



Project Definition Document Preparation Guidelines

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1. PURPOSE

Instruction:

This section provides the purpose of the document.

Recommended text:

This Project Definition Document provides a brief overview of **<insert name of project>** to promote a shared understanding of it before a more detailed Plan, Schedule, and Budget is prepared.

2. PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY

Instruction:

This section describes the problem or opportunity the project seeks to address using factual information.

Examples of the types of factual information relevant to problems or opportunities are as follows:

- change in legislation requires action;
- current technology is outdated and not meeting needs; and
- service levels are low, resulting in frequent customer complaints.

3. PROJECT GOAL

Instruction:

This section provides a clear, concise statement of the project's purpose and intended results. The project goal statement should be brief (one sentence).

Examples:

- The project will reduce the waiting time for heart surgery by 50%.
- The project will improve customer satisfaction with government services.
- The project will reduce the cost of a program.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Instruction:

This section provides a list of what must be achieved in the project to realize the overall goal. The objectives can be considered as "subgoals."

Example:

The project goal of reducing traffic accidents will be achieved if the following three objectives are achieved:

- increase public awareness and knowledge of how to drive safely;
- pass new, stricter laws for speeding and seatbelt violations; and
- assign more police to enforce new, stricter laws.

5. PROJECT SCOPE

Instruction:

This section provides a high level list of the major activities the team will undertake and, if known, the major deliverables.

6. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Instruction:

This section provides a list of the people with the strongest interest in or influence over project work and results.

Examples:

- Decision-makers: People with authority and decision-making power over the project.
- Influencers: People with power to influence the project.
- End users: People who will use the end product of the project.

7. OUTCOMES/SUCCESS CRITERIA

Instruction:

This section provides statements about the impact the project must have on those outside the project to be considered successful. These statements should be consistent with the project goal and provide information on measurable project outcomes.

Examples:

- Reduced number of traffic accidents.
- Lower program costs.
- Increased levels of customer satisfaction.
- Improved literacy rates.

8. ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

Recommended text:

This section lists the assumptions and constraints of the project.

8.1 Assumptions

Recommended text:

This section lists the project's assumptions. Assumptions are factors outside the scope of the project that could affect its success and which the authors of this document believe to be true.

The assumptions for this project are as follows:

- **<Insert assumption 1>**
- **<Insert additional assumptions>**

Examples of assumptions:

- Another project will be completed on time.
- Appropriate resources will be available to work on the project.

8.2 Constraints

Recommended text:

This section lists the project's constraints. Constraints are factors that restrict the project team's options.

The constraints for this project are as follows:

- **<Insert constraint 1>**
- **<Insert additional constraints>**

Examples of constraints:

- Time or budget restrictions
- Required adherence to specific standards

9. RISKS

Instruction:

This section lists project risks. Risks are something that may or may not happen in the future that could have a negative impact on the project.

10. ESTIMATED COST

Instruction:

This section is optional. Delete this section or provide an initial estimate of what the project is expected to cost. Note that this estimate will be refined during the development of a more detailed Project Plan.

11. ESTIMATED DURATION

Instruction:

This section is optional. Delete this section or provide an initial estimate of the project duration. Note that this estimate will be refined during the development of a more detailed Project Plan.