Communicate objectives with a project proposal

In this reading, you will continue examining communication within the data workspace. As you have learned, communication is present in all aspects of data professional work. As projects progress, the expectations, resources, or even team members can change. This will require adjustments within a project that can impact the overall workflow and delivery date.

You have also learned about the scalability of PACE (Plan, Analyze, Construct, and Execute). Through its framework, projects can be accessed globally, outlining the overall tasks that are needed for completion. Concurrently, each individual task within a project can be broken down into smaller actions. When working within a data team, the tasks in a project are often delegated between different data professionals. The need for sharing, collaborating, and communicating updates is therefore a necessity for data professionals and all of the stakeholders involved in a project.

Even with the best preparation, most projects will encounter unexpected events. It is important for a data team to adapt, pivot, and/or plan in light of these situations. A **project proposal** can provide the structure and communication needed for tracking tasks. In addition, project proposals are beneficial for teams when facing challenges that require a high degree of flexibility.

Project proposals

A project proposal's main function is to outline objectives and requirements. Project proposals present ideas in more detailed and actionable segments often called **milestones**. Proposals are commonly a collaboration, created with input from team members and other stakeholders. It may also be the case that project proposals are shared with clients or executives to gain approval and inform them of a project's path to completion. Project proposals are used across a multitude of industries and organizations. Although the design and layout of project proposals can vary, there are key elements that are common among them.

Sample project proposal

The sample project proposal, linked below, deals with an imagined wildfire predictability project undertaken by the U.S. National Parks Service. Use this document as a reference as you review each of the following sections.

This project proposal's audience is the National Park Service's data team. The purpose is to gather a comprehensive list of tasks that will be needed to be carried out and divide them into smaller actionable groupings or milestones. Project proposals assist project managers in setting up task tracking, scheduling, and allocating resources. Furthermore, they serve as a reference for the team and as a valuable tool when new members are added to the project.

To access the sample project proposal, click the link below and select "Use Template."

Link to sample project proposal: Wildfire prediction project proposal ⧉

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the file directly from the attachment below.

⌁ **Wildfire prediction project proposal.pdf**
PDF File

Elements of a project proposal

Each project proposal contains important information that a team will need to consider before work begins. Below is a brief explanation of some common sections you will find in project proposals. Note that the format of project proposals will vary, so not every section described here will be included in every project proposal.

Project title: The title of the project is prominent, usually placed near the top of a document. Effective titles are short and purposeful. Depending on the context and circumstance surrounding a project, the title on a project proposal can change over time.

Project objective: The objective statement is a one to three sentence explanation of what the project is trying to achieve.

Milestones: Milestones are groupings of tasks within a project, breaking the work needed into smaller, manageable goals. Milestones assist in the delegation and scheduling of work that needs to be completed within projects.

- The milestones in the provided example are representing the end-of-course projects in future courses.

Tasks: Tasks detail the work that needs to be completed within a milestone.

- In the provided example, the tasks parallel some of the work you will complete in future end-of-course projects.

Outcomes: Outcomes are the completed actions or results that allow a project to continue.

Deliverables: Deliverables are items that can be shared amongst team members or with stakeholders. These are the end products of work undertaken for a project.

Stakeholders: The individuals or groups who are directly involved and have a vested interest in the success of a project. Input from stakeholders can serve as a basis for making decisions throughout a project.

Estimated time: At the beginning of a project, the time needed to complete milestones is estimated. As a project develops, these estimates will often need to be updated to account for adjustments to timelines or changes in team members.

Overview

You will discover that PACE strategy documents are a great reference when working on project proposals. During your end-of-course projects, you'll be presented with questions that will assist you in identifying the planning, analyzing, constructing and executing stages. Within your responses you'll discover the information needed to create a solid project proposal. The more time you spend considering and answering each question, the more information you'll have available to you when creating project proposals.

Key takeaways

A project proposal is a plan of action, describing what needs to be accomplished and how to achieve your intended goals and outcomes. Within these documents, you'll encounter milestones, deliverables, timelines, and schedules. In proposals, purpose and scope are outlined, giving a suggested method for approaching the tasks necessary to complete a project. It is important to keep project proposals updated as the scope and objectives of a project change, as well as the needs of stakeholders.

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