

Project Management Foundations and Best Practices

Modern projects are in the clutches of constant pressure. They must deliver more with less, while meeting short schedules and tight budgets. Unfortunately, too many projects fail at this challenge. This class shows you how to organize small to medium size projects, then work with a team to accomplish them on schedule and within budget. Participants learn practical and proven project management techniques, then immediately apply them to real projects as in-class teams.



Topics include:

- Starting a project on a firm foundation by defining it clearly, then getting alignment among the stakeholders
- Visual tools for building a good plan that addresses the *how*, *when*, and *who* of the project
- Executing the plan, monitoring progress, steering, and making changes
- Properly closing a project, including how to learn lessons for future improvement

The class includes proven techniques researched by the Project Management Institute, the global professional body for project management.

Course Objectives

By the end of this two-day class, participants will understand how to manage a project from beginning to successful completion. They will understand how to:

- Recognize common causes of project success and failure
- Explain the role of projects at work
- Efficiently run a project using a standardized set of steps
- Clearly identify how the project aligns with the mission and strategy of the organization
- Get agreement on what a project will deliver
- Set stakeholder expectations early
- Use visual techniques that encourage team-based planning
- Use work breakdown technique to identify the tasks that the project must do
- Develop a realistic schedule, a resource plan, and a budget that fits the project
- Identify and manage risks
- Communicate important project information
- Monitor project progress, steer the project's execution, and take corrective action
- Increase team motivation
- Complete a lessons learned review

Intended Audience

People who need to organize and manage small to medium-sized projects.

Prerequisites

Previous experience in a project environment is helpful, but not required.

Course Outline

1. Overview of project management
 - Why projects succeed and fail
 - Does project management really make a difference?
 - Project management frameworks
 - Work breakdown
 - Activity sequencing
 - Critical path
 - Resource and duration estimating
 - Making tradeoffs
2. Initiating and defining a project
 - Defining how the project supports mission and strategy
 - Agreeing on deliverables for the project
 - Chartering
 - Managing stakeholders
 - Constraints, assumptions and high level risks
 - Roles and responsibilities
3. Teams and people
 - Characteristics of effective project leaders
 - Forming project teams
 - How organizational structures affect projects
4. Scope planning
 - How much planning is worthwhile?
 - Seven questions of planning
5. Managing risks
 - Identification
 - Prioritization
 - Assessment
 - Taking action
6. Executing and controlling
 - Measuring progress
 - Steering the project
 - Resolving issues
 - Communications
 - Managing changes
7. Closeout
 - Verification and acceptance
 - Project handoff
 - Lessons learned and team acknowledgements
8. Action planning
 - Create an action plan to apply what you've learned in the class

Instructor

Jeff Oltmann, PMP, is an experienced manager and instructor. He ran the Program Management Office (PMO) and project portfolio for IBM's development facility in Oregon. Jeff consults with companies across a broad range of industries, from healthcare and biotechnology to new product development. He is on the faculty of the Division of Management at Oregon Health and Science University, where he teaches management topics at the graduate level. Jeff is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP®).

Availability

Project Management Foundations and Best Practices is a two-day course. Synergy offers it in public sessions, as well as in-house at your company. Synergy will also customize it to fit your specific needs. Contact us for information.