

Project Development Workbook



Introduction

Why invent new templates for your projects? Synergy has tuned this collection of project templates based on the feedback of hundreds of students and clients. We are happy to share them with you so that you can benefit, too. They are a starting point for you to customize for your own special situations. Don't expect to use every form for every project; instead, think of this workbook as a cookbook with a selection of recipes that you can pick from and modify to suit your taste. And if you come up with any improvements, please share them back by sending a copy to Synergy for future editions of this workbook.

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Simple Business Case

(Use to decide whether to move an idea into the *Define* stage)

Opportunity Assessment

1. Briefly describe the opportunity or need that you see.

Value to Customer

2. List the top features required from the customer or user point of view.

3. Briefly describe the major business benefits the customer or user will see.

Our Ability to Execute

4. List the top development and adoption risks that may cause this project to fail.

5. Estimate the delivery date and key milestones.

Fit

6. Give a high-level estimate of investment required by period.

Time period ▶				
Investment amount ▶	\$	\$	\$	\$

7. Give a high-level estimate of revenue or savings generated by period.

Time period ▶				
Revenue amount ▶	\$	\$	\$	\$

8. Show payback period based on above estimates of investment and revenue:

9. Describe how this proposal supports our strategy:

10. Give your recommendation on how to proceed:

Charter

(Describes *Why* and *What*)

Project name:

Date:

Short description:

The why
What is the business reason for this project?

Business alignment (Why is this project important and how does it link to your organization's business priorities?)

The what
What are the SMART deliverables to the project's customer or

Success measures
How and when will you measure the project's success?

Deliverables (What will be the tangible items or results that the project will deliver?)

Description	Success Measurement and Date

Other Success Measures (Other success measures, not correlated with deliverables listed above)

Out of Scope Items

SMART

(SMART = Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Time-bound)

Targets

May be revised during further scoping and planning

Key targets

Desired start date:

Desired completion date:

Estimated cost:

Other:

Major risks

Key assumptions and constraints

Major roles and authority

Role	Name	Major responsibilities
Project manager		
Sponsor		

Approval to proceed to next phase

Project manager:

Sponsor:

Funder:

Other:

Instructions for Completing the Charter

Purpose and Responsibilities

- This form is used during the define phase of a project to get initial alignment and agreement on why the project is being initiated and what it will produce.
- The sponsor and the project manager should work together to get this charter form filled out. Involve as much of the core project team as possible to get their buy-in.
- The charter is not a replacement for a project plan. Keep it at a higher level of detail; just detailed enough to make a decision at the next gate on whether it is worth investing in detailed planning for the project.
- The completed form should be no longer than 2 – 3 pages. The entire define phase should be short, such as several weeks for many projects at a typical company.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Short Description

Enter a brief description of the project so that other people can recognize it quickly. This is just an identification tag, so don't make it too fancy.

Business Alignment

In this section, describe the why of the project. Explain the business level costs and benefits that your company will get from this project. Why is this project important and how does it link to your company's business objectives?

Deliverables and Success Measures

In this section, describe the what of the project.

- What are the tangible deliverables that the project will deliver to its customers or users?
- How will you measure whether the project successfully delivered them?
- Use the SMART test. Are the deliverables and success measures Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time-bound?
- In the *out of scope* section write a short list of things that you don't plan to deliver but that other people might be expecting, based on likely misunderstandings.

Key Targets

These are order of magnitude estimates, since you are filling out this form during the *define* phase, before any detailed planning has been done for the project. These are not commitments.

Major Risks, Assumptions, and Constraints

List major risks that may significantly affect the success of this project. Also, document key assumptions and constraints that will shape the planning for this project. Capture the big stuff here – don't worry about minor items at this time.

Major Roles

List the major project stakeholders and what role you expect them to have. Make sure you include the project manager, the sponsor, and key team members (if known at this time). This is not a laundry list. List 3 – 8 stakeholders who are major internal or external customers of the project or are contributors to it. Key stakeholders are often people who do one or more of these things:

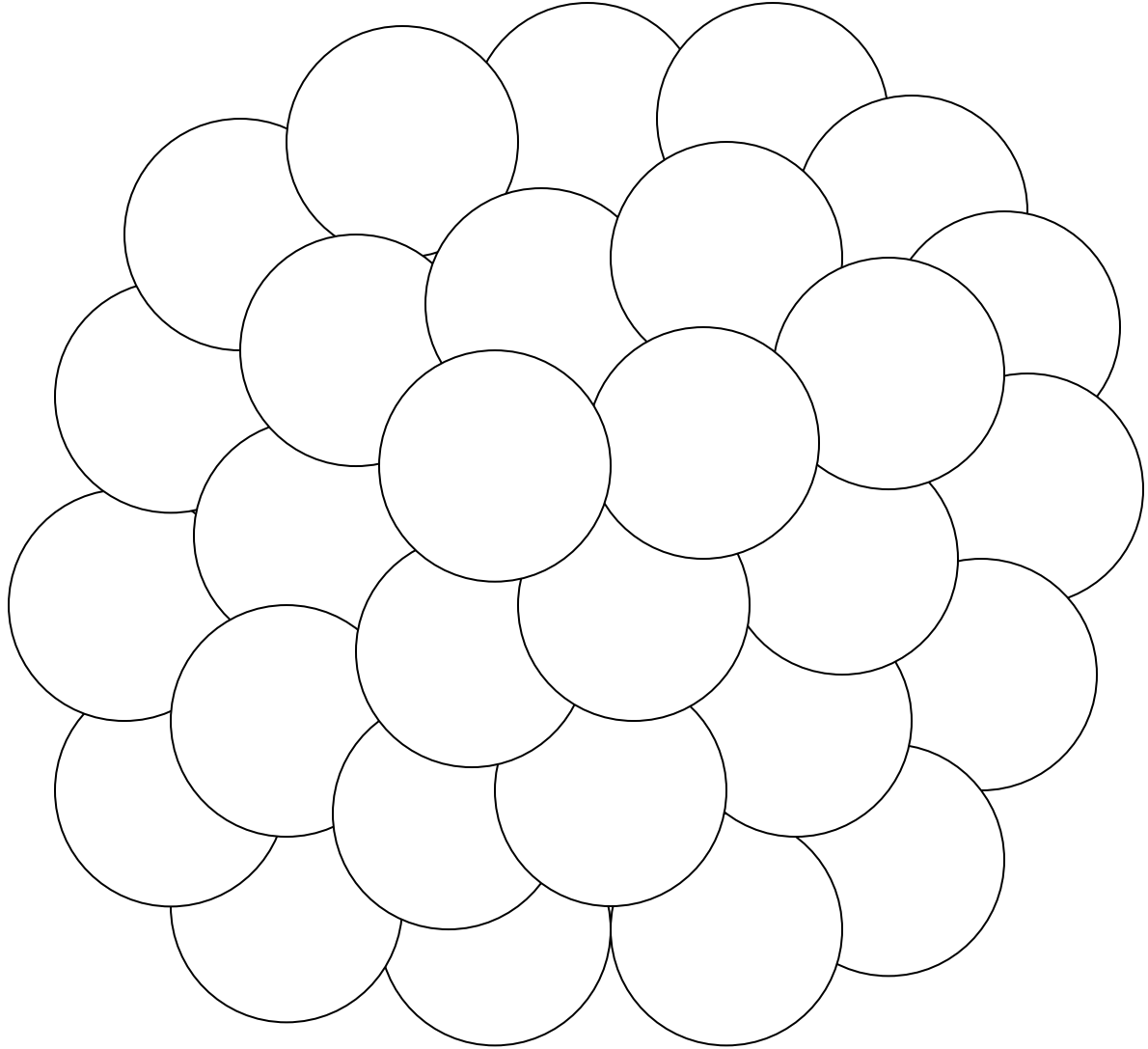
1. Provide things to the project
2. Pay for the work
3. Do the work
4. Support the results after the project is done (such as maintenance techs)
5. Use the results of the project (such as line operators and sales people)
6. Are an end customer
7. Can derail the project

Approval of Charter

Formal approval is necessary to transition this project into the *planning* phase. Get the signatures of the sponsor, project manager, and other especially key stakeholders so you are assured that they all agree on the direction that the project is taking.

Stakeholder Identification

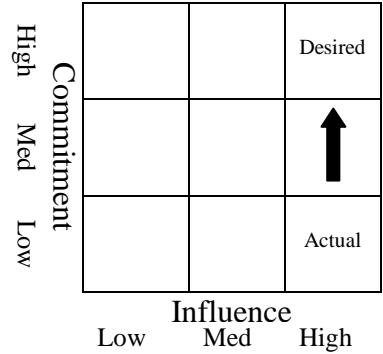
List the project stakeholders by name or group, along with a few words about what is most important to that stakeholder.

A large cluster of overlapping circles, intended for listing project stakeholders. The circles are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with some overlapping others, creating a dense field of empty space for writing.

Stakeholder Management

For the stakeholders that you consider most crucial to the success of the project, write a brief plan explaining how you plan to manage them over the life of the project. To create your actions, consider:

- What are the stakeholder's needs? How will you meet those needs?
- What does the project need from the stakeholder? How will you obtain it?



<i>Stakeholder name:</i>		
<i>Comments:</i>		
Action	Owner	Due Date

<i>Stakeholder name:</i>		
<i>Comments:</i>		
Action	Owner	Due Date

<i>Stakeholder name:</i>		
<i>Comments:</i>		
Action	Owner	Due Date

Stakeholder Management Instructions

Step 1

List stakeholders using the *Stakeholder Identification* template.

Step 2

Follow the steps below to create action plans showing how you will manage critical stakeholders over the life of the project.

1. Mark the stakeholder's current attitude toward the project on a commitment / influence matrix. Then on the same matrix, mark where you need to them to be. (You can type directly into the cells of the matrix, then drag the arrow to point in the correct direction. See the example already typed into the matrix.) Use this visual indicator to decide which stakeholders you are going to focus on, since you probably don't have time to manage every stakeholder.
2. For each high priority stakeholder:
 - 1) Consider:
 - What are the stakeholder's needs? How will you meet those needs?
 - What does the project need from the stakeholder? How will you obtain it?
 - 2) Based on these considerations, list specific actions that will move the stakeholder from the current to the desired state. If the stakeholder is already where you need him to be, list actions you will take to maintain this.

Project Kickoff Agenda

Project name:
Project number:
Project manager:
Sponsor name:
Date, time and location:

Topic	Facilitator
1. Welcome the project team and explain project's purpose and connection to business objectives	Sponsor
2. Introduce project manager and team members. Explain everyone's role on the project.	PM
3. Walk through the charter so everyone understands it	PM
4. Walk through the planning steps that this project will follow. Agree on next steps.	PM
5. Agree on ground rules for how the team will work together.	PM
6. Celebrate!	PM

Project Team Member Contact List

Name	Department	Phone	Role

Project Kickoff Instructions

Purpose of a kickoff

The kickoff meeting gives a project a good, decisive start. It is usually held early in the *Plan* phase, after the project's charter has been approved and the project has passed its first stage gate. Often more people join the project team at this time, as the project starts detailed planning. The kickoff is a good way to get the new people aligned with the project and committed to reaching its goals. You should also have some fun, creating an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and build some enthusiasm for the project.

Who should attend?

- The sponsor
- The project manager
- The people that took the project through its *Define* phase
- New project team members, both core and extended
- Stakeholders

Tips

- This is an important time for building relationships within the team. Plan activities that will build relationships and improve communication. These don't have to be "touchy – feely" types of activities.
- During the ground rules section of the agenda, identify the 3 – 5 things the team feels is most important about how they will work together. Also use this time to agree on some housekeeping items, such as
 - A shared location for project documents
 - Where and when project team meetings will be held
- Have some fun and build enthusiasm.

Instructions for Responsibility Matrix

Why?

Making program responsibilities clear within a matrixed organization can be hard, partly because of the complexity of the matrix. A responsibility matrix can help this.

How?

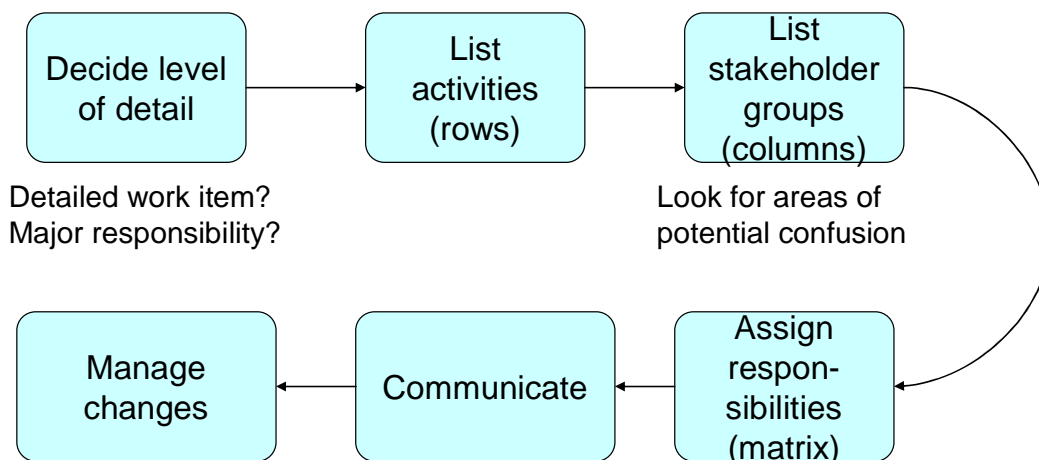
To build a responsibility matrix, determine the level of detail for the activities you want to work with. This may range from the work item level to the major responsibilities level, depending on what you are trying to accomplish.

Then list the activities, one per row. Identify the stakeholders or groups who should be involved and list them, one per column. Keep an eye out especially for activities or groups that have been confused or overlooked in the past. It is OK, and sometimes preferable, to list groups instead of individuals in the columns.

Code the responsibilities into the matrix. Watch for areas of possible misunderstanding, such as between groups or with outside organizations. It is often useful to do this as a team, because the discussion brings a wider variety of perspectives and increases alignment. You can define any code that makes sense to you and your team, but the RACI code is widely used.

- R – responsible for
- A – approve results
- C – contribute to the work (help)
- I – (must be) informed

Communicate the completed matrix and manage changes to it, even using change control if warranted by the impact.



Role Definition Worksheet

Stakeholder Roles (Who will contribute to the project?)

Name	Communication Channel & Freq.	Major Contribution or Involvement	Contact Info
------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------

Sponsors

Management

Customers

Project Team

Project Leader

--	--	--	--

Other

The five major stakeholder roles on a project are:

1. *Sponsor*: Champion of the project and the team. Removes roadblocks to success.
2. *Management*: Line or functional managers. They have long-term control over employees and resources.
3. *Customer*: Uses the result. Often provides requirements and sometimes contributes funding.
4. *Project Team*: The people who will do the work. Contribute time, skills, and effort.
5. *Project Leader*: The person who coordinates the project and drives it to completion.

Boundaries and Escalation

Specify who has authority for what (eg key decisions, approvals, or escalations)

Chain of command for _____	Chain of command for _____	Chain of command for _____

Use escalation thresholds to define when to take action. The example to the left shows two parameters that have thresholds, schedule variance and spending variance. It also shows first and second level trigger thresholds. The first threshold might trigger a warning to management, and the second might require immediate management intervention.

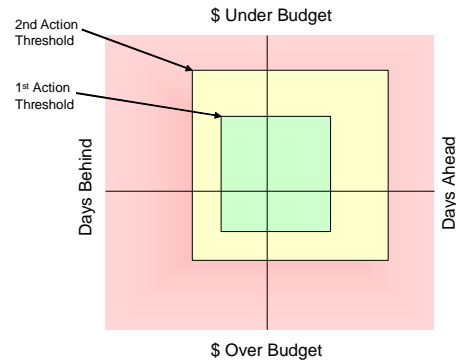


Diagram escalation thresholds for your project in the space below.

Key Project Stakeholders

<i>Name of Stakeholder</i>	<i>Title and Role on Project</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

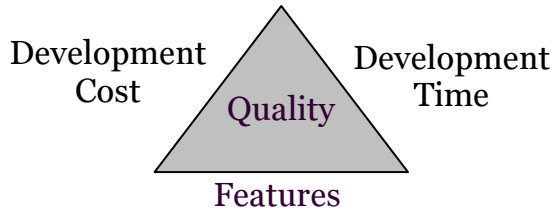
Project Team Members

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title and Function</i>	<i>% Available</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Triple Constraint Priorities

(rank the top three)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Scope Management Approach (how will you manage future requests to change the scope?)

Approval

Project manager:

Funder:

Other:

Scope Definition Worksheet Instructions

The deliverables of many projects are sufficiently defined in the project charter, which is written during the *Define* phase. However, deliverables for other projects, primarily large or complex projects, must be defined in more detail before the project team can break down the work of the project into tasks to do. If this is the case for your project, you can use this template to refine the scope into a list of requirements that defines in more detail the characteristics of what the project will produce.

How to fill out this form:

- Facilitate discussions among members of the project team to get an initial list of requirements.
- Balance the needs and desires of the users with the constraints and judgment of the project team.
- Be prepared to iterate though the list of requirements several times to refine it and get agreement.
- Try to cover the breadth of important aspects of what you will be creating, including reliability, standards compliance, performance, usability, and maintainability.

Tips for writing good requirements:

- A requirement describes a feature, function, or deliverable. It describes *what*, not *how*.
- Requirements should have these characteristics:
 - Complete and consistent
 - Unambiguous
 - Specific
 - Verifiable
 - Feasible
 - Prioritized into categories such as *required*, *highly desired*, and *would be nice* (to give the project team guidance on where to make tradeoffs)

Work Breakdown Instructions

The purpose of a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is to convert the description of the project's scope (the *what*) into a list of tasks that have to be done (the *how*). Since this task list is the basis for further planning, it is important to get it right. The WBS technique uses a methodical "divide and conquer" approach to help ensure that no tasks are overlooked. Major advantages of creating a WBS are:

- it helps conquer complexity
- it helps you convert the *what* of the project that was your focus in the Define phase into the *how to* that is the focus of planning
- it does a good job at eliminating gaps and redundancies

It can be harder than it looks to build a good WBS, but the results are worth it.

Steps for Creating a WBS

1. The top level of a work breakdown structure is called level 0 and is always a single item that represents the scope of the entire project. Sometimes level 0 is omitted for clarity, but it is always assumed to be there.
2. Break level 0 (the scope of the entire project) into three to eight chunks of work. This is the next level of the WBS and is called level 1.
3. Continue breaking down each chunk into smaller chunks that go on the next lower (or indented) level.
4. Label each chunk with a description of what work it includes, using a *verb-noun* form, such as "Define metallurgy tests."

Tips

1. You should stop breaking down a branch when it meets the tests listed in the "When to Stop Breaking Down" section below.
2. The WBS does not have to be symmetrical. Some branches may have more levels than others have.
3. Remember to include the work of managing the project in the WBS, such as "Communicate Status" or "Update Risk Plans." For convenience, many writers show it as a separate branch of the WBS that begins on level 1.
4. As you create the WBS, you can work from top to bottom, bottom to top, or any combination. Pick a method that works well for your team and remember to use the sanity tests below to check the correctness of your WBS after you are done.
5. Create the WBS as a team activity, possibly after you or a small team has sketched out the framework.

When to Stop Breaking Down

Stop breaking a branch down when each item on the lowest level meets these tests:

1. It is *trackable*. The estimated length of the task should be less than the status-reporting interval that you plan to use.
2. It is *assignable*. You can reasonably assign this task to a person or small group with assurance that they will understand and complete it.
3. It is *estimatable*. It is small enough to estimate accurately

Don't go smaller than necessary, but don't allow long, broadly defined tasks. Applying these tests often results in work packages that are 1 - 2 weeks long.

Sanity Tests for Your WBS

When you have completed the WBS, use these tests to verify that it is good.

1. Are there any tasks that are too big to plan, assign, or monitor? If so, break into smaller tasks.
2. Are there tasks that are too detailed? Combine them into a bigger task.
3. Are there any missing or redundant tasks?
4. Is each task a subset of the summary above it, and does each level of tasks add up to its summary?
5. Does each task name an activity that produces a product?

Work Breakdown Structure Worksheet

Draw or outline a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) that converts your product scope (in the form of requirements from the scope definition) into the tasks that the project must complete. Use “hierarchical decomposition” to eliminate gaps and redundancies.

List key milestones, making sure that they are SMART and linked to work packages from the WBS.

Task Information Sheet

A project team can use this worksheet to gather detailed information about the tasks in their project. The best time to use this form is generally after the team has created a WBS and is starting to work on creating a schedule and other detailed plans.

WBS ID and name of task
What will it deliver? (Activity -> Deliverable format)
Who will do it and at what level of effort? (list names, e.g. Fred Flintstone 50%; or skill sets, e.g. 2 CAD Engineers at 100%)
What else is needed to do it? <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ From other groups■ Equipment and materials■ Special skills■ Special costs
What tasks come before and after it?
How long will it take? (optimistic, mostly likely, and pessimistic range)
Key assumptions
Risks

Instructions for Creating a Schedule

Sequence the Tasks

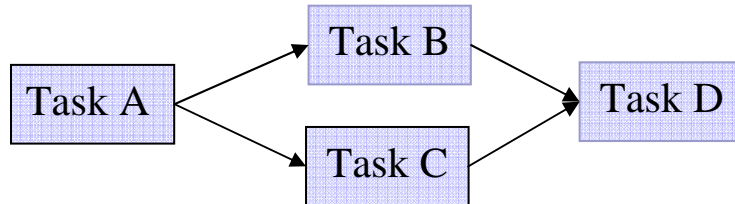
1. Gather up the list of tasks that must be done to complete the project. You should already have this list from the work breakdown that you did in the “Create tasks ...” step.
2. As a project team, decide the order in which the tasks will be done.

- a. Write the short description of each task in verb-noun form on the top third of a sticky. Include stickies for START and FINISH. You may already have these stickies from the work breakdown that you did in the “Create tasks ...” step.

Task Description (VERB – NOUN form)		
People	Duration	Resources
Start	Finish	

- b. Arrange the stickies in the sequence that will most effectively get the project done.

Draw arrows indicating the sequence. Some projects will have a very simple sequence where almost all tasks must be done in serial order (the preceding task must be completed before the following task can begin). Other projects may be able to speed things up by doing some tasks in parallel. The example diagram shows that tasks B and C can be done in parallel once task A is completed.



Estimate the Tasks

3. Estimate how many working days and people each task will take. Write this in the “Duration” and “People” sections of the sticky. Then list other important resources that will be necessary to do the task, for example time on a piece of equipment or an expenditure of money. The example shows that task C, “Research coolant options,” is expected to take 12 working days.

George will work on it approximately 50% of his time and an equipment technician (to be named later) 25% of her time. The task will also require spending \$2,000 for travel expenses to visit a potential supplier, as well as use of Lab 2, which is in very high demand.

C. Research Coolant Options		
1. George 50%	12 days	1. \$2000 travel
2. Equipment tech 25%		2. Use of lab 2 50%

4. Insert milestones into the sequence of tasks. Milestones have zero duration and zero effort. They are valuable for several reasons:

- a. They will help you monitor the project’s progress because you can see whether milestones are achieved on the date you planned for them. This is called a *tracking baseline*.
 - b. They will help you communicate project status to other people.
 - c. They will become a synchronization point, both within and outside your project team.
 - d. They give people concrete intermediate goals to shoot for.
- You should have a milestone for each key accomplishment or deliverable in your plan, as well as one for each gate in your project management process. Generally, you should have one or more milestones every month.

Create a Schedule Chart

- 5. Determine the earliest dates that you can start and complete each task. Use the sequence information to determine when a task can start, based on the finish dates of the tasks that immediately precede it. Given the start date and the duration of a task, then determine what its earliest finish date is. Going from start to finish through the sequence, do this for every sticky and enter the dates in the appropriate boxes.
- 6. Create a schedule chart using the information on the stickies. A schedule chart plots the tasks in your project against a timeline, so that people can easily see when things are supposed to happen. Units of time are plotted as columns. Each row contains the

C. Research Coolant Options		
3. George 50%	12 days	1. \$2000 travel 2. Use of lab 2 50%
4. Equipment tech 25%		
Start 12/4/06	Finish 12/19/06	

Task	Names	Resources	27-Nov	4-Dec	11-Dec	18-Dec	25-Dec	1-Jan	8-Jan	15-Jan
A Write plan	Tom 100%	\$1,000								
B Construct new room	George 75% Mary 50%	\$50,000								
C Rsch coolant opts	George 50% E tech 25%	\$2,000 Lab 2 50%								
D Procure equipment	Mildred 10% George 50%	\$20,000								
Names	Tom		100%							
	Mary			50%	50%					
	George			125%	125%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
	E tech			25%	25%	25%				
	Mildred						10%	10%	10%	10%
Resources	Expenses		\$1,000	\$25,000	\$27,000		\$10,000			\$10,000
	Lab 2			50%	50%	50%				

information for one task, with a bar showing when the task is supposed to occur. You can also chart how the people and resources on the project will be used over time.

Fix Conflicts

7. Your schedule chart may show some problems. In the example schedule chart, 125% of George's time is allocated to the project during the first two weeks in December. You may see problems such as
- a. Over allocation of people or resources
 - b. Using a resource when it is not available
 - c. Milestones not achieved on target
 - d. Unacceptable cash flow

Fix these problems by modifying the schedule. You may have to change the sequence of tasks, durations, assignments of people and resources, or other parts of your plan.

Tips

- You can use software to assist with many of these steps. Microsoft Project® supports all of the above steps, but some people don't have access to it. Another option is to use the Excel spreadsheet template in the *Resource Kit* to automate most of the graphing work in step 6.
- See the class resources, as well as chapters 7 and 8 of Eric Verzuh's *Fast Forward MBA in Project Management, 2nd edition* for more details on how to do good scheduling and estimating.
- Involve the project team in creating the schedule. Get estimates and inputs from the people who are most familiar with the work that will be done. One person may propose a first draft, for example of the task sequencing, but the project will get a better quality schedule as well as more enthusiastic commitment if you involve the people who will do the work.

Network Diagram

Use this page to document the network diagram that you created using the instructions above.

Schedule Chart

Use this template to draw the schedule chart described in step 5 of the instructions.

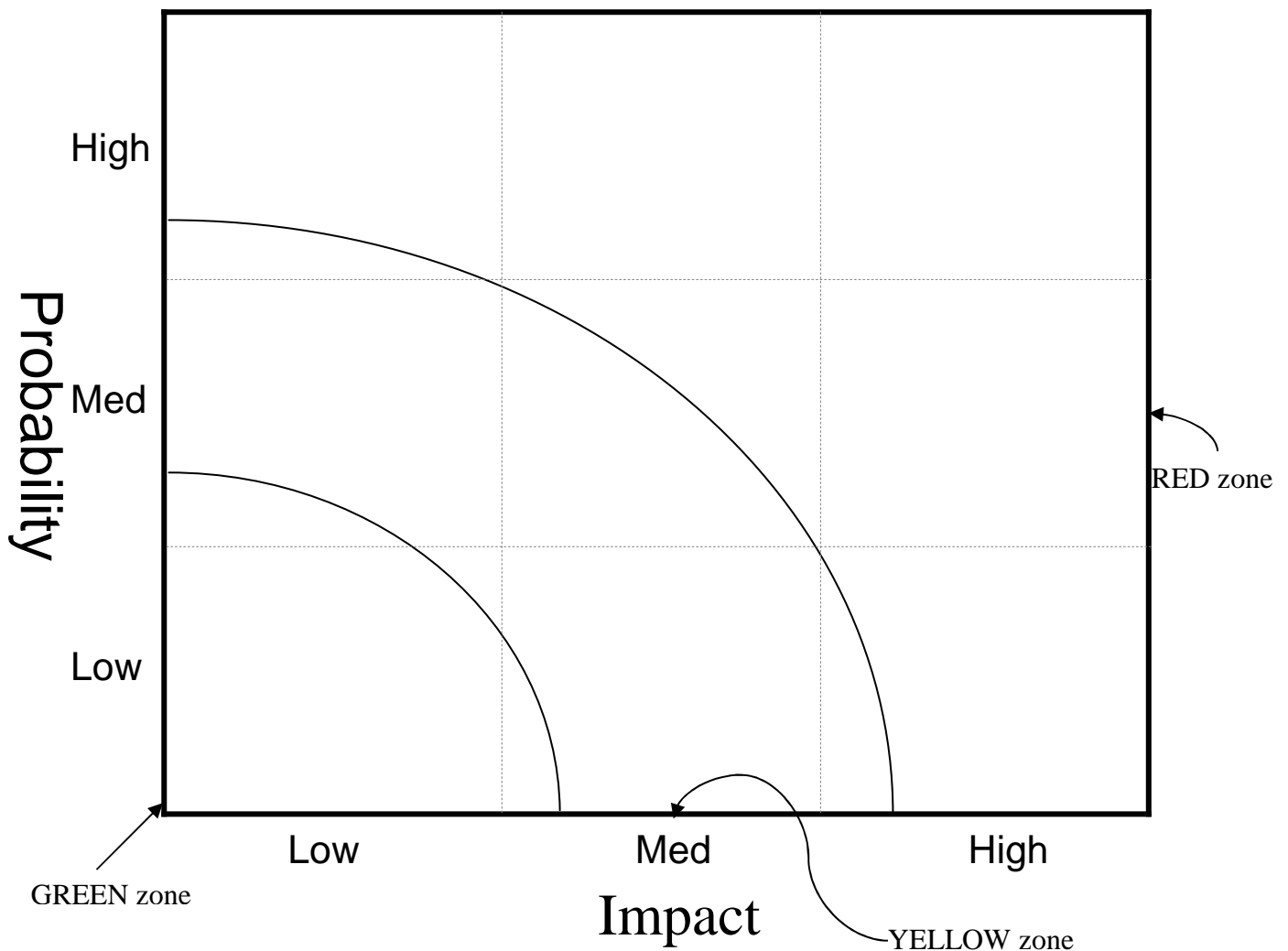
Resources														
Names														
Task														

Risk Assessment

Project name:
Project manager:
Date:

Identify and Prioritize Risks

Identify risks to the successful completion of your project. Prioritize the risks by plotting each one on this Probability-Impact (PI) Matrix



Risk Management Instructions

The risk management process has four basic steps.

1. Identify risks using “If / Then” format
2. Analyze and prioritize risks
3. Create and implement risk management plans
4. Monitor risks and act when necessary

Step 1 - Identify

Identifying risks is a team activity. Use the charter to start the discussions on possible risks. Don't limit your questions to yourself or your project team. Ask people who are not directly involved with the project, such as people outside your area of expertise. For example, if you're in engineering, talk to service, manufacturing, or marketing people. You can also consult historical information such as postmortems and debriefs, as well as published information in books, articles, and case studies.

Step 2 – Analyze and Prioritize

Now that you have a list of potential risks, prioritize it down to the top items that you and your team are going to focus on now. Use a Probability-Impact (PI) Matrix like the one on the first page of this form to drive the discussion.

A good way to use a PI matrix is for your team to write each risk on a sticky, and then place the stickies on a large copy of the matrix that you've drawn on flipchart paper. When you're done, transfer the results to the PI matrix on this form by typing the risks into the corresponding cells of the table. Remember to write each risk in this format: IF <something occurs>, THEN <impact>.

Put a high priority on managing the risks that end up in the red zone of the PI matrix. Green zone risks go on your watch list – don't spend a lot of energy planning for them, but check them periodically. For each yellow zone risk, make a case-by-case decision on how much energy you will spend managing it.

Step 3 – Risk Management Plans

Use the *Risk Management Plans* worksheet on this form to create action plans for the high priority risks from the previous step. Each risk management plan has two parts, with an owner responsible for implementing each part.

- In the *proactive* section, you decide on preventative actions that you will take *now* to reduce the probability that the risk will occur or to reduce the impact if it does occur.
- In the *contingency* section, you decide how you will react if the risk event occurs in spite of your proactive actions. The *trigger* is the event that you will monitor to determine whether the proactive actions were good enough. If the trigger occurs, you will implement the contingency plan.

Some classic risk management strategies are:

- Avoid - Eliminate a specific threat, usually by eliminating the cause, before the project enters the execution phase.
- Mitigate - Reduce risk by taking proactive actions to lower the probability of a risk event's occurrence or to reduce its impact should it occur.
- Accept - Plan to accept the consequences of a risk (can be active or passive).
- Transfer – Move the burden of managing the risk to someone else who is better able to handle it (financially, expertise, or in other ways).
- Monitor – Defer action and monitor the risk.

Step 4 – Monitor and Act

The owners of the proactive plans from the previous step should implement the preventative actions. This may require help and support from other people, including managers and sponsors. After all, great plans aren't any good if you don't execute them. Likewise, contingency owners should monitor their risks and initiate the contingency plans when triggers occur.

Finally, risk management is not a one-time event. Monitor and update your risk list and risk management plans regularly. Look for new risks and risks that have changed substantially. It is an excellent idea to devote a few minutes at every team meeting to a brief risk review.

Progress Report Template

Project name:
Project manager:
Date of this report:

Project Number:
Sponsor:

Overall Project Health

Area	Health	Comment
Budget	Y	This comment explains project team's recovery plan
Schedule	R	This comment explains what help is needed from sponsor.
Scope	G	
Overall	R	

Key to Project Health Indicators

Red: Significant risk; need help from management or sponsor. (Explain in comments.)

Yellow: Issues, but recovery plan in place. (Describe recovery plan in comments.)

Green: OK (Comment is optional.)

Milestone Status

Milestone	Dates			Health	Comments
	Original Plan	Previous Report	Forecast / Actual		

Key to Milestone Health Indicators

Red: Will significantly miss this milestone. (Explain reasons and actions in comments.)

Yellow: Issues, but recovery plan in place. (Describe recovery plan in comments.)

Green: Expect to hit this milestone. (Comment is optional.)

Done: Milestone is complete. The date in the *Forecast / Actual* column is the actual completion date.

Current Cost Forecast for Total Project (update only on significant changes)

Cost Type	Amount		Unit	Date Updated
	Original Plan	Forecast / Actual		
Capital			dollars	
Expense			dollars	
Labor			hours	

Progress Report Instructions

1. Update this report on a regular cycle, such as every two weeks.
2. Header section: Enter the identifying information for this project.
3. *Overall Project Health* section: Show your opinion of the project's overall health in the areas of budget, schedule, and scope by entering the codes shown in the key below the table. Enter explanatory comments if required. The *Overall* indicator is the worst of the individual indicators.
4. *Milestone Status* section:
 - a. Report about eight milestones in the table. Always include milestones for the standard gate transitions in your Project Management Process, as well as a milestone for the completion of the project, even if some of these standard milestones are already completed. (Indicate completed milestones by entering "Done" in the health field.)
 - b. The remaining milestones should be upcoming milestones in a rolling window from now to about 8 weeks into the future. Drop completed milestones and add new ones as the project moves forward.
 - c. Enter three dates for each milestone. In the *Original Plan* column, enter the milestone's planned completion date from the approved project plan or (re-)baseline. In the *Previous Report* field, cut and paste the date that you forecast for this milestone in your previous progress report. In the *Forecast / Actual* column, enter your current best estimate of when the milestone will be (or actually was) completed. If the milestone is already completed, also enter *Done* in the Health column, leaving the background color unchanged.
 - d. In the *Health* column, enter *R*, *Y*, or *G* and the matching background color to indicate the outlook for achieving the milestone on the planned date. Use the health codes shown in the key at the bottom of the table. Some health codes require an explanatory comment. Enter the comment in the *Comment* column as explained in the key.
5. *Current Cost Forecast* section: Update this section whenever capital, expense or labor projections change significantly,

Dashboard Instructions

The Dashboard gives managers and sponsors an overview of all projects on a single page. It is not applicable to managing single projects – use it as part of an overall portfolio monitoring system. Each project’s status is summarized on a single row. Generally, each project manager updates the projects for which he is responsible, using information from his detailed project status reports. The dashboard is updated on a regular cycle, such as every month before a standard portfolio review meeting.

This example assumes the “Define – Plan – Execute – Close” lifecycle for managing projects. Change the dashboard to reflect your organization’s lifecycle. Here is more information on specific columns:

Current phase

- Use the project phases from your organization’s project lifecycle, such as Define – Plan – Execute - Close. Usually projects that haven’t entered the first phase (Define) are not tracked on this dashboard, but if it is necessary to enter such a project, show its phase as "Not Started". Similarly, if a completed project must be listed, show its phase as "Completed."

Dates of Approvals

- The "Definition," "Plan" and "Execution" columns refer to the dates of the first three required approval gates as documented in project management lifecycle.
- If the approval is already complete, enter the actual date, followed by an "A" in the next column.
- If the approval is in the future, enter the date you are currently forecasting, followed by an "F" in the next column.
- If you don't have enough information to even make an estimate of the signoff date, leave both columns blank.

Dates of Completion

- In the "From Approved Plan" column, enter the completion date from the most recent plan that has been formally approved by your sponsor. This will either be the date from the plan approved at the completion of the Plan phase or the date from a more recent re-plan, if you have an approved re-plan. If your project has not reached this point, leave it blank.
- In the "Forecast / Actual" column, enter your current forecast of the project's completion date. This forecast date will be most accurate for projects in later phases. If the project is complete, enter the actual completion date.

Health Indicators

- Enter your assessment of the health of the project with regards to budget, schedule and scope. Set the corresponding indicator by typing R, Y, or G, using these definitions:
 - R(ed) - Significant risk; need help from management or sponsor. (Explain in comments.)
 - Y(ellow) - Issues, but recovery plan in place. (Describe recovery plan in comments.)
 - G(reen) - OK (Comment is optional.)
- The overall health indicator color is the worst of the individual colors.

Comments / Recovery Action

- If any project indicator is yellow, write a short comment describing your recovery plan. If an indicator is red, write a short comment describing what action you need from the management team. If your indicators are all green, your comments are optional.

Last Updated

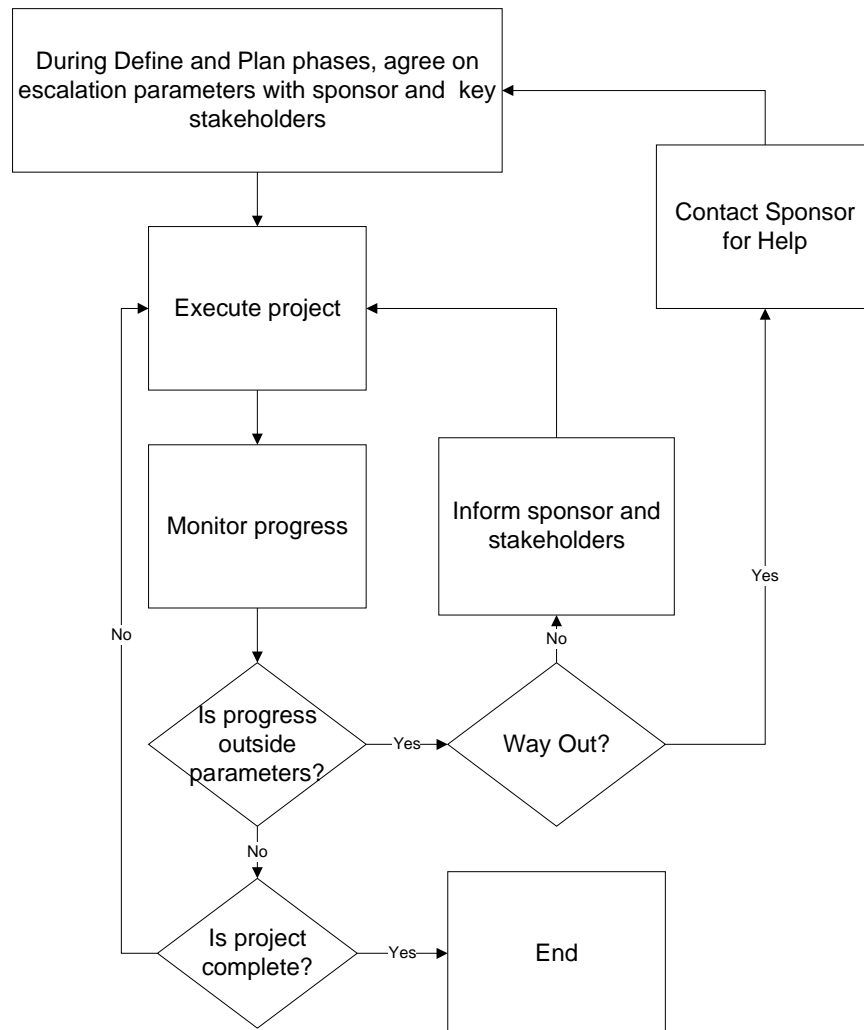
Enter the date that you last modified or verified the information in this row.

Issue and Action Item List Instructions

Try to prevent issues by using good risk management techniques. However, prevention is not always possible. Use this Issue and Action Item List to manage issues and action items that come up during the project. Review this list frequently with the project team. Especially make sure that each item has the name of owner who will take charge of it and a date for when the action is due. That really helps focus the action.

When items are closed or no longer relevant, remove them from this list or transfer them to a separate section for inactive items so that the active items are not obscured by clutter.

Sometimes the team needs outside help to resolve issues. Promptly escalate these issues to your sponsor, using the process below. Don't hesitate to escalate – it is usually better to escalate too quickly than it is to wait too long. Escalation is a normal part of running projects in a busy environment, and one of the critical functions of a sponsor is to help you resolve issues.



Change Request

Project Change Request	
Project name:	Request ID:
Requested by:	Date of request:
Date decision needed:	
Description	
Description of requested change:	
Business reason for change:	
Type of change: <input type="checkbox"/> Major (requires replanning effort) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor	How much effort will be required to investigate this request?
Impact of Change	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ On project schedule:▪ On project cost:▪ On features and functionality:▪ Other impacts:	Source of funding:
Decision	
Who will decide?	
Description of decision and actions:	
Authorizing signature:	Date of decision:

Change Request Instructions

Changes are inevitable and can actually be valuable. They can provide:

- Business flexibility
- Technology improvements
- Learning from discovery

Be prepared to manage change in a constructive way. Prohibiting change does not work, but uncontrolled change causes chaos, so you must strike a balance. Judiciously allow changes, but make explicit decisions instead of just letting changes happen uncontrolled. Understand the cost of each change (not necessarily in monetary terms) and its value to the project or business before make a decision.

Here are the basic components of a simple change control system.

1. Have a starting baseline
2. Submit change requests
3. Investigate costs and benefits of proposed changes; look for better alternatives (this may be done by a people other than the submitter.)
4. Make decision
5. Communicate and implement changes
6. Update the baseline
7. Go back to step 2

Change control does not have to be complicated, slow, or high overhead. You can scale it to meet the needs of your project. However, it should always clearly define responsibilities and the steps that people should follow to make controlled changes to the project.

Sections on This Form

Use this Project Change Request form to handle changes in your project. The form has three sections that you will fill out at different times.

1. First, request a change to the project (step 2 above) by filling out the *Description* section of the form.
2. Next, capture the results of the investigation (step 3 above) in the *Impact of Change* section.
3. Finally, make a decision on the change request and record the results in the *Decision* part of the form.

Instructions for a Project Retrospective

Purpose

Retrospectives help your entire organization learn. Everyone in the organization benefits from the accumulated experience of many people. Participants at a retrospective extract what they learned during the project, summarize it, and decide how to take action to improve future projects. Retrospectives (also known as post mortems and lessons learned reviews) can make a huge difference in improving the performance of a project organization over a relatively short number of projects.

Steps

1. Decide who will lead the retrospective and who will participate in it.
2. Gather preliminary information, including input from team members, stakeholders, and users.
3. Meet to review the project. Here's a possible agenda:
 - Review the project's charter and plan, including major changes that happened during the project
 - Review results (deliverables) vs. success measures
 - Review time and budget against estimates
 - Discuss what went well
 - Discuss what did not go well
 - Prioritize key findings
4. Summarize findings in a report, list, or electronic archive.
5. Act on what you learned. Create action plans, with owners and due dates, for acting on the key findings. Get management commitment to follow through on these action plans.

Tips

- Just do it! Retrospectives are extremely effective, and are an excellent investment of your time.
- Create an environment that is non-threatening, constructive and facilitated by an unbiased person. The purpose is learning, not blaming. Focus on what you can do in the future.
- Include input from a broad spectrum of team members and stakeholders who have a variety of views. Include the people who will have to support or carry forward the results of your project.
- Cover both technical and non-technical areas of the project.
- Ensure that actions are prioritized, communicated, and followed up.
- Consider holding several small retrospectives throughout the project, such as at completion of key milestones or phases of work, rather than one big one at the end. Everyone's memory will be fresh, and your organization can start benefiting immediately rather than waiting until the end of the project.

Communication Needs Planning Form

Stakeholder	What do they need to know and when?	Their Current Awareness Level	Their Current Support Level	Criticality	Level of Communication Effort	Method, Frequency, and Type	Who?
Loan officers	User features of client management system, status of key implementation milestones, dates for their training and pilots (and changes to any of the above) – monthly, plus upon major changes	Low	Low	High – success requires their input and support	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly update in “Loan Sharks” newsletter (FW) Weekly briefing for rep team (FV) (2 sr loan officers and manager of Group) All 3 loan officers participate in UI and biz process team meetings (IV) and send weekly written updates to their teams (IW) 	Jon

Key to Types of Communications			
FW: Formal Written	FV: Formal Verbal	IW: Informal Written	IV: Informal Verbal