Project Management
Workshop Notes

DICKSON TRAINING
— & DEVELOPMENT —

CONTENTS

WHAT IS A PROJECT?

Projects can cover many activities from small short-term ones to multi-million pound tasks that last for many years. However, they all have common elements. The main characteristics of a project are:

- A fixed timescale

- Clear objective(s)

- A temporary team of people

- No practise or rehearsal

- They carry risk and uncertainty

- Has a clearly identifiable start and finish

- An instrument of change

- Has a specific aim

- Results in something being delivered/provided

- Is unique

- Is the responsibility of a single person or body

- Includes costs, resources and time

- Uses a wide variety of resources and skills

Some Definitions of Project Management:

- o A set of related activities having a defined start and finish time, with specific objectives and/or deliverables to a standard of quality agreed with the customer.

- o Any task that has a beginning and an end and has to be managed.

- o A set of related activities of sufficient magnitude or importance to warrant the dedication of an organisational element to produce and/or have overall responsibility for it.

- o A large and often complex process to produce a defined end result to agreed time, cost and quality objectives.

- o A series or related activities with a start and end date, to implement a designed solution to a specified requirement.

- o A unique set of co-ordinated activities, with definite starting and finishing points, undertaken by an individual or organisation to meet specific objectives within defined schedule, cost and performance parameters.

- o Working to achieve a specific task within a given resource framework of time money and people.

The difference between Project Management and Operational Management

Project Management	Operational Management
A life-cycle that ends when the project is completed.	Continuous life from year to year.
Multi-disciplinary ream.	Uses a set of specialist skills.
Temporary project team.	Stable organisation.
Usually not done before.	Repetitive and well known.
Work must be done within time and cost constraints.	Maximum work is done within annual budget.
Cancelled if objective(s) cannot be achieved.	Continued existence assured.
Finish date and cost are difficult to predict.	Annual expenditure easily calculated.
Start and end date.	No specific dates other than the financial year.

Why do projects fail?

There are many reasons why a project may fail. Some examples are listed below:

- o Project not clearly defined

- o Content/scope of project not clearly understood

- o Over-estimating availability/capability of resources

- o Promise more than can reasonably be delivered

- o Poor handling of unforeseen snags

- o Weak control procedures

- o Poor communications

- o Selecting the wrong Project Manager

- o Inability to estimate requirements accurately

- o Reluctance to end project

- o Lack of upper management support

- o Project team's abilities are insufficient

- o Poor commitment to project by team

- o Ineffective planning and control

- o Presence of bureaucracy (organisational/controls)

- o Project Manager not readily available

- o No clearly established criteria for success

Project Management - Getting It Right

Disease	Symptoms

1. No real goals

- o Goals not specific, measurable, realistic or time bound
- o No sub-goals or action plans
- o Lack of priorities on tasks and action plans
- o Activity orientated not goal orientated

Cure: Set specific, time bound, measurable goals, with sub-goals and action plans.

2. Failure to anticipate obstacles

- o Excessive optimism
- o No alternative strategies
- o Conflicts are ignored or not recognised
- o Missed deadlines
- o Little support when needed
- o Crisis management

Cure: Be flexible in planning, anticipating as far as possible obstacles and ways to overcome them. Spend time on potential problem analysis. Be realistic.

3. Lack of milestones

- o 'It can wait'
- o 'I can remember that'
- o 'I'll know how we're doing when we get there, let's play it by ear'
- o Uncertain of progress
- o Lack of reviews or revision

Cure: Set specific task milestones and progress review dates; stick to them and revise when needed.

4. Lack of commitment

- o 'I told you it wouldn't work, it wasn't my plan'
- o Procrastination
- o Focus on routine and daily activities
- o Goals or milestones not achieved
- o Lack of specific action taken to meet goals
- o Lack of priorities
- o Missed meeting or appointments

Cure: Agree goals at the outset; carry out joint reviews, negotiate, compromise and share information. Meet periodically and review progress.

5. Failure to revise goals

- o Plan never changes
- o Inflexible or stubborn in face of feedback, dictating change
- o Unresponsive to changing situation
- o Help not sought when needed
- o Time wasted on unproductive tasks

Cure: Meet periodically to review progress towards goals and assess situation. Change emphasis or approach as appropriate.

6. Failure to learn from experience

- o Lost sight of goals

- o Mistakes are repeated

- o Feedback is ignored or denied

- o Same routine – same crisis as before

- o Unwillingness to change the way of doing things

- o Not asking 'what did we learn from this?'

Cure: Set improvement and learning objectives. Use milestones to re-assess and review. Collaborate more frequently in tracking progress and learning. Meet at the end of the project to review successes, weaknesses, milestones, approaches etc.

THE ROLES OF THE PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

Project Sponsor

This is the person who has commissioned the project. They will usually set the Terms of Reference, budgets and timescales and have a vested interest in the completion of the project. In addition, they will be kept informed by the Project Manager of progress, obstacles and milestones. At the end of the project, the Project Sponsor may request a formal presentation of the project and its findings in addition to a written proposal.

Project Steering Group

A Project Sponsor may appoint a Steering Group to help the project run smoothly. The Steering Group's main responsibility is to ensure that all those involved in the project have access to relevant information and resources. The Steering Group is usually made up of people who have a vested interest in seeing the project succeed and will meet throughout the project to review and assess progress. Project Steering Groups are set up at the discretion of the Project Sponsor and are not always necessary.

Project Manager

This is the person who is accountable for achieving the projects aims and objectives to time, cost and through the day to day leadership of the project team. They are responsible for delivering the project in terms of time, cost and quality.

During all phases of the project life cycle the Project Manager must be in close contact with the end uses - the customer and other members of the Project Team.

Project Team Member

A person who brings specialist knowledge to the project. They are usually accountable for one aspect of the project.

The Qualities of a Successful Project Manager

Project Manager Qualities

How many companies have internal selection procedures for Project Managers? Very few, yet there are special qualities required in a project manager. The job description is relatively straightforward:

Job description

- o   Problem definition and solving

- o   Resource estimation and scheduling

- o   Recognition of interfaces and constraints

- o   Assessment of quality and reliability

- o   Optimisation of value

- o   Control of resources and performance

But what about the person specification? The following are primarily essential for a good project manager:

- o Understanding the Company's business

- o Understanding the technology

- o Understanding the culture

- o Understanding the customer base

- o An awareness of basic management concepts

- o An awareness of management styles

- o Leadership skills

- o Appraising skills

- o Ability to communicate and motivate

- o Interpersonal skills

- o Ability to conceptualise

- o Creative ability

An interesting exercise is to task your colleagues to prioritise the following characteristics of an ideal Project Manager. It will be very interesting to see how the various disciplines of a Project Group see the 'task and process' items interfacing.

'Ideal' Project Manager

1. Technician

2. Systems thinker

3. Communicator

4. People-manager

5. Salesperson

Depending on whether your project team workers see a project manager's roles as technically oriented or people oriented, they will see 1 and 2 or 3 and 4 as the primary role - be warned if you are an opposite!

The Project Manager (The individual)

Knowledge:

- o Planning
- o Scheduling
- o Quantitative knowledge
- o Management theory
- o Accounting/finance/budgets

Skills:

- o Problem solving
- o Decision making
- o Organising
- o Controlling
- o Leading
- o Negotiating
- o Creativity
- o Communicating
- o Systematic working

Attributes

- o Motivation
- o Authority
- o Responsibility
- o Self analysis
- o Style
- o Delegation
- o Understanding people

The Benefits of Project Management

It allows the following to be accomplished:

- o The direction of scarce resources what are judged to be the most desirable objectives, and to do this profitably.

- o To focus appropriate management skills on to specific tasks.

- o To secure commitments to deliver results from those wishing to proceed with the project.

- o To direct major elements of the business without being submerged in detail.

- o To keep control of a wide variety of projects running concurrently.

- o To ensure that issues such as quality and safety are engineered into projects at the design stage.

- o To extend the experience of staff working on projects and help equip them for wider responsibilities.

- o To ensure customer satisfaction.

THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT LIFECYCLE

The Definition Stage

WHO
- o Has financial responsibility?
- o Is the Project Manager?
- o Is affected by the project?

WHAT
- o Are the objectives? (time/quality/cost)
- o Are the priorities? (time/quality/cost)
- o Budget is available?
- o Organisational changes are required?
- o Resources are available?
- o Are the benefits to the business?

WHEN
- o Is the work to be finished?
- o Can work start on the project?

WHERE
- o Is the work to be carried out?

WHY
- o Is it being contemplated?

The Planning Stage

1. Appoint the Project Manager.

2. Develop realistic objectives:

   o When is the project due to start?
   o What are the individual tasks in the project?
   o Who are responsible for them?
   o How are they interdependent?
   o What are their estimates of cost and duration?
   o What are the deliverables of each activity?
   o How will the project be monitored?
   o Who needs information and when?
   o How will it be controlled?
   o How will change requests be dealt with?
   o What are the risks?
   o What contingency plans exist?
   o How are suppliers to be controlled?
   o How do we deal with internal suppliers?
   o Do we need escalation procedures/penalty clauses?
   o What milestones should be defined?
   o How will we know when the project is finished?
   o Is the Project Statement approved?
   o Is there authority to proceed?

The Doing Stage

This will probably be broken down into several different stages depending on the nature of the project, for example:

- o Design and development
- o Tendering
- o Procurement
- o Manufacture
- o Installation
- o Commissioning
- o training
- o Post-launch surveillance
- o Compiling the documentation and final report

This stage is characterised by sharply rising costs and requirements for resources. There is, therefore, a need for consistent and thorough monitoring and control procedures (including how to deal with changes) and effective communications. It is too late to start thinking about how to set such things up now.

The Reviewing Stage

This is an essential step in the project lifecycle. The following questions, as a minimum, should be answered:

- o Is the client satisfied?

- o Was the project finished on time, within budget and to specification?

- o Is there any future interest in the project?

- o How accurate were the estimates?

- o How effective were the monitoring, change control process and controls?

- o How effective was the PM?

- o How well did the team perform?

- o How successful was the communication?

- o Should anything be done differently next time, and why?

- o Where will the project details be archived?

- o How will they be accessed for future reference?

- o Where do the details of this review go?

STAGES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

1.   Focus on your objective.

Write it down on a poster so that you don't lose sight of your end point. This should be worded to comply with the SMART characteristics of effective objectives.

2.   Write down a list of the major activities that have to be performed to reach your objective.

Do not worry about sequencing at this stage. Write down ideas as they come. A popular tip is to write each on a separate Post-it® note. This will make it easier when moving on to future steps.

3.   Review each major activity.

Can it be broken down into subsidiary tasks that have to be completed before the major activity is finished?

A list could be developed using Post-it® notes under each major heading.

4.   Identify the major relationship between activities.

Sort the activities into a preliminary sequence. Make an initial analysis of the relationship between the major activities and the dependency of the major activities on completion of any subsidiary tasks.

5.   Work out a time-frame for each major activity

Estimate the time required to complete each major activity. Don't forget the impact that the subsidiary tasks will have. If in doubt, err on the side of caution. This way you will be building in some contingency time for 'slippage' caused through unforeseen circumstances, for example, computers going down or the non-delivery of essential materials and so on.

6.   Develop your schedule.

This step involves working out the earliest start and latest finish dates for each activity. By this stage you should also be able to identify which activities can be running at the same time and which can only be completed after an earlier stage. For example, in a building project you can't start building the walls until the foundations are finished. Once the walls are finished you could install electricity and plumbing at the same time.

7.   Identify who is responsible for each activity.

For simple plans, when only you are going to be involved, you needn't develop this step. However, management often involves getting things done through other people. This stage ensures that each individual knows where they fit into the plan and precisely what area they are responsible for.

Developing a graphical picture of the stages is usually a much easier way of working on complex projects which is explained in the next step.

8.   Produce a Gantt chart.

These charts use bars to indicate the start and finish times of the main activities, and also to illustrate their interdependency (this is why they are sometimes called "bar charts').

Gantt charts are named after the industrial engineer Henry Gantt who first popularised their use. They have become one of the most common methods of illustrating and monitoring projects' progress, and have proved an excellent means of communication and control. They have the advantage that anyone in the project team can see exactly where the project should be at any given time. Planned action can be compared with actual progress. Remedial action can then be taken if necessary.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Common Project Management Terminology

Project Statement

The document that contains all relevant detail of the project:

- o Objective(s)
- o Terms of reference
- o Scope
- o Resources

Activity (or Task)

The smallest element of work for a project; needed to define inter-activity logic and allocate durations, estimates and costs.

Backward Pass

This determines the latest finish and latest start times for each activity.

Critical Activity

An activity that has zero float on the critical path.

Critical Path

This is the shortest possible duration for the project.

Dependencies

The logical constraints between activities in a project.

Dependency Tables

A logical and structured method of identifying the inter-dependency of the individual activities that the project comprises of. They also show the duration of activities.

Earliest Finish Time (EF)

The earliest possible time an activity can finish without changing the project duration or network logic.

Earliest Start Time (ES)

Earliest possible time an activity can start without changing the project duration or network logic.

Float

The time by which an activity can be delayed without affecting the project end date.

Forward Pass

This calculates the earliest start and earliest finish times for all activities in a network.

Gantt Charts

A special form of bar chart with horizontal columns. The details of the activities are written down on the left-hand side, with the timescale shown along the horizontal axis.

Latest Finish Time (LF)

The latest possible time an activity can finish without changing the project duration or network logic.

Latest Start Time (LS)

The latest possible time an activity can start without changing the project duration or network logic.

Milestones

Milestones are key phases in the project used to check progress. Like objectives they are useless unless they are specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time bound. Milestones should occur regularly throughout a project, giving everyone the opportunity to ensure that the project is on course for completion within budget and on time. In addition, milestones are an excellent opportunity to identify any possible problems, before they become major problems. They are also particularly useful in providing summary or overview reports.

Project Review Dates

Throughout a project it is important to hold regular reviews. Many of these review will be informal, however, on major projects more formal reviews should be included. By detailing the dates at the outset of the project, all key team members can plan these into their diary, ensuring maximum attendance.

Network Analysis or Planning

A method of representing a project by illustrating the logical sequence and interdependencies of its activities and provides a way of calculating the critical path.

Project Sponsor

This is generally the person representing the external interest of the project's outcome.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

A logical and structured method of identifying a hierarchy of individual activities that comprise the project. It allows for scheduling, costing, monitoring and ownership.

THE PROJECT STATEMENT

Project Name……………………….   Project No…………………………………

Project Sponsor……………………   Project Manager…………………………

Project Team Members……….……   Project Finish Date……………………..

Project Start Date…………………..   Total Budget………………………..

1. Project Details

Aim

Objectives/Goals

Terms of Reference

2. Project Outline

Sub projects or tasks	Responsibility	Duration	Budget

1
.
2
.
3.

Milestones

1.

2.

3.

Obstacles/Possible Problem Areas

1.

2.

3.

Project Review Dates

3. Project Plan

Process Map

Gantt Chart

Critical Path

PROJECT DETAILS

Aim

This should give general information on the purpose of the project and why it has been commissioned.

Objectives/Goals

These should be S.M.A.R.T. That is specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time bound. They should reflect exactly what the project sets out to do and if properly defined and agreed at the outset, they will prevent the project involving in areas which are not relevant.

Sub Objectives

In major projects, there may be sub objectives; each sub project should have sub objectives.

As objectives set out what a project will do, the words used must be action word such as, identify, process, investigate, produce etc.

Terms of Reference

These set out the boundaries and constraints of the project. They form part of the project objectives, however, in addition they set out the scope, criteria and departments/areas involved in the project. These are usually set by the Project Sponsor.

Resources Available

This should detail all resources available such as; equipment, rooms, time, people from other departments, outside sources, machines, computer software, vehicles etc.

Project Budget

In addition to giving the total budget, where possible, budgets for different areas should be shown. If different from the Project Sponsor, the name of the person with overall authority for the budget should also be shown.

USING CHARTS TO HELP YOU PLAN

Once all the tasks required for the project have been listed, you now have an outline of your project plan. The next stage is to put them into a logical order. It may be that some of them can be performed at the same time, where as some tasks are dependent on the completion of others. For example, if you were giving a presentation, it would be impossible to prepare your visual aids (called task B) until you had decided on what information you would include in your presentation (called task A).

Task A is called the predecessor of Task B
Task B is called the successor of TASK A

Until a task is complete none of the successors (sometimes called dependents) can begin and tasks can only begin when all their predecessors are complete.

The Project Manager is not solely responsible for establishing dependencies. This can be carried out with the help of other project team members

PROJECT OUTLINE

Sub-Projects Or Tasks

This is the first stage of detailed project planning. This stage begins to break down the overall project into smaller more manageable areas. In addition to breaking down the tasks, estimated times and budgets are shown. At this stage, you may even want to begin the process of allocating people to each task.

Below is one method of task analysis.

PROJECT TO BE MANAGED _____		
TASK NO	**TASK BREAKDOWN ACTIVITIES**	**DURATION**

In the boxes on the left, number each of the tasks. At this stage it is not important to put them in any sequence, it is just important to list all the tasks and the estimated durations.

RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNMENT MATRIX

PRODUCT LAUNCH FOR KERSEY - 2008

ACTIVITY	RESEARCH & DESIGN MANAGER	MARKETING MANAGER	MANAGING DIRECTOR	PERSONNEL MANAGER	TRAINING MANGER
1.0 MARKET RESEARCH					
1.01 Competitive research		√			
1.02 Competitor activity report		√			
2.00 DESIGN					
2.01 Design product	√				
2.02 Design approval			√		
STAFF EXHIBITION					
3.01 Recruitment				√	
A Write job Descriptions				√	
B Person Specifications					
C Advertise				√	
D Issue applications				√	
E Sift applications				√	
F Interview				√	
G Select				√	
H Inform				√	
3.02 Training					√
4.00 PACKAGING					
4.01 Design	√				
4.02 Design approval	√				

A TYPICAL EXHIBITION BUDGET

Exhibition Hall Expenses

- Space costs
- Shell scheme
- Stand fittings
- Services: electricity, water
- Telephone and fax: install and calls
- Cleaning
- Insurance
- Furniture and carpet hire

Exhibit Material

- Professional fees: designer, copywriter, editor
- Exhibit material (products): bought-in, in-house
- Exhibit material (brochures): printing, display racks
- Stationary
- Storage: pre-exhibition, post-exhibition
- Assembly
- Disposal
- Transport

Marketing

- Advertising: press, direct mail, catalogue, poster
- Tickets
- Press releases
- Photographer
- Photocopying
- Flowers
- Entertaining: fridge, food, drink
- Special events: juggler, conjurer, dancers, competition prizes

Staff Costs

- o Salary costs
- o Hotels
- o Subsistence
- o Travel and car parking
- o Transport: car, van hire
- o Overtime
- o Hiring Temporary staff – to work on stand or as replacements at work
- o Training: trainer's fees, videos
- o Uniforms: clothing allowance
- o Security

CASH FLOW PROFILE

Product Launch for Kersey – April 2008

PERIOD (WEEK) PAYMENTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
People	400	400	400	500	500	500	500	450	450	500
Machinery	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Materials	250	250	250	300	500	250	600	300	500	250
Premises	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Other expenses	100	200	50	650	700	200	600	200	300	100
Total weekly payments	1250	1350	1200	1850	2200	1450	2200	1450	1750	1350
Cumulative weekly payments	1250	2600	3800	5650	7850	9300	11500	12950	14700	16050

MAJOR MILESTONES

PRODUCT LAUNCH FOR KERSEY - APRIL 2008

MAJOR MILESTONE	RESPONSIBILITIES	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Project Start	J Cropper	01/04/2008		
New copy and layout	K Kapour	30/04/2008		
Distribution of sales material	D Shine		15/05/2008	
Customer focus review	S Johnson		28/05/2008	
Pilot launch - 3 stores	L Wilson			06/06/2008

ACTIVITY LIST

Project Title - Product Launch For Kersey – April 2008
Project Manager – Joanne Cropper

	TASK TO BE COMPLETED	RESPONSIBILITY		BUDGET		SCHEDULE			
		Name	Department	Plan	Actual	Start		Finish	
				£	£	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
1.	Competitive research	P Riggs	Marketing	800	750	01/04/2008	03/04/2008	10/04/2008	12/04/2008
2.	Competitive Activity Report	P Riggs	Marketing	200	150	11/04/2008	13/04/2008	13/04/2008	13/04/2081
3.	Design of copy and layout	K Kapour	Advertising	2500	3200	05/04/2008	05/04/2008	25/04/2008	24/04/2008
4.	Approval of copy and layout	S Johnson	Executive Committee	0	0	25/04/2008	24/04/2008	30/04/2008	02/05/2008
5.	Prepare sales material	M Fuller	Design Inc.	500	6300	30/04/2008	06/05/2008	10/05/2008	21/05/2008
6.	Print and distribute sales information	D Shine	Sales	500	4900	15/05/2008	20/05/2008	20/05/2008	24/05/2008

PROJECT BUDGET COST MATRIX

Product Launch for Kersey – April 2008

ACTIVITY	PEOPLE	MACHINERY	MATERIALS	PREMISES	OTHER EXPENSES	TOTAL
MARKET RESEARCH 1.01 Competitive research 1.02 Competitor activity report						
DESIGN 2.01 Design product Design approval						
STAFF EXHIBITION 3.01 Recruitment 3.02 Training 3.03 Uniforms						
PACKAGING 4.01 Design 4.02 Design approval						
    TOTAL COST						

PROJECT STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS MATRIX

STAKEHOLDER	STAKEHOLDER NEEDS	MEASURE

PROJECT STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS MATRIX

The aim of the Project Stakeholder Analysis Matrix is to allow you to analyse your Stakeholders in a priority order to enable you to:

- o Identify your key Stakeholders

- o Identify what their needs are from the project

- o Assist you in defining the end results required from the Stakeholders

Once you have completed the Matrix it is a good idea to then re-look at it and prioritised it order of the following:

- o Those Stakeholders for whom you must meet all their needs

- o Those Stakeholders for whom you must meet some of their needs

- o Those Stakeholders for whom you must co-operate

DEPENDENCY TABLES

The following is an example of a table drawn up for preparing a staff dinner party.

TASK	DESCRIPTION	PREDECESSORS (DEPENDENCIES)
1.	Contact the staff involved	-
2.	Prepare tables and lay out the room	1,3
3.	Plan the menu	1
4.	Arrange transport for staff to and from the dinner	1
5.	Buy the necessary food	3
6.	Prepare the food	1,3,5
7.	Serve the food	1,2,3,4,5,6
8.	Clear and clean the room after use	1,2,3,4,5,6,7

You can see from this table that task 2 cannot be completed until its predecessor 3 has been completed. Task 2 should be placed anywhere between tasks 4 and 6.

A revised table would look like this:

TASK	DESCRIPTION	PREDECESSORS (DEPENDENCIES)
1.	Contact the staff involved	-
2.	Plan the menu	1
3.	Arrange transport for staff to and from the dinner	1
4.	Buy the necessary food	2
5.	Prepare tables and lay out the room	1,2
6.	Prepare the food	1,2,4
7.	Serve the food	1,2,3,4,5,6
8.	Clear and clean the room after use	1,2,3,4,5,6,7

This is a very simple form of task breakdown and for more complex projects you may need more time and input from many different team members. However, this stage is vital for the future planning of your project.

RISK REGISTER

DESCRIPTION OF THE RISK	LIKELYHOOD OF RISK HAPPENING (High/Medium/Low)	IMPACT OF RISK ON THE OVERALL PROJECT (High/Medium/Low	ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE THE RISK

CRITICAL PATH ANALYSIS

A Critical Path Analysis is a way of identifying those tasks which must be completed on time if the whole project is to be completed on time.

Tasks which are critical have no slack.

This means if they are late, the whole project will be late. Alternatively, if you complete a critical task early, it means that other critical tasks may be completed early; reducing the overall time needed to complete the project.

Non-critical tasks are those which have 'slack' or 'slippage'. They can 'slip' a little without effecting the project completion. Completing non-critical tasks early will not speed up the project.

A NETWORK BOX
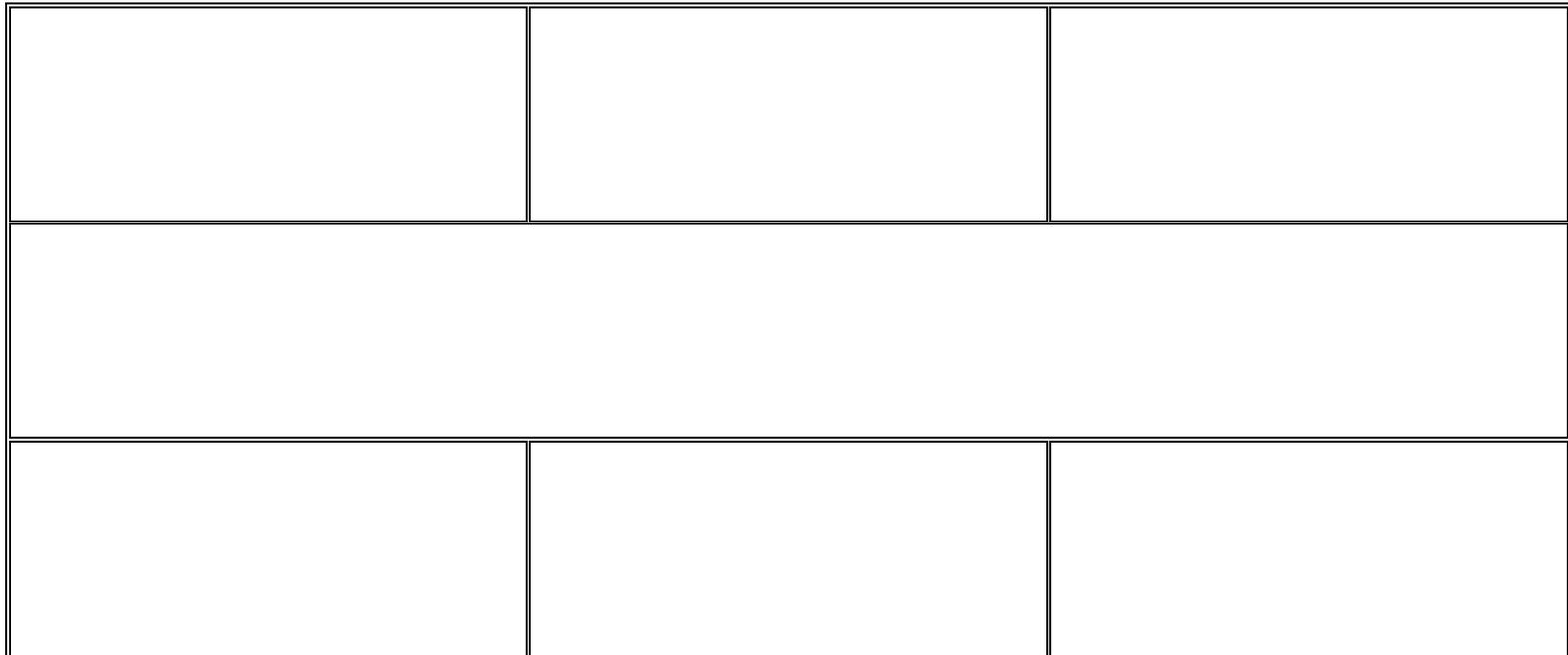
GANTT CHARTS

Drawing up a Gantt Chart is an effective way of visually representing info showing the amount of time in which particular tasks or activities completed and how they relate to one another. A Gantt Chart is a type where the amount of time is always shown on the horizontal axis and the activities are shown on the vertical axis.

Product Launch for Kersey – April 2008

DATES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
ACTIVITIES											
1. Research	▓	▓	▓	▓							
2. Design			▓	▓	▓	▓					
3. Layout					▓	▓	▓	▓	▓		
4. Packaging											▓
5. Briefing				▓	▓	▓	▓				
6. Launch											

In addition to showing when the project will start and finish, the Gantt shows how each task relates to another. In the example above, you can s packaging cannot be completed until the layout, design and research completed (predecessors or dependent tasks).However, the briefing can anytime during the project.

Benefits of Using a Gantt Chart

The main benefits are:

- o Quick and visual way of seeing the overall timescale of the project/t
- o The start and finish time is shown for every task
- o You can quickly recognise which tasks are dependent on others be completed and which tasks can be carried out at the same time
- o If any delays occur, the knock on effect on other tasks can be ident immediately
- o It is a clear way of communicating difficult information

Milestones

Within your Gantt Chart you may want to plot your milestones. Again, at a glance, you will be able to see exactly what stage your project should be at. Successfully achieving milestones demonstrates that the project is on schedule.

PERT CHART

A PERT Chart can be used to identify and track critical tasks. PERT is an acronym for Programme Evaluation and Review Technique. One way of completing a PERT Chart is to start with the very last task of the project. From this work backwards to its predecessors, from each predecessor work backwards for each of their predecessors. This then gives you an outline of the critical path of your project.

On a simple project this is very straightforward, however, on major projects with large numbers of tasks this can be time consuming and complex. However, most Project Management computer packages are able to produce this information very quickly.

MONITORING AND CONTROL

Project Control Options

1. Reconsider the logic behind the relationships of activities

2. Split the activities in two or more parallel activities.

3. 'Fast Track' certain activities by splitting two or more activities and creating additional parallel paths.

4. Request a reduction in the duration of an activity(ies) which will almost inevitably involve increased costs.

5. Increase the resource level on an activity.

6. Increase the project priority relative to other projects.

7. Allow the project to overrun/not meet requirements. *Is this a real option?*

MANAGING PEOPLE

Project management is about people. Effective project systems are only part of the story – good human relations systems are the other part. If there are good interpersonal skills throughout a project there will be a reasonable project performance. If, however, this breaks down, no matter how good the technical systems are, the project may not be successful.

Technical problems are generally capable of being solved whatever their nature. People problems are much more difficult, and sometimes impossible.

The Project Manager

The Project Manager should have the overall responsibility for the project. They must have the expertise to plan, monitor and control all its elements. They need to:

- Define and achieve tasks
- Build up and co-ordinate their team
- Develop and satisfy the individual members

Project managers must be:

- Intelligent
- Proactive
- Self-assured
- A helicopter communicator and thinker
- Persuasive
- At ease making decisions
- Good time managers
- Enthusiastic
- Capable of communicating, motivating and delegating

These are not scientific or technical skills; they are skills which any good manager will recognise. They comprise of good management practice and it is how well they are brought together in the project situation which determines how good the project manager is.

The Project Team

The temporary nature of a project group means that the team must quickly learn how to work together, there is no time for interpersonal relationships to develop into a static state, as is the case in operational management. Successful projects are executed by good teams, not a group of individuals.

Unfortunately, the members of a project team are often not selected by the Project Manager but by the client or sponsor. There is no-one ideal for a project team – successful teams are as diverse as the projects they work on, but there are key players and attributes which are common to teams with successful outcomes.

The following process will help bring together a suitable and satisfactory team:

- o List the main areas of activity which the project requires
- o List all possible team members who could undertake the task (taking note of their preferred working styles and personal characteristics)
- o Rank them in terms of expertise, acceptability to client/sponsor and track record in priority areas
- o Check their availability for the project duration
- o Draw up a preferred list of team members
- o Identify their potential for interpersonal relationships
- o Discuss with each candidate their willingness to take part
- o Bring the team together at the outset (the planning stage)

This last point is particularly important. It takes time for any group to develop into an effective team and so the earlier they can start working together the better. Once the team has reached full effectiveness, it is fairly resistant to minor factors (particularly external ones) affecting it.

The Project Manager must also determine if there will be any training needs. It is extremely unlikely that all team members will be totally competent in all the project's requirements. Drawing up a skills matrix can be a useful tool for the Project Manager to decide how to manage the team and what outcomes are to be expected; it can also be a useful "getting to know you" exercise for the team itself, enabling them to understand and value each other's contributions.

Stages Of Teambuilding - Group Dynamics
(*Tuckman And Jensen - 1977*)

Before a group becomes effective and high performing, they must first go through various stages.

While there may be plenty of energy right at the start as a team is forming, it is unlikely that this will be sustained. The team will have to examine internal differences and assumptions (at some stage) before it can truly weld together. This process is called storming and is not comfortable and involves risks, but it is a necessary way of hammering out self-determined 'norms' of behaviour. The resulting clarification of purpose and cohesion among team members produces higher performance than when it was a 'working group' i.e. when it just 'forms'. This process is known as the 'performing' stage. Finally, of course, teams often disband once the tasks have been accomplished, and this phase is also characterised by a distinctive processes known as adjourning or mourning.

The stages or processes, along with actions to be adopted by the team leader throughout are set out below.

Forming

The team leader's role at this stage is crucial. He or she should focus on helping the team members to get to know each other and putting everyone at their ease. Team members' fears, confusions and uncertainties should be minimised as early as possible. Individuals will test the boundaries in relationships and behaviours. The best way to do this is to clarify the goals, roles, and responsibilities and procedures which are of relevance to the team's operations.

Storming

The team leader can help the team successfully to resolve the issues which emerge at this stage by listening to problems, providing feedback which acknowledges all points of view, and encouraging the team to work towards shared goals. If the team leader adopts an authoritarian stance and attempts to suppress conflict, it will only fester and continue to disrupt the team processes. Indeed a team may at this point reject the conventional leader and determine an alternative way of regulating its affairs. The team may even split or break into sub-groups. The storming phase is really an opportunity to clear the air and, if carefully managed, can help the team to become more cohesive.

Norming

At this stage the team leader needs to ensure that the established norms are conducted to team effectiveness. Time given to a new and consensually driven set of 'rules' by which the team wants to operate will reap rich dividends later. The team building skills here are concerned with facilitating team cohesion and ensuring each member's identification with the teams purpose and values.

Performing

At this stage the team is co-operative and working efficiently to achieve its goals. The team leader needs to evaluate team effectiveness by looking at individual and team efforts, satisfactions and successes. The team is concerned with productivity, efficiency and achieving their full potential. It is important to give credit where credit is due. However, if you wish the group to remain harmonious and cohesive it is better to reward the team and not individual team members. Picking out one member from the rest of the team for praise can foster disruption, competitiveness and hostility, which is why performance related pay systems can backfire. This would be destructive to team work and team spirit so it may be important to evaluate the team's work as a team effort. Teambuilding skills include appraisal, evaluation, debriefing and giving feedback.

Adjourning or mourning

It is important for the team leader once again to be aware of the uncertainties facing members as they move away to new challenges. They may need feedback on how well they have done, what they have learned and how they are likely to cope with new challenges. The team leader may need to minimise the stress that is associated with changes and transitions. The team member may be feeling some sadness if their experience within the team was particularly satisfying. If appropriate, the team leader may encourage the team members to maintain links with each other and develop their relations through new activities and projects.

Criteria for Effective Teams

An effective team:

1.   Shares clear objectives and agreed goals:

   o Clarifies roles
   o Agrees on what differences are tolerable
   o Discusses values and a general consensus on the underlying philosophy of the team is reached

2.   Has a climate of support and trust:

   o People display the relationship building skills of conveying respect, genuineness and empathy
   o Feelings are recognised and dealt with
   o Strengths are built upon
   o People give and ask for support
   o People spend time together

3.   Has open lines of communication:

   o Positive and negative feedback is given
   o Each person's contribution is recognised
   o People are skilled at sending and receiving messages in face to face communication
   o People talk to one another about issues as well as vertically in the organisation
   o Discussions about work are the same inside and outside the organisation
   o People are open to being influenced

4.   Recognises that conflict is inevitable and can be constructive:

   o Issues are dealt with immediately and openly
   o People are assertive
   o People are encouraged to contribute ideas
   o Problems are seen as normal and dealt with constructively
   o Unhelpful competition is minimised
   o People are not blamed, discussions are problem-centred
   o People use "I" and not "you" statements

5. Has clear procedures:

    o For making decisions
    o For delegating responsibility
    o For meetings

6. Has leadership appropriate to its membership:

    o The leader models the philosophy of the team
    o The leader utilises the strengths of all its members

7. Reviews it progress regularly:

    o Reassesses its objectives
    o Evaluates the processes the team is using
    o Does not spend time dissecting the past

8. Is concerned with the personal and career development of its members

    o Regular reviews are carried out with each team member
    o The leader looks for opportunities to develop each member
    o Members look for the opportunities to develop other members
    o Members look for opportunities to develop their leader

9. Relates positively to other groups

**AN EFFECTIVE TEAM ACHIEVES ITS
OBJECTIVES AND STAYS TOGETHER**

MANAGING MEETINGS

To Fail To Prepare Is To Prepare To Fail

Time (or lack of it) is one of the biggest problems in the workplace today. Meetings are an integral part of the working week or month yet too much time can be spent in unproductive gatherings.

In order that meetings are effective it is essential to dedicate sufficient time before the event to adequate preparation. Several factors need to be considered before holding a meeting:

1.   Define Your Objective(s)

o   Why are you holding the meeting?

o   What is the desired outcome?

o   Decide what actions, agreed by the group, will satisfy your objective(s).

o   Try to make your objective(s) as concrete as possible.

   Remember they should be:

   Specific
   Measurable
   Agreed
   Realistic
   Time bound

2. Draw Up The Agenda

Consider what contribution each item on the agenda will give towards achieving the objective(s). If there is no contribution, delete the item or cover it briefly at the beginning of the meeting.

The agenda should be brief.

Ensure that it is logical and flows from one item to the next. **THINK!** – Before the attendees will understand this item, what must have already been covered?

Build up progressively towards the end of the meeting.

Try not to end with 'Any Other Business'. This takes far too much time and the meetings need to be kept as brief as possible.

3. Who Needs To Be There

Pay particular attention to who needs to be present. Time is valuable. Only include people for whom the meeting is relevant.

4. Timing

Pay attention to:

Best day/time of the week. Friday afternoon is not always the best time to hold a productive meeting as people are often tired and may find it difficult to pay attention.

Regularity – Is it a meeting that needs to be held once a week, month or quarter? Don't hold unnecessary meetings just for the sake of it.

Special Meetings – To hold a meeting too often can lessen the impact of it.

5. Location

Is 'On-Site' necessarily the best location?

Think about facilities and transport issues.

Will there be any additional costs?

6.   The Room

Consider:

- o Lighting
- o Ventilation
- o Heating
- o Sound proofing
- o Table layout
- o Seating plans
- o Equipment e.g. overhead projector, flipchart, television, video etc.

7.   Organisation

- o Arrange for breaks and refreshment for longer meetings.

- o Use of telephones, relay of messages (if appropriate during breaks).

- o Decide who will take the minutes.

8.   Prepare And Rehearse

- o Prepare the whole meeting.

- o Prepare visual aids.

- o Prepare the timings.

- o **REHEARSE**

Running the Meeting

- Control and time management are the keys to success,

- Decide who will take the minutes if this has not been agreed already.

- Open the meeting by telling the attendees what the objective(s) are,

- Run through the agenda briefly and state how each item contributes towards the objective(s)
- Go through each item on the agenda in the correct order.

- Summarise each item as necessary.

- Involve everyone. – Use participation and motivation. Attendees may have to be 'sold' an idea if they are to feel motivated to carry through a course of action or change an opinion.

- After each action is agreed –

    - Give encouragement

    - Spell out what action has been agreed and what feedback, by when,   is   necessary

    - Move on quickly

- At the close of the meeting –

    - Summarise each topic

    - State what action has been agreed and what feedback, by when, is necessary

    - Set a date for the next meeting (if appropriate)