

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT



- What are the pros and cons of working in a team?
- What makes a good project team?
- How can team members be motivated?
- What kinds of projects have you been involved in and what was your role?
- What are the challenges of leading multinational teams?
- Do you have difficulty meeting deadlines?
- Why might a project fall behind schedule?

## PROJECTS AND PROJECT LIFE CYCLE



A project is a set of tasks that must be completed to **achieve** planned **objectives**. These tasks are completed by a group of people known as the project team, which is led by a project manager, who **oversees** the planning, **scheduling**, **tracking** and successful **completion** of projects. A project is usually considered successful if it achieves the objectives within an agreed **timescale** and **budget**.

The project life cycle is the **order** of processes and phases used in **delivering** projects. It consists of five main stages:

1. Initiation - The starting phase where the need or opportunity for the project is identified. During this phase, the project's objectives, **scope**, **feasibility**, and **stakeholders** are defined.
2. Planning - Project managers and teams define project goals, **deliverables**, tasks, schedules, budgets, resources, and risk management strategies.
3. Execution - Teams **execute** the tasks according to the project plan, and project managers oversee the progress, monitor resources, and communicate with stakeholders.
4. Monitoring & Controlling - The project's progress is tracked against the project plan. **Key performance indicators** (KPIs) are used to measure and **assess** the project's performance. Regular **status reports** and updates are provided to stakeholders.
5. Closure - Finalising and delivering project deliverables, obtaining formal **acceptance** from stakeholders, and **closing out** contracts and **resources**. A post-project **review** is often **conducted** to evaluate the project's **overall** success and identify areas for improvement.



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management is the application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to meet project deliverables within agreed **parameters**.

A **key** factor that **distinguishes** project management from management as such is that it has this final deliverable and a specific **timespan**, unlike management which is an **ongoing** process. Therefore, a project professional needs a wide range of skills, often technical skills, people management skills, and good business **awareness**.

Project managers are responsible for **day-to-day** management of projects. Their tasks typically include:

- planning what work needs to be done, when and who is going to do it,
- looking at the risks involved in a particular project and managing these risks,
- making sure the work is done to the right standard,
- motivating the team of people involved in the project,
- co-ordinating work done by different people,
- making sure the project is running on time and to budget,

- dealing with changes to the project when necessary,
- making sure the project delivers the expected **outcomes** and benefits.

### Project management skills

Successful project managers need the right balance and combination of various skills. Soft skills are called “non-technical skills,” or skills that can help improve quality of work without a specific tool or technical requirement. These are also called “**people skills**” or “**interpersonal skills**” because they often help project managers work with and relate to others in their workspace:

- COLLABORATION helps get work done quickly and more efficiently. Coordinating across teams brings **valuable insights** into a project, makes it more creative and well-developed.
- TEAMWORK is more effective and it **ensures** that everyone feels welcome, valued, and they are supported to **contribute**.
- COMMUNICATION - **Miscommunications** are common when working with a group of people. Learning how to communicate well will make projects run more **smoothly** and be more enjoyable. Communicating well also includes listening to others.
- TIME MANAGEMENT goes hand in hand with ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS. Improvement of these skills and also reduction of procrastination can be ensured by **prioritising** tasks.
- LEADERSHIP - Good leaders bring everyone together and make them feel supported to **foster** teamwork and collaboration.
- PROBLEM-SOLVING - People with good problem-solving skills do not necessarily have the “right” answer to every problem but they are able to **approach** problems from new perspectives and work methodically towards a solution.
- CRITICAL THINKING, like problem-solving, does not have a “solution.” Problems may be approached logically instead of decisions being based on emotions. Good critical thinkers practise analysing information and form their own **conclusions** based on facts.
- ADAPTABILITY - Great project managers are able to adapt to new situations to continue **steering** their project team in the right direction.
- CONFLICT RESOLUTION - Addressing both sides of the conflict so everyone feels heard and supported.

Unlike soft skills, hard skills are **quantifiable** abilities. While the soft skills are **applicable** to many work skills, the following hard skills are relevant specifically to project management:

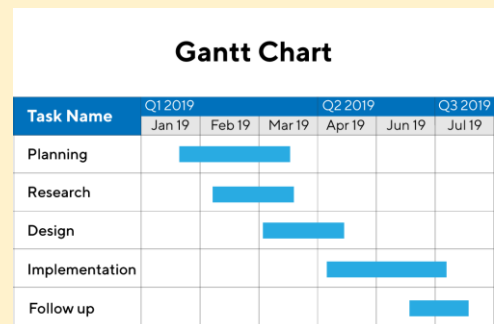
- PROJECT PLANNING will typically include objectives, success **metrics**, stakeholders and roles, scope and budget, **milestones**, deliverables, project **dependencies**, schedule, and a communication plan. Some of these may be defined in the project roadmap.
- PROJECT SCOPING - Project scope is the size, goals, and **limitations** (i.e. deadlines and resources) for a project.
- HOSTING a project **kick-off meeting** that presents an opportunity to **clarify** the project goals and scope and **specify** roles and responsibilities on the project.
- PROJECT ROADMAPPING - A project **roadmap** is a high-level overview of the project’s key deliverables and **timeline**.

Technical skills refer to the knowledge of specific tools and software within project management:

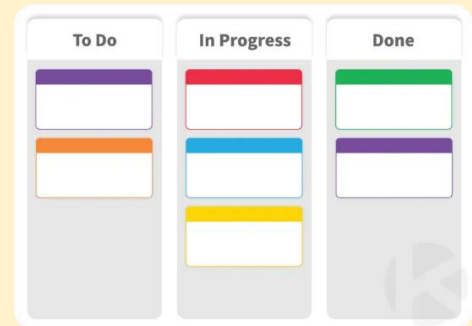
- Project management SOFTWARE SKILLS

- GANTT CHARTS are a way to **visualise** the project as a horizontal **bar chart**, where each bar represents a piece of work and the length of each bar represents the amount of time that work will take.

- Project milestones
- Dependencies
- Real-time project progress
- Start and end dates



- KANBAN BOARDS - Each **column** in a Kanban **board** represents a stage of work, such as *New*, *In progress*, or *Done*. Individual work is represented by cards, which move through the columns until they are completed.



- AGILE MANAGEMENT - **Agile management** is a **lean** project management methodology that is particularly popular with product, engineering, and software development teams.
- WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT - **Workload management** helps measure a team's capacity and make sure they are not over- or under-worked.
- COST MANAGEMENT - Cost management is considering how each task impacts the budget at every stage of the project.
- CHANGE MANAGEMENT - Change management is the process of introducing organisational change, such as new processes or tools, over a set period of time to make them easier to adapt to.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are a set of quantifiable tools that a company or industry uses to measure and compare performance in terms of meeting their strategic and **operational** goals. KPIs vary between companies and industries, depending on their priorities or performance criteria.

KPIs are usually developed following the well-known S.M.A.R.T. criteria:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Result-oriented or Relevant
- **Time-bound**

There are four different types of project management KPIs:

TIMELINESS KPIs ensure that all of a project's activities are done on time, and if they are **lagging behind** schedule, an estimated completion date can always be calculated. **Timeliness** KPIs include for example Cycle Time and Planned Hours vs Time Spent.

QUALITY KPIs help check the quality of the work done so far and how the project team benefits from the project development process.

BUDGET KPIs ask serious questions and **determine** how much **funding** is being spent on the project development process and if it is **exceeding** that budget.

EFFECTIVENESS KPIs are the resource monitoring ones, and they determine how you spend the **allocated** resources for the project and how you use them more effectively.

**Match examples of important project management KPIs and their descriptions.**

1. Cycle Time	A. It shows the total number of people working on the project multiplied by the total percentage of time they have in their schedule to work on it.
2. Cost Performance Index (CPI)	B. The time necessary to complete a specific task or process in the project development process.
3. Number of Errors	C. This KPI compares the budget cost of the work that the whole team has done so far to the amount of money spent on the project.
4. Resource Capacity	D. This KPI measures the total number of situations when things related to the project have to be redone.
5. Number of Cancelled Projects	E. It measures the client's loyalty to a specific project or product or the overall company.
6. Customer Satisfaction	F. It shows how much the initial value of the budget allocated to the project development process has been changed.
7. Budget Variance	G. This KPI tracks all important stages or events related to the project development process, checking to see if they are being completed promptly.
8. Number of Project Milestones Achieved on Time	H. It tracks the total number of projects eliminated from the development queue or pending to be worked on.



**Listening activity 1**

**1. Before you do the listening task, think about why big projects might fail.**

**2. Listen to a talk on why big projects go wrong and answer the questions below.**

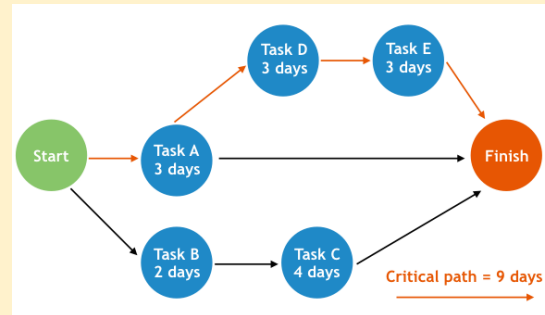
1. What are some examples of construction projects in various countries that experienced budget overruns and delays?
2. What is the subject of the new book "How Big Things Get Done" by Bent Flyvbjerg and Dan Gardner?
3. According to one of the authors, what percentage of projects finish on time and on budget?
4. What is "strategic misrepresentation" in the context of project planning, and why is it used?
5. What approach does Pixar take in developing and testing their films, and why?

6. Why do solar-power and wind-power installations have a better chance of success compared to large projects?
7. What are examples of mitigating the risks in big projects?
8. What lessons can managers from various fields learn from the information about mitigating risks in their projects?



### Listening activity 2

**Listen to a talk on the Critical Path Method and complete the gaps with the words you hear.**



Step one of the Critical Path Method is to (1) \_\_\_\_\_ each activity.

Step two is to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ the activities.

Step three is to draw a network diagram using (3) \_\_\_\_\_ to connect the activities shown as (4) \_\_\_\_\_, in which we can write important information.

Step four is to (5) \_\_\_\_\_ the duration of each activity.

Step five is to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ the critical path, which is the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ route through the network. Any delay will lengthen the critical path, which will delay the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of the project.

Step six is to use the critical path to monitor, plan and to show (9) \_\_\_\_\_.

This method also makes it possible to (10) \_\_\_\_\_ the earliest and the latest possible start times for activities. It shows the float, i.e. the ability to (11) \_\_\_\_\_ the start time of an activity without (12) \_\_\_\_\_ the completion of the whole project. If the duration of every route through the network is the same, the project has been (13) \_\_\_\_\_.

The Critical Path Method is a way to understand the (14) \_\_\_\_\_ of a project and calculate its (15) \_\_\_\_\_.

The Gantt chart is a different (16) \_\_\_\_\_ of the same information, and the Critical Path Method is only one way to plan, display and (17) \_\_\_\_\_ the progress of a project.



### Video activity

**1. Before you watch the video, think about possible challenges of managing multiple projects simultaneously.**

**2. Watch the video below on handling multiple projects and answer the following questions.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsIliSWbOWE>

1. Why do many project managers prefer having one project?
2. Why do some project managers like to work on more projects?
3. Why might it be a good idea to manage one more thing than we can comfortably handle?
4. What are the recent findings about multitasking?

5. What two aspects are important when it comes to managing multiple projects?
6. In project management, what warning signs should individuals watch for in themselves?



#### Revision time:

Wordwall set - [Project management \(definitions\)](#) - a match-up activity

Wordwall set - [Project life cycle](#) - a match-up activity

Quizlet - [Project management \(translation\)](#)

LearningApps - [Project management \(collocations\)](#)

LearningApps - [Project management \(word formation\)](#)

LearningApps - [Finding a great project manager](#) - an open cloze exercise

Wordwall set - [Project management KPIs](#) - group sort

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**Definitions:**

acceptance	the act of agreeing with something and approving of it
achieve	to succeed in doing something good, usually by working hard
adaptability	ability to change to suit different situations or uses
agile	a way of managing projects in which work is divided into a series of short tasks, with regular breaks to review the work and adapt the plans
allocated	given officially for a particular purpose
applicable	affecting or relating to a person or thing
approach	to deal with something
assess	to make a judgement about the quality, size, value, etc. of something
awareness	knowledge and understanding of a particular activity, subject, etc.
bar chart	a diagram that uses lines or narrow rectangles (= bars) of different heights (but equal widths) to show different amounts, so that they can be compared
board	a thin flat piece of hard material which is usually attached to a wall in order to show information about something
budget	the amount of money you have available to spend
clarify	to make something clear or easier to understand by giving more details or a simpler explanation
close out	to complete something by doing the last thing that is needed or possible
column	any vertical block of words or numbers
completion	the time when something that you are doing or making is finished
conclusion	something that you decide when you have thought about all the information connected with the situation
conduct	to organise and perform a particular activity
contribute	to add new plans or ideas, or help make improvements to something so that it becomes more valuable or successful
day-to-day	happening every day
deliver	to produce something that has been promised
deliverable	something that must be completed or provided as part of a project
dependency	a task that relies on the completion of a different task
determine	to decide what will happen
distinguish	to make one person or thing seem different from another
ensure	to make sure that something happens
exceed	to be more than a particular number or amount
execute	to do or perform something, especially in a planned way
execution	the act of doing or performing something in a planned way
feasibility	the quality of being possible and likely to be achieved
foster	to encourage the development or growth of ideas or feelings
funding	money for a particular purpose
hosting	setting up and managing
insight	a clear, deep, and sometimes sudden understanding of a complicated problem or situation
interpersonal skills	skills that contribute to dealing successfully with other people
key	very important and having a lot of influence on other people or things
key performance indicators	a set of quantifiable measurements used to measure a company's overall long-term performance
kick-off meeting	the first official meeting at the start of a project
lag behind	to move more slowly than someone or something
leadership	the ability to be a leader or the qualities a good leader should have

lean	strong and efficient because they do not have more employees than is necessary
limitation	a fact or condition that limits something
metrics	a set of numbers or statistics used for measuring something, especially results that show how well a business, school, computer program, etc. is doing
milestone	a very important stage or event in the development of something
miscommunication	failure to communicate ideas or intentions successfully
objective	something that you are trying to achieve; a goal
ongoing	continuing to exist or develop, or happening at the present moment
operational	relating to the activities involved in doing or producing something
order	the way in which things are placed or arranged in relation to each other
outcome	a result or effect of an action, situation, etc.
overall	general, considering everything
oversee	to watch work as it is done in order to make certain that it is done correctly
parameters	something that decides or limits the way in which something can be done
people skills	the ability to communicate with people in a friendly way and therefore deal with them effectively
prioritise	to arrange in order of importance so that you can deal with the most important things before the others
quantifiable	able to be measured
resolution	a definite decision to do or not to do something
resources	a useful or valuable possession or quality that a person or organisation has, for example, money, time, or skills
review	an examination of something, with the intention of changing it if necessary
roadmap	a plan for how to achieve something
schedule	to arrange that an event or an activity will happen at a particular time
scope	the range of things that a subject, an organisation, an activity, etc. deals with
smoothly	easily and without interruption or difficulty
specify	to explain or describe something clearly and exactly
stakeholder	a person or company that is involved in a particular organisation, project, system, etc., especially because they have invested money in it
status report	a document that describes the progress of a project within a specific time period and compares it against the project plan
steer	to take control of a situation and influence the way in which it develops
time-bound	requiring completion within a specified period of time
timeline	a plan that shows how long something will take or when things will happen
timeliness	the quality of happening at exactly the right time
timescale	the period of time over which something happens
timespan	a period of time within which something happens
track	to record the progress or development of something over a period
valuable	very helpful and important
visualise	to make something able to be seen
workload	the amount of work to be done by a particular person in a period of time
<i>Listening and video activities</i>	
arrow	a symbol used to show a direction
Critical Path Method	a method of planning in what order tasks need to be done in a particular project, so that it can be finished successfully in the least amount of time
display	to arrange something somewhere so that people can see it
duration	the amount of time that something lasts



finding	a piece of information that is discovered during an official examination of a problem, situation, or object
network	a system of connected parts
route	the paths you follow to get from one place to another place
warning sign	an early signal that something bad or dangerous might happen