

Document: Project Kickoff Meeting Agenda

Projects do not always go through an organized sequence of planning, approval, and execution. Sometimes before you know it, you can be executing a project when you discover that team members and stakeholders have different levels of understanding about what is going on and why. A Project Kickoff Meeting can help.

The Project Kickoff Meeting is a time to get all the team members, clients, and stakeholders together and formally set the stage for the start of the project. Like all formal meetings, there should be an agenda. You want to cover a number of specific things at this meeting:

- Introduce the people at the meeting.
- Recap the information in the Project Definition, including
 - The purpose of the project
 - Scope
 - Major deliverables
 - Risks
 - Assumptions
 - Estimated effort and budget
 - Deadline
- Discuss the important roles and responsibilities of the project team, clients, and stakeholders. Many, if not all, of the people who will work on the project should be in attendance. If there is confusion about the role of each person or organization, it should be discussed now.
- Go over the general approach and timeline of the project. This gives people a sense for how the project will unfold. In particular, you will want to ensure that people understand what they need to be doing in the short-term to support the project.
- Discuss and answer any outstanding questions. The purpose of the discussion is not to rehash the purpose of the project, but allows people to voice specific questions or concerns they have as the project begins.
- Confirm that the project is now underway. If it was not before, it should be starting immediately.

Other items to consider in the kickoff meeting include

Attendees. In general, the project team, client, and stakeholders should be in attendance. If this results in too many people for comfort, consider having only the major players attend. You can then meet with others in subsequent mini-kickoff meetings, or you can send the relevant meeting information to the people who could not be there.

Length. Although most project kickoff meetings can be conducted in an hour or two, others might require a day or two. The longer kickoff meetings are especially important if the project is very complex or controversial. In some cases, a long kickoff meeting may be useful as a way to gather initial requirements, although that would not be the primary purpose.

Preparation. You never have a second chance to make a good first impression. This is true with the kickoff meeting. You are using the meeting to help set expectations for the project. If the meeting is unorganized, chaotic, or a waste of time, the participants will probably carry those perceptions into the project as well. The project manager needs to make sure that they have prepared well for this meeting and that it goes smoothly. The project manager should also talk to the sponsor ahead of time and make sure you are both in agreement with how the meeting will be conducted.

Project Name
Kickoff Meeting
mm/dd/yy

- 1. Introduction of Meeting Participants**
- 2. Project Review**
 - **Purpose of the project**
 - **Scope**
 - **Major deliverables**
 - **Risks**
 - **Assumptions**
 - **Estimated effort, budget and duration**
- 3. Roles and Responsibilities**
- 4. Project Approach and Overall Timeline**
- 5. Questions**
- 6. Recap/Summary**