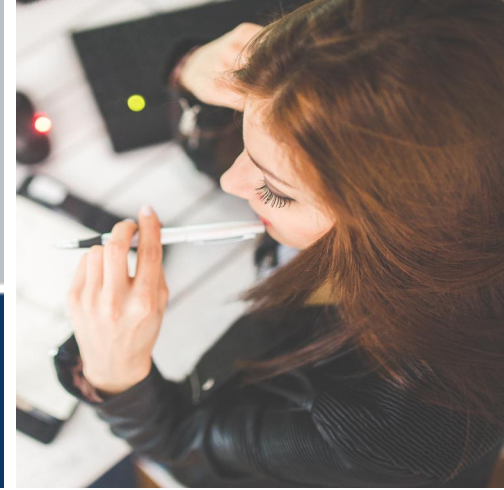


PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management involves five essential phases or process groups. These phases help to define, organize, and keep track of the work necessary to achieve a specific goal.



INITIATING: BEGINNING THE PROJECT

During the initiating process, project sponsors and/or project managers develop a project charter, which helps to clarify and refine the project. The project charter includes a short description of the project, a justification or reason for the project, project goals, a description of project deliverables, success criteria, and some detail regarding the project's schedule and budget. Project sponsors and/or project managers also use a human resources template, or stakeholder register, to identify each person involved with or impacted the project—including project sponsors, project managers, team members, suppliers, vendors, customers, etc.—along with his/her contact information and role in the project.

PLANNING: DETERMINING HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED

Early in the planning phase, project managers write a project scope statement, which builds upon and clarifies the information included in the project charter. The project scope statement further defines the project, reasons for the project, and project requirements. It also identifies constraints, assumptions, boundaries, and user acceptance criteria. Next, the project manager and project team members develop a work breakdown structure (WBS). The WBS breaks the project's workload down into smaller, more manageable parts and outlines criteria for determining the successful completion of these parts. Finally, the project manager works with his/her team to arrange these smaller tasks into a logical order (a project schedule) and determine who is responsible these tasks.

EXECUTING: DOING THE WORK

Project managers have planned their work—now, they must work their plans! During this stage, project managers coordinate team members and other resources to make sure that tasks are completed on time. Depending on the size of the team, the project manager might be “in the trenches” with the rest of the team—performing tasks and getting work done. Or, the project manager might be more hands off, supervising and directing others.

MONITORING & CONTROLLING: MAKING SURE THE PROJECT STAYS ON TRACK

Monitoring and controlling begins as soon as the project manager and project sponsor start defining the project. It is performed simultaneously and continuously throughout the project. The project manager's job during this phase is to make sure the project stays on track and to take appropriate corrective measures if it doesn't. One way that managers can keep abreast of project tasks and activities is to require frequent status reports and meet with team members on a regular basis to discuss the project's progress.

CLOSING: ENDING THE PROJECT

The most important task in the closing phase is delivering the end product that the project was designed to create. When the project is finished, the project manager and other key stakeholders also review the entire process, noting what went well, what didn't, and how things might be improved the next time around. They usually summarize their findings in a lessons-learned document to keep on hand for future reference. Finally, this is the time to recognize team members for their hard work or special contributions, if appropriate.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PROCESSES

The following diagram shows where each framework template is used within Project Management.

