

Planning report

The planning report should clearly indicate the topic/problem of the project work, and how this will be addressed.

Title

A preliminary title should be stated in the planning report.

Background

Background should include a justification of why the chosen topic is interesting from an academic point of view and/or from a technical point of view or, where appropriate, from the customer's/client's/industry perspective. In some cases this heading should include a brief history of the subject. The following questions should be considered:

What is the topic/problem to be investigated?

Why has the topic/problem arisen?

Why is it a relevant and interesting topic/problem?

For whom is it a relevant/interesting topic/problem?

Can the specific topic/problem be related to a more general discussion?

Purpose

The purpose specifies the aim/s/ of the project and what kind of results that will hopefully be achieved. A project can have multiple purposes that are related to the topics/issues presented in the background. In most cases, it is advisable to have only a general purpose, which is then broken down into more detailed sections later in the report / process.

Problem/Task

This section is often the most important part of the planning report. It aims to identify the question/questions to be addressed in the project. It is important that the group does a problem (task) analysis, even though the

problem (task) is already stated in the project proposal. The reason for this is that the primary problem often differs from that which was proposed by the client/supervisor. The problem analysis also aims to break down the problem/task into smaller and more detailed sub-problems/ subtasks, which also leads to the formulation of sub-purposes. By doing this you will get a much better understanding of the various aspects of the problem/task. Without this information it is impossible to identify which information is needed, the sources of information needed and the appropriate approach to solve the problem/task.

A good problem analysis that identifies sub-problems/subtasks and sub-purposes are based in many cases on the use of theories and models from the literature. A literature review should therefore be carried out early in the process.

Boundaries

The boundaries should take up the parts of the problem that are not addressed in the report, and the reason for this. Justification of boundaries is important. If the analysis of the problem is well implemented there is no need for a boundaries section.

Method / Implementation

The way in which the group intends to solve the stated problem/ task constitutes the choice of method. In construction related projects, the method may seem obvious, but it can also in this case exist important methodological choices.

The Methods section should also describe how data is collected and how an evaluation of how well the project objectives have been met will be carried out. In practical projects, this can be achieved by obtaining measurements of different types. It may also be accomplished through computer simulations. What information is needed in order to know if you have achieved the purpose of the project?

Timetable

This part of the planning report describes what to do and when to do it. Persons to be contacted should also be included here. Dates, or at least weeks, when students should provide interim reports and the final presentation will be stated here.

It is important to note that project activities cannot occur sequentially when these activities are dependent on each other, which means that a number of iterations between them will occur. Only by iterating between them, the structured knowledge will be exploited in a good way. The same thinking applies also for the writing of the report, i.e., updating of one section requires updating other sections. The writing process must therefore be ongoing throughout the project-work.