Establishing a Project Objective

# Guidelines

* An objective should be thorough but to the point
* Should be no more than 25 words
* Should reflect the main requirements of the project
  + Scope
  + Time
  + Etc…
* Should involve participation from as many stakeholders as possible
* The objective should be S.M.A.R.T. for projects that have well defined time-lines and Acceptance guidlines
  + **S**. pecific
  + **M**. easurable
  + **A**. ttainable / Achievable
  + **R**. ealistic
  + **T**. ime-bound
* The project objective should be well documented throughout projects documentation
* Try not to get hung up on defining the perfect objective. There is a high possibility that the objective can morph into something else throughout defining user stories
  + However the objective should be firmly defined and set by the end of defining epics if not sooner

# Purpose

An objective should help define the scope of the project, the timeline and those involved. The Objective should be written in a manner that allows it to be evaluated at the end of the project to assess if it was achieved.

# How to Proceed

* Establish core objectives or goals that the client has for this project
  + Be thorough in the questions you ask. If you feel that you are still missing information try to rephrase the questions or ask them to fill in the blanks with a question like “What do you see as areas that we need to know for this project that we haven’t already covered?”
    - Researching what the company does beforehand will help you facilitate this process as well as help you see “red flags” or areas that should not be in scope
* Determine what the acceptance for the core goals of the project are. How do we measure our success or failures?
  + This could help out story pointing, try to record them

# End Result

After establishing an objective you should be able to jump into the creation of epic (high level) user stories. A well-defined objective will allow you to check epic user stories against and see how they fit in with the objective as well as having an understanding of time-line and clear acceptance for the project.

## Examples

1. <http://www.hr.ecu.edu.au/mps/html/mps-smart-eg.cfm>
2. <http://www.brighthubpm.com/methods-strategies/78817-smart-objectives-samples-for-managers/>