



Project Charter

Project Title:

Prepared by:		Position		Date:	
				Version:	
Distributed to:					

Background to the Project

Set out where you are now, where the project will be taking you and what the benefits of the project will be. Make sure there is a clear understanding of what the project is about and that all interested parties share the same aims and objectives. All too often people either do not know Why the project is being initiated or have a conflicting idea as to what the required outcome is.

Aims & Objectives:

Set out exactly what it is that the project is aiming to achieve. The more precise and specific you are the more likely you are to achieve the end result. Having measurable results is also important, there is a truism that if something cannot be measured it cannot be controlled.

Criteria of Success:

How exactly will you know that your project has been a success, spell it out. Like a journey you will know when you have arrived.

Consequences of Failure:

Focusing people on what the downside is may reinforce the need to achieve the objectives of the project. We live and work in a fast paced and ever changing world, just standing still is not good enough. If you don't respond quickly to change it is likely your competitors will, consigning you and your business to second place or even worse.

Assumptions:

Just because things are obvious or apparent to you does not mean others think in the same way or perceive the situation from the same viewpoint as you. If there are any assumptions in your plan clearly define them, that way there can be no confusion or breakdown in communication. If things go unsaid they can go unnoticed.

Constraints:

What factors limit or impact upon your project and your planning. Clearly identify all factors impacting on your plans and the steps you have taken to accommodate them.

Risk Analysis:

What risks are there to your project. List them out and consider their probability and potential impact upon your plans. How would you know when a risk had arisen, back track to try and identify the warning signs and then monitor them closely.

Mitigation Plans:

Having identified and prioritised potential risks to your project list out the measures you would employ to avoid the risk impacting on your project.

Contingency plans:

Your plan should go according to schedule but if it does not what are you going to do?



Risk Owners:

You cannot be responsible for all the risks in your project, list them out and assign them to team members, typically the person closest to the tasks impacted by potential risk are the best candidates to take ownership and responsibility for the identified risk.

Project Documentation:

Identify the documents relating to your project and where they are kept. Typical documents would include:

- Project Charter
- Project Plan – Gantt chart
- Method Statement
- Risk Analysis
- Mitigation Plans
- Contingency Plans
- Risk Owners
- Budget
- Meeting Minutes
- Quality Plan
- Specification
- Communication Plan
- Assumptions Register
- Project Contact Directory - a list of participants complete with contact details

Some project practitioners advocate there being a central location for the storage of documents relating to the project so that all relevant information is grouped together and accessible to those with an interest in the project. In Project 98 you can define a Hyperlink base, a location where all such documents are kept and which can be linked to easily by Hyperlinks from your project plan.

Key Dates in the Project:

Identify Milestone events and dates
Detail any key decision points and their deadlines

Project Control:

Spell out how you intend to monitor and control your project. Identify your reporting procedures and the frequency of updates. If people involved in your project are aware that regular updates are required they will hopefully be aware of the need to avoid disappointing the Project Manager.

Holding regular meetings to review progress with a consistent agenda should also promote adherence to the targets in the plan. If members of your team have to report failure to meet targets to the team on a regular basis they may eventually become embarrassed by always being the one who lets the side down.

Key Project Personnel

Identify the key people involved and their roles in your project, their details should also be kept in the project contact directory