**DMIT2027**

**Guidelines: How to Complete a Project Charter**

A Project Charter concludes the Initiation Phase; it guides the beginning of a relationship between a project manager (PM) and sponsor. A good Charter clearly provides a high-level description about what is to be accomplished and establishes some of the metrics by which project success is assessed.

The overall budget for a project must include detail and be substantiated. This degree of diligence establishes trust and the credibility of the PM. Market conditions and supply and demand for materials and human resources can impact the eventual figure. At times, the budget might even come under the projected figure, as evidenced by the City of Edmonton’s 2009 surplus of $25M due to cheaper labour.

A Charter is more than a mere listing of the deliverables. The sponsor and the PM must know what they are agreeing to. As such, several key ingredients of the project must be articulated to avoid assumptions by either side. A good degree of research is commonly needed at this stage.

The following are some examples of the research needed to complete a charter:

* You do not need to provide 100% accurate projections (that will happen after the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is completed. But ensure that the data you have provided is the best, educated estimates.
* The length of the project must be in real time (not our course duration). You must provide some evidence to show that the approximate length of time required to complete the project deliverables is “reasonable”.
* For the budget, include evidence of who you contacted (company, name, phone number) or what documents you reviewed (provide the link) to cost the deliverables. A total figure would be enough, but you must provide all the sources that comprised that figure. Give examples of 3 similar projects and their overall costs. Use that to substantiate the proposed budget in the charter.
* You must list general resources needed (equipment, HR, space). This requires research for the kinds of professionals and labour you need to complete this project.

As stated, research is needed to complete a charter. Your librarian can be a great asset in locating the information you need (indeed, some project management firms have entire research departments to assist in obtaining the necessary information).

Note that all NAIT students have access to a plethora of academic resources and databases online. But, be prepared to visit the library personally, as not all content is available in full text.

In summary, pay attention to accuracy and details - personally. Avoid splitting the tasks in your team. Get everyone to independently complete all the necessary research; then compare your figures before including them in your charter.

*Note: When meeting with the client, you must be able to answer the following question for any and all parts of your charter and other documents submitted:*

*“What did you look at to arrive at this figure?”*

*Comments like “I did not do this part” are not acceptable and will be recorded and considered when evaluating the final team submission. As such, each of your team members must be fully abreast of what goes in your charter and the details that led to it*.

What to put in your Charter:

1. An opening statement about what this project aims to accomplish, the start and end dates of the project.
2. State who would be your potential client (stakeholders) in this project.
3. Describe the reasons for this project and who it benefits (users)
4. List all the high-level deliverableds of the project
5. Provide 3 examples of the cost of similar projects and state the projected cost of your project based on that evidence. Provide a link to each of those 3 examples.

Note: Because you have already done some research to make your project pitch, you probably know quite a bit about your project already. Use that information, if relevant, if your charter.