**Mini Project Plan Template**

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| **Section** | **Content** |
| Introduction and Background | Brief overview of the problem description, context and purpose. |
| Justification | What need(s) does the project fulfil? What benefits – actual and potential, short-term and long-term – does the project expect to realise? How and why are these benefits valuable? At this stage of the project, this section will primarily be qualitative. |
| Scope Description | A brief description of the anticipated outcomes, products to be produced, and the work to be undertaken. |
| Assumptions, Exclusions & Constraints | Assumptions are the factors or conditions which are expected to be in place, i.e. the givens! Exclusions identify the deliverables and work which are explicitly excluded from the project. Constraints are those factors or conditions which limit what the project can achieve, such as available people, resources and time. |
| Project Objectives | Expressed in SMART terms. Typically, one to three objectives. Don’t forget to include time-bounds. |
| Broad project approach | Conceptually, how do you intend to approach the project? Do you intend to pursue a linear or iterative approach? For example, do you intend to build and test a series of prototypes to test different ideas? Include a brief description of the project lifecycle. |
| Product Breakdown Structure (PBS) | What products (or deliverables) will the project produce – both interim and final. How are these products structured hierarchically? Break the products down only as far as necessary and practicable. By convention, product names are always expressed as nouns or noun phrases because they represent entities. Typically shown as a graphical hierarchy or as an indented vertical structure. |
| Product Descriptions | Linked to the product breakdown structure. For each product state/outline the product name, product purpose, product content if applicable (e.g. for software documentation), who is responsible, who will review and how will it be reviewed (e.g. peer review). |
| Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) | What activities are needed to produce these products? How are these activities structured hierarchically? Break the activities down only as far as necessary and practicable. By convention, activity names always begin with a verb because they indicate action. The product breakdown and work breakdown structures are frequently displayed in combination, the upper layers of the hierarchy being the products and the lower levels being the tasks or activities to produce those products. Typically, the WBS is shown as a graphic hierarchy or as an indented vertical structure. |
| Organisational breakdown structure (OBS) | A hierarchical depiction of the project organisation, including not only the project team but whoever has associated accountabilities or responsibilities. The OBS will include, for example, the unit coordinator in the role of the project sponsor and chair of the project board, the industry sponsor in the role of senior user, and the team members. This would be accompanied by a summary of the associated accountabilities and responsibilities (very brief). |
| Required resources | Do you require any other resources to complete the project? |
| Responsibility Allocation Matrix | Showing the intersection mapping of the WBS and the OBS – typically in a RACI (Responsibility, Accountability, Consult, Inform) diagram. |
| Key Milestones and Schedule | The project schedule typically begins by importing the PBS and WBS hierarchies. Resources are assigned to activities. Resources do not need to be quantified for this project. Activity durations and dependencies are determined. The critical path is calculated. The schedule is baselined and periodically updated and compared to the baseline. |
| Risks and issues management | What are the major risks and issues (typically five to ten total)? For both risks and issues include a brief description and the intended response. Risks should be described using the cause, risk-event, consequence template structure described in class. |
| Stakeholder management | Who are the major stakeholders – typically four or five? This would certainly include the project and industry sponsors. But it could also include certain employees or employee groups within the organisation and sections of the community. What the expectations of these stakeholders? You might use the interest-influence matrix to analyse stakeholder characteristics. How do you intend to engage with these stakeholders? |
| Acceptance testing (including progressive validation and verification) | How will you progressively test whether the products will satisfy the stated requirements (verification) and, at the same time, will be fit for the customers’ purpose (validation)? Note however, that the number of teams and the limited availability of the industry sponsor/users may make it difficult to get regular user feedback. This obviously constitutes a constraint which you should acknowledge. As a result, if you identify gaps or ambiguities in the user requirements, you may be forced to make assumptions. At very least, though, you should implement peer reviews of the products both interim and final. Remember also that the product descriptions must identify who and how you will test them. |