



## **Managing Successful Projects**

### Details of course content

#### ***Course Objectives***

Today, the voluntary sector expects and is expected to deliver high quality services that match the standard of those provided by the statutory and commercial sectors. It is vital that people who work in the sector have the appropriate skills to meet this challenge.

This two-part course is designed to enable project managers in the community and voluntary sectors to work in a more efficient and more effective way. It is tailored to the requirements of the voluntary sector and is designed to be easy to understand, and to concentrate on the practicalities.

Each one day module is self-contained and can be taken individually or as a pair. Together they offer a comprehensive introduction to the processes and techniques of project management.

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# **Course Content**

## **Part One**

The day begins with an introduction to the 'golden rules' of project management, some thoughts about which tools to use, and an introduction to the "six stage model" of a project. This model forms the framework for the rest of the day.

### **Stage 1 – DEFINE**

This part follows a project from the first idea through to the creation of the project brief, a vital document for any project.

We will discuss the definition of a project including the following -

- Developing Project Objectives
- Who are stakeholders and how to manage them
- What is a good project team?
- Do you need a feasibility study?
- How to define and handle opportunities and threats
- Costs and benefits as they apply in the voluntary sector
- Risks and contingency planning
- Strategies for dealing with risk
- Contingency planning
- Producing the Project Brief

### **Stage 2 – PLAN**

Having decided what the project is to achieve, the next stage is to being the planning process.

- Where do I start?
- How to define deliverables
- Identifying the key steps
- How to develop the project plan
- Estimating costs, revenues and intangible benefits
- An overview of scheduling and critical path analysis
- Overview of software as a planning/control tool

### **Stage 3 - TEAM BUILDING**

Projects are about people. In this part we look at the qualities needed in a good project manager. How do you put a team together, keep it together and get it working together?

We finish this section by spending some time talking about dealing with senior management.

### **Stage 4 – CONTROL**

Now that we've started the project, we have to control it. In this section we discuss what to do and how to do it.

- Monitoring as control
- What do you monitor against?
- Paperwork
- Project status reports
- SOFT report
- Tracking progress
- Project meetings schedule

- Successful project meetings
- Changes

## **Stage 5 – COMMUNICATIONS**

A really important part of project management is communication, and we talk about it throughout the day. This section covers some specific points about the best way to communicate to all the stakeholders in a project.

## **Stage 6 – REVIEW**

As the project goes through its life, it's important to review the plan against reality. This section covers the best way to do this.

- Reviewing the plan
- Problems
- Problem solving in seven easy steps
- Changes

## **HANDOVER & EXIT**

Finally, a much neglected phase of project management – the end of the project. Here we talk about finishing the job, tying up all the loose ends, learning from the experience and moving on.

## **WHAT CAN GO WRONG**

To finish the day, a look at the more 'popular' ways that projects fail, and how to avoid them

# **Part Two**

This day concentrates on two main areas – financial appraisal of a project, and scheduling.

## **Project Appraisal**

The issues around cost/benefit analysis may be different in the commercial and voluntary sectors, but the principles are the same. Here we illustrate the concepts of discounted cash flow, and how to use it to produce a quantitative analysis of the financial impact a project will have on your organisation.

- Costs and benefits
- Financial appraisal
- Discounted Cash Flow made easy (!)
- Putting in a bid

## **Scheduling**

You've got all your tasks worked out, but how to you turn a "to-do list" into a project plan?

- Definitions
- Scheduling – first pass
- Linking tasks
- Overlapping tasks
- Start and finish dates
- Logic diagrams

## ***Critical Path Analysis***

Any project has one part of it that is critical to the timescale – the critical path. It's the tasks on the critical path that you must monitor closely. In this section we discuss what it is, and how to find it.

- Finding the critical path
- Resources
- Levelling

## ***Software Overview***

What software can do for you and what it can't - a review of software products for project management.

## ***Working with Large Projects***

In theory, the principles of project management can be applied to any size of project. In practice, large projects have their own special issues. In this section we look at these and how to cope with them

- Opportunities and Threats
- Risk and Contingency planning
- Project team
- Communications
- Problems and project issues
- Controlling change
- Managing multi-site projects

## ***Course handbook***

Delegates receive a comprehensive manual which extends the course material, and a CD with a selection of Word, Excel and Powerpoint templates which can be modified to suit their own organisations.