

# Project management

*Designing, conducting, distributing roles: everything you need to know about project management.*



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# From designing to project realisation

## What is project management?

Project management is an approach to organise the proper conduct of a project from A to Z. It involves three imperatives:

- **Quality:** objectives achieved in the most satisfactory way
- **Costs:** execution within the budget allocated at the beginning
- **Deadlines:** achievement of intermediate objectives within a given time-limit.

It is all about **balance**!

## What is a project?

A project is a solution to **meet a need**. It is carried out in a limited time and has a unique result. Although you are prepared in the most efficient way to achieve this objective, it is still very difficult to anticipate everything. A project always involves a certain amount of unforeseen events.

# The members of a project team and their missions

## The client

The faculty tutor coaches and assists the team until the project is completed. He helps the team ask themselves the right questions but does not provide solutions or solve the problem for them.

## The faculty tutor

Le tuteur enseignant guide et accompagne l'équipe jusqu'à la réalisation du projet. Il l'aide à se poser les bonnes questions mais ne donne pas de solutions ni résout le problème à la place de l'équipe de projet.

## The project manager

The project manager, or contracting authority, must enforce the choices that collectively have been set up. He is responsible for the team coordination and execution of the project.

## The team: flat hierarchy and collective intelligence

Leadership is based on the **distribution of roles**, according to the skills that are needed. Everyone makes their know-how, knowledge, skills and network available for the team.

# Démarches d'un projet – Les 4 étapes

1. **Identifying:** what is the final objective? How to achieve it? Who is involved?
2. **Organising:** what tasks need to be done? Who is doing them? What are the deadlines?
3. **Carrying out** these tasks
4. **Closing:** step back and analyse your experience

## The roadmap

The roadmap is a concise document that includes the following elements:

- The name of the project and of the client
- The links between the objectives of the project team and those of the client
- The interests of the project for the team and for the client

- The deadline
- A brief description of the project deliverables
- A brief description of the task distribution among the team members
- The budget and the resources available for the project team
- The signatures of the team, the faculty tutor and the client

### **Specifying the objectives: a SMART approach**

The objectives must be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed. Make sure they are simple, clear and precise. How to define a project?

Comment définir un projet ?

- By brainstorming
- By explicitly defining the objectives and the content of the project
- By specifying the research content

### **Overseeing the actions**

Decisions are taken by the **project manager**, who is a mediator informing the client about the progress of the project, and by the **Steering Committee**, appointed within the company.

### **Report**

All the talking points, the decisions taken, the deadlines set and the overall progress of the project are listed in meeting reports.

## **Splitting and planning the project**

*“How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.”*

The outcome of a large project begins with the execution of its sub-components. What needs to be done to achieve the objectives? How long will it take?

### **Prepare a project breakdown**

Define a **WBS** (Work breakdown structure), which is the same as **dividing complex tasks into simpler tasks**, which in turn are divided into sub-tasks.

How to achieve your goal?

- Split the tasks from the most general to the most specific
- Plan: give each task a deadline
- Divide up the tasks between you
- Check the work by going from the most specific tasks to the most general ones

### **Assess the tasks' duration and the resources required**

How long should I spend on a task? For what budget? The task duration will set the framework for the execution of the schedule (taking into account any unforeseen circumstances). Beware of the deadlines!

### **The Gantt chart**

The Gantt chart represents the project according to its phases, the tasks to be carried out and the activities they involve, as well as the resources available. Once the project is “divided” into several phases, it is necessary to

determine the best way for the tasks to be carried out according to **the length of each phase, the established chronology and the deadlines.**

## **Throughout the project**

### **Unforeseen events**

While working on the project, you should try to understand the difficulties you encounter (meeting deadlines or budget, delay in the delivery of equipment, etc.).

What if things do not go according to the schedule?

- Review the first parameters: deadlines, available resources, deliverables
- Reconsider the tasks and estimated deadlines: the project's structure and its breakdown, the initial assignment of tasks, the reorganisation of resources, and the key tasks
- Take advantage of the tutored aspect of the project: ask your tutor for advice and communicate with your client
- Analyse your situation closely in terms of resources, skills, etc.
- Look for suitable solutions for your project
- Be creative

### **Identify and manage the risks**

Every project is based on forecasts according to the team's performance, but risks always subsist. Consider making a risk inventory in order to be prepared.

### **Prepare a plan B**

1. **Identify and prioritise** risks. They are either internal (resources, budget, planning) or external (competitors, new software updates, exit from a market, unavailability of the principal).
2. **Plan** possible actions to avoid or minimize risks. Anticipate possible problems and consider solutions to prevent them from happening.
3. **Prepare a plan B** for the project. Some risks cannot be anticipated: prepare the team for a potential problem to avoid any element of surprise. Prioritise your actions according to their importance by focusing on communication, team meetings and the tasks to be carried out.

## **The main steps of a project**

### **Launching a project**

- Prepare for the launch of the project
- Answer questions related to teamwork, project management and coaching
- Define and communicate rules of behaviour within the team

### **Kick-off meeting**

The kick-off meeting has a symbolic value, as it brings the team together and sets the direction for them to follow. Everyone must be there to confirm their commitment.

What are the talking points?

- Introducing the team members and their function
- Describing the project and its content
- The project manager talks about the objectives and what is at stake

## **Rules of behaviour**

Be **diligent and pragmatic** in your work: others depend on you. Only constructive criticism is allowed: you should respect one another. Besides, there are no taboos related to the team's functioning and nothing is kept confidential within the team. **Communication** creates an appropriate environment and avoids conflicts. The aim is to encourage discussion by considering ways to carry out your tasks.

### **“Collegiality, the foundation of collective efficiency!”**

- Ensure that all your peers are at the heart of the project
- Encourage them to participate
- Publicly recognise and value individual contributions
- Give each other opportunities to get to know one another
- Work and make people work together

Consider **encouraging the exchange** of ideas among team members. The more a sense of belonging develops, the better the project will be carried out. Share information and discuss the progress of the project among yourselves.

## **Closure and assessment of the project**

### **Who assesses the project?**

You evaluate yourselves by **reviewing** your experience: what if it were to be done again? Have all the hypotheses been tested? Your tutor and client also assess your work.

### **What is being judged?**

- What you have learned
- The deliverables
- The schedule
- The costs (if any)
- The project management

### **Filing documents**

Be careful to keep the documents and to not throw anything away.