

Progress Test 1 Audio Script

Track 2

It's never easy to give golden rules for project management, and that's because the nature of all projects is that they're fluid – things change, problems appear and you just can't predict exactly what will happen. But, of course, there are guidelines that project managers have to follow and there are a number of tools to help them. I always say that all the phases of a project are critical but that some are more critical than others. And for me, the two most critical ones are initiating and planning. Initiating is critical because if the project doesn't have solid foundations, then it just shouldn't happen. So you have to look at the project as a whole and ask yourself: Is the project feasible? Will it add value? One way to get the answers is by preparing a project overview, or project charter, which lays out the purpose and the strategy behind the project. Once you've done that, then the next phase, planning, becomes much easier. When you plan, you have to do a lot of things – allocate resources, forecast costs, prepare a budget and time schedule and, above all, evaluate the risk factor. Perhaps equally important is selecting the project team because if you've got the right people working together, you're more likely to succeed. If the first two phases have been well prepared, then executing should be relatively easy, especially if you've thought through the potential problems and developed contingency plans if things go wrong. Delivery – well, again, if you've done the planning, you should be able to deliver the project on time and within the specifications. But if you haven't, then there's not much chance of that happening.