

Pathfinders

Pathfinders enables us to define a path to success for our idea, learning from both our formal process and prior projects.

1. On the straight timeline, document the process our team expects to follow: milestones, decision points, signed agreements, reviews, and budgeting. These can be formal organizational or informal team milestones.

2. Looking at a recent project the team worked on, begin another line. If an action advanced the idea, draw it above the timeline. If an activities delayed the project, draw the line down to a point below the line. Try to keep the activities in order of how they occurred. Complete this process for at least two ideas the team worked on.

Note: This is the red line in the example.

3. As a team, there are a number of lessons we can learn:

- How do we limit the activities that delayed us previously?
- If there were “lucky” occurrences in earlier projects, how can we plan to have that same luck this time?
- What do we need to add to our expected timeline based on how previous projects actually progressed?
- Whose names should we add to the projected plan based on our prior need for support and promotion?
- How can we plan for potential roadblocks to limit them?

Expert Edition—After completing this exercise and refining our project plan and expected timeline, consider bringing our partner organizations into the conversation. Using our refined baseline, walk our partners through the work we’ll complete jointly to listen to their experiences, concerns, and recommendations.

