

Project Life Cycle & Processes

by Sophia

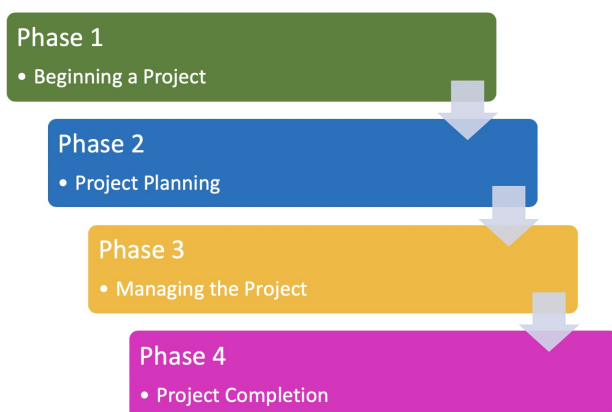


WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson will discuss the project life cycle including:

1. Project Life Cycle: Phases

A **project life cycle** is all the phases of work that are needed to complete a project and produce the deliverables. Organizations might separate the life cycle differently, but most projects generally have four **project phases**.



TERMS TO KNOW

Project Life Cycle

A series of planned phases of work that are required to generate defined project deliverables.

Project Phase

A grouping of work that is a part of the project life cycle and contributes to the generation of project deliverables.

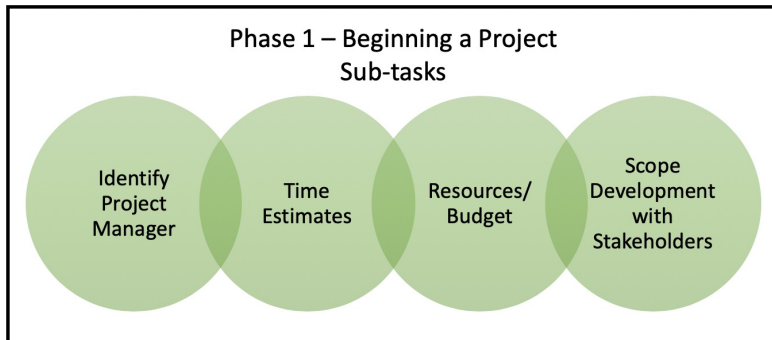
1a. Phase One: Beginning a Project

This is the kickoff phase of the project, and it's where the project manager is assigned and begins work. This is also where the stakeholders are identified and the **project scope** and **project deliverables** are defined. This might happen before the project manager is assigned, but often the project manager is part of this process.

Once the scope is known, then it's time to create the first estimates for the schedule, budget, and what resources are needed to complete the work. When this phase is complete, all stakeholders should agree that the project can proceed.



A more detailed schedule and budget will be developed in a later phase, so it's important for a project manager to avoid getting hung up on specific details at this point.



Project Scope

The phase conducted at the beginning of a project where a project manager conducts research and collects information to identify specific project deliverables.

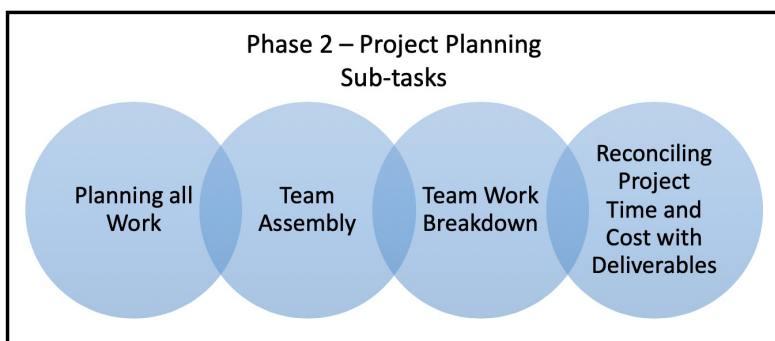
Project Deliverables

Defined outcomes expected to be created at the end of a project.

1b. Phase Two: Project Planning

Next, the project moves into the planning phase. A project team is assembled often with the project manager's input. And once that team is in place, then everyone helps contribute to the development of a detailed schedule and budget.

Tasks and responsibilities are assigned to each team member, and estimates for the work are compiled. In this phase, it's crucial to nail down the time and the cost needed to produce the deliverables.

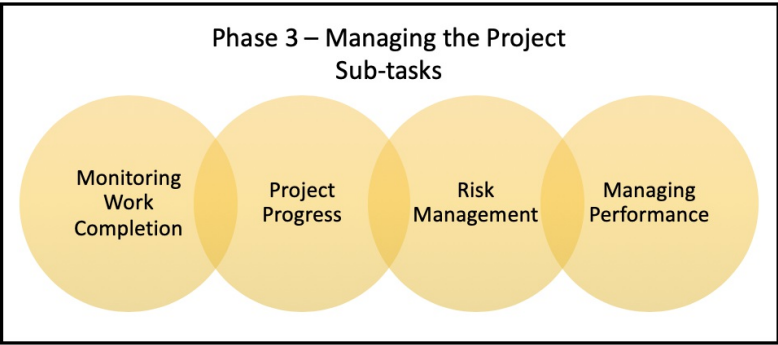


1c. Phase Three: Managing the Project

Once the schedule and budget are approved, the tasks begin and the project manager starts monitoring the work. The project manager then communicates the status of this work to the project stakeholders, including any issues positive or negative. Remember, that a project manager should communicate clearly and

consistently.

Risks will also be managed at this stage. Risks are the uncertainties, both known and unknown, that are encountered in every project. When they happen, it's the project manager's duty to let everyone know. Finally, it's up to the project manager to guide individuals and the team as a whole toward common goals. This phase will end when the tasks are complete and the deliverables are ready for review.

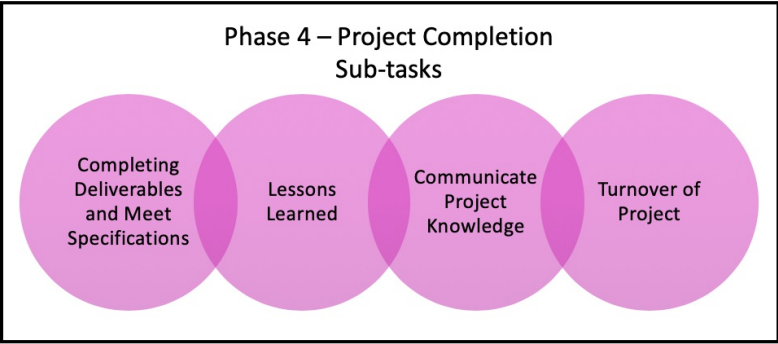


1d. Phase 4: Project Completion

At this point, the deliverables created by the project are reviewed and verified, hopefully, as complete. If all requirements aren't met, then work to fix these issues must be managed, and the deliverables resubmitted when the work is done.

Before everyone leaves a project, organizations will often try to capture the lessons learned throughout the project to help improve future efforts.

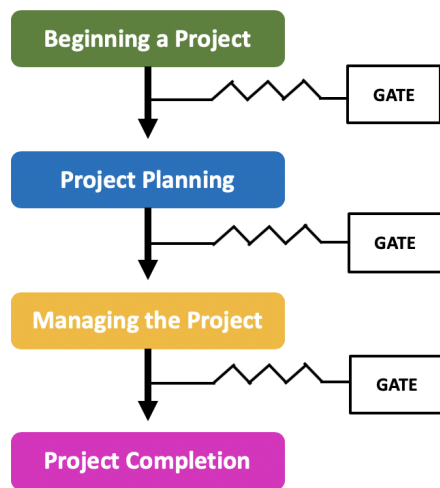
Finally, the project manager will hand over the project knowledge and documentation to someone else. Then either close the project or transfer ownership to an operation or maintenance group that will use the results of the project.



2. Project Gates

As you may have noticed, we spoke about approvals at each stage of the project. These are called project gates. They are checkpoints where work must be approved before the project continues.

These gates can be planned for any point in a project, but are always at the end of phases. Also, it's important that the project manager lets everyone know when these gates are scheduled, and what is expected during the approval stage.



SUMMARY

This lesson discussed the four **phases of a project life cycle** including highlights of each phase. **Phase 1** includes the assignment of a project manager. **Phase 2** handles task assignment to team members. **Phase 3** involves risk management, and **Phase 4** is where deliverables are evaluated. You also learned that **project gates** are scheduled at the end of a phase and act as a checkpoint before the project is allowed to move forward.

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Jeff Carroll.



TERMS TO KNOW

Project Deliverables

Defined outcomes expected to be created at the end of a project.

Project Life Cycle

A series of planned phases of work that are required to generate defined project deliverables.

Project Phase

A grouping of work that is a part of the project life cycle and contributes to the generation of project deliverables.

Project Scope

The phase conducted at the beginning of a project where a project manager conducts research and collects information to identify specific project deliverables.