



Cloudwards

Project Management 101

The Complete Guide to
Project Management
Fundamentals



course by Cloudwards

Project management is more than just creating and monitoring tasks

it's about maximizing business,

opportunities, managing and developing people, and creating maximum value for your customers and stakeholders. In this guide, we'll cover all of this and more to help you determine whether a career as a project manager is for you.

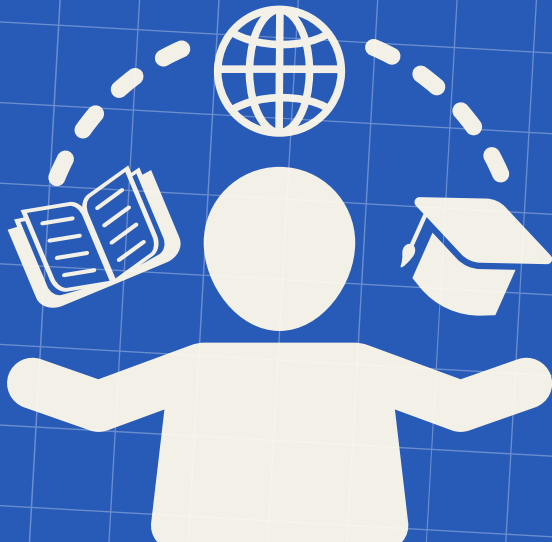
Project managers are responsible for completing projects and deliverables on time while working with strict budgets and often tight deadlines. If you're ready to become a project manager or wish to learn more about project management in general, our **Project Management 101** guide is for you.



This guide will help you understand what a **project** is and the role a project manager plays. You'll learn about the certifications that can help you land your dream role, the hard and soft skills that will help push you towards success, and who you'll need to be comfortable interacting with.

You'll learn all this information quickly and easily thanks to dedicated chapters that use an **easy-to-understand** style. Bullet points highlight key project management topics, and multiple images help you visualize information.

By the end of this comprehensive guide, you'll either be ready to enter the growing and often lucrative field of project management or want to run away with your tail between your legs upon learning the scope of the job and the sheer expectations of success that project managers face. We know you're eager to learn, **so let's jump in.**



What you'll learn:

- Learn the basics of project management and what it entails.
- Gain an understanding of the life cycle of a project and who's involved.
- Learn what a project manager does and which certifications are required.
- Understand stakeholders, clients and project management offices, as well as how all involved parties can make or break a project.

Benefits:

- By the end of this guide, you'll have a complete understanding of what a project is.
- You'll know which project management courses are best for aspiring project managers.
- We'll explain the key traits and skills to help you succeed in the role of a project manager.
- You'll gain an understanding of how projects work, the organizational structures you'll need to work in, what's expected during a project's life cycle, who stakeholders are and more.



Project Management 101

The Complete Guide to Project Management Fundamentals

If you have always wanted to know what project management is all about and how it became popular, or have often wondered what a successful project looks like, you're in the right place.

This guide to project management fundamentals will help you understand the ins and outs of modern project management. By the end, you'll know what a project is, what project managers do and the skills they need to be successful. You'll learn what scope creep is, how to track projects and about software that can help ease the burdens of project management.

If you're thinking about becoming a project manager or just want to learn more about what project managers do to gain a better appreciation for them, read on. You might be surprised at how much goes into getting a project off the ground and running smoothly.

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The Project Management Life Cycle (End-to-End Management) and Key Processes page 39 - 55	You'll learn about the five phases of the project life cycle, the advantages and pitfalls of end-to-end project management and project management processes.
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When you see this icon, it means that you can click on the link to get access to amazing extra resources that will help you manage projects successfully

An Introduction to Project Management

Modern projects come in all shapes, sizes, colors and smells. In fact, it would be highly unlikely for a project manager to work on two identical projects. Each project you work on will have its own challenges, personalities to handle and roadblocks that will do their best to stop you from delivering what clients and stakeholders want: success.

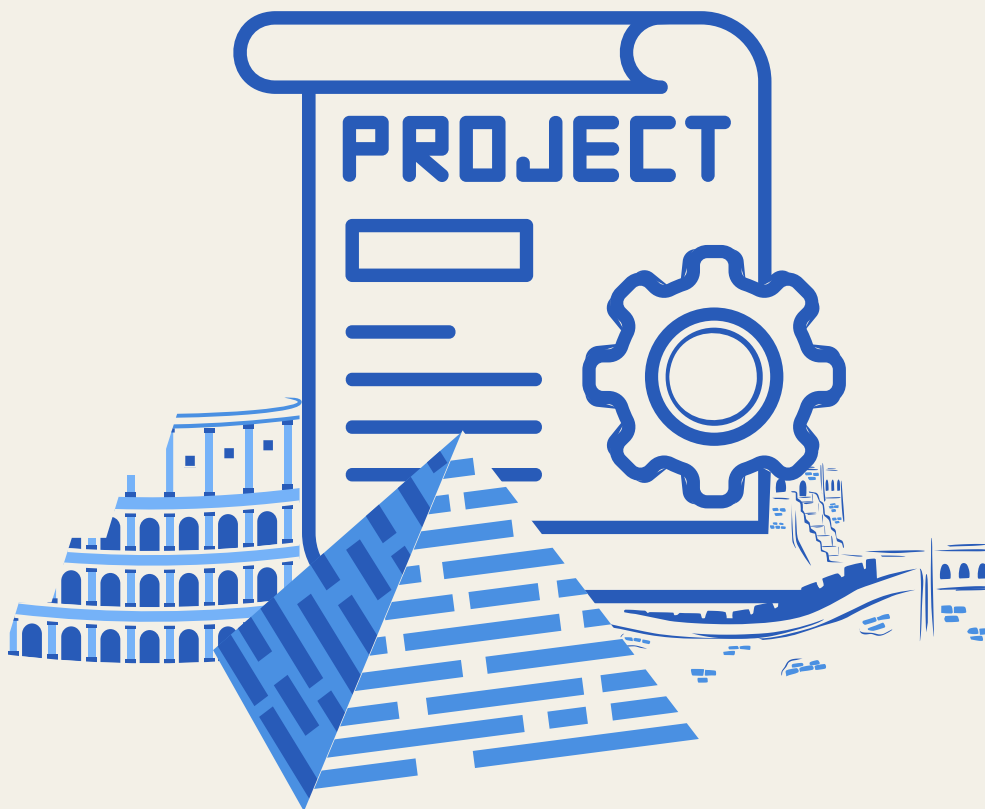
However, many projects do have a lot in common. By following project structures, adopting project management processes and incorporating project management principles, your chances of project success will increase.

In the following sections, you'll learn all you need to know about projects and project management. We'll cover what a project is, what project management is, what a successful project looks like, how success is defined and how you can overcome roadblocks and avoid scope creep. There's a lot to take in, so without further ado, let's begin.



What Is a Project?

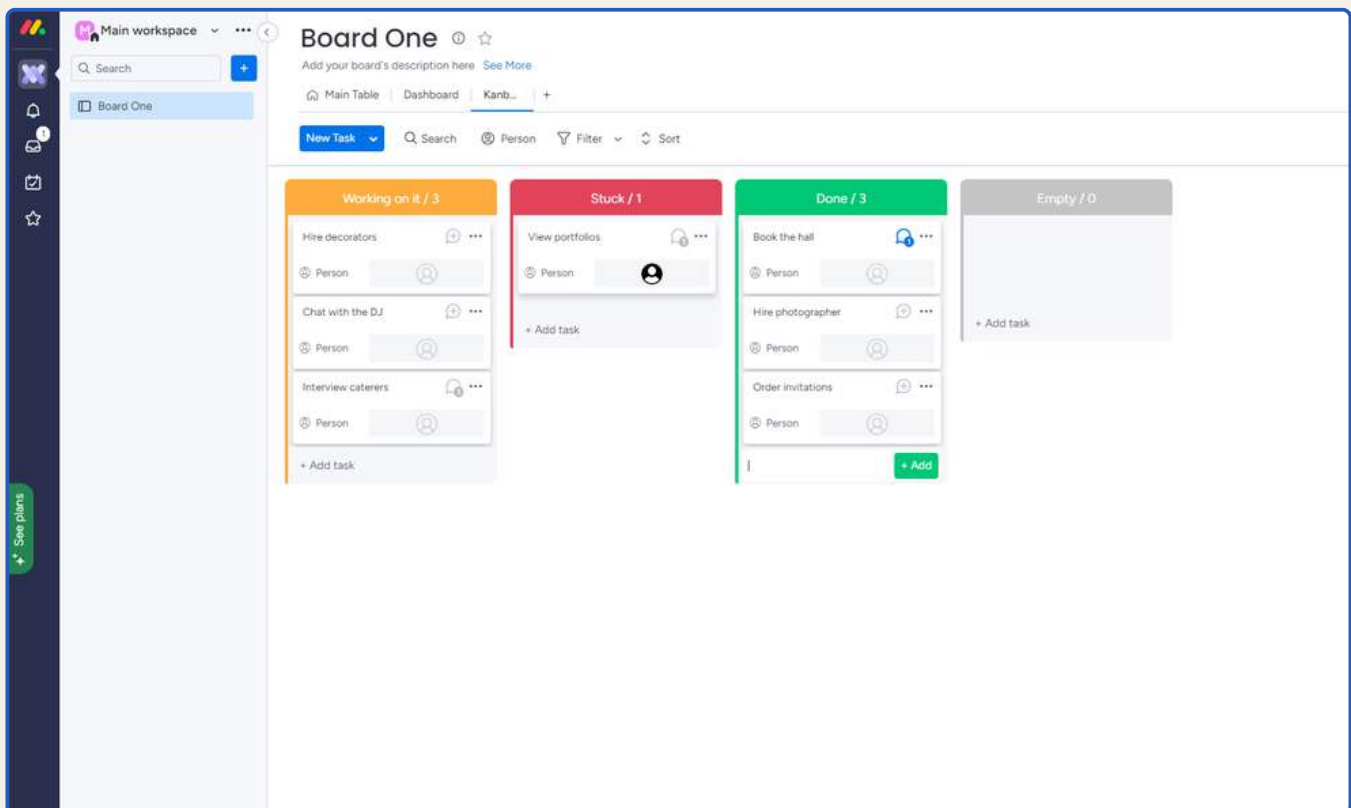
Though projects and their management have been a key part of nearly every known civilization (think about Egypt and the construction of the pyramids, or how much work went into building the Great Wall of China and the railroad system in the U.S.), project management as we know it today is relatively new.



Project planning came into its own during the 1940s and 1950s when **Taiichi Ono** created the **Kanban method** to complement Lean engineering practices for Toyota and when **Charles F. Clark** devised the **Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT)**, which uses a series of graphical charts, for the United States Navy.

Since then, businesses have become rather fond of the benefits of in-depth project management, which include increased collaboration and communication, improved budget and resource control, and enhanced risk management.

So, what exactly is a project? Simply put, a project is a group or set of tasks that make up a larger job. Projects are usually split into key phases: **initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closing**. These phases must be completed for a team to reach a set goal or achieve an end result for themselves or a client.



Taiichi Ono developed the Kanban method and popularized it during the mid-20th century.



Projects have five distinct phases of work.

Projects are common in all businesses, enterprises and government organizations, and project leaders are always needed. It's important to note that not all projects are the same and that not all teams use the same **project management methodologies** (which we'll cover later) to reach their goal. Still, as a general rule, modern projects follow the five critical phases listed above.

Where Do Projects Come From?

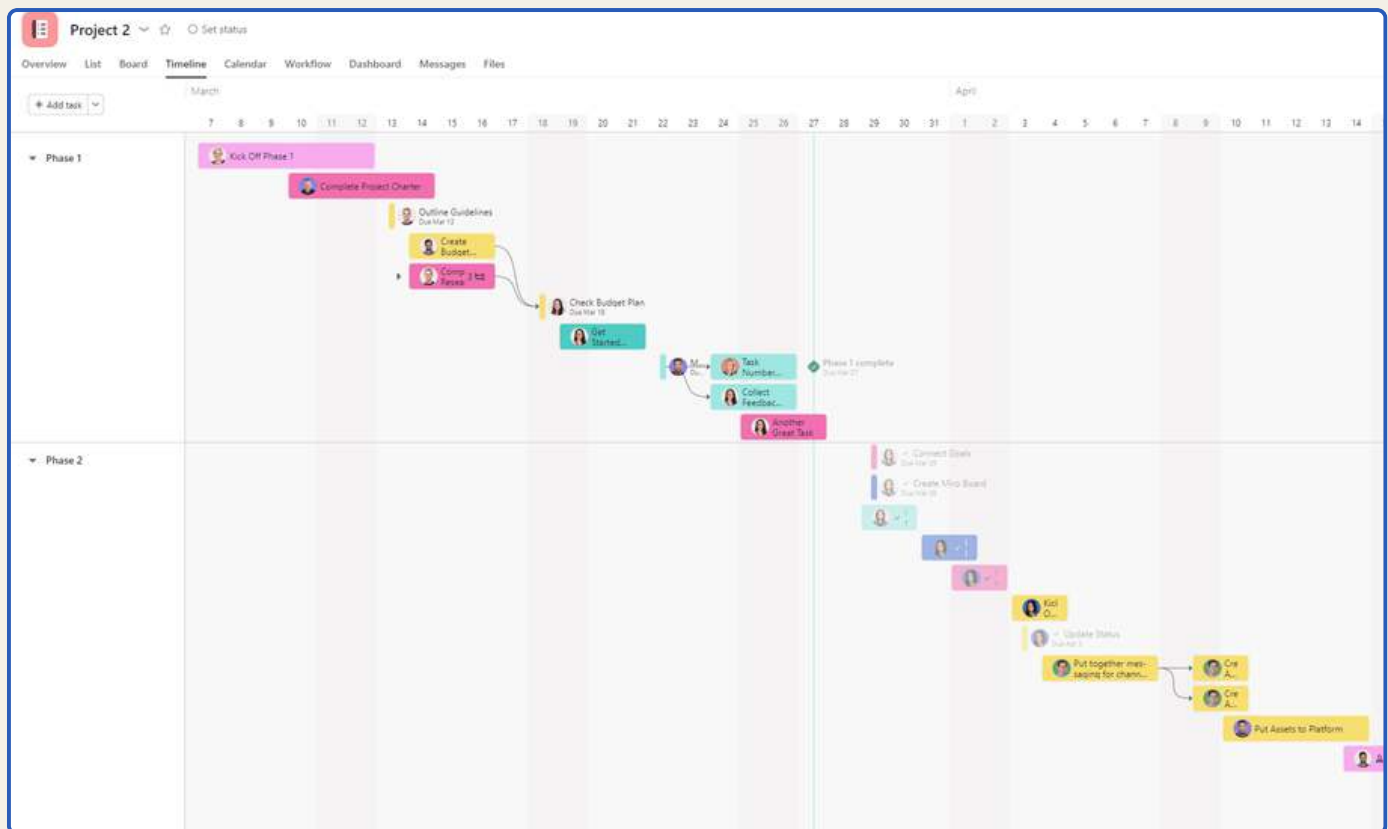
Projects come from many places. As individuals, we have projects that we want to complete in our personal and business lives. Businesses have projects to improve work processes, IT systems, buildings, HR workflows and more. Governments have projects to improve infrastructure and national security. However, who calls for these projects in the first place?



In the business world, project managers, scrum masters and other leaders work on projects that external clients commission or that company executives and stakeholders vote on and implement to improve an aspect of the business, be it systems, products, services or processes. No matter where a project originates, project managers are a necessity.

What Is Project Management?

Now that we know what a project is and where projects come from, it's time to take a quick look at **project management** and what it is. **Project management** is a process in which a project manager initiates, plans, executes and leads a team through a series of project tasks that result in an end goal or deliverable.



Gantt charts are a popular tool that project managers use to plot due dates, dependencies, milestones and more.

A well-planned project management process that follows the five phases (initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and closing) helps ensure that the project meets all time and budget requirements throughout the project life cycle.

As previously mentioned, there are many **project management methodologies**, each with its own set of project management principles that help guide teams. Regardless of the project management framework used, the end goal is always the same: to hand over a high-quality deliverable on time and on budget to your client or stakeholders. Below, we'll briefly look at the most popular methodologies.

Waterfall

This highly structured, traditional project management framework requires each project stage to be completed before moving on to the next.

Critical Path Method

Similar to Waterfall, CPM takes dependencies into account, which means the next task cannot start until the previous one is finished.

Scrum

A more structured version of Kanban, **Scrum** relies heavily on communication, collaboration and a series of time-boxed work events called "sprints."

Lean project management

This Agile methodology uses kanban boards and their global views to ease workloads, cut unnecessary tasks, reduce waste, improve efficiency and deliver maximum value to the client.

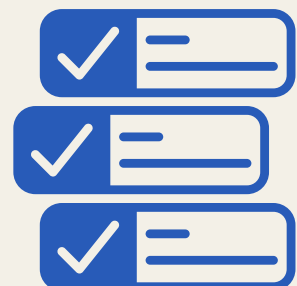
Agile

This set of principles and values champions collaboration, communication and adaptability and is often used in software development projects.

Kanban

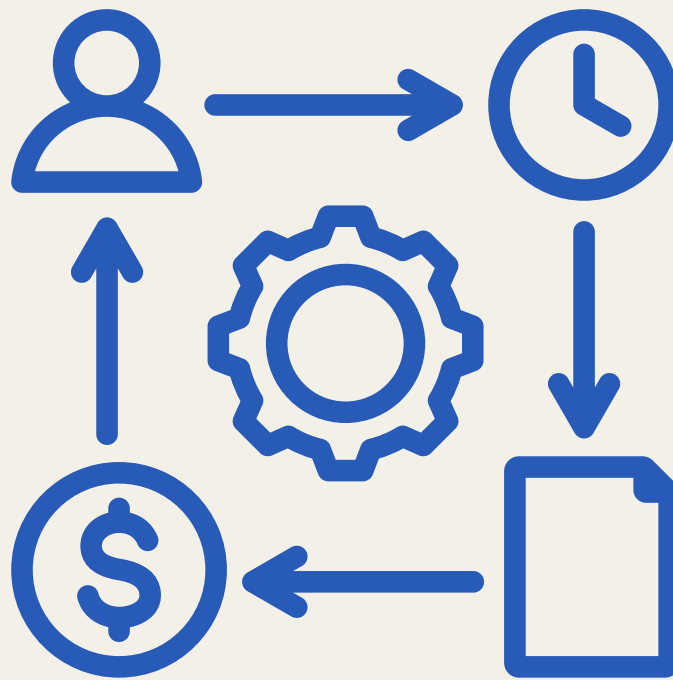
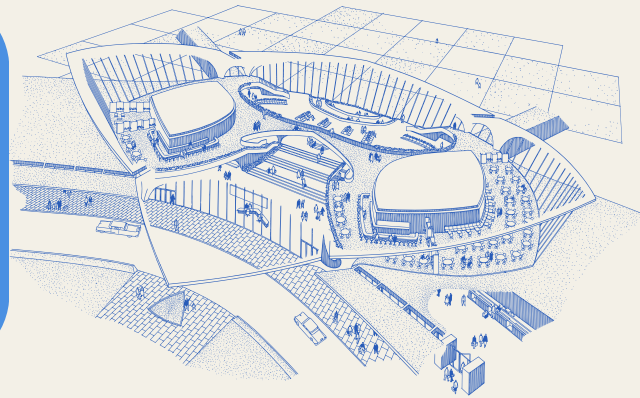
This Agile visual framework sees tasks pulled from a catalog or to-do list. As tasks are worked on, they move through a series of work stages (for example, "in progress" or "under review") until completion.

As long as managers stick to a methodology that suits the project, everything should go smoothly. Just know that all projects, regardless of size or cost, have several moving parts and that everything from tasks to budgets, resources, time management and more must be adequately managed and tracked; otherwise, a project could quickly fall into disarray.



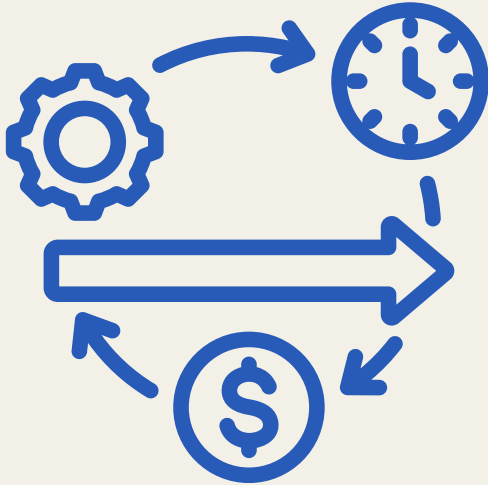
Understanding Project Success

Running and completing a project is one thing, but how do project managers determine whether it was a success? We can confirm that simply finishing a project does not make it successful. Just look at the Denver International Airport disaster: Yes, a fine airport was built, but it was many years late and millions of dollars over budget.

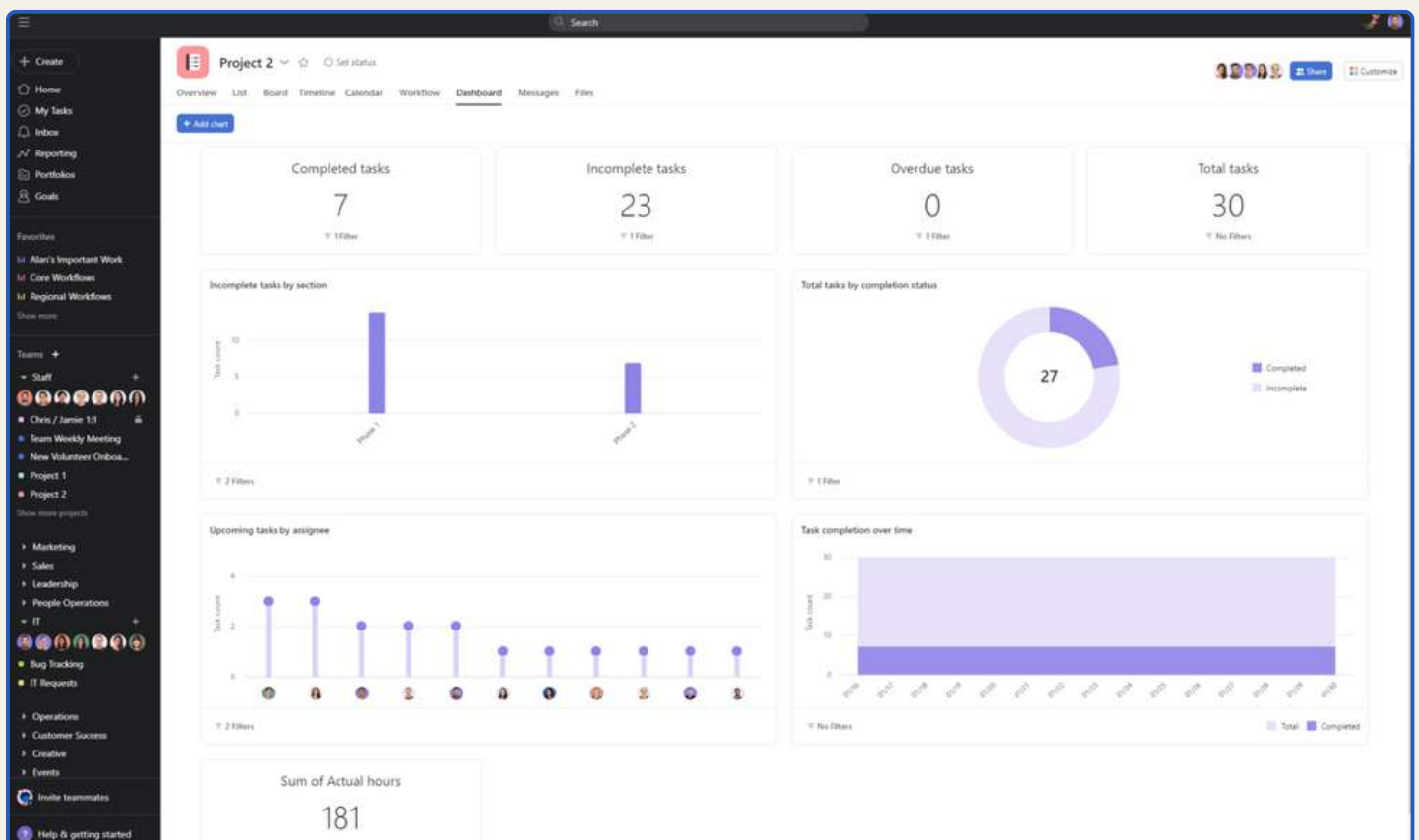


In this next chapter, we'll take a quick look at some tools that project managers can use to determine whether a project was a success. We'll also examine what can influence success (positively and negatively) and what scope creep is.

How Do You Define Project Success?

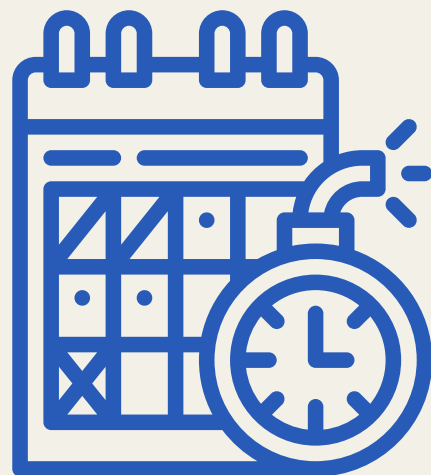


Project managers will quickly find that there are many methods for defining project success. One of the best ways to determine whether a project was a success is to speak directly with clients and stakeholders. Those who are financially vested in a project will have no problem speaking up and letting you know if they are happy or displeased with how things went.



When configured correctly, dashboards, like this one in Asana, can display project metrics that will help you determine whether a project was successful.

Many modern project management software programs, like **monday.com**, **ClickUp**, **Zoho Projects** and **Asana**, provide project leaders with **dashboards and reports** that display project metrics covering budgeting, timelines, deadlines, resources and more. If a dashboard has been configured correctly, you can see all the metrics in one place during the project and at the end.



As we've learned, the last stage of the project life cycle is **closing**. During this phase, managers review the original project plan, gather feedback and examine reports before delivering the product to the client.

It's incredibly easy to view detailed **key performance indicators**. You can track velocities to see how efficient your team is and whether they are overworked or encountering problems. Project leaders can cross-reference original timelines to the actual timeline to measure success. Starting and ending budgets can be compared, and the quality of deliverables can be assessed.

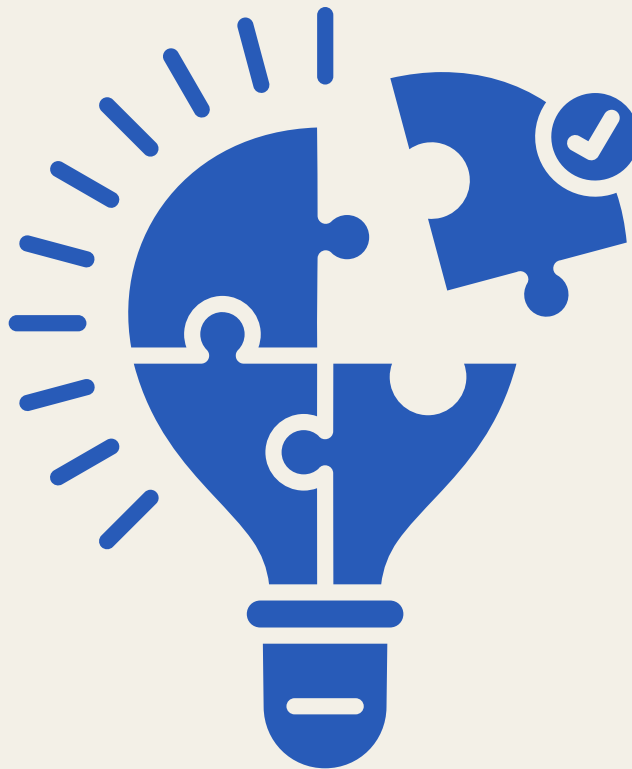
Be sure to set **S.M.A.R.T.** (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) goals at the start of your project so you can measure your team's performance against them. Do not set these goals alone, either. Make sure your client and any stakeholders are involved so everyone is on the same page.

Project Constraints and How to Manage Them

As a project manager, you likely go to bed dreaming of your next project running smoothly with no hiccups or bumps in the road. However, the reality is that all projects will likely encounter problems and roadblocks on the path to success. As a leader, you must know which problems to anticipate and create a plan that can help you overcome issues efficiently.



Risk management is a critical part of project management. Improper risk management could lead to missed deadlines, overshoot budgets or complete project failure.



So, what are some typical project constraints, and what can you do to overcome them? Project constraints can crop up in every area of a project. You could experience problems with the project's budget, timelines or deadlines; the project scope or product quality; or resources and employee time management.

Chances are, as you go through a **project's life cycle**, you'll experience headaches in all of the areas listed. However, a good project manager will sit down with their team and devise a risk management strategy to help deal with problems.

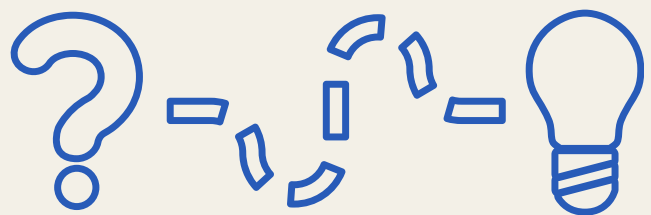
Fortunately, many of the best project management platforms have built-in risk assessment planners or at least offer templates that project leaders can use to note potential problems, list potential solutions and delegate issues to team members who can deal with them efficiently.

The Dangers of Scope Creep

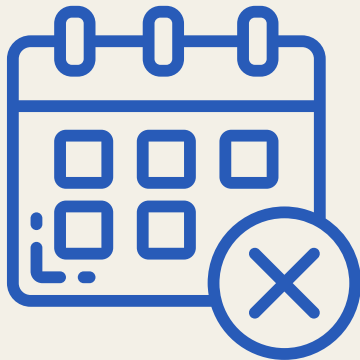
Imagine you have your project ducks in a row. Your team is killing it, and then plans change – not once but multiple times. Before you know it, your project's original plan is out the window. There's extra work you hadn't planned for, additional expenses, a communication breakdown and unmanageable deadlines. This is scope creep if left unchecked, it can destroy a project.

Before we go any further, let's take a minute to define what a project scope and scope creep are. A **project scope** is a plan that a project manager and key stakeholders create at the start of a project. Tasks, roles, expenses, resources and deadlines are defined. **Scope creep** is when the original plan is expanded upon after the work has begun – or, worse, is nearly complete.

This may not sound too terrible; after all, a few changes here and there can be accommodated. Problems arise when the project manager, clients and stakeholders don't discuss new tasks and deliverables, deadlines, expenses, resources and increased team workloads.

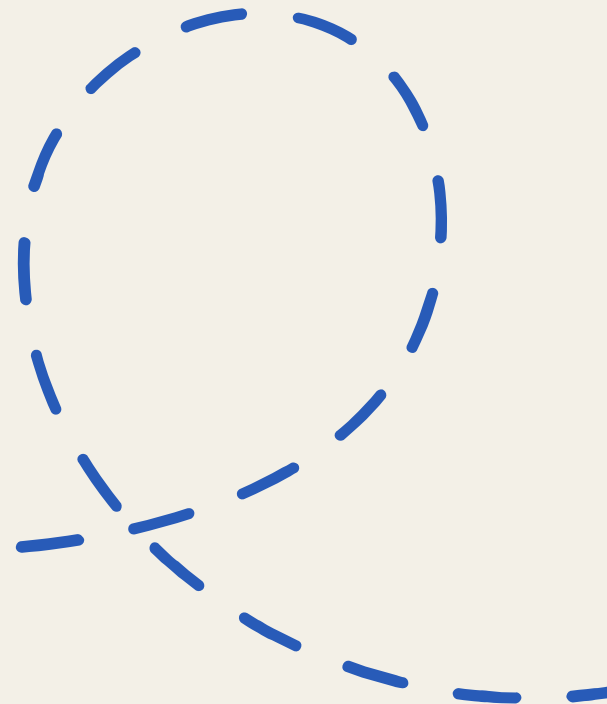


Consequences of Scope Creep



As you may have guessed by now, you want to avoid scope creep at all costs. Nothing good can be gained from scope creep. Below, we will take a quick look at its harmful effects.

- **Missed deadlines and delivery dates:** Additional requirements and deliverables that aren't accounted for could cause missed deadlines and costly delays.
- **Exceeding budgets:** Piling extra work on without further compensation will stretch your budget thin.
- **Overworked project team:** An overworked team will make more mistakes than usual, and morale will take a nosedive.
- **Poor final results:** An overworked team delivering poorly planned work could lead to subpar final results.



This may not sound too terrible; after all, a few changes here and there can be accommodated. Problems arise when the project manager, clients and stakeholders don't discuss new tasks and deliverables, deadlines, expenses, resources and increased team workloads.

Of course, scope creep has many more consequences, including personal and organizational reputation hits, employee turnover, loss of income and total project failure.

The Five Most Common Causes of Scope Creep

Now that we know what a project scope and scope creep are, it's time to look at the five most common causes of scope creep. If you're a project manager, take notes. You'll want to nip any of these issues in the bud as soon as you detect them.



A Poor or Missing Project Scope

By defining a project's scope, you'll know who's doing what, what's expected and when, and which resources are available. Not planning for risks, challenges and potential changes will also lead to disaster. Do not skip this step. Once the project's scope has been defined, ensure that everyone signs off on the plan, including all project stakeholders.

By defining a project's scope, you'll know who's doing what, what's expected and when, and which resources are available. Not planning for risks, challenges and potential changes will also lead to disaster. Do not skip this step. Once the project's scope has been defined, ensure that everyone signs off on the plan, including all project stakeholders.



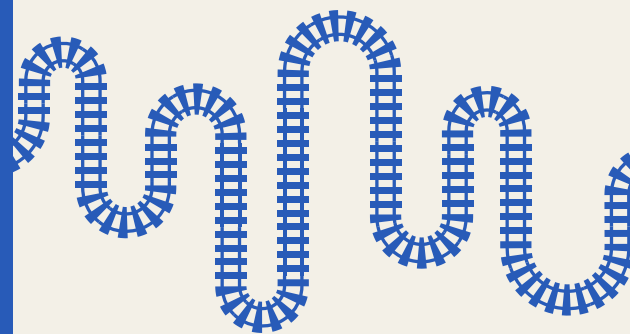
Substandard Communication

Communication is key to getting good results in many areas of life, and project management is no exception. When communication between a project manager and their team, clients and stakeholders breaks down – or when communication is vague – problems arise.



Additional Undocumented Work

When clients, stakeholders and even project managers add work to a project that hasn't been officially documented or planned for, a project can derail, especially if extra tasks are added frequently. Ensure that every additional piece of work runs through the proper channels and is added to the project scope; otherwise, the project may falter.



Too Many Requests

Scope creep occurs when clients make change requests to an already-defined project schedule. It's not uncommon for one or two requests to be made. However, when numerous stakeholders who may not understand how big an undertaking a task is request multiple changes, projects can fall behind schedule and run over budget.



Lack of Resources

If you accept too many unofficial requests as a project manager and don't have a plan in place to deal with the extra work, you'll be in trouble. Extra work requires additional team members, which can require extra equipment and incur more expenses. If work issues like these go unaddressed, you could end up understaffed, overworked and over budget.



How to Avoid Scope Creep

If your project is already underway and some cracks are beginning to appear, what can you do? Quite a lot, actually. You can proactively prevent scope creep by creating a project scope before your project starts and holding regular meetings.

During each meeting, cover every aspect of the project. Share how tasks are progressing, how much work team members have taken on and details about any expenses, delays or problems. If someone requests a change to the project scope, ensure you have all project metrics and information at hand so you can discuss the potential impact.

After approving a change to the original scope, you must sit down with your client to update the project scope. If you repeatedly fail to take into account additional tasks or deliverables, scope creep will turn into scope run.

We know that work costs money, so ensure the budgets are accurate. You must manage your funds and resources whenever you accept a change request. If you fail to do so, the project could end up over budget.

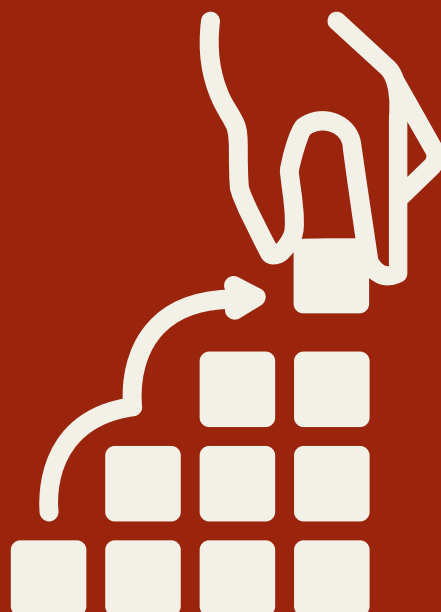
Don't be afraid to charge a fee for changes. If the change is important, your client will pay. You may even find that they stop requesting additional changes, which will help mitigate scope creep.

Learning to say no is another powerful tool to keep in your arsenal. Though difficult, it is one of the best ways to help prevent scope creep in project management. Standing up to a client is never easy, but it's your job as the project manager to provide pushback to clients and stakeholders who are crossing the line.

The Fundamentals of Project Management

Project management is complex because it covers a broad range of topics. If you're on the outside looking in, you likely have many questions about project management. How do you become a project manager? ➤ Which skills do project managers need? What does a project manager do? Which tools are available to make a project manager's life easier?

In this section, we'll answer all these questions and more so you can better understand project management. By the end of this section, you'll know whether you want to pursue project management further.



The Project Manager Role

What exactly are project managers? Project managers are individuals who oversee an entire project from start to finish. Managers are responsible for **planning, organizing, budgeting, managing resources, executing, monitoring and closing projects**. Leaders, on the other hand, are responsible for team members and must use effective communication to manage them.



How to Become a Project Manager

There are many ways to become a project manager. Whether you want to be a full-time employee or a freelancer is up to you. To gain experience, you can work as part of a project team and rise through the ranks or earn certifications from colleges and institutes. We'll list some of the best project management certifications below.



- **Project Management Professional (PMP)** — A certification offered by the Project Management Institute (PMI), [the PMP](#) covers many methodologies and a variety of project management principles and topics.
- **BVOP Certified Project Manager** — The BVOP Certified Project Manager course will teach you all you need to know about technical project management and how to manage teams and individuals.
- **Certified Scrum Master (CSM)** — If you want to lead Agile scrum teams and learn about scrum events and more, the [Certified Scrum Master Course](#) (CSM) by the Scrum Alliance is for you.
- **PRINCE2** — If you like traditional project management methodologies and prefer to operate in highly structured environments, the PRINCE2 certification could be a good fit.
- **PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)** — Another PMI course, the Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP) certification is one of the best for those who want to focus on Agile frameworks.
- **SAFe Agilist** — If you're interested in scaled Agile projects (projects that span entire enterprises), you'll be hard-pressed to find a better option than the SAFe Agilist certification.

Project Manager Hard and Soft Skills

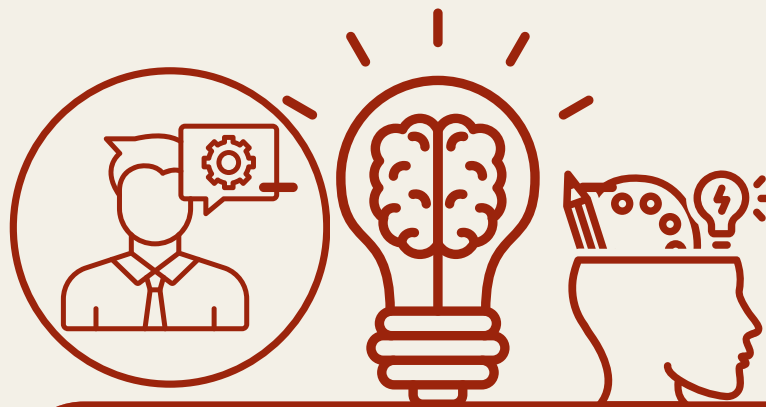


In addition to holding certifications and understanding what a project manager does, it's important to understand the hard and soft skills that are required to be successful in this demanding role. Below are lists of hard and soft skills that all project managers need.

Project Manager Hard Skills

- **Negotiation:** Being able to negotiate with clients, stakeholders and employees will help the project manager set realistic expectations regarding project scope and what a team can achieve in a given time frame.
- **Writing and public speaking:** A project manager must be a master communicator. If you follow Agile frameworks, most communication will take place face-to-face, so you must be comfortable speaking with others. More traditional approaches use documents and writing to communicate wants and needs, so you must also be comfortable writing.
- **Organization:** A project manager must have exceptional organizational skills to keep projects running smoothly. You could be dealing with hundreds of tasks, countless documents, files galore and many deadlines, none of which can afford to fall through the cracks.
- **Planning and prioritization:** A project manager must be able to set clear priorities and goals if a project is to be successful. If you can't help your team understand what to prioritize and what to leave until a later date, you'll run into problems.
- **Delegation:** Project managers must be able to identify the right team members for the right jobs and then delegate tasks that match their skill sets. Failure to assign tasks to appropriate team members can lead to delays and low-quality products.
- **Budget management:** Though many projects have a designated budget manager, project managers must still be competent in budget management. They must know how to balance the books using spreadsheets or dedicated accounting software to recognize and avoid scope creep

Project managers with these hard skills will likely be more successful than those who do not possess them.



Project Manager Soft Skills

- **Communication:** Strong communication skills are vital if you want to get team members on board with the project and your vision. Project managers also need to be able to influence the actions of others through communication.
- **Leadership and motivation:** Motivating can be tricky, especially over the course of many weeks or months. Project managers must be able to identify when to make hard decisions and when to implement motivational interventions.
- **Conflict resolution:** No project will ever run its course without the need for conflict resolution. It's a given that team members will butt heads. Therefore, it's vital for project managers to act as mediators to help all parties at loggerheads come to a mutual understanding and agreement so that work can progress smoothly.
- **Teamwork:** Though team leadership is an important quality, it's just as important for the project manager to be part of the team, too. Project managers must be supportive, collaborative and open to feedback.
- **Adaptability:** Even the best plans may crumble. It's vital that project managers be adaptable so they can course-correct and redirect their team when new requests or problems pop up.

The above-listed soft skills will serve project managers well.

What Are the Areas of Project Management?

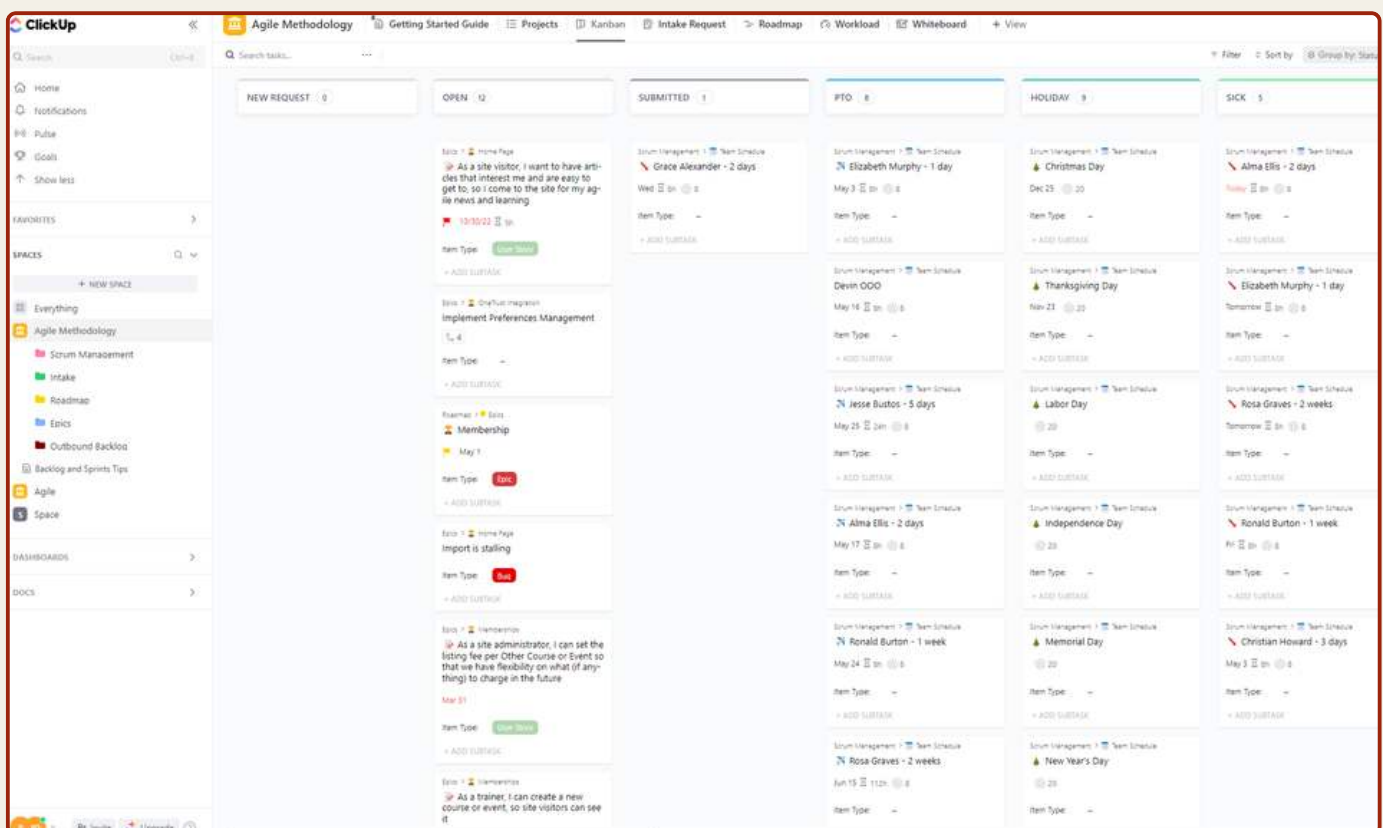
Below, you'll find a comprehensive list of tasks and processes that modern project managers are responsible for. You may find that other individuals in your organization handle some of these tasks, or you may find more of them on your own plate as the project manager. Either way, this list will give you a good idea of what to expect.

- **Schedule management** — Managers create a schedule that includes milestones and due dates for project tasks.
- **Cost management** — This is the process of estimating, creating and monitoring project budgets via methods like activity-based costing.
- **Scope management** — Managers must keep on top of the project and ensure milestones and task due dates are met, and that any newly requested features are planned accordingly.
- **Resource management** — Project managers must oversee the procurement of the staff, materials and equipment needed to complete the project.
- **Communication management** — Project managers or scrum masters must schedule and hold frequent team meetings and decide which communication tools to use.
- **Task management** — Ensure team members are assigned, due dates have been set and that there are no problems that could cause delays.
- **Stakeholder management** — This is the process of identifying stakeholders and communicating with them to determine their demands and expectations.
- **Risk management** — Managers must complete a risk assessment and plan for any potential problems so they can be dealt with swiftly.
- **Quality management** — Ensure that the deliverable for your client meets their expectations during every step of the project.

Projects have many moving parts and numerous people to deal with. There is a lot to consider before any project gets rolling. In a nutshell, project management isn't easy, and if you're not careful, you could find yourself in a bind. Ensure you understand the role, surround yourself with knowledgeable individuals and don't be afraid to ask questions.

Project Tracking

Project tracking is the process of tracking tasks, budgets, time and resources during a project's life cycle. Project managers, scrum masters and project leaders must ensure that their projects are on schedule and on budget, and be able to update senior management, stakeholders and clients about a project's status at any moment.



Kanban boards, which provide a global project view, are popular with teams that use Agile frameworks to complete their work.

When done correctly, project tracking allows project managers to see how a project is progressing against the original project scope. They can also keep tabs on key milestones, identify problem areas and potential bottlenecks, avoid scope creep and confidently communicate and provide updates.

Project-Monitoring Strategies


You can monitor projects in many ways, but our experts always recommend using project management software. Projects have so many moving parts that managing and tracking them without software is nearly impossible. Our team of experts also suggests a few additional strategies. We'll look at them below.



Try the Best Project Management Tool for Free



Use Project Management Software

Project management software  can help you monitor a project's progress. Software can be expensive, but free options are available. PM software lets you create plans, allocate tasks, track time, monitor budgets and resources, view a project timeline and generate project reports, all of which are essential for project tracking.

Create a Project Scope

Another way to track progress is to check it against a project scope. Project scopes, or project plans, contain information about the overall goal, tasks, milestone dates, budget information, stakeholder information and more. There should also be **RACI charts** that show who's responsible for which tasks. Constantly reference the scope to help stay on track.

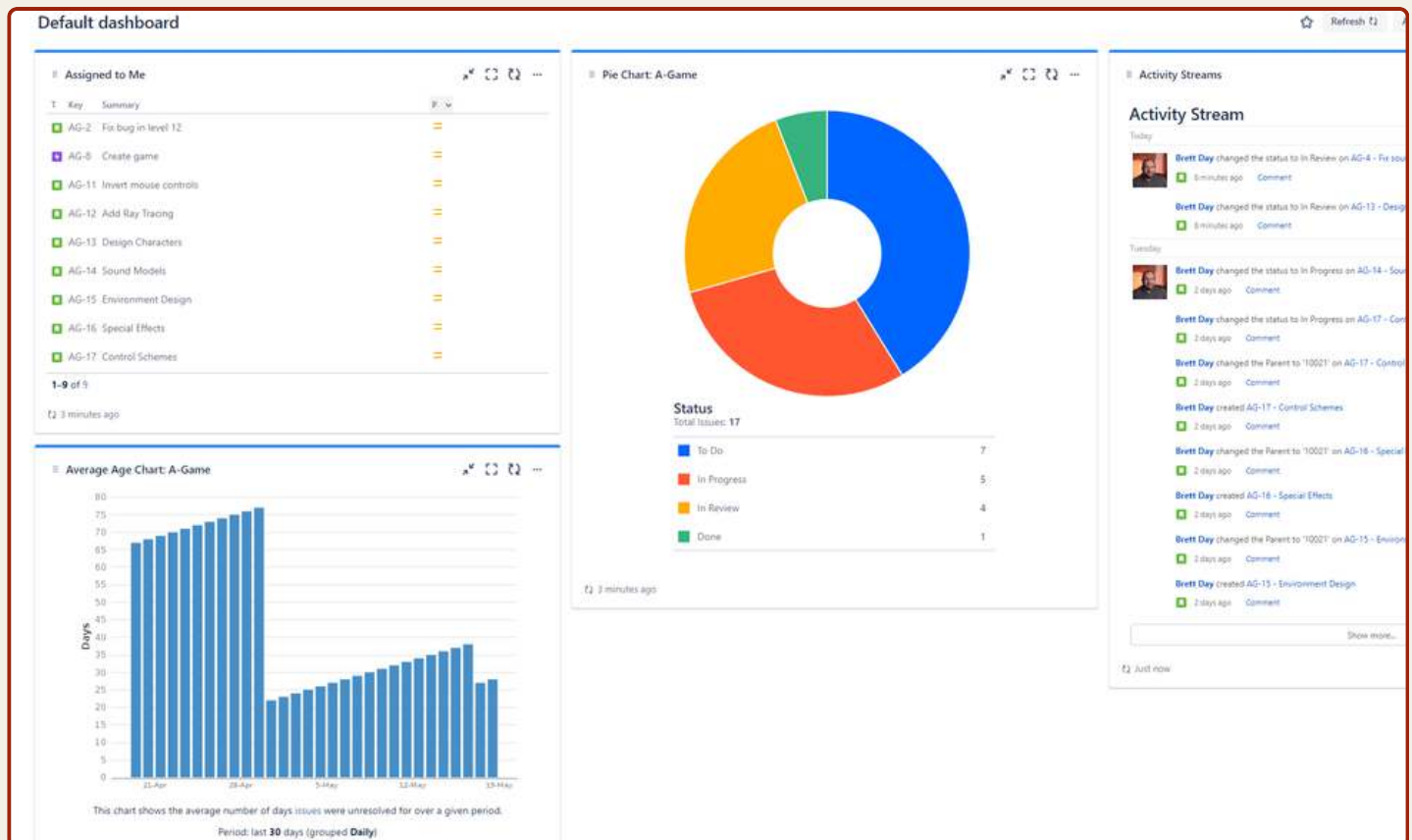
Hold Regular Meetings

The key to success for any project is communication. Transparent communication, which Agile frameworks and other project management methodologies champion, allows project managers to touch base with team members, get a feel for how a project is going, learn about potential issues, brainstorm ideas, gather feedback and boost team morale.

Utilize Reports

PM software can generate reports that help you track tasks, budgets and project resources. Reports, which are often displayed on dashboards, display project data in an easy-to-read manner and can give a quick overview of a project's health. Utilize reports to track tasks, manage time, and view team velocities and budgets.

Project-Monitoring Strategies



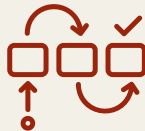
Reports and dashboards can help project managers understand how their team is performing and how a project is progressing

Project-Tracking Tools



Project management software like monday.com, [ClickUp](https://clickup.com/) and Microsoft Project simplifies online project tracking. These platforms can give project leaders deep insights into their projects and team members. Below, we'll quickly review a few of the tools in PM software that can help you track progress.

Workflow Tools



Project management platforms give managers access to workflow tools like kanban boards, Gantt charts, lists, calendars and spreadsheets. These tools allow users to view a project schedule, assign jobs, track task progress, see employee workloads and identify workflow problems. A platform that supports many project management methods is ideal.

Time-Tracking Solutions



One of the best project-tracking tools is a time tracker. Time tracking allows you to see how efficient your project teams are. Time tracking can also help keep your project on or under budget. Most time-tracking tools allow team members to log how long they have spent on a given task and record and calculate hourly rates.

Dashboards and Reports



Managers should utilize reports and dashboards to track projects. Dashboards show project status information like tasks, due dates, budgets, calendars, project goals and messages. Detailed reports show accurate data, and the information within them can be shared with clients, team members and stakeholders. Reports are one of the best ways to track project progress.

Real-Time Collaboration Tools



Real-time collaboration tools, like those supporting text and voice messages, should be used to help track project progress. Chat tools can bring distributed teams together for meetings where critical information, status reports, project updates and feedback can be shared.

Project Templates



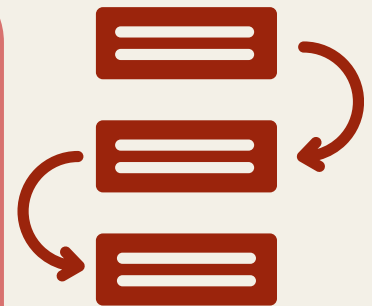
If you're new to project management or just want a quick and easy way to set up a project that needs to be tracked, you should use a project-tracking template. Most project management platforms offer one-click templates for projects in many industries. You'll have kanban boards, Gantt charts, lists, budget planners and more to start tracking projects in a flash.

Ultimately, there are many ways to monitor projects, and thanks to software, it's easier than ever to track tasks, schedules, budgets and resources. If you use all the **project-tracking tools** in your chosen software, you'll deliver your next project without a problem. The moral here is to embrace software rather than shy away from it.

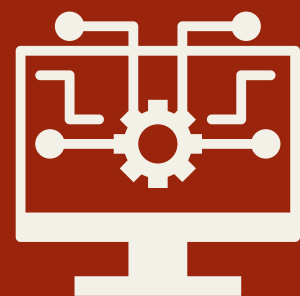


Integrations and Automations

Workflow automation is the process of using workflow automation tools to complete repetitive tasks without an employee's input. After automations have been set, tasks automatically update once a trigger is activated. For example, if a task is categorized as "marketing," the employee in charge of marketing will be automatically assigned to it.

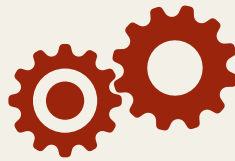


Creating automations, even in some of the best **free project management software** is painless. Most platforms, such as **monday.com**, **ClickUp** and **Zoho Projects**, have premade automations that can be used with a single click. As a bonus, you can create custom workflows and automations with no coding experience.



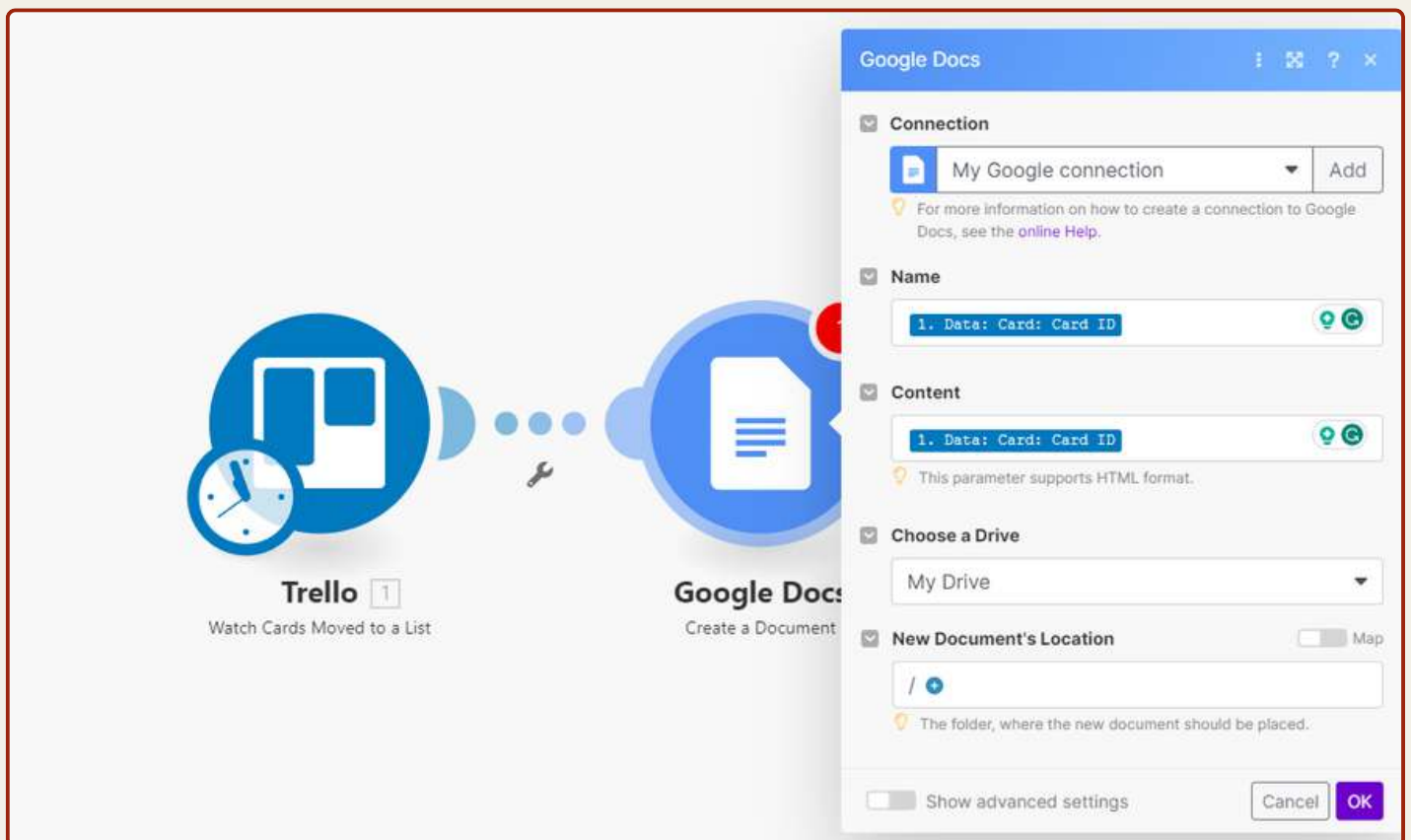
Examples of Automation

Thanks to modern software, you can create automations to handle both simple and complex tasks. You can automate one process or link multiple pieces of software to perform events on all platforms when a trigger is activated. Below, you'll see examples of simple and complex automations that can **simplify business processes**.



- Tasks can be automatically assigned to the correct team member.
- Tasks can be added to a kanban board directly from emails.
- When a task status updates, messages can be sent to the appropriate person on Slack, Microsoft Teams or other messaging platforms.
- Files uploaded to project management software can be automatically shared with many of the best cloud storage services.
- If your marketing team receives a lead from an email, a task to call the potential client can be added to the sales team's "to do" column.
- Tasks with due dates can automatically send messages to team members, update a third-party calendar app and move to the appropriate board or kanban column.
- As your project updates, data can be sent to external databases and software like Tableau, which can create detailed reports.
- If your tasks and processes renew weekly, you can create workflow automations that auto-generate tasks and add team members, due dates and other custom information at the start of each week.
- If you create an invoice, an automation can send it to DocuSign for the client's approval and signature.

Examples of Automation



Creating automations in project management software with standalone services like Make.com is straightforward

Benefits: Why Automate Workflows?

Automated workflows can save you a significant amount of time during a project by automatically completing what would otherwise be time-consuming manual processes. If you're struggling to see why you should automate tasks, the list below should help clarify.

Boost Productivity



Automating workflows can significantly improve productivity. You will no longer need to create tasks, add due dates and assignees, complete data entry in custom fields or manually export time-tracking stats to third-party software. Automated tasks can do all this and more for you, freeing you up to focus on more pressing matters.

Better Communication



With automations, you can link project management software to collaboration tools like Slack. Automated messages about tasks that change status or fall behind schedule can be sent on your behalf. These messages will help improve communication and keep team members in the loop. Updates about tasks can increase accountability and help projects avoid scope creep.

Reduction in Errors



Creating automations for repeatable tasks can help reduce human error. If set up correctly, automations that create cards, export data, perform data collection or complete updates for you can help with risk mitigation. Project managers and business users should all strive to reduce errors in business operations.

Better Reporting



If creating reports to view key performance indicators isn't your jam, have automations create them for you. You can set up a workflow automation solution that pulls project data and exports it to Google Sheets or dedicated reporting software. If you ensure the correct parameters are set and tell the software how often you want the reports, you're good to go.

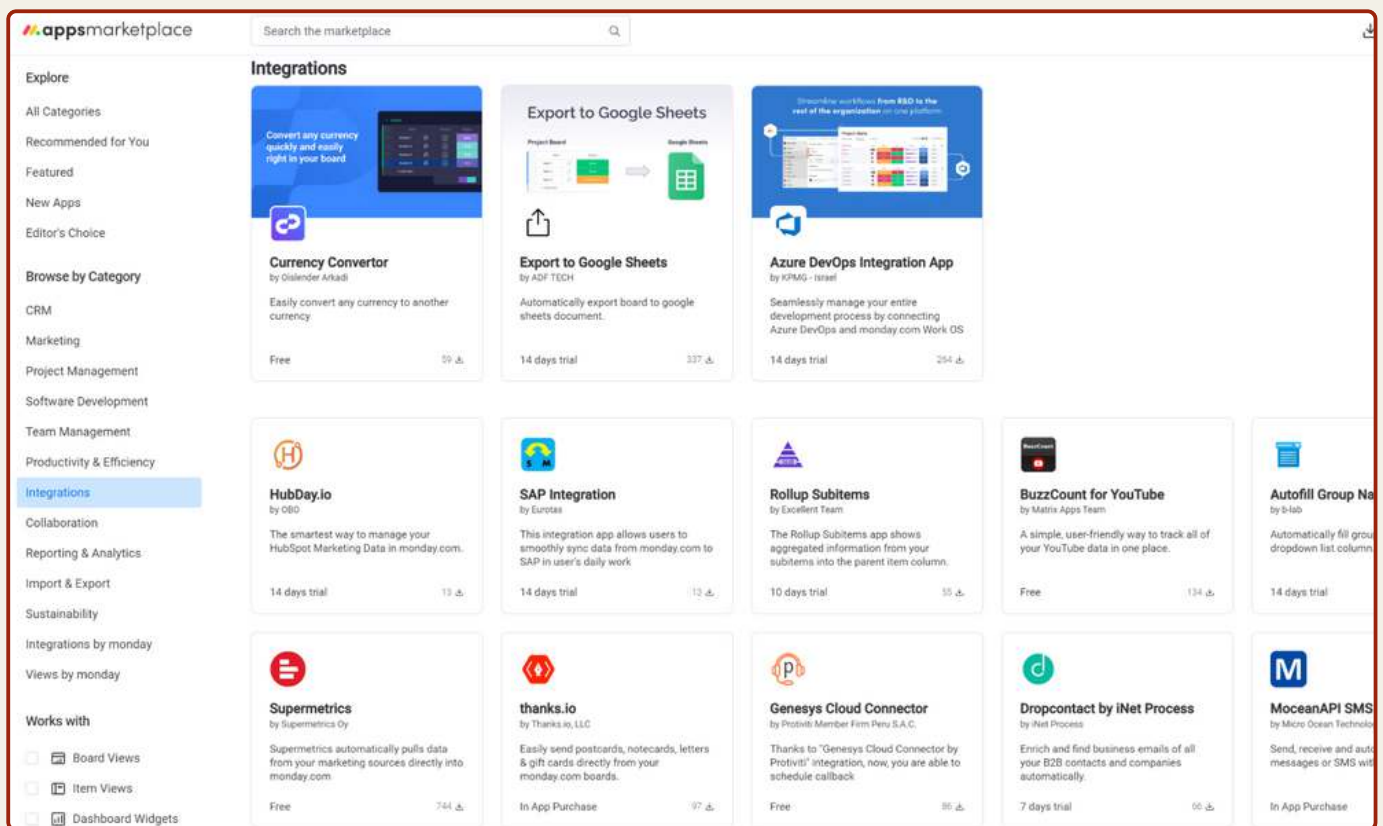
Less Stress



Ultimately, creating a business workflow or automations will help you and your team be more productive and reduce stress. Imagine being able to remove small, nagging tasks from your plate. You can stop stressing about the small stuff and focus on larger tasks and more pressing issues, knowing the menial tasks are still being completed.

Integrations

- Integrations are just as useful to project managers as automations. With integrations, you can link numerous platforms to your project management software of choice, usually with just a few clicks. Integrations turn your project management software into a one-stop project management shop.



Leading project management software suites can integrate with hundreds of third-party platforms.

- You can integrate with timekeeping platforms, budgeting tools, third-party software that can create incredibly in-depth and complex reports, creative suites such as the Adobe Creative Cloud and so much more. Integrations can also help you create even more powerful and complex automations across platforms.

The Project Management Life Cycle (End-to-End Management) & Key Processes

Now that you know what a project is and what a project manager does, it's time to look at the [project management life cycle](#) and a few key processes that could derail a project if not incorporated properly.

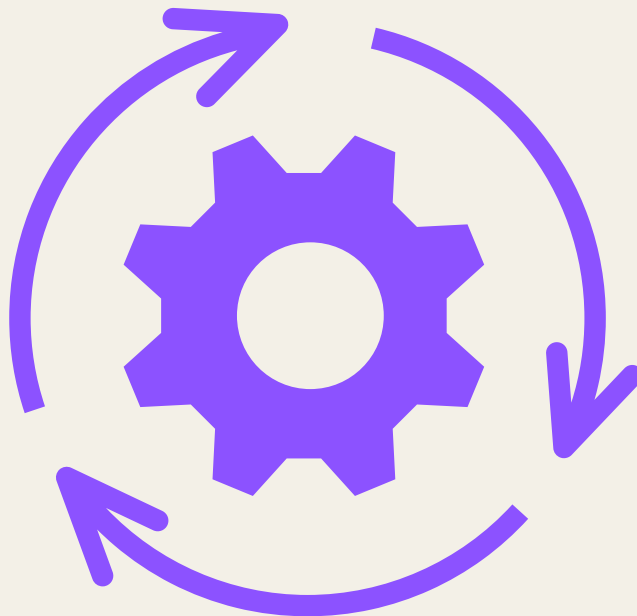
Below, we'll explain the project management life cycle, which has five distinct phases (initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure and delivery).

We'll also cover the key components of end-to-end project management, its advantages and disadvantages, and key processes (time management, risk management and scope management) that should not be overlooked.



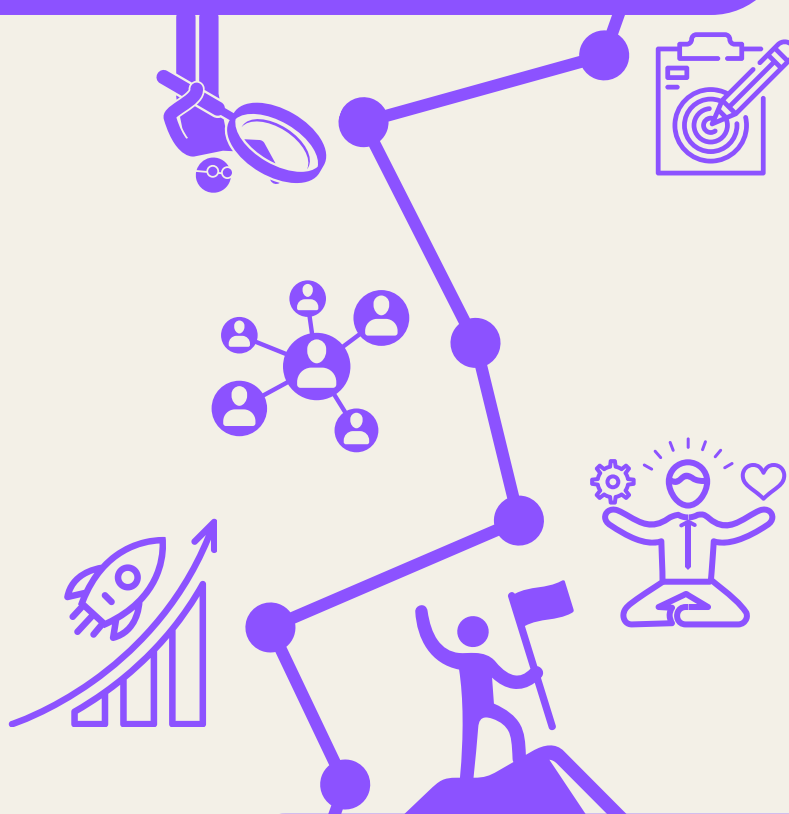
The Project Management Life Cycle

If you're a project manager, a scrum master or a project leader who wants to create highly detailed project scopes that can help deliver products on time and within the budget, you owe it to yourself to learn about end-to-end project management and the project management life cycle.



What Is End-to-End Project Management?


End-to-end project management (e2e) is the process of breaking down projects into smaller chunks. Small blocks of work are easier to plan, and they allow project managers and teams to digest tasks and reach milestones more efficiently during a project's life cycle. This effective project management process makes **defining, analyzing and managing project objectives easier.**



The end-to-end process, which is used in traditional methodologies like PRINCE2, Agile frameworks such as Kanban and Scrum, and hybrid methods that combine Waterfall and Agile traits, allows project managers to create detailed project scopes, stay on top of tasks and due dates, and create accurate budgets throughout an entire project life cycle.

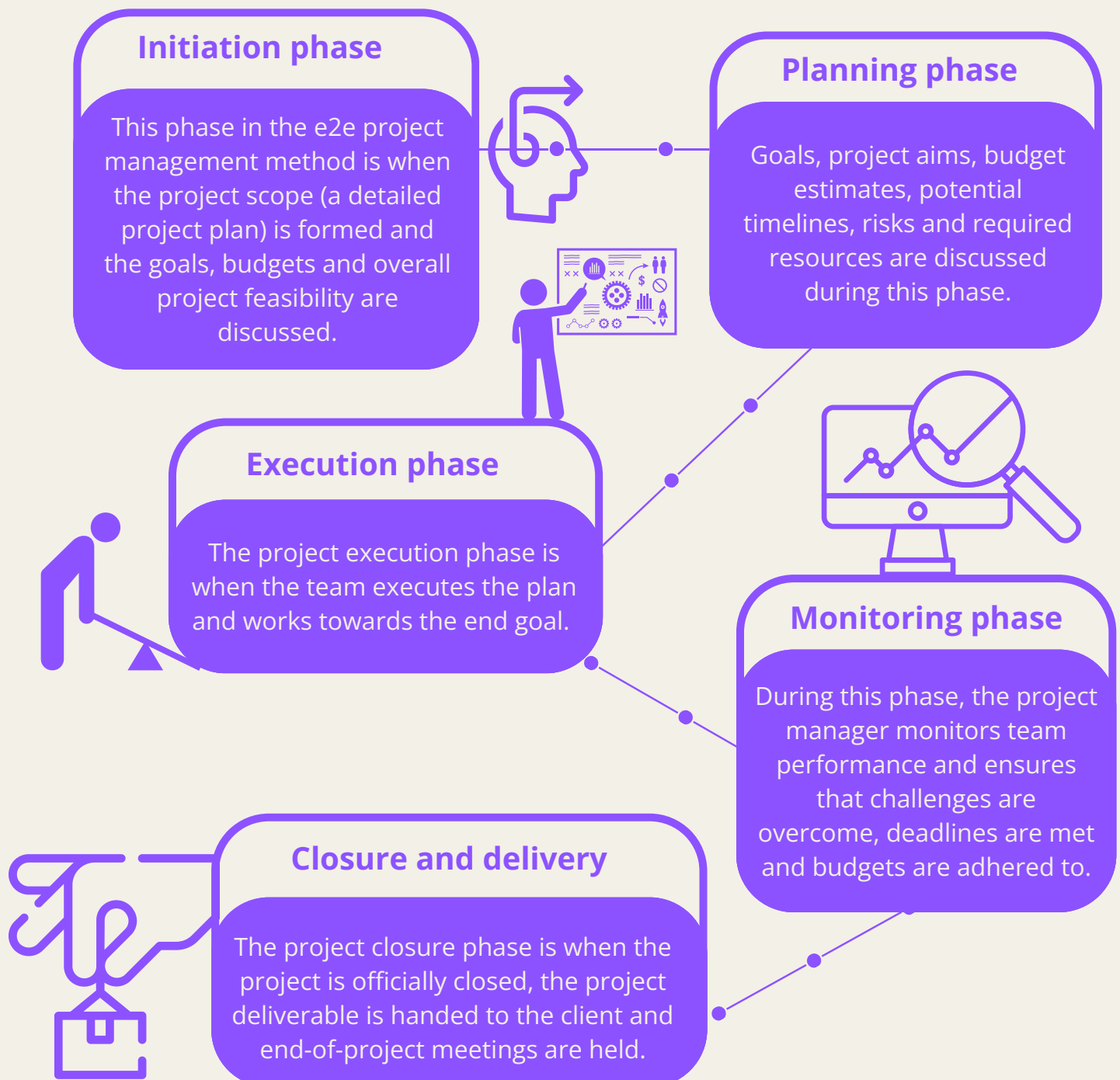
End-to-End Project Management Key Components

No matter which traditional project management methodologies or Agile frameworks you use, the end-to-end process is broken down into seven key components, which we'll cover **below**.

- **Scope management** — The project manager is responsible for creating the project scope (a detailed plan). The scope aims to prove the project's feasibility by defining goals, deadlines, milestones, budgets and anything else that's needed to meet project stakeholder requirements.
- **Cost management** — This includes estimating the project budget, identifying the necessary resources and determining how to best control project expenses.
- **Risk management** — This involves identifying risks like miscommunication, staffing, project team or supply chain issues, and putting plans in place to overcome these challenges during the project.
- **Time management** — This component ensures that due dates for each task and timelines for each project management phase are created. Time management helps teams understand time constraints and provides a global project timeline that can keep projects on track.
- **Quality management** – Quality management refers to defining quality standards, implementing quality assurances and carrying out quality-control checks on all project documentation and deliverables.
- **Stakeholder management** — This is the process of managing [project stakeholders](#). Project managers must effectively communicate with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle to gain a better understanding of their expectations and concerns.
- **Communication management** — Project managers must define communication methods between their teams, the client and the stakeholders. For example, a manager could use some of the best project management software and chat tools or platforms like Slack to communicate with others.

End-to-End Project Management Life Cycle

Every end-to-end project you work on, regardless of industry, will have five key project management phases. These project phases will help you plan for every situation in the project management life cycle. We'll cover each stage in more detail below.



The Project Management Life Cycle Phases in Detail

Now that you know what the phases of project management are, we'll break down each phase a little more so you can better understand them.

Initiation

During the initiation phase, the project manager will:

- **Introduce the project**

A project manager must introduce the project to explain why it's needed and how the company will benefit. A project charter introduces the project by defining the project, determining team roles and responsibilities, setting budget estimates and identifying key stakeholders.

- **Conduct research**

Project managers should conduct research to help support their request. If a project charter can prove the project is feasible, it will likely be approved.

- **Identify stakeholders**

Stakeholders (individuals or companies) that will be affected by or involved with the project must be identified so their needs and requirements can be taken into account.

- **Hold a kickoff meeting**

Once approved, the project manager holds a kickoff meeting with their team and stakeholders. The team discusses team structure (check out our guide to [organizational structures](#)), ➤ what must be accomplished and project timelines.



Planning

During the planning phase, the project manager will:



- **Identify the problem**

During the planning phase, teams must identify the key problem their project will solve. When the team has identified the problem, they can create a plan to help reach their goal.

- **Create a timeline**

Once the scope has been determined and milestones and tasks have been assigned, the project manager can plot the project's timeline on a Gantt chart. A Gantt chart provides a global overview of tasks and is easy to maintain and read.

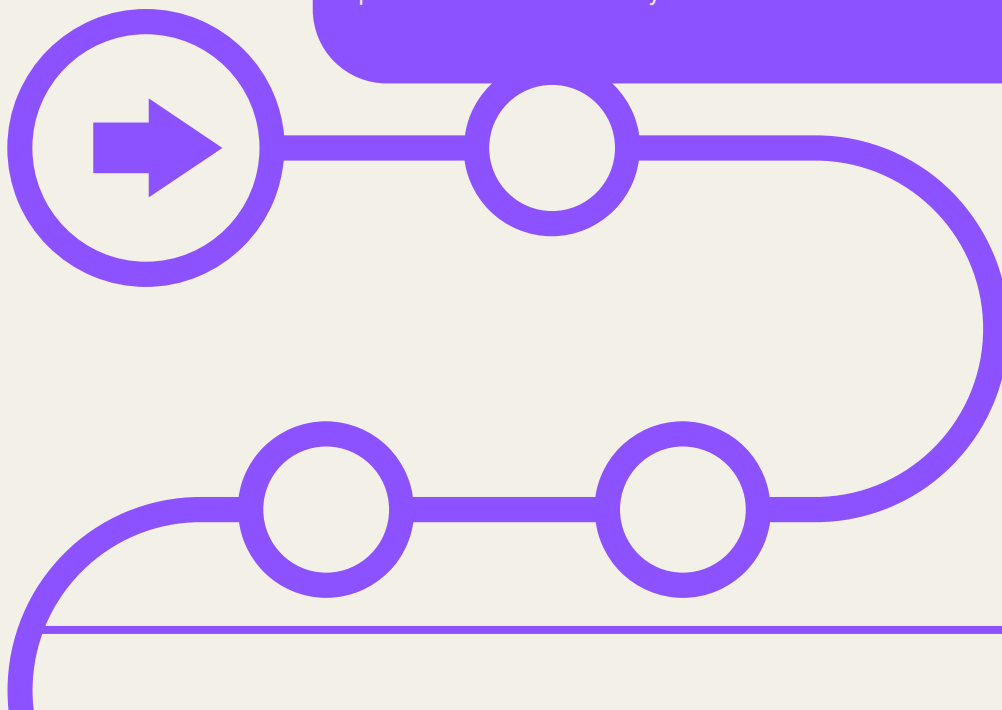


- **Estimate the budget**

Project leaders must estimate the project's overall cost. Project managers can use activity-based costing to estimate how much each phase, task and resource will cost.

- **Plan for risks**

Every project has risks. Project managers need to plan for staffing issues, problems with resources or materials, budget constraints and more. By planning for potential issues upfront, project managers and scrum masters can quickly overcome problems when they arise.





- **Discuss product quality**

To understand what's expected from a quality standpoint, the project manager must know what the client and stakeholders are looking for so a quality assurance plan can be created.

- **Identify required resources**

Project managers must identify the resources they need to complete the project from a human resource management perspective and, if required, a material standpoint.

RACI Matrix

🏠 Main Table

+

New Item

🔍 Search

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↕ Sort

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Item	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Status of the Deliverable/Task
Project Phase 1						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Item	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Status of the Deliverable/Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create Welcome Packet	👤	👤	👤	👤	Working on it
<input type="checkbox"/>	Book Meeting Hall	👤	👤	👤	👤	Done
<input type="checkbox"/>	+ Add Item					
			👤	👤👤	👤👤	
Project Phase 2						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Item	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Status of the Deliverable/Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deliverable/Task 1	👤	👤	👤	👤	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deliverable/Task 2	👤	👤	👤	👤	
<input type="checkbox"/>	+ Add Item					
			👤	👤	👤	
Project Phase 3						

Project managers can use RACI charts to assign roles and responsibilities to team members.

Execution

During the execution phase, the project manager will:

- **Manage the project**

Leaders need to ensure that team members are doing what they're supposed to, that deadlines are met and that requests for help are handled. Leaders can utilize dashboards and reports in project management software to track the project's progress and monitor time spent on tasks.

- **Watch the budget**

The budget must be constantly monitored, as even slight changes to the plan can wreak havoc. Any changes to the plan must be discussed and fit within the budget. Otherwise, the project could experience scope creep.

- **Implement risk strategies**

If the project manager encounters any of the risks discussed during the planning stage, they use the risk plan to overcome them. If an issue that wasn't discussed pops up, the manager meets with the team, the client and the stakeholders to find a solution.

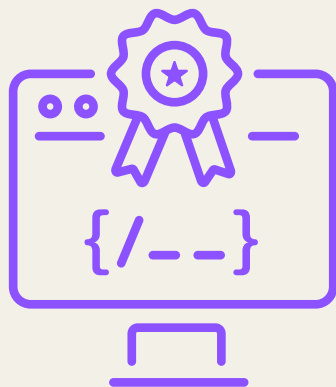


Risk Register											
Use this risk register to manage and mitigate the risks across your projects. See More											
Main Table Risks Dashboard											
New Risk Search Person Filter Sort Hide											
Project Romeo											
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk	Description	Implications	Risk owner	Risk status	Probability	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Expected C...	Mitigation cost	Risk response
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk 1	a very very bad thin...	all lives on earth wil...		Active	Possible	Moderate	Medium	\$500,000	\$100,000	Escalate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk 2	Oh no! its going to ...	will need to purcha...		Mitigated	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	\$5,000		Accept
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk 3	a very very bad thin...	all lives on earth wil...		Active	Likely	Moderate	High	\$20,000		Avoid
+ Add Risk											
									\$175,000 avg	\$100,000 avg	
Project Surge											
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk	Description	Implications	Risk owner	Risk status	Probability	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Expected C...	Mitigation cost	Risk response
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk 1	a very very bad thin...	all lives on earth wil...		Active	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	\$100,000		Accept
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk 2	Oh no! its going to ...	will need to purcha...		Mitigated	Likely	Severe	High	\$7,000		Reduce
+ Add Risk											
									\$53,500 avg	\$0 avg	
+ Add new group											

You can use project management software to plan for risks.

Monitoring

During the monitoring phase, the project manager will:



- **Ensure product quality**

Throughout the project, management should review the team's work and check the product quality. They should also frequently test and evaluate the product so potential issues can be promptly identified and fixed.

- **Evaluate team output**

If a task takes too long to complete, the project manager must find out why. Does the person assigned to the job need more training? Are there any supply issues? Do more people need to be assigned to the task? To ensure the project is delivered on time, the team must perform to its maximum potential.

- **Facilitate team collaboration and stakeholder interaction**

Agile methodologies like Scrum and hybrid methodologies — traditional methods that embrace Agile principles — encourage daily team meetings and biweekly review meetings with the client and stakeholders. This helps keep everyone updated via open lines of communication.



Closure & Delivery

During the Closure & Delivery the project manager will:

- **Close the project**

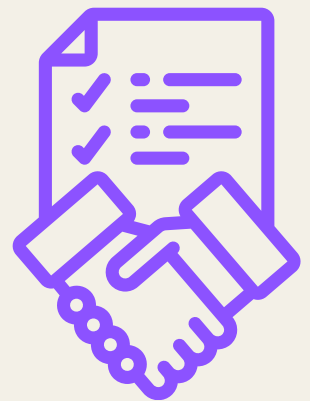
Closing the project is the final stage. The manager must ensure that every task is finished and that all client and stakeholder objectives have been met. The manager then hands over the project deliverable and writes a closing report before officially closing the project.

- **Review the project**

Once the project has ended, the project manager should hold a retrospective meeting to discuss project performance. These meetings allow the team to reflect on the project, discuss wins and losses, create new methods to improve future projects, hold team-building exercises and celebrate.

- **Release the resources**

Once the retrospective meeting is complete, the project manager releases the team. Individuals can then be assigned to new projects within the organization or released.



Advantages & Pitfalls of End-to-End Project Management

Though the end-to-end project management method has many advantages, you must also be aware of the disadvantages. We'll cover the pros and cons below.

End-to-End Project Management Advantages

Some of the advantages of using the end-to-end project management method are:

- **Better results**

Having a robust plan and sticking to it will produce better results than trying to run a project without any direction or forethought.

- **Increased client and stakeholder satisfaction**

A better outcome will please clients and stakeholders, and enhance the chances of them hiring you again.

- **Improved risk management**

Recognizing potential risks and weak spots in a project before it starts can help managers deal with issues efficiently if they arise during the project.

- **Team collaboration**

The end-to-end process encourages open communication and collaboration. Frequent meetings with transparent communication can help build trust and improve decision-making.

- **Controlled budgets**

Using activity-based costing methods to estimate a project's budget and implementing measures to control new initiatives and tasks will help you stick to that budget.



End-to-End Project Management Pitfalls

The end-to-end method also has a few pitfalls that project managers must be aware of. Below are a few of them.



- **Lack of preparation**

The process of planning an end-to-end project can be time-consuming and can delay the project if the project manager is unprepared or unsure of the steps.

- **Under-planning**

Under-planning for a project can lead to delays, low-quality deliverables and scope creep. Take the time to meticulously plan for every variable.

- **Skipping team meetings**

Falling behind schedule is never good, but cutting corners is worse. If you fail to hold regular team meetings where leaders can share project information and solutions to problems, you could find yourself in deep water.

The end-to-end project management method might not be for everyone but, as you have learned, the process does have some clear benefits. Though time-consuming, it can help leaders develop a comprehensive project plan, meet project goals, come in under budget, build a team that trusts each other and deliver a successful project.



Project Management Processes

Along with everything we have learned about the project management life cycle, project managers must be aware of some critical processes that simply cannot be ignored or swept under the rug. Failure to incorporate scope, time and risk management will lead to disaster.

In this section, we'll take a closer look at each of these key project management processes so you can better understand their importance. Project managers should do everything in their power to ensure these are carried out.

Scope Management

Project managers spend a lot of time designing project scopes, which define projects and how they will be completed. A solid plan should ensure projects run smoothly. There are many ways to create a project charter (**project scope**), but they are usually created before the project begins, during a meeting with clients and key stakeholders.

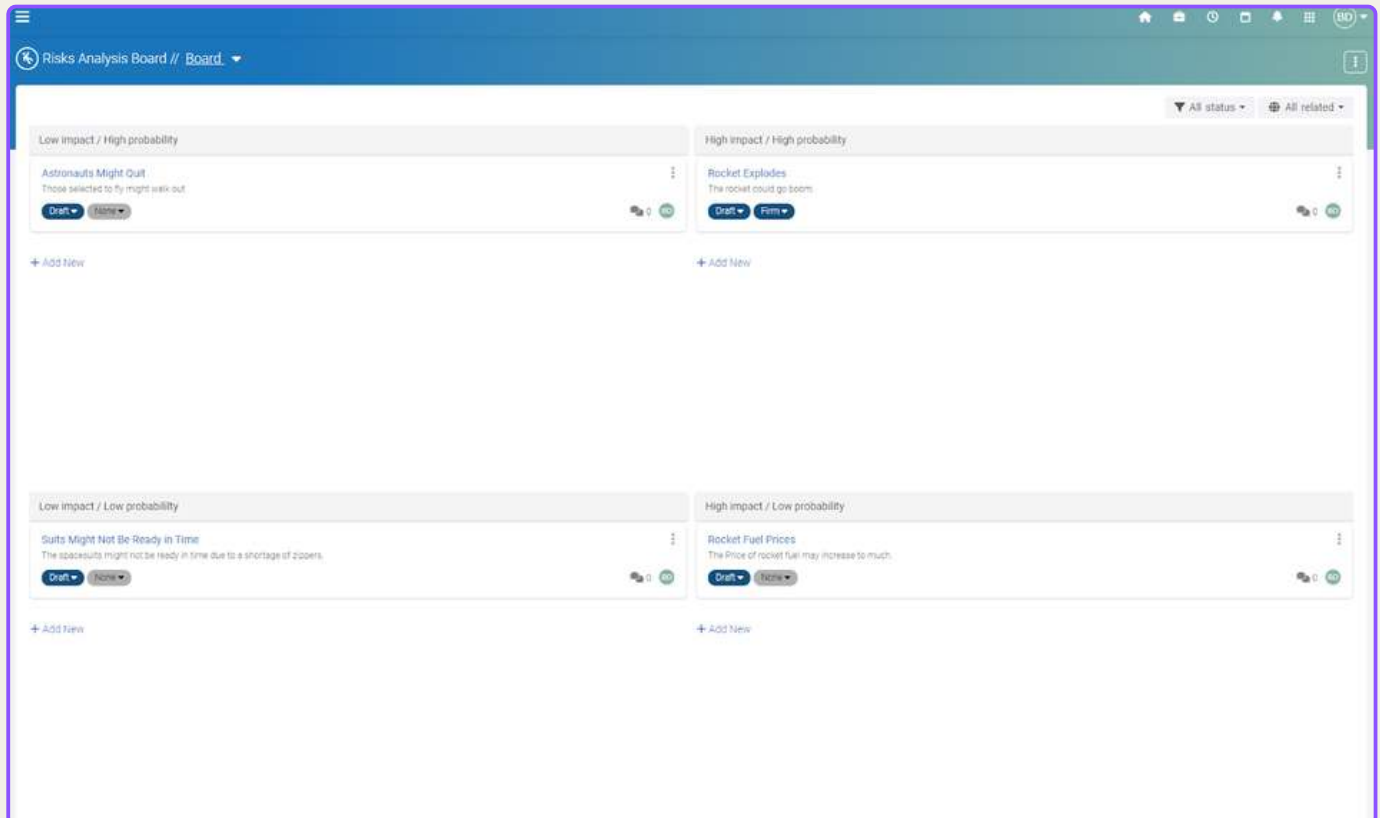
A solid project charter will detail every aspect of the project, from the project vision to the overall goal. Key details about **resources, budgets, team members, milestones, deadlines and the project management methodology** will be ironed out. The goal of a project scope is to convince top brass that the project is feasible and will be profitable.

Once executives, the client and key stakeholders have all agreed to proceed with the project, the project scope is further refined before all of the project chess pieces are moved into place. As mentioned earlier, scope creep is a real possibility without a proper project plan, so the initial scope must be watertight.



Risk Management

During the project scope refinement process, project leaders should sit down with their team to plan for risks. There will always be risks no matter which industry you're in or project you're working on. Failing to prepare for them will lead to disappointment.



Purpose-built tools in popular project management software can make risk management even easier.

Fortunately, many of the best project management software suites, like monday.com and Leantime, come with excellent tools that can help you document potential risks and how to deal with them should they rear their ugly heads.

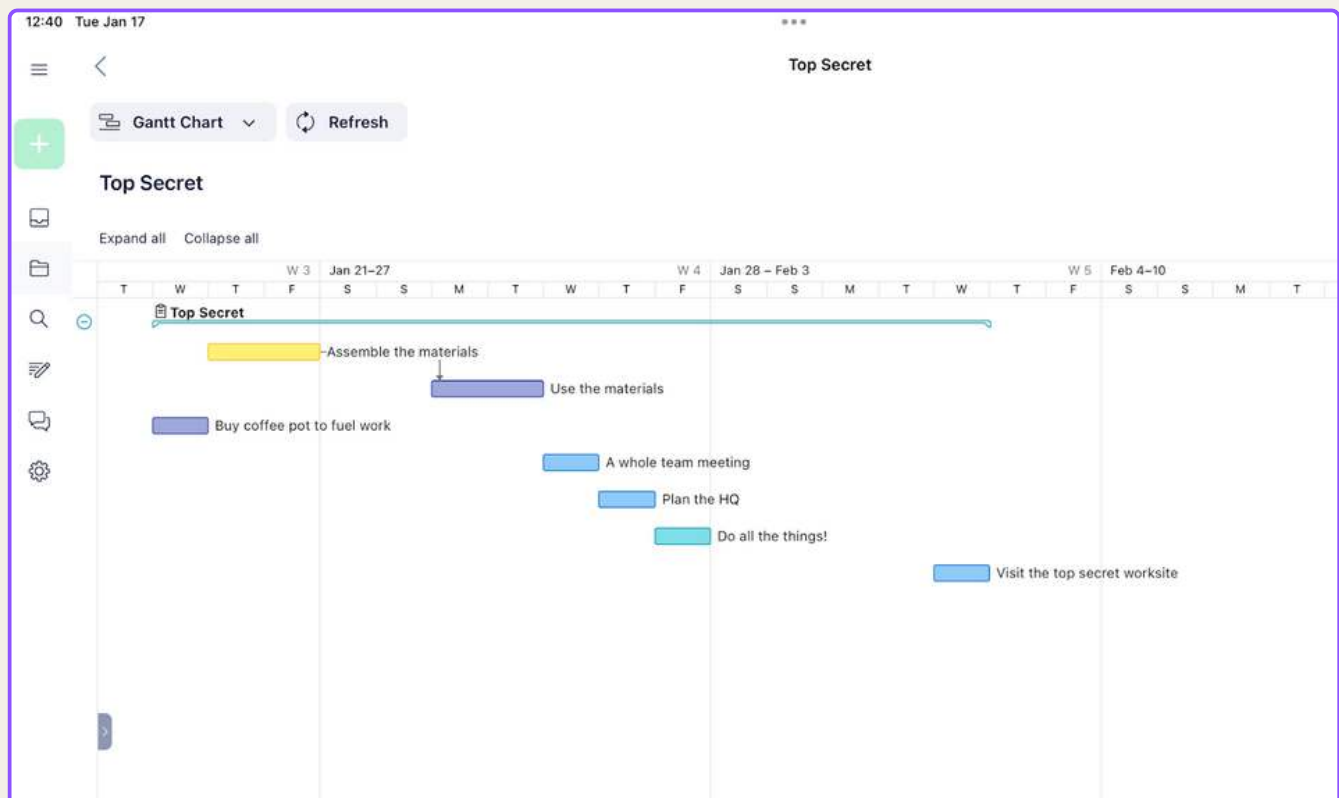
Project risks can include issues with resources and supply chains, employee performance issues, team members falling ill, undocumented project changes, breakdowns in communication, budgeting issues, market risks, local or federal laws that may have been overlooked and more.

If any portion of the project scope should be scrutinized, it's the risk management plan. Not having well-documented processes to deal with issues could cause problems you simply do not need. You may experience major bottlenecks, ballooning budgets and more that could leave your project's chances of success in dire straits.

Time Management

It should go without saying that time management is pivotal in project management. How can a project be expected to finish on time and within budget if tasks aren't assigned, due dates aren't set, employee hours aren't tracked and milestones aren't created?

Many traditional project management methodologies, such as **Waterfall** and the **Critical Path Method**, require project managers to create extremely detailed time management plans. However, this level of planning can often be overlooked when using Agile methods and frameworks, which are more accepting of change and encourage flexibility.



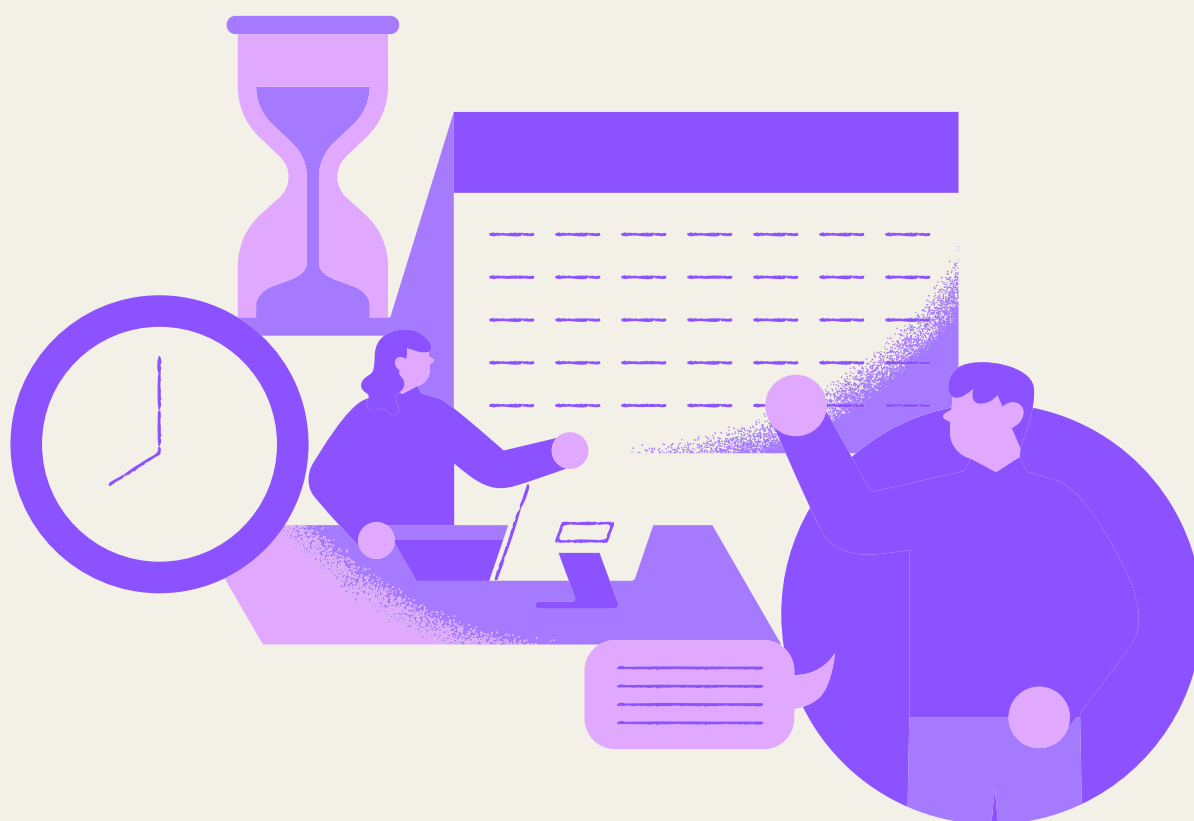
Gantt charts are one of the best tools project managers can use to create project timelines.

Remember: No matter which project methodology you choose, you should always take the time to create detailed plans that will help you manage your time and your team's time.

Use the built-in time-tracking tools in project management software or a third-party application. Create **Gantt charts** that display a project on a dated timeline and set milestones so you can quickly see where your project needs to be at any given point.

Ensure that team members track the time they spend on tasks so they can bill correctly and so you can see how efficient they are. This also helps you bill clients correctly. Time management is a process that tends to fall by the wayside. Don't let this happen.

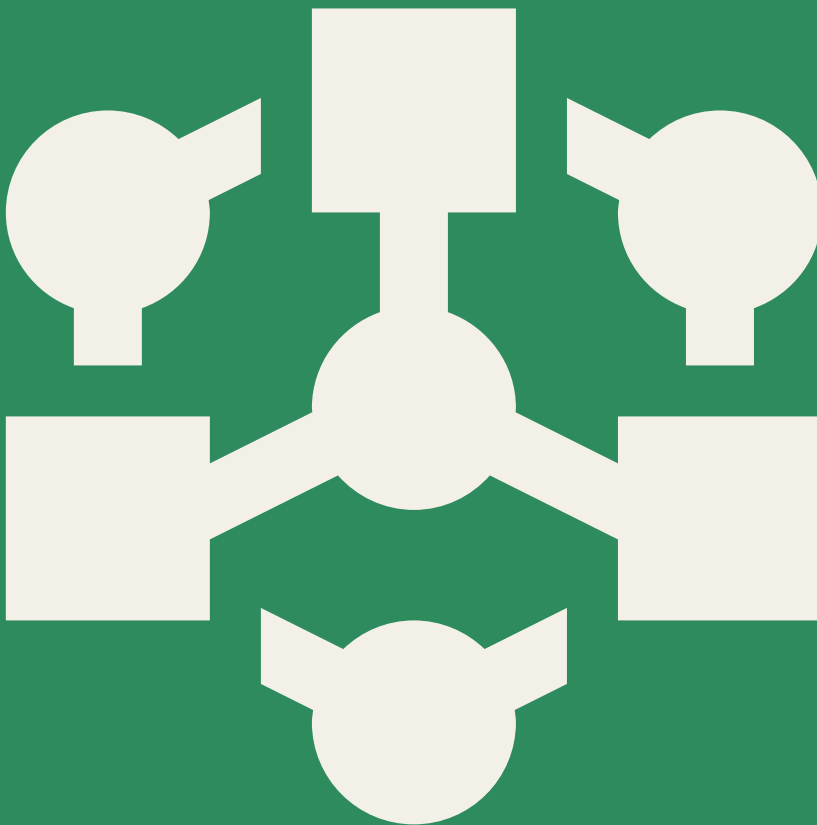
Create a time management plan before the project starts to ensure everyone is on the same page.



Project Management Structures, Project Management Offices and Stakeholders

No two projects are alike. As a project manager, you must be ready to work within many organizational structures that can significantly affect how you do your job. You must also be able to work with stakeholders who could have wildly different visions than yours.

Below, we'll examine four organizational structures that you, as a project manager, need to be aware of. You'll learn about project management offices and how they function, and we'll break down the different types of stakeholders that you'll encounter along the way.



Organizational Structure

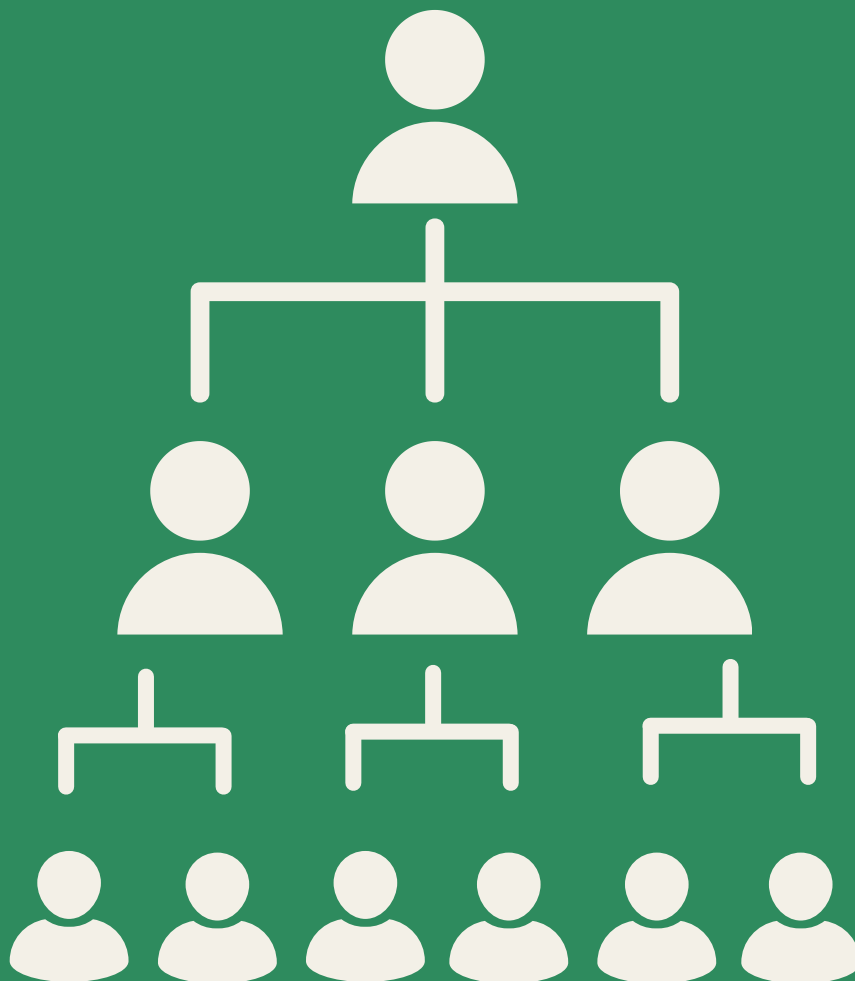
Business owners spend a significant amount of time searching for the perfect employees for their businesses. Still, without a solid plan and an organizational structure to support them, it could all be for nothing. Below, we'll look at the four types of organizational structure that project managers could find themselves in. You want to be comfortable working in these environments.

There are many organizational structure charts, most of which take on specific shapes. Think about the organizational charts you have seen in your career. You've likely seen charts that look like pyramids, with the company CEO sitting at the top and the senior and middle managers below. Below are the four types of organizational structures you could find yourself working in.



Functional Structure

A functional organizational structure is divided into various departments covering different business aspects. Each department is a functional team that has a leader or department owner. The teams in each department report to their manager if there are issues or concerns. The department leads then report to their respective managers further up the chain.

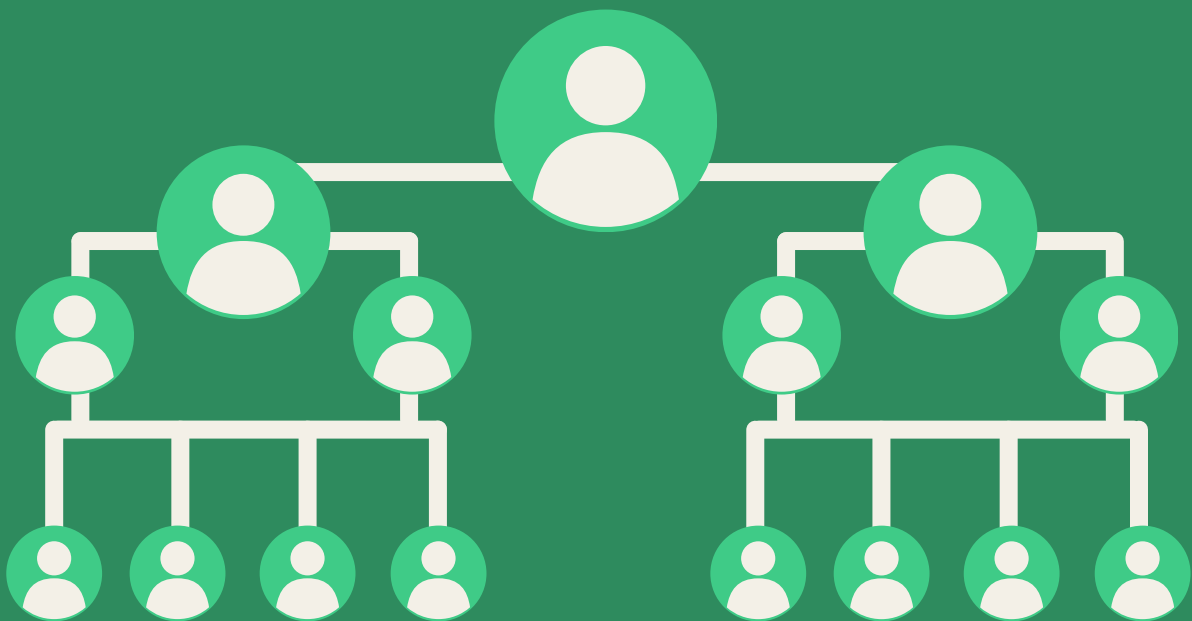


In functional structures, communication comes from the top and works its way down.

The functional structure is an example of a top-down hierarchical organizational chart. It is also known as a bureaucratic organizational structure. This method is common in small to medium-sized businesses. Pros include knowledgeable departments that promote teamwork. The main disadvantage of this departmentalization is the lack of cross-functional teams.

Divisional Structure

Large companies and enterprises with many different product lines often adopt centralized, divisional organizational structures. Take an electronics company, for example. The company creates televisions, kitchen appliances, phones and more, but each department operates as its own division or business and has its own team-based structure.



Divisional structures ensure every office or department has the same employee setup.

Each division of the electronics conglomerate has a president who runs that segment of the business. Under the president are senior and mid-level managers. Beneath them are various teams and individuals who design and create the products, and report to the division leader. Each division head then reports back to the company CEO or chairperson.

The biggest pro of the divisional approach is that each department operates individually but uses the same employee structure, which provides flexibility when attempting to cater to the customer base. The biggest con is that there is often little collaboration between different divisions, which can make different sections of a company feel isolated.

Flatarchy

A flatarchy is a hybrid organizational structure that mixes hierarchical methods and a flat structure. In a flatarchy, you'll find an executive sitting at the top the organization, like in a hierarchy. Flat structures aim to remove middle management, so in a flatarchy, you'll find a single manager or no manager at all between the top executive and all other employees.



A flatarchy is an organizational structure that businesses use to cut down on middle management.

A flatarchy is a decentralized structure that small businesses often employ. As you can imagine, a small business using decentralized organizational structures doesn't need many middle managers. Fewer managers means teams and individuals can work across departments, have more responsibilities and job functions, and make critical decisions.

This type of structure indicates that a company is Lean. Lean methods can help reduce waste and operating costs. Businesses that adopt a flatarchy can also expect improved communication and teams with an Agile mindset. The biggest pitfall of a flatarchy is confusion stemming from a lack of leadership.

Matrix Structure

A matrix organizational structure is a little more complex than the other methods we have covered. In matrix structures, teams report to two managers instead of one. For example, a creative team would report to a functional marketing manager and to a project manager.



A matrix structure sees employees report to two managers: a functional manager overseeing a department and a project manager who oversees projects.

Organizations that employ a matrix structure are highly flexible, champion collaboration and encourage direct communication. In a matrix structure, team members can learn new skills, as they are part of cross-functional teams. However, matrix structures can cause problems, including managerial conflicts and drawn-out decision-making processes.

Having a sound business operational structure that can help regulate operations, roles and responsibilities is necessary for businesses that want to grow and exceed expectations. Though every organizational structure is different, many of the methods discussed above will improve team performance.

With a clear organizational structure, employees know who to turn to when problems arise. An organizational structure also fosters collaboration across multiple departments, helps increase transparency and builds team trust. You'll also find that productivity increases, operations become scalable and better pay structures can be adopted.

How to Choose an Organizational Structure

You need to sit down and take time to figure out which type of organizational structure you want in your business. After all, it will affect the way your business operates. Take into consideration the type of business, the employees you have and the direction you want to take the business.



Discussing a structural change with your team can help increase buy-in.

Do you want to be the one calling the shots, or do you trust your managers and employees to make decisions on your behalf? Do you want numerous managers and slower decision-making processes, or do you want to use a structure that promotes agile teams that can adapt to change and make business decisions on the fly?

The best way to choose an organizational structure is to look at your business and the services you're offering. Speak with your clients and shareholders to understand their needs, and discuss potential changes with the entire team to see what they're comfortable with. With transparency and open communication, your team will be more likely to buy in to the new structure.

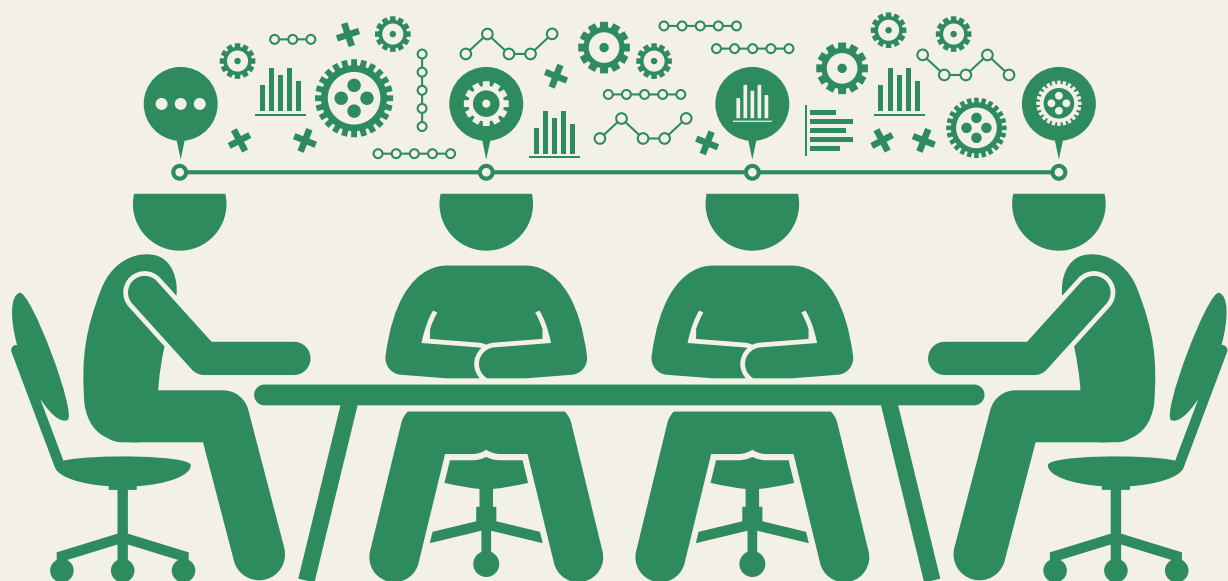
Project Management Office (PMO)

Project managers may have to adapt to using a project management office team. PMOs aren't used in every organizational structure, but they are becoming more popular. What is a PMO, though?

A PMO is a group, unit or business division that sets and applies policies, best practices and company standards that structure and explain how projects should be executed. The group can include internal employees or an outside consulting firm. Regardless, by standardizing how projects operate, PMOs can help ensure projects are delivered on time and within budget.

PMOs play a huge role in helping organizations share resources and tools. They help communicate work progress and any risks that might crop up. They ensure strategic goals are aligned, implement dashboards and scorecards to track project progress, and advise senior management on how projects are going.

There are two main types of PMOs. Supportive PMOs share best practices, design and implement templates, and support project teams. Directive PMOs are directly involved in projects and their execution, which requires consistency. They are often found on teams that work in high-risk industries like healthcare.



Project Stakeholders

As a project manager, you'll be expected to collaborate and communicate with project stakeholders during every stage of work. However, what are project stakeholders, and what do they do? A project stakeholder is an individual who is involved in a project or who will be affected (negatively or positively) by the outcome of the project.

You'll have regular interactions with stakeholders as a project manager. You'll provide updates on project progress, budgets and whether any problems or roadblocks stand in the way of project success. You'll also need to be receptive to feedback from stakeholders and may have to deal with differing interests, which is where your ability to handle conflict will come in handy.

During your project management career, you'll encounter two types of stakeholders: internal and external. Internal stakeholders are individuals who work for the same company as you. They could be managers, executives or even team members. External stakeholders include outside suppliers, customers, consultants, sponsors, end users and investors.

There is not a single project on the planet that has no stakeholders. The quicker you can learn to collaborate, communicate and find common ground with them, the smoother the project will go.



Project Management Software

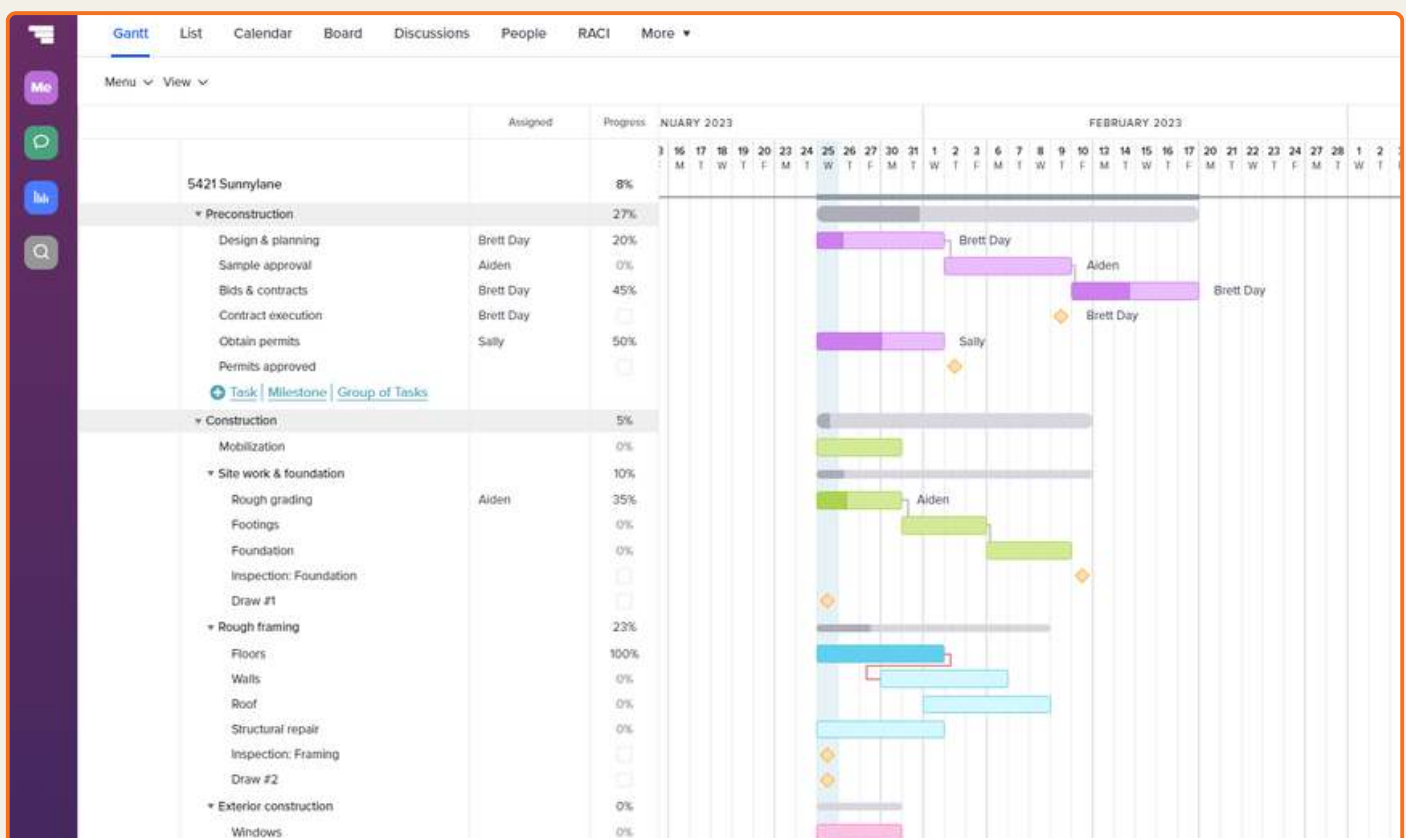
As we discussed earlier in this guide, managing projects big or small is no easy task. As a project manager, you'll be responsible for managing hundreds of tasks, communicating with team members, managing resources and more. Fortunately, project management software can help lighten your load and simplify task management, communication and many other specifics.

In this section, we'll cover different types of project management software and why picking the right one for you and your team is key. We'll also examine 15 project management platforms that all modern project managers should keep in mind.




Types of Project Management Software

Many project management software suites look similar. You'll notice that most feature multiple workflow tools that let you assign staff to tasks and add due dates, project notes and more. They typically allow managers to track resources, manage time, share files and communicate with team members. Many platforms also support multiple project management methodologies.



Most project management software platforms support multiple project management methodologies, but it might be worth exploring specialized options.

However, it's worth taking a deeper dive into each platform to see whether it handles one methodology or framework better than another. You can do this by signing up for free trials and putting the kanban boards, [Gantt charts](#),  calendars and more to the test. Though all kanban boards may seem alike, you may find that you prefer one version over another.

In addition, though all-in-one project management solutions that support multiple project management methodologies work well, you may be better off with a dedicated software platform that specializes in one form of project tracking.

For example, if you use the **Waterfall method**, [monday.com](#) will certainly help you get your work done. This beautifully designed tool supports traditional ways of working with **Gantt charts** and **Agile frameworks** via kanban boards. However, a dedicated platform that specializes in **Gantt charts**, like **TeamGantt**, might offer more features for your preferred work style.

Our suggestion is to use the **free trials** that many companies offer and put each tool to the test before you commit to a paid subscription. You'll quickly learn whether an all-in-one solution or a specialized platform suits you better.



- Try for Free
- Beautiful Design
- Easy to Learn
- Many Apps & Integrations



- Try for Free
- Good Budget Option
- Steep Learning Curve



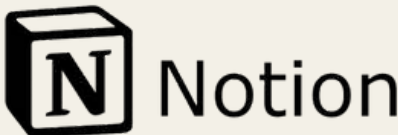




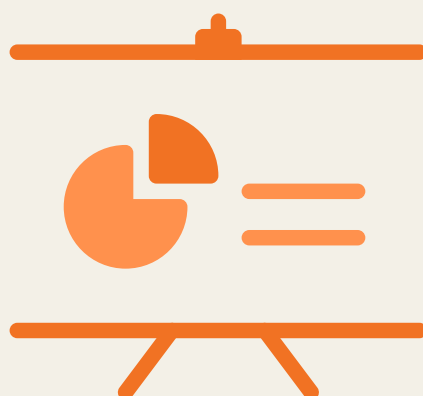
Project Management Software: Quick Comparison





It can be easy to become bogged down in the fine details of project management software. Each platform has numerous features that change often and plans that fluctuate in pricing.

It's important to understand the general use of each platform and have a brief overview of its capabilities; that's exactly what you'll find in the table below. The platforms are listed alphabetically rather than in any particular ranked order.

<i>Project Management Platform</i>	<i>Features and Use Case</i>
 Airtable	 A highly customizable project management software suite allows managers to create custom workflows for multiple projects in numerous industries.
 asana	 A project management platform designed to be used with traditional and Agile methodologies that can connect with more than 200 applications for highly customized workflows. The interface is a little clunky, but overall it's a reliable platform.
 Basecamp	 Ideal for teams who need extensive communication and planning tools and simple yet effective task-tracking features.
 ClickUp	 Perfect for remote teams thanks to robust real-time collaboration tools, powerful task and resource management features, and many project templates.
 freedcamp	 An easy-to-use platform with simple task-tracking tools that's ideal for small teams that are new to project management.
 Jira	 A powerful tool for software and product developers using Scrum, thanks to its drag-and-drop kanban boards and clean backlog management tools.

<i>Project Management Platform</i>	<i>Features and Use Case</i>
	Suitable for leaders who need resource and project management tools, as well as blueprints for planning simple and complex projects.
	One of the most versatile project management platforms around thanks to its gorgeous interface, easy-to-use tools and affordable plans. It's suitable for most project teams.
	Robust software for managers and teams working in content creation fields. It features powerful real-time collaboration tools and clean task-tracking features.
	A budget-friendly project management suite with tools for Agile planning, organizing, tracking and scheduling. It's ideal for teams on a tight budget that need effective task and resource management tools.
	A platform that brings spreadsheets into the 21st century with powerful coding and task tools that are ideal for many traditional and Agile project management methodologies. However, it is not well suited for those who dislike spreadsheets.



<i>Project Management Platform</i>	<i>Features and Use Case</i>
	<p>➤ Gorgeous, easy-to-use Gantt charts that are ideal for teams that use traditional project management methods like Waterfall or the Critical Path Method.</p>
	<p>➤ A powerful and affordable project management platform for large Agile teams that like using kanban boards to manage projects.</p>
	<p>➤ Do-it-all project management software with plenty of task-tracking tools and robust security and administration options that make it ideal for projects at scale.</p>
	<p>➤ An easy-to-use and well-rounded platform that's intuitive, affordable and expandable thanks to many first-party integrations.</p>



Conclusion

We hope this guide to project management has cleared up any questions you may have had about project management, the role of a project manager and how you can become one. A career in project management can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also be very stressful. Hopefully, this guide will help you decide whether a project management role is for you.



Author

Brett Day



Knows very well about

project management, Gantt chart, scrum, milestone, stakeholder, agile methodology, critical path method, kanban board, Project scope management

Snap Shot

Brett Day is a writer and editor for **Cloudwards**. His writing and research focus largely on project management software. Snap Shot

Background & Education

Brett Day brings to the table a vast and diverse experience that ranges from retail management with top names like CVS, Old Navy and Kohl's to owning a successful photography business. With an impressive 13 years in the writing realm, Brett has showcased his expertise on various esteemed platforms, such as [Yahoo](#), [GotGame](#), [411Mania](#), [The Phoblographer](#), [Photofocus](#) and [SmartBrief](#). His deep-seated passion for technology and software, combined with his background in planning and executing significant projects, makes him a valuable asset to the Cloudwards team. Beyond the professional realm, Brett is a passionate gamer, hiker and photographer.

Brett has fortified his professional background with a Six Sigma White Belt certification from Educate 360, emphasizing his dedication to continuous learning and improving processes in the business realm.



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