

PROJECT DEFINITION CHECKLIST

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PROJECT PURPOSE	DUE DATE
Articulate the need for the project.	
Identify the root problem the project will solve.	
Align the project's purpose with the business's goals.	
Work with the sponsor to confirm the purpose.	
PROJECT GOAL	DUE DATE
Articulate what the project will achieve upon completion.	
Write a clear, short goal statement (elevator pitch).	
BENEFITS	DUE DATE
List the opportunities you gain by solving this root problem.	
Outline the ways in which the project will benefit the business.	
Collaborate with the sponsor to define and agree on the benefits.	
Conduct a cost-benefit analysis.	
OBJECTIVES	DUE DATE
Determine how you will achieve the project's goal.	
Identify the necessary time, budget, quality, and stakeholder requirements.	
Use clear goals (like SMART) to develop metrics and evaluation criteria for each objective. Make sure that the objectives are reasonable given the constraints.	
Keep the objectives on a high level to avoid getting bogged down in the details.	
SCOPE	DUE DATE
Describe the work necessary to accomplish the objectives.	
Determine the exclusions (i.e., that which is not necessary) with stakeholders.	
Determine the primary deliverables that the project will produce.	
With the stakeholders, sponsor, or client, rank the following in order of importance: time, budget, quality, stakeholder satisfaction, and scope.	
Confirm this ranking with clients/stakeholders.	
Use example scenarios to make sure all stakeholders understand that the objective prioritization is subject to change.	

DEPENDENCIES AND CONSTRAINTS		DUE DATE
	Identify the constraints (i.e., the factors that will limit your ability to accomplish tasks throughout the project). Consider all the external standards, regulations, policies, procedures, conditions, and deadlines that can impact the project.	
	Identify the dependencies (i.e., the factors on which the project depends in order to progress). Include the project's dependence on internal factors (e.g., cross-team interdependence) and external ones (e.g., the availability of resources).	
RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS		DUE DATE
	Perform a realistic assessment of the uncertainties.	
	Add contingencies for unexpected costs, time delays, resource issues, etc.	
	Discuss potential risks and assumptions with the stakeholders and sponsor.	
	Create a risk management plan.	
	Define any unclear boundaries concerning project assumptions.	
STAKEHOLDERS AND SPONSOR		DUE DATE
	List all stakeholders who have a connection to the project.	
	Prioritize stakeholders by labeling each as primary, secondary, tertiary, etc.	
	Review the priorities of each stakeholder. Meet with each stakeholder to begin building individual relationships.	
	Develop an engagement plan for each stakeholder/stakeholder group.	
	Determine governance between stakeholders if necessary.	
	Meet with the sponsor to define roles and expectations.	
	Negotiate the terms with stakeholders.	
	Make sure that the stakeholders and sponsor sign off on the agreed-upon terms.	
DECISIONS / APPROVAL		DUE DATE
	Perform a final review of the project definition to catch any oversights.	
	Communicate your final decisions to employees and stakeholders.	
	Collect input from the project team before requesting final approval.	
	Before signing off, confirm that there is a total consensus among all stakeholders.	

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