

Control Effort, Control the Project

Estimate, measure actual, and intervene in Methods to control Time, Cost, Quality

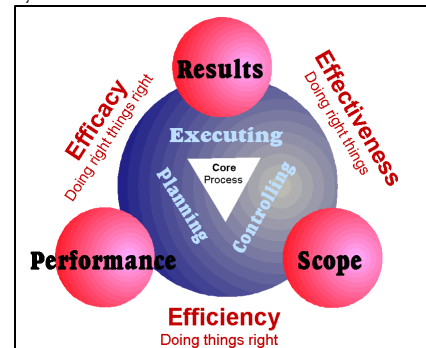
Introduction

Projects come in all sizes and shapes just like alligators. Sometimes they come with a few of their buddies. Good project managers always get more projects. Learn to wrestle with all the different project alligators and herd each one to successful completion.

Herding means having the power to change – to accelerate, to turn down, to turn off – to control. What do we control on a project? How do we cause a project trajectory to change?

Classically, time, cost, and quality are said to be the controls. However, we can not control any of the three. They are simply yardsticks – metrics – for measuring where we are in the project. Metrics without any knobs for control! Time, cost, and quality can even be traps – projects that are on time, on budget, with the expected quality can be abysmal failures.

Planning is the crucial process for avoiding failures. Planning builds the yard sticks for measuring. Planning identifies the methods to accomplish the work of the Scope. Detailed analysis of the methods yields the crew, tools, equipment, materials, duration, and the effort. In many projects, all success requires is getting all the information, materials, skilled people, equipment, and attack strategy to show up at the right place at the right time. Repeatedly, we find entire organizations which are action-prone and planning-disabled.



Planning starts with establishing Scope through a Work Breakdown Structure. Reduce the WBS to greater detail to identify methods which identifies crew size, materials, equipment, information. Then break the WBS to the level of detail to estimate the duration and effort. Any level may be the right level for controlling the project. Many Project Managers do not dive to the level of effort. We believe that labor hours are the only way to control a project.

Learn the strategy of reducing Scope using Time, Territory, Technology, People as separate levels for breaking work into finer and finer pieces. When in doubt use duration or effort to break the work down until durations and costs can be estimated. For example, no task longer than two hours and no task consuming more than 40 labor hours.

Estimate people, materials, tools to be consumed by a project activity. Reduce these resources to cost for accurate budget. Pump the resources through the method to get duration. The duration dictates indirect costs. Disciplined estimating eliminates surprises and fixes risk. Earned value

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allows project progress to be measured each hour. Learn to use this powerful tool for excellence in project management.

Measure progress. Sum credit of earned labor hours in completed activities. Compare actual progress against planned progress. Actual Hours against Earned Hours from the actual progress. Actual Costs against Earned Costs from the Actual Progress.

Predict outcomes based on actual. Respond by adjusting the schedule, the budget, the resources, or the method. Continue these constant course directions as a airplane pilot until the result is achieved.

The Job

- We can do a good job.
- We can do a cheap job.
- We can do a quick job.
- A good job done quickly is not cheap.
- A cheap job done quickly is not good.
- A good job can be a cheap job if it is not done quickly.



Time Line

One Day – eight hours

Purpose

To build a solid foundation of planning Performance. Estimate, budget, and control time, cost, and quality.

- ◆ Know how Scope dictates Cost and Time.
- ◆ Understand the variation in Performance and that Risk.
- ◆ Use the Productivity of materials, tools, equipment. Know that Risk.
- ◆ Understand and use Earned Value to measure Performance

Mission

To plan project excellence – ensure Performance. Write detailed work breakdowns based on time, territory and technology. Know the value of Methods. Estimate people, tools, equipment, indirect costs. Price resources. Measure performance on the ruler of earned value.

Learning Objectives

- ◆ Define the imperatives of the project fundamentals: Result, Scope, Performance.
- ◆ Define the Scope completely. What is required and what is not to produce the Result?
- ◆ Plan Project Strategy, Tactics, and Key Methods.
- ◆ Understand Methods – how, when, who, with what.
- ◆ Completely identify the Performance required to accomplish each element of the Scope.
- ◆ Break down the Work into controllable chunks. Develop a Work Breakdown Structure.
- ◆ Estimate both the Effort and the Duration required by the WBS.
- ◆ Plan Resource requirements required by the WBS. Estimate the cost of the resources.

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- ◆ Develop processes to estimate, budget, procure, receive, store, disperse, and account for resources: management, methods, tools and equipment, materials, money, time, information.
- ◆ Create Cost Rulers (Metric) for Measuring Progress against Earned Value.
- ◆ Control Change. Understand the cost impact of change. Understand change in scope, change out of scope, and a change in the project process.
- ◆ Recognize the symptoms of problems in a project.
- ◆ Monitor Progress. What had been done, what has been expended, what is left to do, how long will that take, what additional resource will that take?

Outline

Time	Duration	Activity	Outcome
8:00	30 minutes	Introduce workshop	Introduce People, Instructors, Workshop.
8:30	90 minutes	Exercise One	What are examples of risk you have experienced? What are Threats and Opportunities you have encountered? What are examples of Threats and Opportunities in Results? In Scope? In Performance? In Resources? What is a Threat? An Opportunity? What conclusions and learning can we draw from these examples?
10:00	10 minutes	Break	
10:10	90 minutes	Exercise Two	Risk Recognition First current Project. Participants work with the project managers to identify risks. Identify potential project problems and project successes. Both Threats and Opportunities will be identified for Results, Scope, and Performance. How do you recognize a Threat? An Opportunity? What conclusions and learning can we draw from these examples?
11:40	80 minutes	Exercise Three	Causes of Risk On the same current project Discuss the causes of the risks or opportunities developed above. What are the causes for Risk in Results, Scope, Performance? Discuss the causes of Performance Risk in the variation within Resources: What conclusions and learning can we draw from these examples?
12:00	45 minutes	LUNCH	

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Time	Duration	Activity	Outcome
1:45	10 minutes	Break	
1:55	75 minutes	Exercise Four	Risk Assessment Second current project Quickly identify Risk and determine Causes. Assess the Impact and Probability of those risks. What conclusions and learning can we draw from these examples?
3:10	75 minutes	Exercise Five	Risk Response Second current Project. Develop Response Plans for the Risks: exploit opportunities, ignore ducks, transfer or insure, avoid or prevent, mitigate, counter, or allocate contingency. What conclusions and learning can we draw from these examples?
4:25	30minutes	Exercise Seven	Each team member will write commitments for their personal change to deal with the risks endemic to project management.
4:55	5 minutes	Closure	Certificates