



M-001 **BEST PRACTICE PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**TARGET AUDIENCE & DESCRIPTION:** Intended for anyone involved in the Scottish construction industry, especially SMEs, who is or aspires to be a manager of projects.. Offers a 'best practice' approach to project management.

**INTRODUCTION**

For any construction project to be seen as successful it must be managed in a structured way: think of the project as a SPACE odyssey – Scoping, Planning, Acting, Comparing, and Evaluating. The aim being to guarantee your project comes in under budget, on time and goes way beyond the expectations of the various stakeholders. This means that we need to understand and appreciate issues such as GODS, the DISCO, MINCE, and the P's of project management. By following 'best practice', tips, and guidelines, you will have a much better chance of delivering that project success.

**SCOPING - DEFINING GOALS, OBJECTIVES, DELIVERABLES, SCOPE**

For any project to be successful you (the Project Manager) need to fully understand and appreciate what the project is designed to achieve. The goals of the project drive future actions and confirming what the objectives are aids in planning, executing and managing the project.

You also need to clearly establish the scope of the project, i.e. what are the limits to the work to be undertaken. During the overall life of a project there will be pressure to alter/amend/extend the scope and

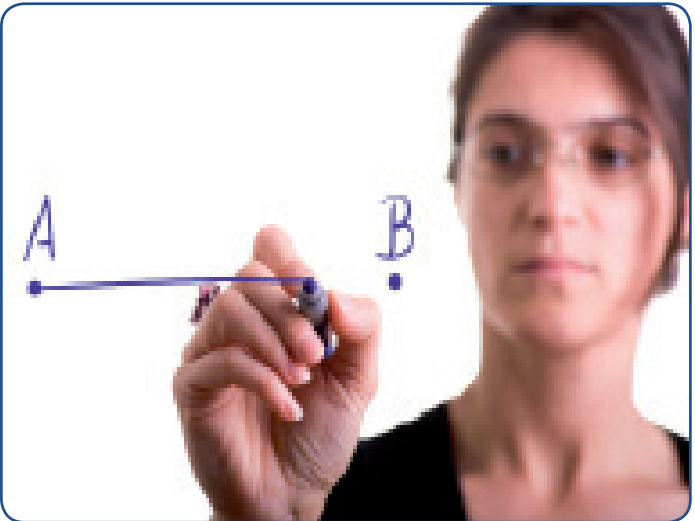


excellent Project Managers will understand that if they change the scope, then this will bring pressure to bear on other issues e.g. cost, time. Everyone involved in the project needs to understand and buy in to scope management. You will consider strategies designed to deliver smart objectives that focus plans and performance towards attainment of the 5 key goals.

**PLANNING – WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY, HOW?**

Normally at this stage, details will be developed as to how you will achieve the desired outcome of the project. The outcome being enshrined within documentation that should clearly contain the objectives and the defined project deliverables, but very often these documents lead to confusion (through Masses of Information Not being Communicated Effectively). Planning requires the project manager consider and make decisions about the project resources (people, time, and money): but what if the project manager is a poor decision maker? You will review the decision making process.

All decisions should be built in to a clear and realistic project plan; this should be reviewed and bought in to by all stakeholders. How this plan is communicated and managed forms a key point for most projects.



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## ACTING – TEAM BUILDING, COMMUNICATING, LEADING AND DIRECTING

Everyone involved in the project team needs to know exactly what is expected of them i.e. what their roles and responsibilities are, and what they are being held accountable for. The assumption being that they know how they fit with the rest of the 'team'. Part of the answer to these lies in effective and efficient communication.

Project communication plans indicate each stakeholder's information requirements during the project and how this will be generated and used. Project communication planning ensures that the right information goes to the right person, at the right time. You will consider approaches to team building and effective communication strategies.

## COMPARING – TRACKING AND REPORTING

Once the plan is operational it is customary to review progress against that planned. You will need to consider mechanism for recording variations between cost, schedule and scope. Variations may have to be reported to key stakeholders and necessary corrective actions will need to be considered and evaluated. Project managers constantly juggle three variables – cost, schedule and scope; each has an impact on the other two. You will consider status reports, scorecards and a road map for project success.

## EVALUATING – CHANGE AND RISK MANAGEMENT, AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING

Change is constant: all projects tend to change in some way and managing change becomes a key issue for project managers. You will review approaches to change management and consider techniques for ensuring robust change.



Risks are any events which can adversely affect the successful outcome of the project. Risks vary from one project to another: but it is vital that the key risks are identified as early as possible, and their management planned for. This may entail avoiding the risk, or, if it cannot be avoided, at least mitigating or lessening its impact. You will consider holistic approaches to risk and its management.

When the project is complete it is always useful to compare what we planned to do with what we actually did. The learning experiences had along the way can inform our future approach to projects and also shape the holonic networks that we establish on future projects.



**GENERAL: FOR SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC BODIES**

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LINKS
Implementing Project Management Best Practices	An article written by Simon Buehring, a project manager and trainer. Contains a link to a second article in the series - Implementing Project Management Best Practices on Small Projects.	<a href="http://www.knowledgetrain.co.uk/project-management-training-course-article001.php">http://www.knowledgetrain.co.uk/project-management-training-course-article001.php</a>
Best Practice	An article on project management best practice, contained on the <a href="http://www.projectsart.co.uk">projectsart.co.uk</a> website, giving easy to read guidance on this subject.	<a href="http://www.projectsart.co.uk/best-practice.html">http://www.projectsart.co.uk/best-practice.html</a>