

The purpose of a Lessons Learned exercise is to compile and disseminate project management lessons learned as part of effective project management practices encompassing the project lifecycle as a viable method of identifying issues and opportunities that influence successful project execution. This information should be collected, reviewed, and promptly distributed to all affected departments to aid in achieving a goal of improving overall project management performance. The information gathered during this exercise can be applied as a roadmap for project improvement, used to maximize future successes, and minimize future failures.

Note: Instructions for completing this template appear in blue italics throughout. Sample text appears in black.

LESSONS LEARNED:

PROJECT NAME

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INTRODUCTION

This section provides a general overview of the project and summarizes its overall level of success. This section should also reiterate the document’s purpose – to serve as a tool for project managers working on similar projects in the future.

This section should also include the following:

Project Start:

Project End:

Project Manager:

Document Prepared By:

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The lessons learned approach describes how the document will be created, what it will consist of, and how lessons will be categorized. A methodology along with an appropriate set of tools should be established to capture these lessons throughout the project’s lifecycle. A project journal is one example of a tool to capture these lessons. If no thought is given to lessons learned until project closeout then it is likely that many lessons and details will be omitted from the document. The contents of the lessons learned document should also be determined ahead of time. They should be detailed enough to provide value for future use and the contents should be consistent with other lessons learned documents or organizational standards. The categorization of lessons learned is another consideration. Many organizations categorize lessons by project lifecycle phase or by the knowledge area that the lesson applies to.

This section may also include the following: dates and times of lessons learned, feedback meetings, participants in those meetings, and any key stakeholders who were not able to attend prior to compiling the documentation.

PROJECT SUCCESSES

The lessons learned must be communicated in a consistent manner. In addition to the categorization and description of the lesson, it is important to state what the impact was and provide a recommendation for project managers to consider on future projects.

ID	Project Task	Contributor(s)	Successes

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The lessons learned must be communicated in a consistent manner. In addition to the categorization and description of the lesson, it is important to state what the impact was and provide a recommendation for project managers to consider on future projects.

ID	Project Task	Contributor(s)	Opportunities / Lessons Learned

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECT RISKS & ISSUES

This section provides a list of potential future risks to projects as determined while compiling the lessons learned.

ID	Potential Risk or Issue	Recommendations & Notes

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes any process improvement recommendations identified throughout the life of the project.

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