Execution: Guiding questions and tips

Project execution is where your plans get put into action and the actual work of the project gets underway.

These guiding questions and tips, compiled by dozens of project managers at Google, can help you ensure your team collaborates successfully to produce work that everyone can be proud of.

Communication

A major part of project execution is communicating the project's progress to ensure the end result is a success. It's important that you communicate information consistently and coherently so that everyone understands the current state of the project, what they should be focusing on, and what happens next.

Ask your stakeholders and team members how they prefer to be communicated with. For example:

- Email
- Face-to-face (in person or via video conference)
- Messaging app (Google chat, Slack, etc.)
- Written reports or updates

Maintaining project quality

Quality is when you fulfill the outlined requirements for the deliverable and meet or exceed the needs and expectations of your customers.

Quality standards

There are a lot of of resources that can help you determine the standards for your project, including:

- **Project documents**, like the business case and project charter. These documents state the goals, scope, budget, and other details that can clarify the different requirements of the project so it's acceptable to your stakeholders.
- **Conversations** with experts and stakeholders. It's also a good idea to have conversations with the stakeholders who are funding the project to understand their perspective on quality.
- **Online research** about industry standards.

Quality assurance

Be sure to include regular quality assurance audits to confirm that everything is going according to plan and the necessary procedures are being followed. Regular check-ins and reporting to stakeholders will help boost their confidence--and yours--along the way.

Phased launches

A phased launch allows you to present part of your project to end users and clients before you've achieved the end goal in order to collect data and feedback that can improve your final result. Here are two common ways to launch before you really launch:

- **Minimum viable product**: An MVP is the bare minimum version of your product that still solves a problem for your customers. It should help validate your idea by allowing you to gather the most customer data possible with as little effort as possible. It answers the question: do people want this?
- **Beta**: A beta product is not an experiment; it's a real product with fewer features than your full launch. It can help you determine which features to add. It answers the question: how can we build it better?

Choosing a project management approach

Different types of projects will benefit from applying different project management approaches or methodologies. There are many different approaches to choose from that will help you manage your project effectively.

Use a Waterfall approach for linear projects

Linear projects don't require many changes during development and have a clear, sequential process.

The **Waterfall** approach is **linear** and involves the **sequential ordering** of phases, completing one at a time.

A project may benefit from a Waterfall approach when:

- The phases of the project are clearly defined
- There are tasks to complete before others can begin
- Changes to the project are very expensive to implement once it's started

Use an Agile approach for iterative projects

Iterative projects allow for more flexibility and anticipate changes.

Agile project management is **iterative**, **flexible**, and **incorporates necessary changes** throughout the process.

The benefits of an Agile approach are:

- Getting customer feedback more quickly than in a traditional project management approach
- Working more efficiently by streamlining work processes without reducing quality or value
- Proactively reducing waste and conserving resources
- The ability to respond quickly to rapidly-changing business or technological factors
- Encouraging trust, support, and motivation and empowering decision-making within the team.

Implementing Scrum

Scrum is an Agile project management framework. Using Scrum involves forming a team that works together to **quickly develop and test** a deliverable.

Scrum Artifacts, Events, and Roles

Product Backlog: The central artifact in Scrum, where all possible ideas, deliverables, features, or tasks are captured for the team to work on.

Sprint: A timeboxed iteration in Scrum where a planned amount of work is done.

Daily Scrum: A brief meeting of up to 15 minutes that takes place every day of the Sprint to inspect progress toward the goal.

Development Team (Developers): The people who do the work to build the product.

Product Owner: The role responsible for owning and prioritizing the inventory of work. Is also responsible for maximizing the value of the product and the work of the team.

Scrum Master: The role responsible for ensuring that the team lives Agile values and principles, follows the processes and practices they agreed to, shares information, and focuses on doing their best work.