

Criteria for good WBS

Basics

1. The WBS represents scope, (nouns) and not activities (verbs)
2. The connectors between the WPs represent decomposition, not sequencing, or some other relationship
3. The WPs represent both the product scope and the outcomes of PM work needed to complete the project.
4. The WBS mostly represents scope of the product, i.e. the deliverables that the sponsor wants to see – not the scope of the assignment that a group of students needs to hand in.

100% Rule

5. No obvious duplication of scope in duplicated WPs
6. No partial duplication of scope between the WPs, even though they may be named differently
7. No deliverables, which you would expect to see, are missing from the scope diagram, according to your understanding of the product and project scope

The WPs are not too big

8. WP 'x' is too big if its successful completion seems to depend on completing another WP 'y' midway through the progress of completing WP 'x'. In this case splitting up 'x' into two separate WPs would make the project easier to manage.
9. You could calculate the cost of each WP, or obtain a quote for them from a supplier, as a single item.
10. Each WP could feasibly be managed by one person

The WPs are not too small

11. They are too small and have been decomposed too far if you believe that combining some of the WP together would not impact your ability to cost or otherwise manage the delivery of the resulting larger WP