

Document: Project Definition

Project Name

Prepared By:
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Project Name

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Project Executive Summary

(Optional) The executive summary provides a summary of the Project Definition document. In many cases, this is a PowerPoint presentation. If it is, then a reference to the external document can be included here. This section contains high-level explanations of the project objectives, scope, assumptions, risks, costs, timeline, approach, and organization.

Project Overview

Describe the background and context for the project and why it is being undertaken. Speak to the business value of the work being performed. Put enough information here so that the rest of the sections in the Project Definition make sense.

Project Objectives

Objectives are statements that describe what this project will achieve and deliver. Objectives should be "SMART": Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound. To be specific and concrete, objectives should be deliverable based. The completion of an objective should be evident through the creation of one or more deliverables. If the statement is at a high level and does not imply the creation of a deliverable, it may be a goal instead. If the statement is too low level and describes features and functions, then it may be a requirement statement instead.

This project will meet the following objectives:

- Objective 1
- Objective 2
- Objective 3

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Project Scope

This section is where you clearly define the logical boundaries of your project. Scope statements are used to define what is within the boundaries of the project and what is outside those boundaries. Examples of areas that could be examined are data, processes, applications, or business areas. The following types of information can be helpful:

- The types of deliverables that are in scope and out of scope (business requirements, current state assessment)*
- The major life-cycle processes that are in scope and out of scope (analysis, design, testing)*
- The types of data that are in scope and out of scope (financial, sales, employee)*
- The data sources (or databases) that are in scope and out of scope (billing, general ledger, payroll)*
- The organizations that are in scope and out of scope (human resources, manufacturing, vendors)*
- The major functionality that is in scope and out of scope (decision support, data entry, management reporting)*

The scope of this project includes and excludes the following items:

In Scope:

-
-
-
-

Out of Scope:

-
-
-
-

Deliverables Produced:

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All projects have deliverables. In this section, describe the deliverables of the project. Provide enough explanation and detail that the reader will be able to understand what is being produced.

- Deliverable 1: Deliverable description
- Deliverable 2: Deliverable description
- Deliverable 3: Deliverable description

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Organizations Affected or Impacted:

Specify areas or groups affected by, or that may participate in, the project. This is meant to be comprehensive but high level. Individual names should not appear, but the organizations they represent are included here.

The impact of this project on other organizations needs to be determined to ensure that the right people and functional areas are involved and communication is directed appropriately.

Organization	How Are They Affected, or How Are They Participating?

Project Estimated Effort/Cost/Duration

The estimated effort hours and project costs may be depicted in many ways, including costs by team member, cost by deliverable, cost by milestone, or cost by category (internal labor, external labor, travel, training, supplies, etc.). Also include a chart showing the project start date, major milestones, and end date. The deliverables included in this milestone chart should all have been described in the scope section.

Estimated Cost:

Estimated Effort Hours:

Estimated Duration:

Milestone	Date Completed	Deliverable(s) Completed
Project Planning	mm/dd/yy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Project DefinitionWorkplan
Milestone 1	mm/dd/yy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliverable 1Deliverable 2

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Milestone 2	mm/dd/yy	• Deliverable 3
Milestone 3	mm/dd/yy	• Deliverable 4
Milestone 4	mm/dd/yy	• Deliverable 5
Project Conclusion	mm/dd/yy	

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Project Assumptions

Project assumptions are circumstances and events that need to occur for the project to be successful, but are outside the total control of the project team. They are listed as assumptions if there is a HIGH probability that they will in fact happen. The assumptions provide a historical perspective when evaluating project performance and determining justification for project-related decisions and direction.

In order to identify and estimate the required tasks and timing for the project, certain assumptions and premises need to be made. Based on the current knowledge today, the project assumptions are listed below. If an assumption is invalidated at a later date, then the activities and estimates in the project plan should be adjusted accordingly.

- Assumption 1
- Assumption 2
- Assumption 3, etc.

Project Risks

Project risks are circumstances or events that exist outside of the control of the project team that will have an adverse impact on the project if they occur. (In other words, whereas an issue is a current problem that must be dealt with, a risk is a potential future problem that has not yet occurred.) All projects contain some risks. Risks may not be able to be eliminated entirely, but can be anticipated and managed, thereby reducing the probability that they will occur.

Risks that have a high probability of occurring and have a high negative impact should be listed below. Also consider those risks that have a medium probability of occurring. For each risk listed, identify activities to perform to eliminate or mitigate the risk.

Project risks are characteristics, circumstances, or features of the project environment that may have an adverse effect on the project or the quality of its deliverables. Known risks identified with this project have been included below. A plan will be put into place to minimize or eliminate the impact of each risk to the project.

Risk Area	Level (H/M/L)	Risk Plan
1. Project risk 1		Risk plan activity 1 Risk plan activity 2, etc.
2. Project risk 2		
3. Project risk 3		

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Project Approach

This section is used to describe how the project will be structured and the important techniques that will be utilized. The project approach is intended to encourage the project manager to think about the project from the top-down instead of the traditional bottom-up. Including the approach in the Project Definition compels the project manager to both consider the dependencies of the project, and to incorporate the project management necessary to plan and manage the project.

Project Organization

It is important to understand who the major players are on the project. An organization chart works well. Otherwise list the major project roles and the actual people involved.

An appropriate project organization structure is essential to achieve success. The following list depicts the proposed organization:

Project Executive Sponsor:

Project Sponsor:

Project Director (Manager of the Project Manager):

Steering Committee Members:

Project Manager:

Client Project Manager:

Project Advisors:

Project Team Members:

Organization Chart:

Add a project organization chart, if available.

