Pert Cpm Example Problems With Solution

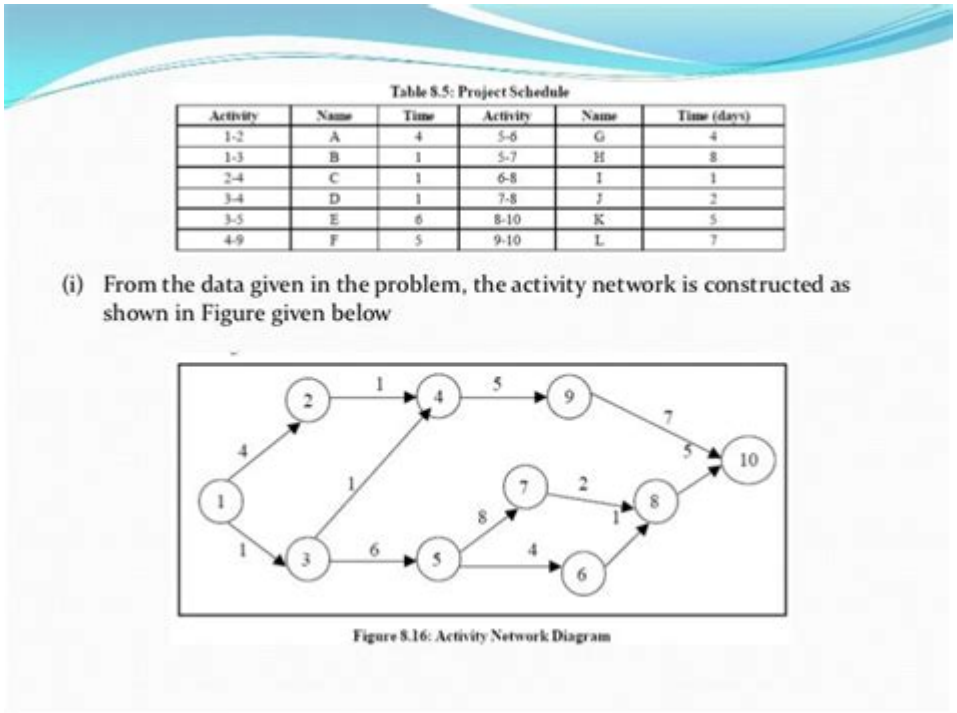

Table 8.5: Project Schedule

Activity	Name	Time	Activity	Name	Time (days)
1-2	A	4	5-6	G	4
1-3	B	1	5-7	H	8
2-4	C	1	6-8	I	1
3-4	D	1	7-8	J	2
3-5	E	6	8-10	K	5
4-9	F	5	9-10	L	7

(i) From the data given in the problem, the activity network is constructed as shown in Figure given below

Figure 8.16: Activity Network Diagram

PERT CPM Example Problems with Solution are critical for project managers and teams looking to optimize their project planning and scheduling. Program Evaluation Review Technique (PERT) and Critical Path Method (CPM) are two essential project management tools used to analyze and represent the tasks involved in a project. While PERT is primarily used for projects where time estimates are uncertain, CPM is more appropriate for projects where tasks and durations are fixed. In this article, we will explore several example problems that illustrate the application of PERT and CPM, along with their solutions to help you better understand these techniques.

Understanding PERT and CPM

What is PERT?

PERT stands for Program Evaluation Review Technique. It is a statistical tool used in project management that helps to analyze and represent the tasks involved in completing a project. PERT is particularly useful for projects where the time required to complete different tasks is uncertain. The main components of PERT are:

- Events: Milestones or points in time during the project.
- Activities: Tasks that need to be completed to move from one event to another.
- Time Estimates: The time required to complete each activity, typically represented as:
- Optimistic time (O): The minimum possible time required to complete an activity.
- Pessimistic time (P): The maximum possible time required to complete an activity.
- Most likely time (M): The best estimate of the time required to complete an activity.

Using these estimates, the expected time for each activity can be calculated using the formula:

$$
TE = \frac{O + 4M + P}{6}
$$

where TE is the expected time.

What is CPM?

The Critical Path Method (CPM) is a project management technique used to determine the longest stretch of dependent activities and measure the time required to complete them from start to finish. CPM is beneficial for identifying critical tasks that cannot be delayed without affecting the overall project timeline. The main components of CPM include:

- Activities: Tasks that need to be completed.
- Dependencies: Relationships between tasks, indicating which tasks must be completed before others can begin.
- Duration: The time required to complete each activity.

The critical path is the sequence of activities that represents the longest duration through a project, which determines the shortest possible project duration.

Example Problem 1: PERT Analysis

Problem Statement

A project consists of three activities: A, B, and C, with the following time estimates:

- Activity A: O = 2 days, M = 4 days, P = 6 days
- Activity B: O = 1 day, M = 2 days, P = 3 days
- Activity C: O = 3 days, M = 5 days, P = 7 days

Determine the expected time for each activity and the overall project duration if activities A, B, and C are independent.

Solution Steps

1. Calculate Expected Time for Each Activity:
- For Activity A:

$$
TE_A = \frac{2 + 4 \times 4 + 6}{6} = \frac{2 + 16 + 6}{6} = \frac{24}{6} = 4 \text{ days}
$$

- For Activity B:
$$
TE_B = \frac{1 + 4 \times 2 + 3}{6} = \frac{1 + 8 + 3}{6} = \frac{12}{6} = 2 \text{ days}
$$

- For Activity C:
$$
TE_C = \frac{3 + 4 \times 5 + 7}{6} = \frac{3 + 20 + 7}{6} = \frac{30}{6} = 5 \text{ days}
$$

2. Determine the Overall Project Duration:
Since activities A, B, and C are independent, the overall project duration is the longest expected time:
- Project Duration = max(TE_A, TE_B, TE_C) = max(4, 2, 5) = 5 days.

Example Problem 2: CPM Analysis

Problem Statement

Consider a project with the following activities and their durations:

Activity	Duration (Days)	Predecessors
A	4	-
B	2	A
C	3	A
D	5	B, C
E	6	D

Determine the critical path and the total project duration.

Solution Steps

1. Draw the Network Diagram:
- Represent the activities and dependencies graphically.
- Activity A leads to B and C.
- Both B and C lead to D.
- D leads to E.

2. Calculate Early Start (ES) and Early Finish (EF):
- For Activity A:
- ES = 0, EF = 0 + 4 = 4
- For Activity B:
- ES = 4, EF = 4 + 2 = 6
- For Activity C:
- ES = 4, EF = 4 + 3 = 7

- For Activity D:
- ES = max(EF_B, EF_C) = max(6, 7) = 7, EF = 7 + 5 = 12
- For Activity E:
- ES = 12, EF = 12 + 6 = 18

3. Calculate Late Start (LS) and Late Finish (LF):
- Start from the end of the project, Activity E:
- LF = 18, LS = 18 - 6 = 12
- For Activity D:
- LF = 12, LS = 12 - 5 = 7
- For Activity B:
- LF = LS of D = 7, LS = 7 - 2 = 5
- For Activity C:
- LF = LS of D = 7, LS = 7 - 3 = 4
- For Activity A:
- LF = min(LS_B, LS_C) = min(5, 4) = 4, LS = 4 - 4 = 0

4. Identify Critical Path:
- The critical path consists of activities with zero slack (LS = ES).
- Critical Path: A → C → D → E
- Total Project Duration = 18 days.

Importance of PERT and CPM

Using PERT CPM example problems with solutions is essential for effective project management, as they allow project managers to:

- Visualize project timelines and dependencies.
- Identify critical tasks that must not be delayed.
- Allocate resources efficiently to ensure timely project completion.
- Reduce uncertainty in project scheduling by estimating time more accurately.

In conclusion, understanding and applying PERT and CPM techniques can significantly enhance your project management skills and help ensure successful project delivery. Through the example problems provided, you can see how these methods work in practice, allowing for better planning and execution in real-world scenarios.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is PERT and how does it differ from CPM?

PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique) focuses on the time required to complete tasks, considering uncertainties in activity durations, while CPM (Critical Path Method) emphasizes the sequential nature of project tasks and uses fixed durations.

Can you provide a simple example problem using PERT?

Sure! Consider a project with three activities: A, B, and C. Activity A takes 2 weeks, B takes 3 weeks, and C takes 4 weeks. If A must finish before B starts, and B must finish before C starts, the total project duration is the sum of all activities: 2 + 3 + 4 = 9 weeks.

How do you calculate expected time in PERT?

The expected time (TE) for an activity in PERT is calculated using the formula: TE = (Optimistic time + 4 Most likely time + Pessimistic time) / 6.

What is a critical path in PERT/CPM?

The critical path is the longest duration path through a project, determining the shortest time to complete the project. Any delay in critical path activities will directly affect the project completion time.

How can you identify the critical path in a given example?

To identify the critical path, list all paths through the project, calculate the total duration for each path, and the path with the longest duration is the critical path.

Can you solve a PERT problem with given optimistic, pessimistic, and most likely times?

Certainly! For an activity with an optimistic time of 2 weeks, a pessimistic time of 6 weeks, and a most likely time of 4 weeks, the expected time is TE = (2 + 44 + 6) / 6 = 4 weeks.

What are some common pitfalls when using PERT/CPM?

Common pitfalls include underestimating activity durations, neglecting resource constraints, and failing to update the project schedule as work progresses.

How do you create a PERT chart from an example problem?

To create a PERT chart, identify all activities, determine their dependencies, estimate time for each, and then use nodes to represent activities and arrows to represent dependencies to visualize the project flow.

What tools can be used to solve PERT/CPM problems?

Tools for solving PERT/CPM problems include project management software like Microsoft Project, online PERT calculators, and even spreadsheet software like Excel for custom calculations and charts.

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