



UNIT-1

Defining Projects and Project Management

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Explain what project management is?
- ✓ Identify the skills needed for a project manager in order to manage projects effectively.

Unit 1

Defining Projects and Project Management

What is a Project?

If we understand what projects are, hopefully we will be more successful. It's important for us to understand how projects differ from other kinds of work.

How do projects differ from other kinds of work?

What is a project?

What is not a project?

What is Project Management?**What is project management?**

What is not project management?

We often discuss project management in terms of several components. If you pick up practically any book on the subject, they usually agree on five process groups:

- Initiating
- Planning
- Executing
- Closing
- Monitoring and Controlling

With the exception of Monitoring and Controlling, all of these processes correspond to the project life cycle, which we will discuss later on. (Controlling takes place during all phases.)

Processes can also be placed into nine knowledge areas:

- Integration
- Scope
- Time
- Cost
- Quality

- Human resources
- Communications
- Risk management
- Procurement

Project management requires resources. Can you think of some examples?

Who Are the Key Players?

There are typically seven key players in a project, although the roles may overlap.

The Sponsor

This person is the most senior team member. They typically initiate the project and provide the authority within the organization.

Their responsibilities can include:

- Representing the interests of the organization, ensuring goals, objectives, and the project itself benefits the company as a whole.
- Providing resources.
- Making the team aware of constraints. (Constraints are factors that may interfere with things getting done on time, such as other projects, construction, labor disputes, budgets, etc.)
- Helping to inspire and motivate the team.

The Project Manager

This is the team leader who is responsible for making sure the project is completed and the goals and objectives are achieved.

This team member has some of the more hands-on responsibilities, including:

- Producing documents such as the plan of action, vision statement, target chart, planning tools. Some of these projects will be done by the manager; others will be done by the team and led by the manager.
- Keeping an eye on the big picture to ensure the progress is on track.
- Motivating the project team and helping them grow.

- Communicating with sponsors, stakeholders, and team members to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- Acting as representative for the customers of the project.

Stakeholders

The name says it all: this team member is someone who has a stake in the project. They may be affected by the outcome of the project, or they may simply have an interest in the project. This person is often involved only at particular stages. Their main responsibilities include providing feedback and guidance.

Key Team Members

This is a team member who has expertise in a particular area. They typically assist the project manager directly, contributing their expertise when necessary.

Their responsibilities include:

- Helping to determine whether or not the project is feasible
- Helping to plan the project
- Ensuring that the project comes in on time and on budget

Team Members

These people are the ones doing the work. Typically, each member focuses on a few tasks (or perhaps just even one task), as assigned by the project manager. They may also act in a consulting capacity if specialized expertise is needed.

The major responsibilities include completing the task(s) as laid out in the project plan.

Customers

Believe it or not, customers are a part of your project plan, too. These are the people internal or external to your company who are affected by the project.

Although the customer may not have a direct role on the project team, the customer should influence some decisions made by the project manager, including the objectives, how success is measured, and the direction for the project.

Suppliers

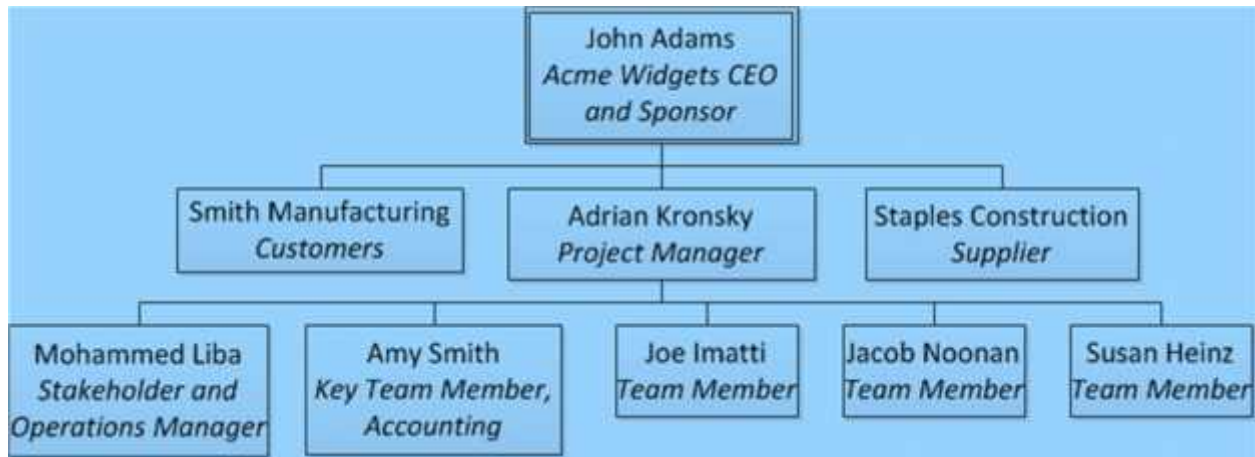
These are the people who provide the resources for your project. These resources can include services, materials, or products. These people are crucial to the success of the project.

Their sole responsibility is to work with the project manager to deliver the promised items or services on time and at the agreed cost.

Example

Acme Widgets Inc. has just received a contract to build 10,000 special widgets for Smith Manufacturing. However, they need to build a separate area in the factory for this new product. This has been assigned to Adrian Kronsky as a project.

The project team looks like this:



The Role of a Project Manager

Setting Your Sights

A project can be extremely rewarding work. Because projects are usually set up to accomplish an important purpose, the success of a project can do wonders for anyone's career.

As a project manager, you need a clear idea of what you are to accomplish. So what do you do?

First of all, sit down with your supervisor to discuss their expectations. Try to put down on paper exactly what your goal is, what the project is to accomplish, how long you have to complete it, how many staff members are to be involved, to whom you must report, and so forth.

We have included a sample proposal form on the following pages.

Improvement Proposal Form

Part 1 – To Be Completed By Proposer

Date: _____

From (Proposer): _____

Department: _____

To (Manager): _____

Idea, Problem, Opportunity for Improvement:	Measure(s) of Success:

Anticipated Benefits from Tackling This Project:

From (proposer):	_____	Date:	_____
To (manager):	_____	Department:	_____

Part 2 – To Be Completed By Manager

	Yes	No
This proposal is within my authority:	☐	☐
This proposal is approved:	☐	☐

Agreed Sponsor: _____

Agreed Team Leader: _____

Agreed Facilitator: _____

This proposal is declined because:

This proposal is not within my authority and is hereby forwarded to:

Signed: _____

Bringing the Team Together

If the project team is to be made up of members of your department, hold a meeting to discuss the upcoming effort and define the objectives. Give project assignments based on what your staff members are capable of handling. If you are charged with the task of selecting a project team, you should consider exactly what skills will be needed before making any team assignments.

Key Skill Areas

There are four specific skill areas that a project manager needs to develop.

Problem Solving

- Diagnostic thinking
- Systematic
- Conceptual
- Monitoring
- Information gathering

Achievement

- Concern for achievement
- Results orientation
- Initiative
- Business orientation

Resource Management

- Time management
- Cost management
- HR management
- Risk management
- Quality management

Influence

- Team building
- Developing others
- Client/user orientation
- Self-control

In today's world, many of us are accidental project managers: people who never intended to lead projects until suddenly we found ourselves heading up one at the request of our manager.

Some key questions to answer when planning include:

- Background information about your company or organization
- Name of your project
- Why you are doing it (the purpose)
- Who will be involved

- Whether this is a project you have asked to do or if it has been assigned to you
- How it will benefit you, your department, a specific group of individuals, or your organization as a whole
- How much time you expect it to take
- Whether you have identified any costs or not (remember time is a cost)
- What planning and tracking tools you will use

Eight Aspects of a Project

Scope

Clearly define what the project will and will not encompass. What is the expected outcome and final product?

Time

Time required to see this project through to completion.

Money

Costs: equipment, materials, labor or staffing needs, financing, or real estate.

Quality

Is there a need as outlined by the organization or the clients for the outcomes to meet certain standards?

Communication

Who needs to be told of project progress? Why must they be told? What should they be told? How or what medium will be used to communicate?

Human Resources

Who will be involved? Why those individuals? Is there a need on the project for special skills/needs or qualifications? How will they be motivated?

Contracts

Are there contracts? With whom? Are they third party (outside of the supplier and customer, such as subcontractors)? Is there a requirement for training and development?

Risk

How much risk is associated with the project? How much can be risked? Who decides the level of risk?

How Can Projects Help Me?

The Benefits of Projects

There are really only two types of projects: those that have been assigned to you, and those you want to take on because they interest you or because you see a special need for them.

Those assigned to you are often projects that you manage for your boss. They have been given this project, or they want to take it on, and they look to you for help. You are the de facto project manager.

Often, people placed in this situation have little or no training or understanding of what it is they are trying to achieve, and usually have no understanding of the components involved. Therefore, it is vital to set the stage by identifying some benefits of taking on a project.

What is the advantage to taking on an extra project when we already feel worked to the max?

However, sometimes we feel overwhelmed by the thought of taking on one more project and we feel like we are sinking. What do you do when that happens? This case study is about that very thing: learning how to handle another project when you are already carrying more work than you can do.

Case Study: Mary Marvelous

Case Study

One day, Mary Marvelous was at her desk working on a project when her boss, Dianne Delegator, requested a couple of minutes of her time. Dianne began the conversation by congratulating her for being selected to develop the new health insurance policy. She explained that she was giving Mary this opportunity because of her extensive experience and management skills.

Dianne continued to explain, "We require a new health insurance policy for retiring employees who qualify for the special pension fund. A recent change in government policy requires immediate action. Normally, this type of change would require approximately eight months, but we have to have our policies in place in four months. We may also require a preliminary report within three weeks in order to update the government." After a brief pause Dianne said, "Get back to me if you have any questions on what has to be done."

On the way back to her office Mary felt proud and enthusiastic. She was happy that Dianne was finally beginning to recognize her skills and abilities. When she arrived back at her desk and had a moment to reflect on this new assignment, reality hit. She remembered the large number of projects already in progress. She sat down and wrote down a list of existing projects. Then she added "Employees' Health Insurance Policy" at the bottom.

She realized that if she dropped everything else to work on this Employee Health Insurance Policy, Dianne would be pleased. But sooner or later, she was going to want results from the other projects. Not only that, but there were a couple of projects there that had high profile because of agreements with other departments and it would look bad if they fell behind. She realized she could not let them slide very long. She thought to herself, "I'm already working two evenings a week at home and my family doesn't appreciate that."

"Something is definitely not right here," Mary Marvelous thought. "This is an interesting job, but Dianne doesn't realize I can't do everything at once. There is no use telling her that I am overloaded, because she always says, 'So is everybody. We've just got to do the best we can!'"

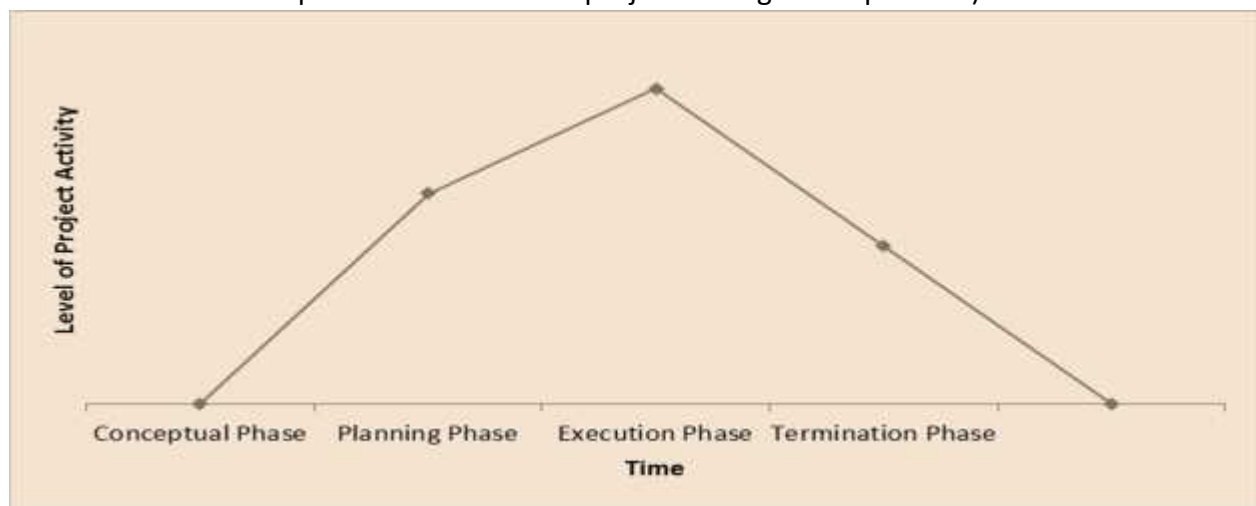
Question

What should Mary do?

A Project's Life Cycle

The Life Cycle Cycle Overview

The sequence of activities from the beginning of a project to its completion is essentially the same, whether we are talking about a small two- or three-day project or a large project that will span several months. These activities can be grouped into four different phases. (A phase of a project is a major set of activities that must be performed within the project management process.)



Phase One: Conceptual

The first phase is the Conceptual phase, sometimes called Initiation, or the Create phase. This phase shapes the project. It often begins after the project has been selected. The purpose of this phase is to provide direction to the team, to decide what is to be accomplished, and to identify constraints and risks.

Basic elements of this phase include determining feasibility; identifying and researching alternatives; naming prospective team members; and creating proposals, budgets, and schedules.

Once the team has been established, members will study some of the initial research before moving onto a Project Charter or Statement of Work (SOW). The team will also set a clearly defined conclusion, establish benchmarks and deliverables, and choose a course of action.

The output for this stage is the Project Charter or Statement of Work (SOW).

Phase Two: Planning

The next phase is the Planning phase, sometimes called the Sell stage. The project team identifies the steps and develops the plan for how and when the project will be accomplished. This is the most critical and most often neglected phase of the project. Poor planning or lack of planning here can have consequences all down the line. If everybody knows what is to be done, the project will go much more smoothly.

Tasks to be completed during Phase Two include setting clear goals, defining who is responsible for which tasks, refining budgets, obtaining necessary approvals, securing or designing systems needed, building and testing, analyzing results, and commencing production.

The output for the planning phase is a project plan document, a complete plan for how the project will be executed. The sponsor and other key shareholders should all approve this document.

Phase Three: Execution

After the project plan is approved the Execution phase starts, where the plan is put into action. Here is where you get down to working on the project and delivering the deliverables that were outlined in phase one. To make sure the work is on track, the team (or the project manager) must monitor progress, and, if required, recommend changes. Progress reports go to the stakeholders.

Tasks include making the time necessary to get the work done, obtaining and using resources (such as money, people, and equipment), meeting regularly with the team, and updating stakeholders.

Ensuring that the project is completed on time and within budget requires the project manager to direct and control the work underway. Tasks include establishing specific standards, monitoring performance, inspecting results and conducting interim progress reviews, auditing, and making adjustments.

What will “making adjustments” require? How can adjustments be made to work for the project?

At the end of the execution phase, the final deliverable is delivered to the project customer or sponsor.

Phase Four: Termination

Closeout or Termination is the final phase in a project. This is when your customer will decide whether they are satisfied with the project. The sponsor assesses the project in terms of goals met and costs incurred, while the team discusses lessons learned and ways the next project can be improved. A final status report is issued and sent to all key stakeholders. This is also the time to celebrate success and thank everyone involved with the project.

Tasks often include a meeting to produce a report or checklist upon completion, and the final production of manuals, drawings, and procedures for the client. The project team may train the client's staff, and the lessons learned through the life of the project are documented and shared for future project work. Finally, project team members are reassigned to pre-project work or perhaps new projects. Any equipment, space, or resources used during the project are repurposed or released.

Milestones

Milestones are the major elements or steps of a project. The first three milestones in every project are the “go or no go” phase gates. For example, after all the preliminary work has been done to shape what the project will look like, a critical decision has to be made. Is this project worth doing? Shall we move forward with it?

If the answer is yes, you move into the planning phase. When all the plans have been made, you once again stand at the edge of the cliff and decide, “Go or no go?” Has all the planning been done? No? Go back and finish it. Is this project still something we want to do? In that case, let's move forward.

The third phase gate is at the end of execution. Have all the deliverables been given to the customer? If no, then back you go to finish the job. If the final deliverable has been completed, then you can move to the final phase.

Why Do Projects Fail?

A project's failure is usually due to several key factors, one of which is the manager or team's lack of involvement in the conceptualization stage. The further down the organizational hierarchy the manager

is, and the less information they are privy to, the more likely they are to fail or be less successful in their projects, and the more stressed they will be as a result. A coping technique should include asking for more information, or, after being briefed, summarizing their understanding of what took place. This can be followed by a statement such as, “This is my understanding of the project; if I do not hear differently, I will assume this is as it should be.”

How Can My Project Succeed?

Here is a brief list comparing the reasons why projects succeed and why they fail.

Failure Factors	Reasons for Success
● Poor planning	● Good planning
● No communication	● Pre-defined communication plan
● Lack of resources/money	● Enough time and money
● Lack of commitment/team problems	● Team commitment
● Poor choice of leader	● A good team leader
● Setting unrealistic goals	● Realistic goals and time frame
● Lack of experience	● Experience with project planning and experienced team members
● Unclear objectives	● Clear goals

Three Ways to End a Project

Before you start the project, you need to have a very good idea of what the end will look like. We'll start with the best case scenario.

Fulfillment

This is the best case scenario, where the results, changes, or new products that were the goal of the project are included in the ongoing operations of the company. Project team members return to their pre-project work if appropriate, or move on to new roles. The project as a distinct entity is wrapped up.

Partial Fulfillment

Project team participants return to their pre-project roles if appropriate, and the project continues but as part of overall operations, rather than separately. This can happen when a project takes much longer than originally anticipated, or funding runs out and must be found from other places within the company, but it is advantageous to take what is already completed and integrate as much as possible.

Premature Termination

The project is stopped mid-stream, and people may or may not return to their original work; sometimes they are laid off. This happens when the project fails for any number of reasons, or the business changes focus. The project is closed down, and the team involved may experience a wide array of emotions depending on their reaction to the time and energy they dedicated to the project prior to its termination.

Stages of a Project

Place each activity under its proper heading (Conceptual, Planning, Execution, and Termination).

Conceptual

Planning

Execution

Termination

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Professor J Rodney Turner, (2014), Gower Handbook of Project Management*
- ✓ *Jeffrey P. Davidson, (2000), 10 Minute Guide to Project Management*
- ✓ *Murillo Xavier, (2004), Project Management - Head Start*