

# ICT Project Management

## Chapter 12: Project Execution, Control and Closure

The purpose of Project Execution and Control is to develop the product or service that the project was commissioned to deliver. Typically, this is the longest phase of the project management lifecycle, where most resources are applied.

This phase consists of the following processes:

- **Conduct Project Execution and Control Kick-off**, where the Project Manager conducts a meeting to formally begin the Project Execution and Control phase, orient new Project Team members, and review the documentation and current status of the project.
- **Manage CSSQ**, where the Project Manager must manage changes to the Project Scope and Project Schedule, implement Quality Assurance and Quality Control processes according to the Quality Standards, and control and manage costs as established in the Project Budget.
- **Monitor and Control Risks**, where the Project Manager and Project Team utilize the Risk Management Plan prepared in previous phases, and develop and apply new response and resolution strategies to unexpected eventualities.
- **Manage Project Execution**, where the Project Manager must manage every aspect of the Project Plan to ensure that all the work of the project is being performed correctly and on time.
- **Gain Project Acceptance**, where the Project Manager, Customer Decision-Makers and Project Sponsor acknowledge that all deliverables produced during Project Execution and Control have been completed, tested, accepted and approved, and that the product or service of the project has been successfully transitioned to the Performing Organization.

### 12.1. Project Execution

Execution consists of the processes used to complete the work defined in the project management plan, to accomplish the project's objectives. The execution process involves co-ordinating people and resources, as well as integrating and performing the activities of the project. The deliverables are produced as outputs from the processes performed as defined in the project management plan and other frameworks that might be applicable to the type of project at hand.

### 12.2. Monitoring and Controlling

Monitoring and controlling consists of those processes performed to observe project execution so that potential problems can be identified in a timely manner and corrective action can be taken, when necessary, to control the execution of the project. The key benefit is that project performance is observed and measured regularly to identify variances from the project management plan. To do this the project management plan is used. Monitoring and controlling includes:

- Measuring the ongoing project activities (*where are we, against where we should be?*)
- Monitoring the project variables (*cost, effort, scope*) against the project management plan and the project baseline (*where should we be?*)
- Identifying corrective actions to address risks and issues (*how can we get back on track?*)
- Managing changes using our change control process (*what is the impact of this change?*)



Monitoring and controlling cycle

In multi-phase projects, the monitoring and control process also provides feedback between project phases, in order to implement corrective or preventive actions to bring the project into compliance with the project management plan.

The monitoring and controlling process group ends once the project has achieved its goals and objectives as detailed in the project contract. A project may be stopped before completion for various reasons, including changes in the business, lack of resources or higher priorities.

### 12.3. Closing

Project closing is an important part of project management, sometimes overlooked. A project that is not closed will continue to consume resources.

This phase consists of:

- **Project close:** Finalize all activities across all of the process groups to formally close the project or a project phase
  - ✓ Closing a project means finishing all activities across all process groups, splitting up the project team, and signing off the project with the customer.
  - ✓ At this point it is important to know how well the project has performed. This is done using the project closure report. It communicates how well the project has performed against its original business case, quality measures, cost, duration and tolerances.
  - ✓ Rather than leave valuable project experiences locked in peoples heads, it's a good idea to complete and publish a lessons learned report. This is used to pass on valuable learning that can be applied to future projects.
- **Contract closure:** Complete and settle each contract (including the resolution of any open items) and close each contract applicable to the project or project phase.

### 12.4. Project Control

Project control is that part of a project that keeps it on-track, on-time and within budget. Project control begins early in the project with planning, and ends late in the project with post-implementation review. Projects should be assessed for the right level of control needed: too much control is time-consuming, too little control is risky. If project control is not carried out correctly, the cost to the business should be clarified in terms of errors, fixes and added costs.

Typical elements of project control are:

1. Overall business strategy
2. Standards for new systems
3. Project management policies
4. Change management
5. Quality control

The following methods of project controlling can be applied:

- investment analysis
- cost-benefit analyses
- value benefit Analysis
- expert surveys
- simulation calculations
- risk-profile analyses
- surcharge calculations
- milestone trend analysis
- cost trend analysis
- target/actual-comparison

Control systems are needed for cost, risk, quality, communication, time, change, procurement, and human resources. In addition, auditors should consider how important the projects are to the financial statements, how reliant the stakeholders are on controls, and how many controls exist. Auditors should review the development process and procedures for how they are implemented. The process of development and the quality of the final product may also be assessed if needed or requested. A business may want the auditing firm to be involved throughout the process to catch problems earlier on so that they can be fixed more easily. An auditor can serve as a controls consultant as part of the development team or as an independent auditor as part of an audit.