

Glossary

Project Management

Terms and Definitions

Course 4



A

Abandoned project: A project in which inadequate handoff or transition on the project deliverables occurs

Acceptance criteria: Pre-established standards or requirements that a product, service, or process must meet

Accessible: Something that is easily used, accessed, or adapted for use by people experiencing disabilities

Action item: A task that needs to be completed

Adoption metrics: Metrics that indicate whether or not a product, service, or process is accepted and used

Air cover: Support for and protection of a team in the face of out-of-scope requests or criticism from leadership

Analytics: The process of answering business questions, discovering relationships, and predicting outcomes based on the analysis of data

B

Bad compromise: A situation that occurs when two parties settle on a so-called solution but the end product still suffers

Bar chart: A type of chart that uses color and length to compare categories in a data set; useful for comparing values

Bug: A technical issue

Burndown chart: A line chart that measures the time against the amount of work done and the amount of work remaining; useful for projects that require a granular, broken-down look at each task

C

Change: Anything that alters or impacts the tasks, structures, or processes within a project

Change log: A record of all notable changes on a project

Character: The qualities or features that make up and distinguish a person, like honesty, integrity, and kindness

Collaboration: People working together on an activity

Confirmation bias: A type of data bias that refers to the tendency to search for information that confirms preexisting beliefs

Conger's four steps: Refers to Jay A. Conger's four-step approach to effectively persuade and influence another person to consider new ideas: establish credibility, frame for common ground, provide evidence, and connect emotionally

Continuous improvement: An ongoing effort to improve products or services; begins with recognizing when processes and tasks need to be created, eliminated, or improved

Control: An experiment or observation designed to minimize the effects of variables

Cost variance: The difference between actual cost and budgeted cost

Critical user journey: The sequence of steps a user follows to accomplish tasks in a product

Customer satisfaction score: A metric that indicates how well the project delivered what it set out to do and how well it satisfies customer and stakeholder needs

D

Dashboard: A type of user interface—typically a graph or summary chart— that provides a snapshot view of a project’s progress or performance

Data: A collection of facts or information; the numbers and feedback available about different aspects of a project

Data analysis: The collection, transformation, and organization of data to draw conclusions, make predictions, and drive informed decision-making

Data bias: A type of error that is influenced by one’s inherent beliefs

Data ethics: The well-founded standards of right and wrong that dictate how data is collected, shared, and used

Data privacy: The act of protecting a data subject’s information and activity any time a data transaction occurs

Data visualization: A graphical representation of information to facilitate understanding

Data-driven improvement frameworks: Techniques used to make decisions based on actual data

Dependability: A quality indicating team members are reliable and complete their work on time

Dependencies: Tasks, activities, or milestones that are reliant on one another

Dependency management: The process of managing interrelated tasks and resources within a project to ensure that the overall project is completed successfully, on time, and on budget

Deviation: Anything that alters the original course of action

Discretionary dependencies: Dependencies that could occur on their own, but the team saw a need to make those dependencies reliant on one another

Diversity: The set of differences each individual possesses, whether visible or invisible, that gives them a unique perspective on the world and their work

DMAIC: The five steps to take when working toward continuous improvements: define, measure, analyze, improve, and control

Duration: The amount of time it takes to complete or produce something

E

Edge case: Rare outliers that the original requirements of the project didn't account for; deals with the extreme maximums and minimums of parameters

Engagement metrics: Metrics that indicate the degree to which a product or service is used—the frequency of use, amount of time spent using it, and the range of use

Escalation: The process of enlisting the help of higher-level project leadership or management to remove an obstacle, clarify or reinforce priorities, and validate next steps

Ethical leadership: A form of leadership that promotes and values honesty, justice, respect, community, and integrity

Expressiveness: Refers to one's ability to communicate with others

External dependencies: Asks that are reliant on outside factors, like regulatory agencies or other projects

F

Feedback survey: A survey in which users provide feedback on features of a product that they like or dislike

Force majeure: An unforeseen circumstance that prevents someone from fulfilling a contract due to a major crisis

G

Gantt chart: A project-tracking visual that is useful for staying on schedule; ideal for projects with many dependencies and larger project teams

H

Happiness metrics: Metrics that relate to different aspects of the user's overall satisfaction with a product or service

Headline: The one-sentence main point that illustrates a slide

History: Refers to the level of personal history between oneself and another person

I

Impact: The belief that the results of one's work matter and create change

Impact report: A presentation guided by a deck or slideshow that shows key stakeholders the value that's been added by the project

Inclusive leadership: A form of leadership where everyone's unique identity, background, and experiences are respected, valued, and integrated into how the team operates

Inclusivity: The practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized

Influencing: The ability to alter another person's thinking or behaviors

Influencing statement: A conversation opener that sets a person up for success with their audience

Infographic: A visual representation of information or data intended to present information quickly and clearly

Information: An organizational source of power that refers to one's level of access and control over information

Internal dependencies: The relationship between two tasks within the same project

Interpretation bias: A type of data bias that refers to the tendency to always interpret ambiguous situations as either negative or positive

Issue: A known and real problem that may affect the ability to complete a task

K

Knowledge: Refers to the power drawn from one's expertise in certain subjects, unique abilities and skill sets, and ability to learn new things

Key performance indicator (KPI): A measurable value that demonstrates how effective a company is at achieving business objectives

L

Legend: The bottom or side section of a chart that gives a small description of each section

Line chart: A type of chart that displays information as a series of data point markers; helpful for showing trends and behaviors over set periods of time or overall

M

Mandatory dependencies: Tasks that are legally or contractually required

Metric: A quantifiable measurement that is used to track and assess a business objective

Milestone: An important point within the project schedule that indicates progress and usually signifies the completion of a deliverable or phase of the project

N

Network: The people one is connected with professionally and personally

Never-ending project: A project in which the project deliverables and tasks cannot be completed



Observer bias: A type of data bias that refers to the tendency for different people to observe different things

On-time completion rate: A productivity metric that helps illustrate to clients and stakeholders how the project is progressing and when they can expect certain deliverables to be ready



PDCA: A four-step process that focuses on identifying a problem, fixing the issue, assessing whether the fix was successful, and fine-tuning the final fix; stands for: plan, do, check, and act

Pie chart: A type of chart divided into sections that each represent a portion of a whole; useful for making comparisons

Portfolio: A collection of programs and projects across a whole organization

Probability and impact matrix: A tool used to prioritize project risks

Process improvement: The practice of identifying, analyzing, and improving existing processes to enhance performance, meet best practices, or optimize consumer experiences

Productivity metrics: Metrics that track the effectiveness and efficiency of a project, including items like tasks, milestones, projections, and duration

Program: A collection of projects

Project closeout report: A document that describes what the team did, how they did it, and what they delivered; evaluates the quality of work and the project's performance with respect to budget and schedule

Project closing: A process performed to formally complete a project, the current phase, and contractual obligations

Project status report: An update that gives an overview of all of a project's common elements and summarizes them at a given point in time

Project task: An activity that needs to be accomplished within a set period of time

Projection: A prediction of a future outcome—such as future productivity trends, project durations, costs, performance, or quality—based on current information; also called a forecast

Psychological safety: An individual's perception of the consequences of taking an interpersonal risk



Qualitative data: Information about subjective qualities that can't be measured with numerical data

Quality: Refers to when the outlined requirements for the deliverable are fulfilled and meet or exceed the needs and expectations of customers

Quality assurance: A review process that evaluates whether a project is moving towards delivering a high-quality service or product; also called QA

Quality control: Techniques used to ensure quality standards when a problem is identified; also called QC

Quality metrics: Metrics that relate to achieving acceptable outcomes, such as number of changes, issues, and cost variance

Quality planning: The actions of the project manager or team to establish and conduct a process for identifying and determining exactly which standards of quality are relevant to the project as a whole and how to satisfy them

Quality standards: Requirements, specifications, or guidelines that can be used to ensure that materials, products, processes, and services are fit for achieving the desired outcome

Quantitative data: Statistical and numerical facts



RAG status report: A report that follow a traffic light pattern to indicate progress and status: “red” indicates there are critical issues that need resolution, “amber/yellow” means that there are potential issues with schedule or budget, and “green” means the that the project is on track

Reputation: Refers to how others perceive a person overall

Retrospective: A meeting in which project teams discuss successes, failures, and possible future improvements on a project

Risk: A potential event that could occur and impact a project

Risk exposure: A way to measure potential future loss resulting from a specific activity or event

Risk management: The process of identifying, evaluating, and addressing potential risks and issues that could impact a project

Risk register: A table or chart that contains a list of risks

Roadmap: A project-tracking visual that is useful for high-level tracking of large milestones

ROAM technique: A strategy used to help manage actions after risks arise; stands for resolved, owned, accepted, and mitigated

ROCCC: An acronym used in data ethics best practices to ensure that data is reliable, original, comprehensive, current, and cited

Role: One's position within an organization or team

S

Sampling bias: A type of data bias in which the sample isn't representative of the population as the whole

Scope creep: When changes, growth, and other factors affect a project's scope

Signal: An observable change

Signpost: A way to clue the audience in to where a presentation is going and what to expect

Stacked bar chart: A type of bar chart that can show part-to-whole variables simultaneously; useful when comparing numerical information; also called a marimekko chart

Storytelling: The process of turning facts into narrative to communicate something to an audience

T

Team: A group of people who plan work, solve problems, make decisions, and review progress in service of a specific project or objective

Team dynamics: The forces, both conscious and unconscious, that impact team behavior and performance

Teamwork: An effective, collaborative way of working in which each person is committed to and heading towards a shared goal

Test case: A sequence of steps and its expected results

Timeboxing: Refers to setting a time limit

Timeout: Refers to taking a moment away from the project to regroup and adjust the game plan

Tracking: A method of following the progress of project activities

Trench wars: Conflicts that occur when two peers or groups can't come to an agreement and neither party is willing to give in

U

User acceptance test: A trial that helps a business make sure a product or solution works for its users; also called a UAT

User story: An informal, general explanation of a feature written from the perspective of the end user

W

Work groups: People in an organization who work toward a common goal; based on and assigned by organizational or managerial hierarchy