

Project Plan Definition

Purpose

The Project Plan formalizes the following:

* Agreement between the Executive Sponsor and Project Manager
* Project purpose
* Business and project goals and objectives
* Scope and expectations
* Roles and responsibilities
* Assumptions and constraints
* Quality Management approach
* Project Management approach
* Ground rules for the project

Components

Each Project Plan component is essentially a work product resulting from subtasks in the *Make Plan* Project Management task, but can be revised during other project management activities. It is important to document all parameters that will have an impact on the project, its planning and execution.

1. Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

State the purpose of the Project Plan. Indicate in a short statement that the Plan will provide a definition of the project, including the business goals and objectives. In addition, state that the Plan is an contract between the Project Manager, Executive Sponsor, Project Team and other management of the enterprise associated with and/or affected by the project.

Background Information about the Project

Describe the project history. Include information such as previous initiatives, business environment changes (may be related to competition, regulation, resource availability), and the impetus and rationale for the project. Describe, in essence, how the project came about.

Project Approach

Explain how the various behavioral and team management techniques, methodology and task structure will be utilized most effectively to meet the requirements and objectives of the project. State which development path was chosen to complete the project and the reason for the selection. Identify the “character” of the project (standard, pathfinder, demonstration, etc.).

1. Goals and Objectives

Business Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives are defined as follows:

Goal:

A goal is an aspiration of the company that states a direction in which the company will focus its efforts in support of its mission.

Objective:

Objectives are short-term targets (typically 12-24 months or less) of defined, measurable achievement.

In the *Business Goals and Objectives* section, identify the corporate goals and objectives that the project intends to support, as well as how they are measured. Some typical business objectives are:

* + Decrease costs, errors, reworks by a specific percentage
  + Decrease processing or turnaround times by a specific percentage
  + Increase productivity or capacity by a specific percentage
  + Eliminate backlogs by a specific percentage
  + Increase market share by a specific percentage
  + Reduce risk by a specific percentage
  + Comply with regulatory requirements (avoid fines or penalties)
  + Provide better access to data needed for decision making within a specific time limit

Project Goals and Objectives

State the goals and objectives expected to be achieved as a result of implementing the project, and describe how meeting them will support the corporate objectives and goals. Set project objectives by establishing why the project has been commissioned and what it is expected to achieve for the enterprise. Identify the specific results to be realized and the benefits to be achieved. Be certain to establish the time frame in which the objectives are expected to be met. Define a visible method to monitor and measure progress in meeting the objectives.

1. Scope

A clear and concise definition of scope is key to the success of any project. Scope should describe from a quantitative perspective what is to be accomplished. Its purpose is to aid in establishing realistic work plans, budgets, schedules, and expectations. Should identified work arise that falls outside the defined scope, the Project Manager must either deem the work out of scope and defer it, or expand the scope of the project to include the work. The latter choice would result in formal changes to the work plan, resource allocation, budget and/or schedule.

Scope Definition

State specifically what work will be done and which parts of the enterprise will and will not be included in the project. If the project is part of a phased approach, it may include deliverables from the previous stage and the scope defined by which objects will be further defined and developed. Focus on the components identified within the Project Plan Scope Definition. Define the scope of the project by determining which criteria constitutes maintenance of the product. This will prevent the occurrence of “scope creep” and never-ending projects.

Scope definition should identify:

* The architectural components involved
* The parts of the enterprise included in the project
* The enterprise locations to be included
* The types of information handling and their associated technologies to be included

Costs, Benefits and Risks

This is the financial scope of the project. Briefly state the costs and benefits associated with the project and include a reference to the Project Budget Report and/or Cost Benefit Analysis Report in the attached Appendix. In the Costs section include the cost of administrative time, meetings and project management task time.

Include a description of the Risk Management approach to be used on the project and refer to the Risk Assessment contained in an Project Plan Appendix. The Risk Management Technique within Architect can provide the foundation for structuring such an approach.

A Risk Assessment should be performed and the findings should be attached as a document in the Project Plan Appendix. The Risk Assessment is concerned with identifying, characterizing, prioritizing and deciding whether to accept the exposure associated with each risk that threatens the project’s ability to meet its objectives within schedule and budget. State how often a risk assessment will be performed throughout the life of the project, the potential impacts on the project’s success, and how the results and recommended contingencies to manage or mitigate the risks will be communicated to those interested/involved parties.

State that Risk Reduction is continually performed throughout the life of the project. Risk Reduction is concerned with developing and executing corrective measures, monitoring corrections and evaluating their effectiveness. Corrective actions must be agreed upon, based on the assessed impact of the risk, the project’s ability to accept the risk, and the feasibility of mitigating the risk.

Be sure to include the option of using the Project Risk Metric Model within Architect, which can help the Project Manager assess the overall project risk level. Distinct risk reduction actions are suggested within the Model that can effectively lower the level of risk exposure for each type of risk that a project faces.

Project Products/Deliverables List

This is the deliverable scope. Project Products may include formal deliverables as well as informal concrete results. Include in this section a list of the deliverables and their contents (if appropriate) to be produced during the project. Detailed descriptions of each deliverable may be contained within the Appendix. Including a detailed list of deliverables in the Appendix provides a structured approach that ensures that all persons involved in the project understand what is expected. The components of the list should include for each deliverable:

* Stage
* Deliverable Name
* Description
* Acceptance Criteria
* Assigned to (Team Member Name)
* Date(s) in Progress
* Quality Review Date
* Delivery Date
* Acceptance Date

Remember to include project management deliverables, such as the Project Plan and Work Plan.

Milestones

This is the temporal scope of the project. List and briefly describe significant project accomplishments that will act as primary checkpoints for the project’s progress and cost measuring. These are generally the points at which the completion of an activity or group of activities causes the project to reach a milestone by producing a highly visible or significant product or result (e.g., equipment delivery, material delivery, review meeting, approval checkpoint). Not every task completion date in the project will be a milestone, but every milestone should be tied to a deliverable.

For budgeting purposes and to aid in monitoring project progress, calculate the percentage of completion that the project should achieve at each major milestone. Include also the estimated time of completion for each milestone. On large projects, it is recommended that milestones be within two months of each other. Milestones are targets that should be met without deviation from the estimate. If they are not met, it is likely that the project will not finish on time. Ensure that milestones are clearly identified in the Project Work Plan.

Impacted Business Areas

This is the organizational scope of the project. Identify business areas that are impacted during the duration or completion of the project and state how they are impacted. For example, if the project is an application development project, some organizations may have to perform processes manually until the new automated process is implemented. If a business area cannot function at all during the course of the project, the project timing should be of high priority.

1. Assumptions

Briefly describe any assumptions made about the project related to resources, scope, expectations, schedules, etc. Assumptions should be specific and measurable.

1. Constraints

Project Constraints

Describe the principal constraints and limitations under which the project must be conducted, concerning the project environment or parameters (timeframes and deadlines, funding, skill levels, resource availability, etc.).

Related Projects

List any other projects that are impacted by the project described in the Plan. Managers of related projects should be kept in the communication loop on all matters related to this project.

Critical Dependencies

It is essential that the dependencies between related tasks and subtasks be understood to ensure that tasks are sequenced correctly and that the critical path of a project is recognized. Indicate that a detailed Project Network-PERT Chart, which depicts the work dependencies between project tasks, is included in the Project Plan Appendix.

Determine the relationship between work performed in a given task or subtask with the work performed in other tasks or subtasks. Identify the predecessor and successor activities, the nature of the dependency between them and the amount of gap, lag time or overlap that can occur between the activities. Indicate whether each dependency is Start to Start, Finish to Finish, Start to Finish or Finish to Start.

Identify any tasks within a related project on which this project is dependent and describe the relationship. Account for these dependencies in the project risk analysis and develop contingency plans as needed to circumvent problems arising from project-to-project dependencies.

1. Quality Management Approach

Activity Reviews/Walkthroughs

Identify the types of project reviews and walkthroughs that will be conducted. Include items such as test plans and test scripts to be reviewed. Indicate when reviews should occur in relation to other tasks.

Tools and Techniques

List and briefly describe the tools and techniques that will be used on the project to ensure quality. Tools may include specific software packages for project scheduling, testing, etc.

Test Approach

Briefly describe the approach that will be used to test the project results prior to putting them into production. All products developed as a result of the project should be tested.

Performance/Quality Standards

Identify any performance or quality standards that must be met upon approval of the final results of the project. This may include acceptance criteria for the final work product.

Quality Management Roles

Define the specific quality management roles and their accompanying responsibilities that individuals will be assigned to ensure quality on the project. Responsibilities should include reviewing work products produced by both Project Team members and Project Managers.

Training

State how the necessary training will be conducted and the approach to evaluate the training.

1. Project Management Approach

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) Gantt Chart

Include a high-level WBS of the project, highlighting the stages and major tasks that must be performed to complete the project. Architect: Planner may be used to create a WBS. Indicate that a detailed WBS is included in the Project Plan Appendix. A Gantt Chart reflects the project schedule, which is composed of the WBS, the projected dates each task is to be started and completed, and the resources assigned. The Architect Process Blueprints provide a standard WBS for a variety of development methodologies, and may be used intact on a project or customized as required. For projects that do not adhere to a specific methodology, a new WBS may be created.

Basis of Estimates

State how the metric estimates in the WBS have been generated. Indicate if any special criteria, such as on-project training, affect the metrics.

Project Effort Estimation

Describe the general approach for resource estimating. Include the following categories:

* *Project Team Members/Administrative Support* - generally describe the types of resources to be used, the quantity of work required from each resource for each activity, and the rationale for how their time is allocated.
* *Projects, Facilities & Equipment* - Describe how these resources will be made available (existing, lease, purchase) and generally describe the timing of outlays.
* *End-user Management* - Describe the extent to which these resources will be involved with reference groups, project reviews, etc.

Resource requirements, including an accounting of resource usage over time, should be included in the Work Plan.

Project Standards

Identify standards agreed to by the Project Team that govern the way in which the project will be conducted. Such standards include team behavioral norms, status reporting, staff meetings, product review acceptance criteria, and celebration criteria.

Describe which standards, if any, already exist within the enterprise and are appropriate for reuse on the project. Such reusable standards typically include project model management, technology, documentation management and training techniques, naming conventions, quality assurance, and testing and validation. These may be standards that are recognized and embraced by the industry as a whole, or those that are unique to the enterprise.

Project Roles and Responsibilities

Identify specific resources that are required to complete the project. Determine the availability of the resources and assign them to the project. People are a primary project resource. The selection of individuals to serve on a project team depends upon:

* Role requirements
* Availability of the resource
* Methodology and process knowledge
* Technology knowledge
* Current systems knowledge
* Knowledge of the business, business processes and procedures
* Knowledge of preceding project states
* Subject matter expertise

In addition to skilled project team members, project resources include project workspace and supplies, software, hardware and telecommunications facilities. A chart depicting such information may be included in the Project Plan Appendix.

Change and Issue Management Approach

Include a description of the issue management approach to be used on the project. Issues should be tracked for all items that arise during the project but are outside of the project plan. State that issues will be logged in the Project Impact Report Log, and explain how they will be handled for resolution. If numerous departments and organizations within the enterprise are involved in or impacted by the project, indicate the chain of authority for resolving and escalating issues.

Define the approach to be used to manage any changes to the project scope, timeline, budget or resources that must be approved by the Executive Sponsor prior to being incorporated into the Project Plan. Include a copy of a Project Impact Report in the Project Plan Appendix.

Communications and Control Approach

Describe the roles and responsibilities of each Team Member along with the communication plan to ensure that Team Members understand what is expected of them. Describe the mechanism for communicating responsibilities across the Project Team and within the organization at large (to the extent that it is required).

Develop a specific strategy that promotes communication among Team Members if the Project Team is geographically dispersed. If the Project Manager is expected to travel between locations to enhance Team morale and communication, outline this in the Plan and ensure that such travel is built into the budget and schedule.

Indicate the method for maintaining the Project Plan, including how each Team Member will report progress specific to each assigned task. Define how often the Project Manager will update the Plan using the scheduling software. Identify how progress on the project will be determined and how it will be communicated to those involved in or impacted by the project. Identify how often status reports will be distributed and to whom. Determine how often progress meetings will be held and who is expected to attend. If external contractors are involved in the project, identify how their performance and progress will be monitored.

1. Attachments/Appendices

Any item that is a detailed work product produced while planning the project should be included as an Attachment or Appendix to the Project Plan. Appendices should represent detailed levels of information and related documents. Such work products include, but are not limited to, the following items:

Project Work Plan

This is a detailed WBS of all stages, tasks and subtasks. It includes a Gantt Chart which shows estimates of how long it will take to complete each subtask, task and stage, the resources required to complete each task, the task dependencies and interrelationships, and any special considerations that must be made. When creating this WBS, use Architect: Planner to specify which role will perform each subtask. All assumptions and constraints must be taken into consideration. Since scheduling is an iterative process, the Project Manager must continually review the Project Work Plan and adjust it based upon ongoing activities and progress achieved.

Project Network-PERT Chart

This is a network diagram showing the work dependencies between project tasks and subtasks.

Project Team Contact Directory

This is a list of all Team Members and other individuals involved in or impacted by the project. The list should include their names, physical locations, phone numbers, alternative contact numbers, User-IDs, Mail Stops, home addresses, titles, and any other pertinent information that will enable better communication between the impacted individuals. This list may be produced as a result of Stakeholder Analysis.

Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment, Risk Reduction Plan and supporting risk documentation should be included in the Project Plan Appendix.

Project Budget Report/Cost Benefit Analysis Report

If a budget has been approved for the project, attach a copy of the Project Budget Report in the Appendix for individuals who need to access budget information. A Cost Benefit Analysis Report should be completed during the planning stage of the project. The Cost Benefit Analysis and Project Budget Report may contain information on the same or different items, depending on the project type and scope.

Project Impact Report

A copy of the standard Project Impact Report should be included in the Project Plan Appendix, to be used by individuals included in or impacted by a project.

1. Approvals

Sign-off Sheet

Include a Sign-off Sheet that must be signed by the Project Team, Project Manager, Executive Sponsor and management of the enterprise associated with the project (i.e., Steering Committee, Board of Directors, Internal Reference Group, etc.). The Sign-off Sheet represents the contract between the project and the business area affected by the project. A separate sign- Sign-off must be obtained each time the Project Plan is revised.

Project Plan

*<Name of Project>*

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Scope

Scope Definition

Costs, Benefits and Risks

Describe each risk type in the table. For each, determine the cost of the event and the likelihood that the event might occur. Identify how you will reduce the impact of each risk event (mitigation).\*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risk Event | Cost of Event | Likelihood of Event | Mitigation Strategy |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

\*Note: If the Risk Analysis Detail becomes too large and cumbersome, move it to an Appendix with a reference at this location.

Project Products/Deliverables List

This worksheet is designed to keep track of all of your project’s deliverables in an orderly fashion. Name and describe each deliverable and cite the version, phase of the project lifecycle in which it must be delivered, delivery schedule and status. Include the Team Member who is the point person for either creating the deliverable or making sure it gets completed.

NOTE: You may wish to attach separate sheets that checklist the specific Acceptance Criteria that must be met by a given deliverable.

| Stage | Deliverable Name | Description | Acceptance Criteria | Assigned to (Team Member Name) | In Progress  (Date) | Quality Reviewed (Date) | Delivered  (Date) | Accepted  (Date) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initiation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Planning |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Requirements Analysis |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Analysis |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Design |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Implementation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rollout |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Close |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Milestones

Impacted Business Areas

Assumptions

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Project Roles and Responsibilities

Detailed Roles and Responsibilities Definitions Chart\*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Role | Responsibility |
| Project Team Member |  |

\*Note: If the Detailed Roles and Responsibilities Definitions Chart becomes too large and cumbersome, move it to an Appendix with a reference at this location.

Change and Issue Management Approach

Communications and Control Approach

Attachments/Appendices

Appendices may include, but are not limited to, the following items:

Appendix A - Project Work Plan

Appendix B - Project Network-PERT Chart

Appendix C - Project Team Contact Directory

Appendix D - Risk Assessment

Appendix E - Project Budget Report/Cost Benefit Analysis Report

Appendix F - Project Impact Report

Appendix G - Project Resource Requirements Checklist

| Project Requirements Checklist | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item | Quantity | When  Required? | Availability  Secured? | For How Long? | Comments/  Action |
| Human Resources |  |  |  |  |  |
| Core Team Members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Part-time Team Members |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technical Specialists |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Experts |  |  |  |  |  |
| Current Systems Experts |  |  |  |  |  |
| Business Sponsors |  |  |  |  |  |
| Consultants |  |  |  |  |  |
| Training Resources |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical Resources |  |  |  |  |  |
| Project Workspace & Supplies: |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Office Space |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Meeting Rooms |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Office Furniture |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Office Supplies |  |  |  |  |  |
| Software: |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Word Processor |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Project Management Tool |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Spreadsheet Tool |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Graphics Tool |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Presentation Tool |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Methodology |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Application Development Tools |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Project Repository |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hardware: |  |  |  |  |  |
| * PCs (configured) |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Network |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Servers |  |  |  |  |  |
| Telecommunication  Facilities: |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Fax Machines |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Internet Access |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Tele-/Video- Conferencing |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Phones |  |  |  |  |  |

Approvals

Sign-off Sheet

I have read the above Project Plan and will abide by its terms and conditions and pledge my full commitment and support for the project.

Executive Sponsor: Date:

Project Manager: Date:

Project Team Member: Date:

Project Team Member: Date:

Project Team Member: Date:

Project Team Member: Date:

Enterprise Manager: Date:

Enterprise Manager: Date:

Enterprise Manager: Date: