

Summary: 10 Steps to Project Success

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<i>Step</i>	<i>Results of Successful Performance</i>
1. Define the project concept, then get support and approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of conversations, brainstorming sessions, and other formal or informal discussions about the project concept with your supervisor and key people whom you hope will provide project support • An approved <i>Project Charter</i>
2. Get your team together and start the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of conversations, brainstorming sessions, and other formal/informal discussions about the project concept with all stakeholders • <i>Commitments from stakeholders</i> to play particular roles on the project team throughout or at specific times in the project. • <i>Written documentation</i> that captures roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders • A <i>Kickoff Meeting</i> that orients all project team members to their roles and responsibilities and gets the project started (often supported by a <i>Responsibility/Accountability Matrix</i>)
3. Figure out exactly what the finished work products will be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of conversations, brainstorming sessions, and other formal/informal discussions about specific project deliverables • A <i>Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)</i> in rough form as created by a brainstorming group (i.e., a bunch of yellow stickies spread out all over a wall, a collection of flip chart pages scribbled with items, a rough “mind map,” etc.) • A polished WBS which clearly lists 1) all interim deliverables that the end user will not see (such as scripts, flow charts, outlines, etc.) and 2) all finished deliverables that will be turned over to the user when the project is completed. • A <i>Project Scope Statement</i> that expands the Project Charter to include the WBS and other items identified by the team in brainstorming sessions • <i>Approval of the Project Scope Statement and WBS</i> by the sponsor and appropriate stakeholders.
4. Figure out what you need to do to complete the work products. (Identify tasks and phases.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list or graphical collection of <i>all project tasks</i> that must be completed to create project deliverables. • A <i>network diagram</i> showing the <i>sequence and flow</i> of all project tasks, including opportunities for stakeholders to review and approve deliverables as they evolve • Descriptions or illustrations of project phases
5. Estimate time, effort, and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed estimate of the <i>duration, effort, and resources required</i> to complete each project task • A summary of duration, effort, and resources required for the entire project
6. Build a schedule.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more <i>overview schedules</i> showing the “big picture” of the project (i.e., showing all activities, phases, and major milestones). (Gantt, network diagram, summary table/calendar, etc.) • One or more <i>detailed schedules</i> that expand or “zoom in” on particular parts of the overview schedule. (E.g., One particular project phase w/ detailed subtasks/tasks or one particular set of project players. (i.e., plumbers, computer programmers, senior executives w/approval points.) • A <i>strategy to revisit</i> the schedule periodically in order to keep it up to date.
7. Estimate the costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An <i>estimate of project costs</i>, including the costs of labor, materials, supplies, and any other costs tracked by your organization, such as various overhead costs, etc. • A description of all <i>assumptions made</i> in the cost estimate
8. Keep the project moving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic <i>progress checks</i> of each dimension of the project as spelled out in the project artifacts above (Charter, Effort/Duration table, Schedule, Cost Estimate, etc.) • <i>Project manager inspection</i> and awareness of overall progress toward completion • <i>Project manager interventions</i> to correct problems, remove obstacles, and keep the project moving as planned
9. Handle scope changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adjustments to the project plan to deal with additions, reductions or modifications</i> to the deliverables or work process • <i>Formal documentation</i> of each scope change • <i>Formal approval</i> of each scope change
10. Close out phases, close out the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor <i>sign-off and approval of incrementally-evolving project deliverables and phases</i> as they are completed • Sponsor <i>sign-off and approval of all finished project deliverables</i> and the overall completed project • <i>Completion of typical project-specific follow-up activities</i> (Project Archive, Post Mortem, Lessons Learned, hand-off/training, performance evaluations, etc.)