort for each new permission needed at an unburdened cost of $22 per hour (loaded cost is $55 with a 1.5 overhead rate)
- One hour of supervisor time for replanning each change at an unburdened cost of $28 per hour (loaded cost is $70 with a 1.5 overhead rate)
- Sales commission of 20%

This continuing series of requests for changes from the professor is quickly adding to the upwardly spiraling cost of this project. The supervisor feels that something must be done about this scope creep – continually changing scope.

Comment on the following aspects of the case study:

a) Who are the stakeholders of this project? Who are the key stakeholders of the project?
b) What impacts could these requested changes have on the budget?
c) Could these requested changes also impact the schedule? If so, how?
d) What is Global Green Book's process for dealing with changes from their customers? Do you see any possible issues with this process?
e) How would you recommend that Global Green Books handle these changes? Who should be involved?
f) What should Global Green Books do about the conflicting inputs from their customer – the bookstore manager who wants inexpensive eBooks and the professor who wants the best and most up-to-date collection of readings possible for her courses?