

Exercise – Project Planning

Creating a Gantt Chart:

Download the file Gantt_chart_template_Excel_2007-2013.xlsx from the AIE Portal.

This spreadsheet contains a template you can use to create a Gantt chart for your project.

There are several other software packages (Visio) or websites (smartsheet.com, teamgantt.com) that you could also use to create a Gantt chart. For this exercise you can use the Excel file provided or any software or web site of your choice. Choose a solution you feel is right for you.

As a team, come up with a schedule for your project.

Answer the following questions:

- When is the assignment due? This will be the date for your Gold Build milestone.
- How much time will you need for debugging and testing?
Working back from the Gold Build date, figure out when the Beta Build milestone is.
(If you need 2 weeks for debugging and testing, then the Beta milestone will be 2 weeks before the Gold milestone)
- How much time will you need to get the First Playable build working? This will be the date for your First Playable Build milestone.
- The remaining time will be for the Alpha development. Is this time too long or too short?
Now that you have a rough schedule for development you can adjust your milestones as needed.

Using the answers to the questions above, fill in this table:

	Development Start Date	Development End Date	Duration
First Playable Build			
Alpha Build			
Beta Build			
Gold Build			0

(The Gold Build will have the same start and end date)

One you have dates for each milestone, try to think of every task you will need to complete for each milestone. Write these down but don't worry about dates yet.

Next to each task, estimate how long you think it will take to complete.

Put the tasks in order according to which ones should be completed first. If any task depends on another task, ensure that those tasks occur in the correct order.

Now that you have a list of tasks (in order) and their estimated durations, figure out the start date and end date of each task.

Add each task to your Gantt chart as you go.

If you find that you have too many tasks to complete for a development phase, there are two possible solutions:

- Decrease the amount of time you have to work on certain tasks, or
- Remove some tasks from your game

Once you see all the tasks plotted in your Gantt chart you should discuss the final schedule with your team. Everyone should agree on which tasks they will complete and try to keep to the schedule.

Refer to your Gantt chart regularly throughout your project to check whether or not you are on schedule.