

Project Management and Grant Writing

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Lesson 5.

Execute and Close a Project

The phase of execution is the longest phase of a project. Here, you have to build the physical project deliverables and present the results. In short: this is where the project gets done. The most resources are applied and the most effort is expended in this phase.

Activities included in the execution phase¹:

- Manage and support the project team
- Manage time, costs, documents, etc.
- Execute project scope
- Quality and risk management
- Communication with the stakeholders, sponsors and team members from time to time
- Continuous status review through reports and meetings
- Track the progress of the execution → monitoring
- Dissemination

Please read the following article to understand, what deliverables mean:
https://www.simplilearn.com/what-is-a-deliverable-article?source=frs_left_nav_clicked

Successful Execution

Todd C. Williams wrote a book called *Filling Execution Gaps*, where he identifies six execution gaps that prevent successful project execution. These are:

- Absence of common understanding
- Disengaged executive sponsors
- Misalignment with strategic goals
- Poor change management
- Ineffective governance
- Lackluster leadership

It is important, according to Williams, to understand how these gaps can affect your project and find solutions, not just for each gap individually, but develop action plans and strategies to fix all six gaps.

Please, watch the following video for more detail:

- How to Successfully Execute a Plan
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=802yQd8TNf8>

¹ Orangescrum. Execution In Project Management. URL: <https://www.orangescrum.com/tutorial/introduction-to-project-management/execution-in-project-management>

Project Reports

Writing reports regularly is always one of the most important tasks during the execution. Reports help communicate the status of your project and keep people regularly informed of the schedule, budget, staffing, deliverables, risks, and issues. Reports are crucial to implementing your project successfully.

To learn about how to write effective project reports, please watch the following video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-vvrcQdpZQ>

Monitoring and Control

Monitoring and controlling can hardly separate. Monitoring means keeping track of all tasks, costs, and activities to make sure you are executing the project according to the plan. Through monitoring, you can make grounded decisions and changes (→ controlling) during the execution phase when it is necessary. Reports help a lot to make easier this activity.

PMBOK® Guide defines controlling in the following way: „*Ensuring that project objectives are met by monitoring and measuring progress regularly to identify variances from plan so that corrective action can be taken when necessary.*”²

The core controlling processes are³:

- Integrated Change Control: coordinating changes across the entire project.
- Scope Verification: formalizing acceptance of the project scope.
- Scope Change Control: controlling changes to project scope.
- Schedule Control: controlling changes to the project schedule.
- Cost Control: controlling changes to the project budget.
- Quality Control: monitoring specific project results to determine if they comply with relevant quality standards and identifying ways to eliminate causes of unsatisfactory performance.
- Performance Reporting: collecting and disseminating performance information. This includes status reporting, progress measurement, and forecasting.
- Risk Monitoring and Control: keeping track of identified risks, monitoring residual risks and identifying new risks, ensuring the execution of risk plans, and evaluating their effectiveness in reducing risk.

Please watch the following video:

- Project Execution: Monitoring and Control Functions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo9lVmeU4MY>

² A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide). Sydney, NSW: SAI Global, 2004. 30.p.

³ The list quoted from PMBOK® Guide 36.p.

Closing

To learn how to close a project, please, watch the following video:

- How and Why to Close a Project - Project Management Training
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aakuB-BtdlQ>

Dissemination

Disseminate means „*to spread or give out something, especially news, information, ideas, etc., to a lot of people.*“⁴ In a project, it means the process of making the results and deliverables of a project available to the stakeholders and to the wider audience. You can use several ways to disseminate the results of your project. A few examples:

- Publications, articles
- Banners, catalogs, logo, roll-up banner, etc. (printed materials)
- Conferences (press conference), seminars, trainings
- Media presence
- Websites, online communication tools
- Short videos

In most cases (but not every time!), dissemination is crucial for the long-term sustainability of your project. You can execute the best and most useful project of all time, but if no one knows about it, your project failed.

Please, watch the following video:

- 5.6 Create Impact Through Dissemination and Exploitation of Results
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYNArB6Y9sw>

⁴ “Disseminate.” Cambridge Dictionary, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disseminate>.

Assignment

Practice Quiz

- You can find the quiz here: <https://forms.gle/JHkFH5369U1dJetD9>