

# Defining Project Activities



Casey Ayers • PMP® • MBA

[CaseyAyers.com](http://CaseyAyers.com) | [@caseyayers](https://twitter.com/caseyayers)  
[linkedin.com/in/caseyayers](https://www.linkedin.com/in/caseyayers)

---

# Module Overview



Introduce the **Define Activities** process

Explore the process components

# Introducing the Define Activities Process



...the process of identifying and documenting the specific actions to be performed to produce the project deliverables.



# Define Activities

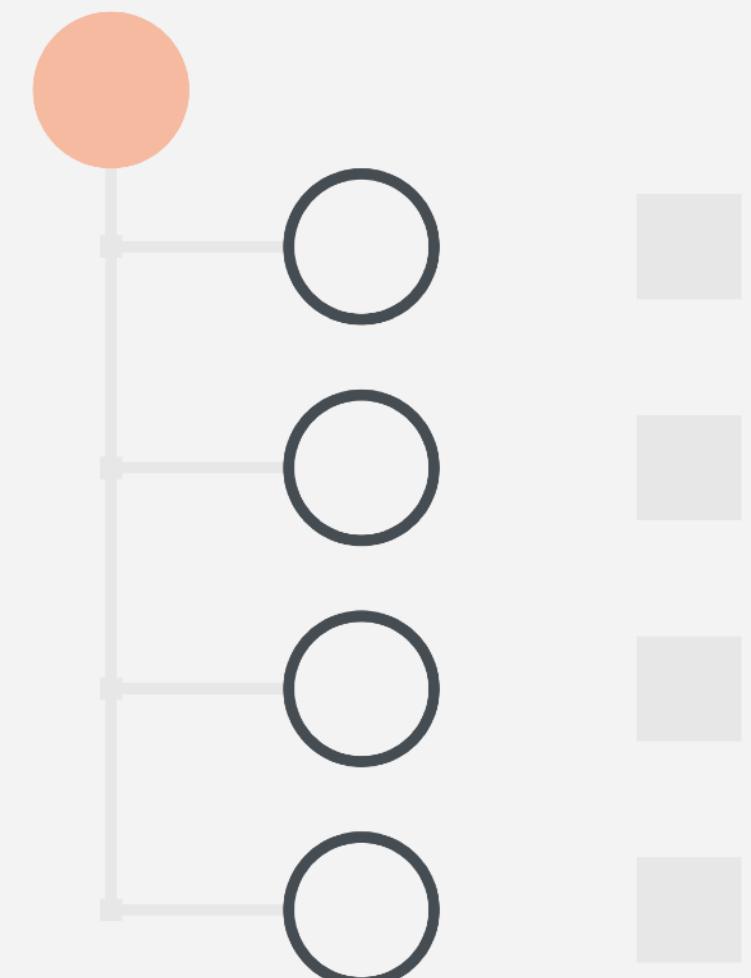
Planning

Project Schedule  
Management

Begins with work packages found  
in Work Breakdown Structure

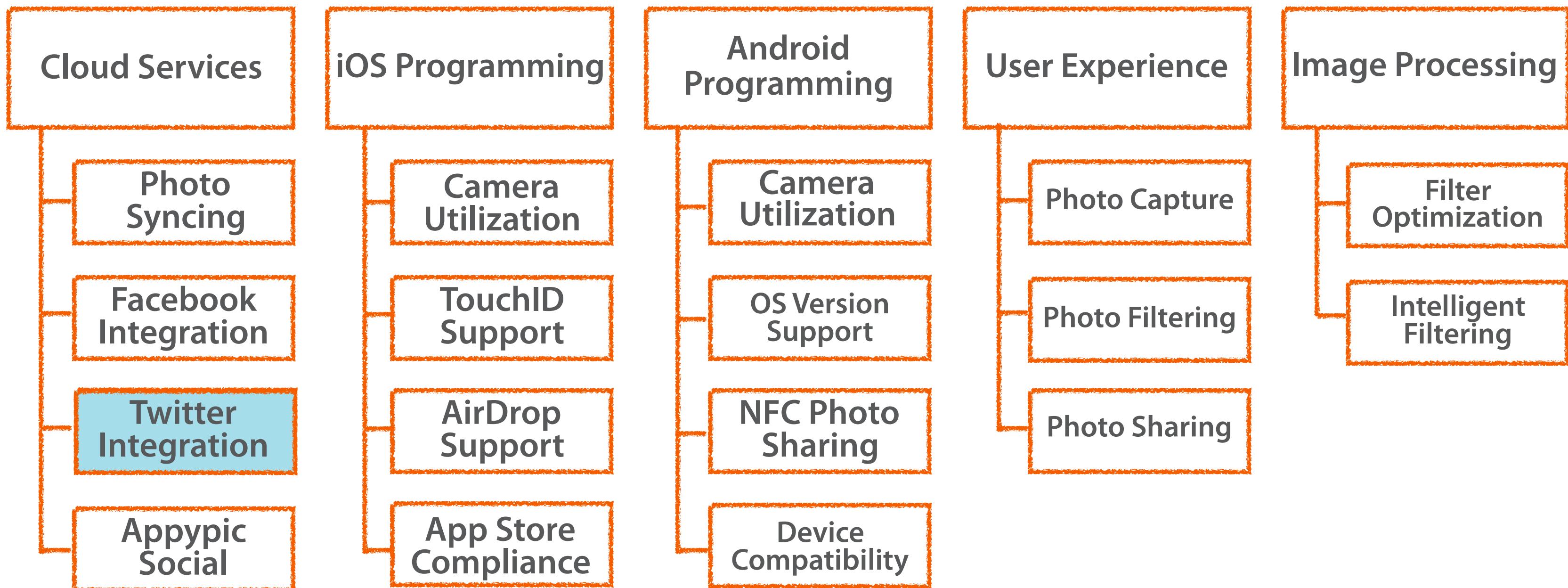
Decomposes work packages one  
more level into individual  
activities

Results in an **activity list**



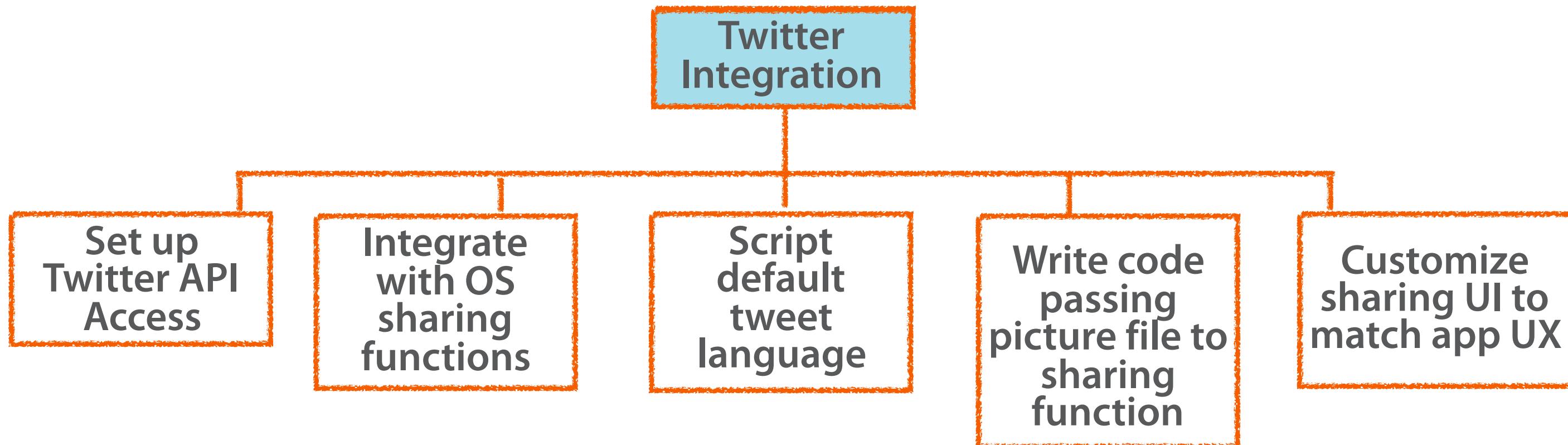
# Work Breakdown Structure

## Appyco Software



# Defining Activities from a Work Package

*Appyco Software*



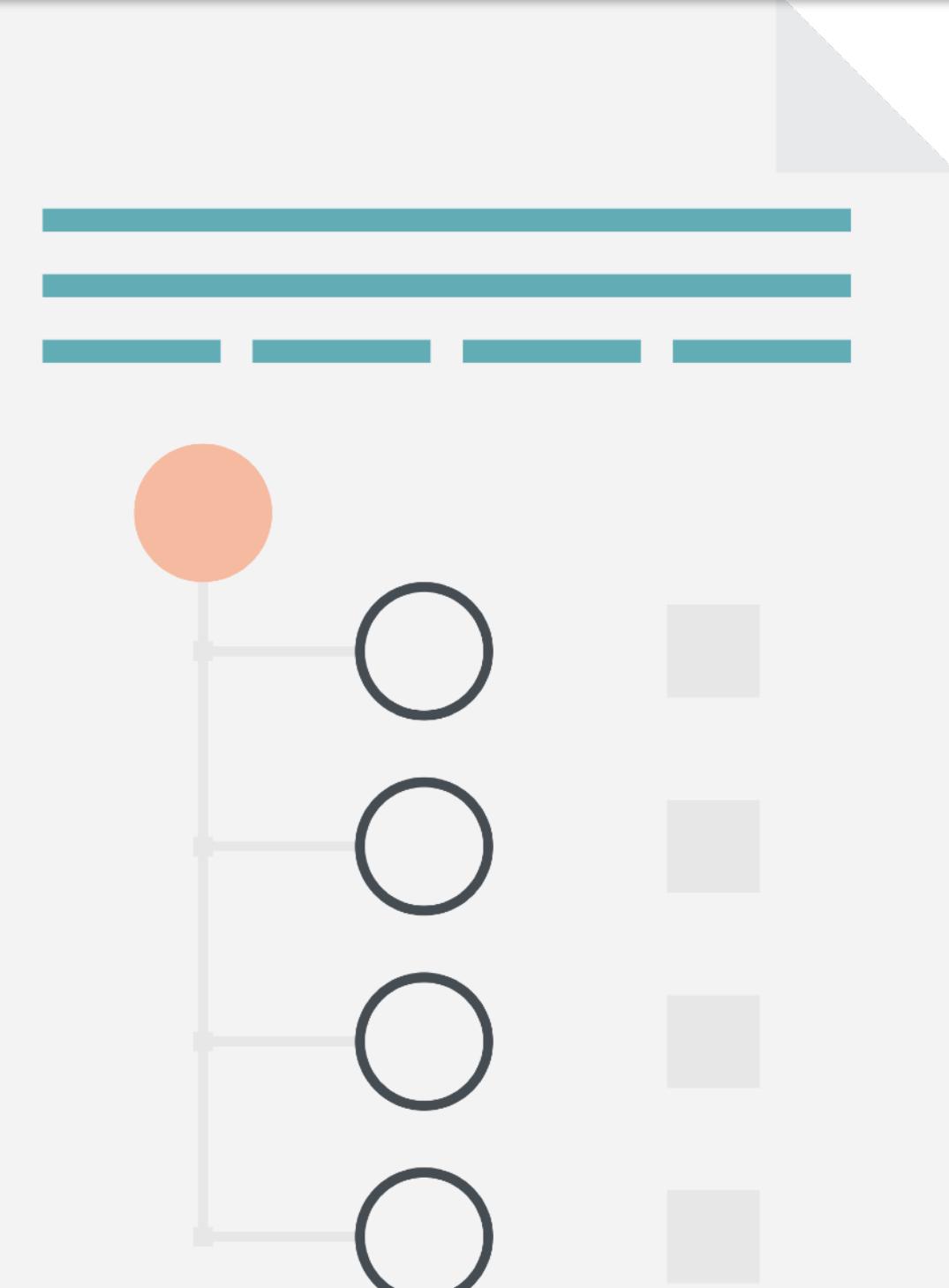
# Define Activities

Planning

Project Schedule  
Management

WBS may be made before or at the same time as the activity list

Often useful to involve team members and subject matter experts in the defining activity process



# Rolling Wave Planning & Defining Activities

Iterative planning technique where future work is less understood than immediate work

Work packages decomposed as far as possible now; further over time as more is known



# Inside the Define Activities Process

# Define Activities

## Planning

## Project Schedule Management

### Inputs

### Tools & Techniques

### Outputs

Schedule Management Plan

Decomposition

Activity List

Scope Baseline

Rolling Wave Planning

Activity Attributes

Enterprise Environmental Factors

Expert Judgment

Milestone List

Organizational Process Assets

Meetings

Change Requests

Project Management Plan Updates

# Define Activities

Inputs

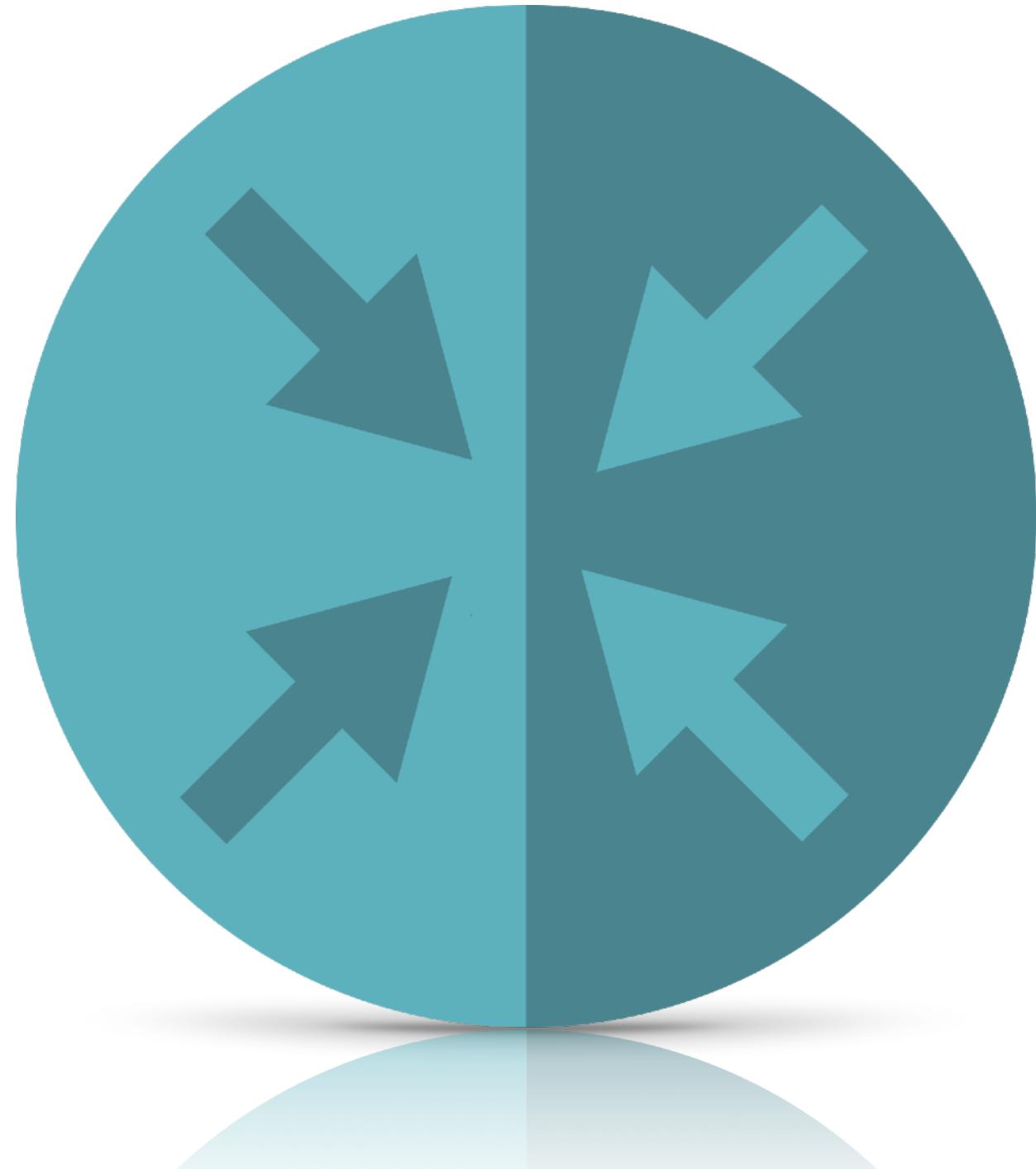
T&Ts

Outputs

## Schedule Management Plan

What level of detail is required?

What kinds of attributes should be captured in activity definitions?



# Define Activities

Inputs

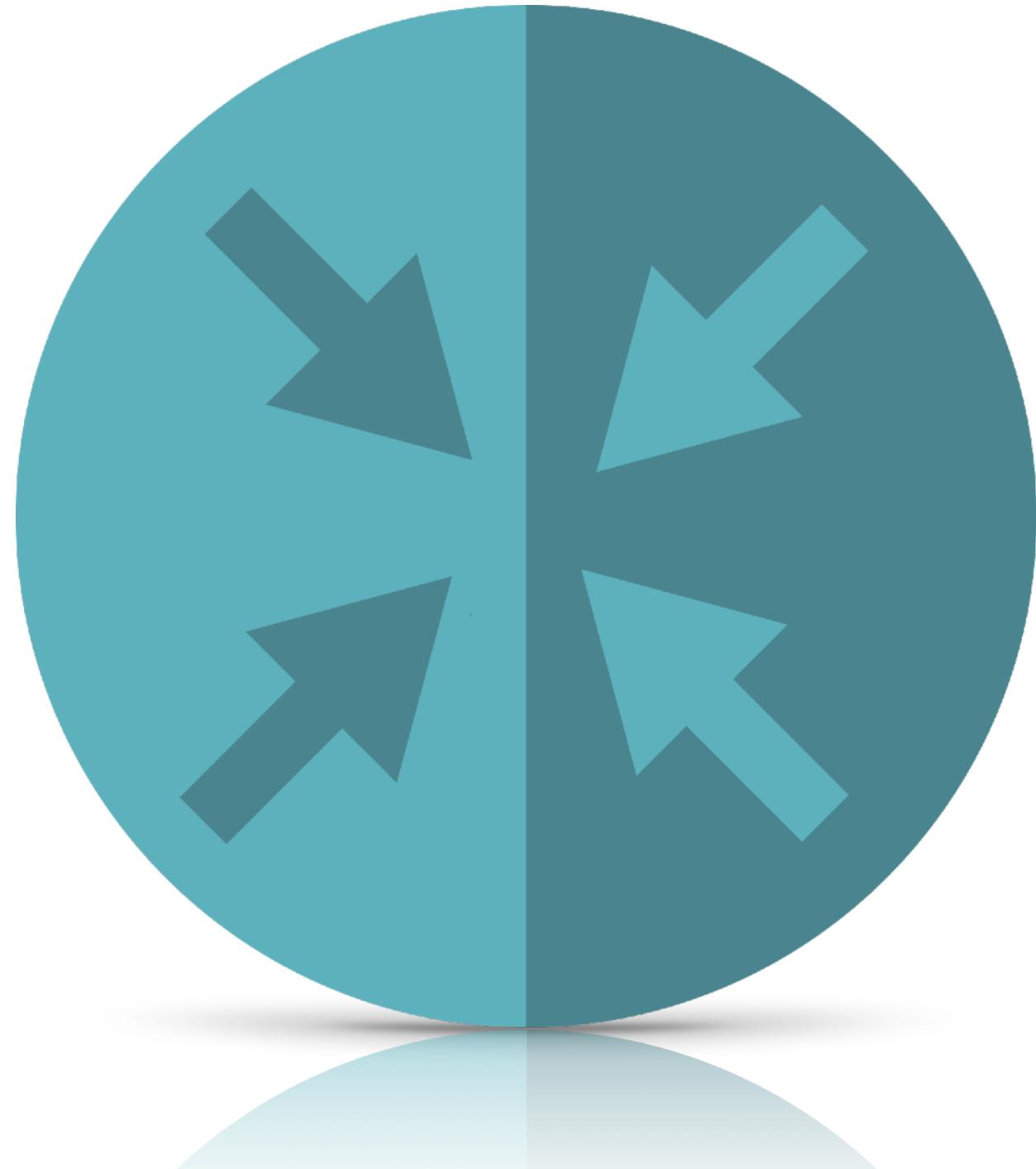
T&Ts

Outputs

## Schedule Management Plan

How should the activity list and activities be formatted?

Who will assist in defining activities?



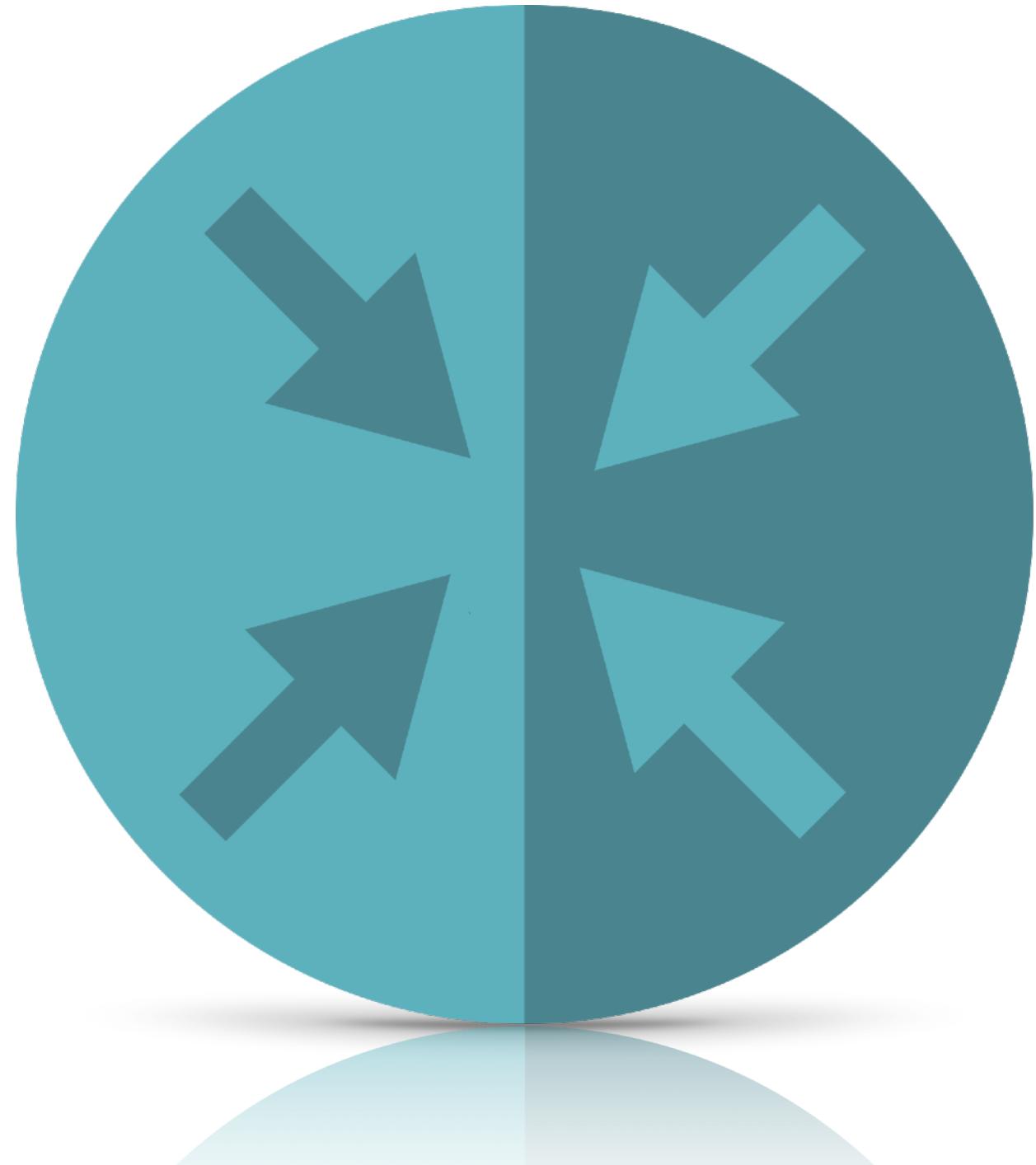
# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

- Scope Baseline
- Work Breakdown Structure
- Deliverables
- Constraints
- Assumptions



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

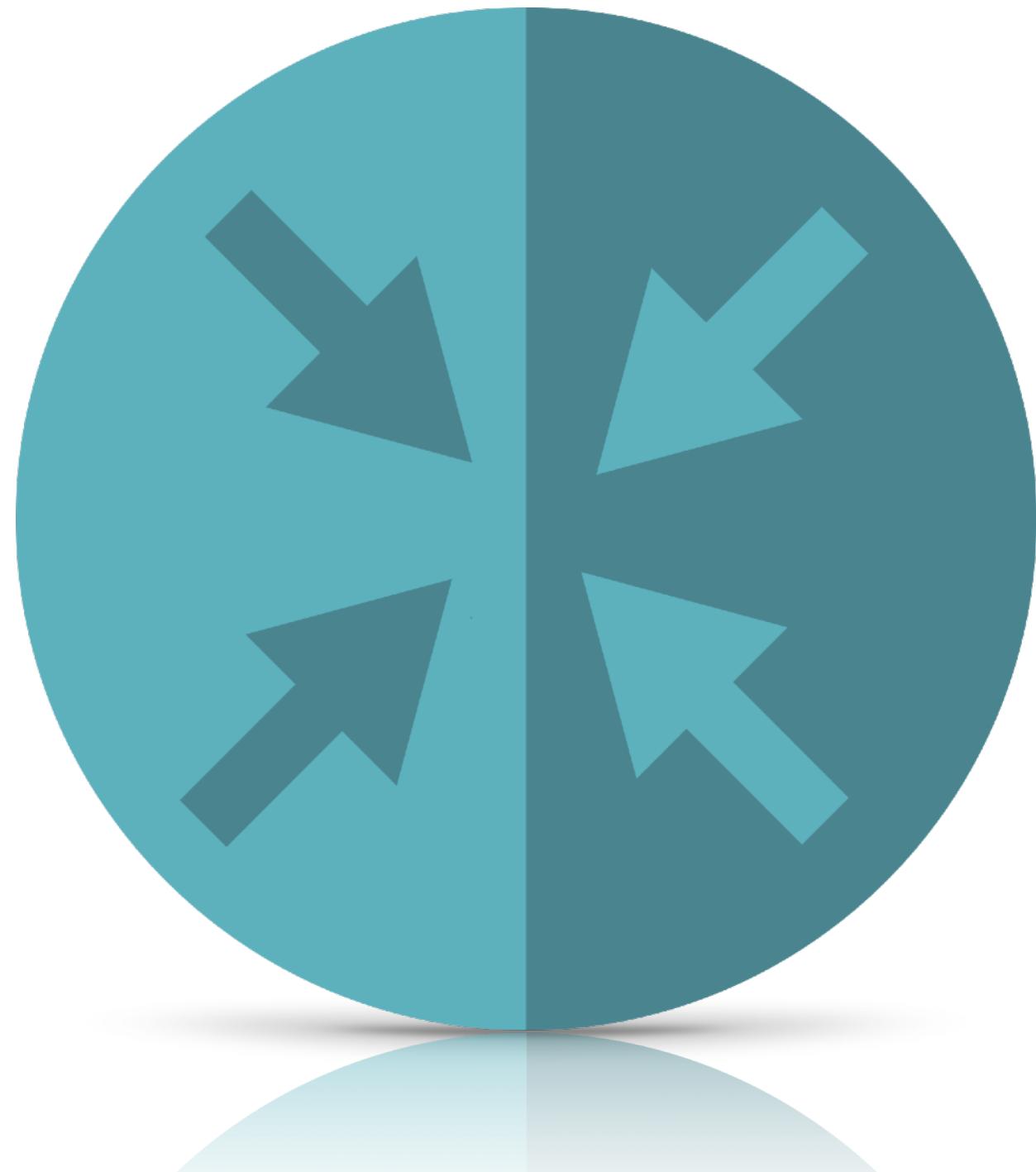
Outputs

## Enterprise Environmental Factors

Organizational culture and structure

Published commercial information

Project management information system



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

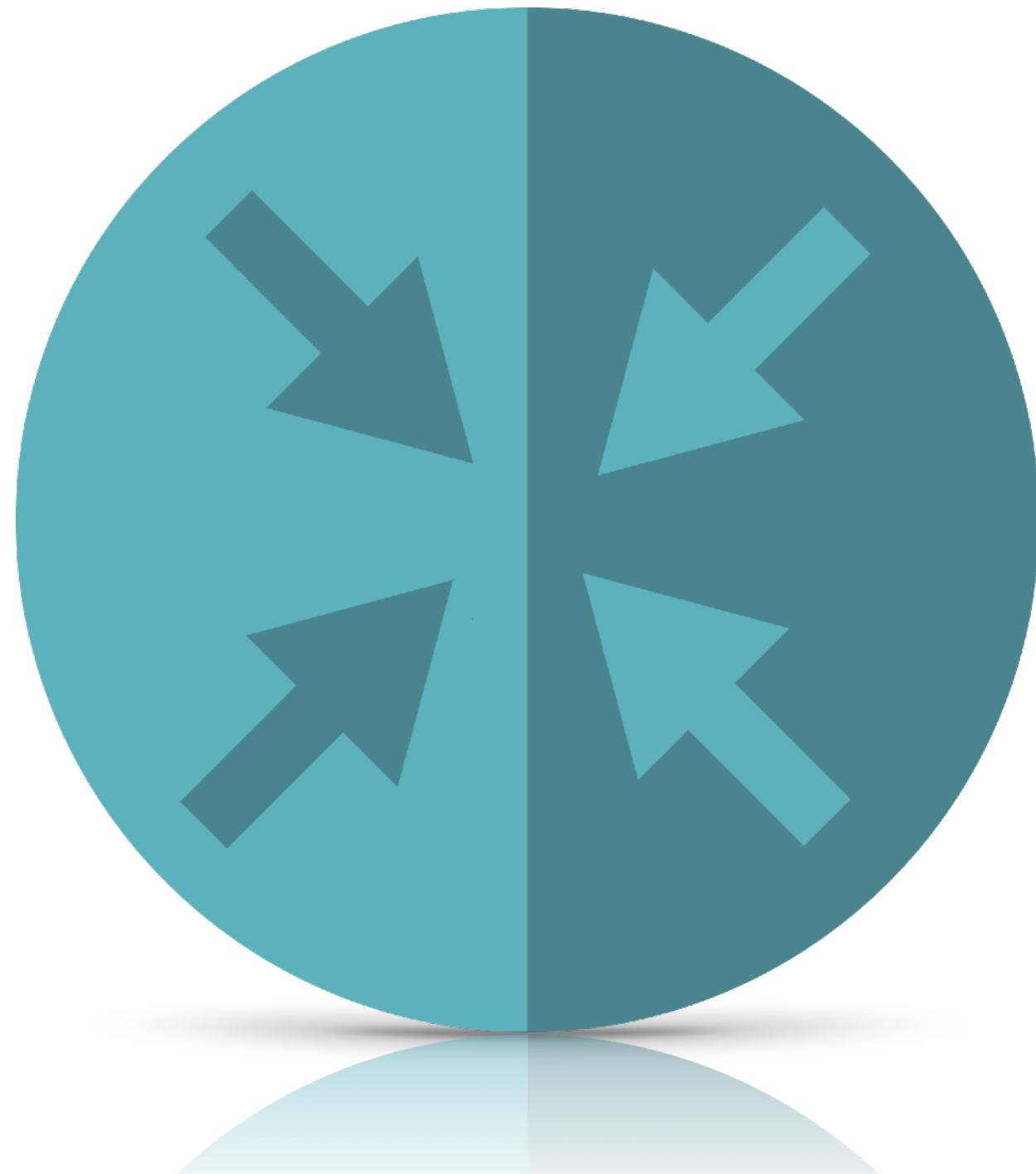
Outputs

Organizational Process Assets

Lessons learned knowledge base

Standardized processes

Activity list templates or  
historical examples



# Define Activities

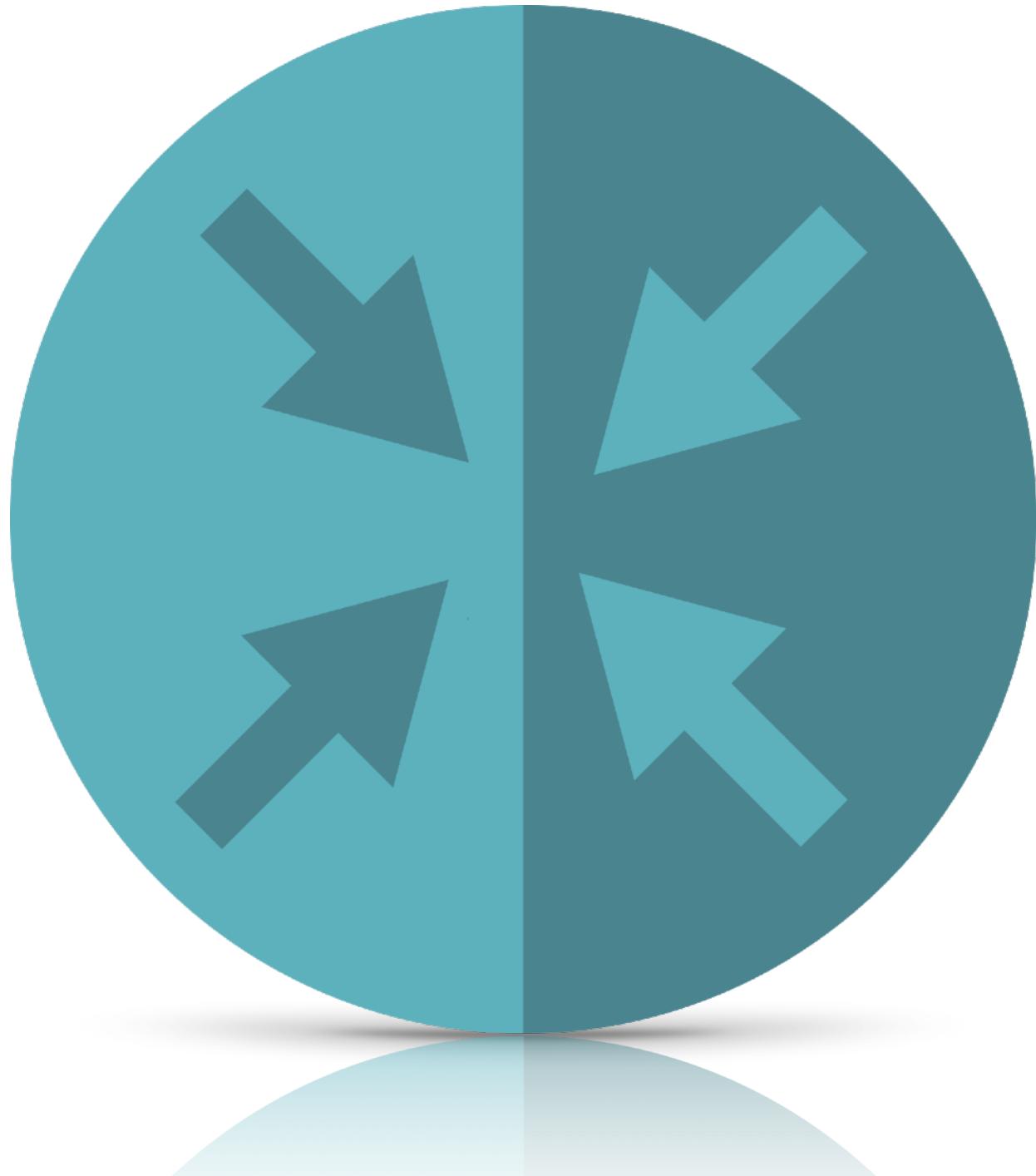
Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Organizational Process Assets

Policies, procedures and guidelines related to scheduling methodology



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

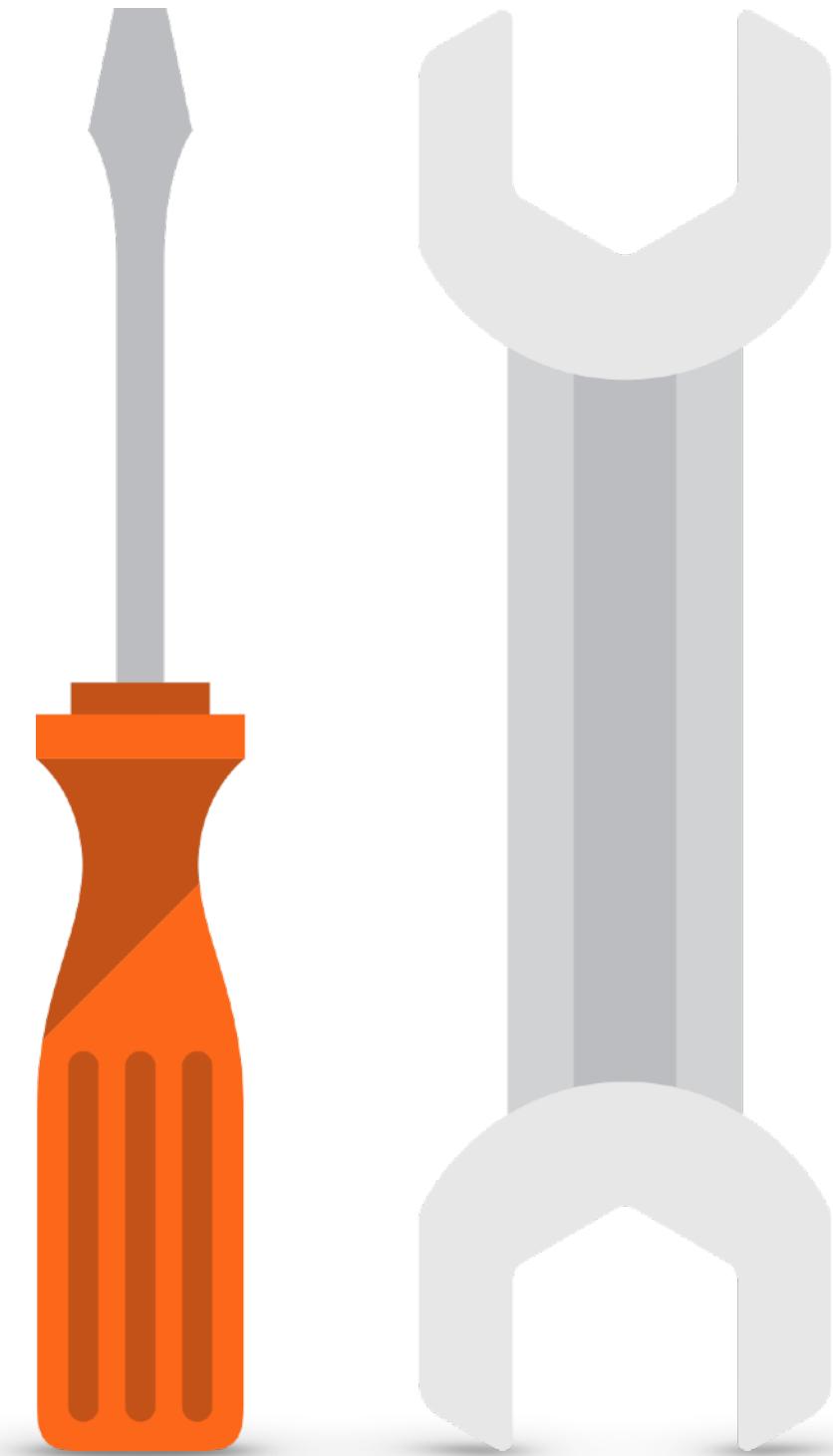
Outputs

## Decomposition

First used to create work packages  
in the Work Breakdown Structure

Later used to create activity lists  
from work packages

WBS and WBS Dictionary are basis  
of final activity list



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

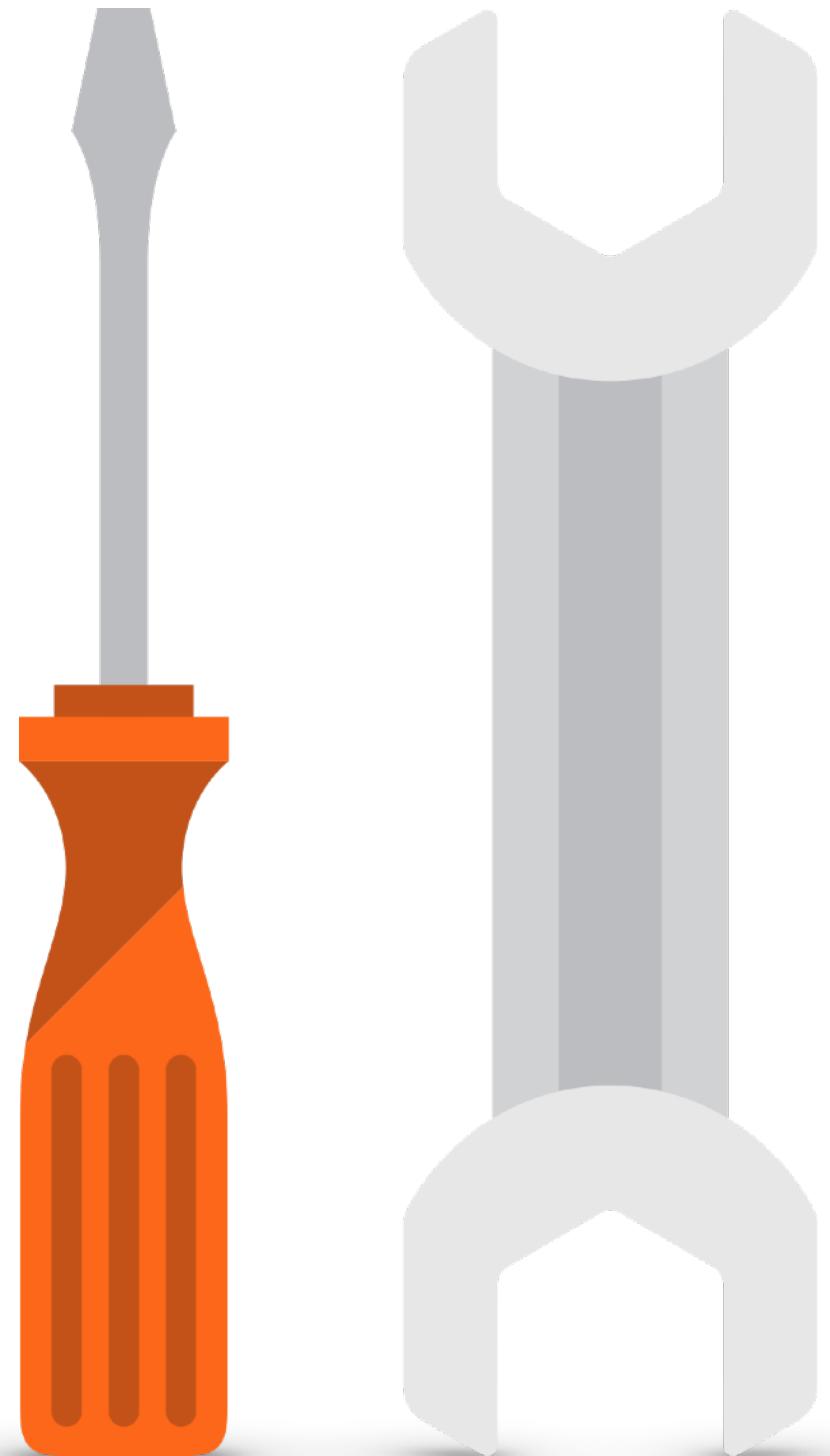
Outputs

## Rolling Wave Planning

Near-term work well understood

Later work not yet well understood

Detail regarding later work added as project progresses



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

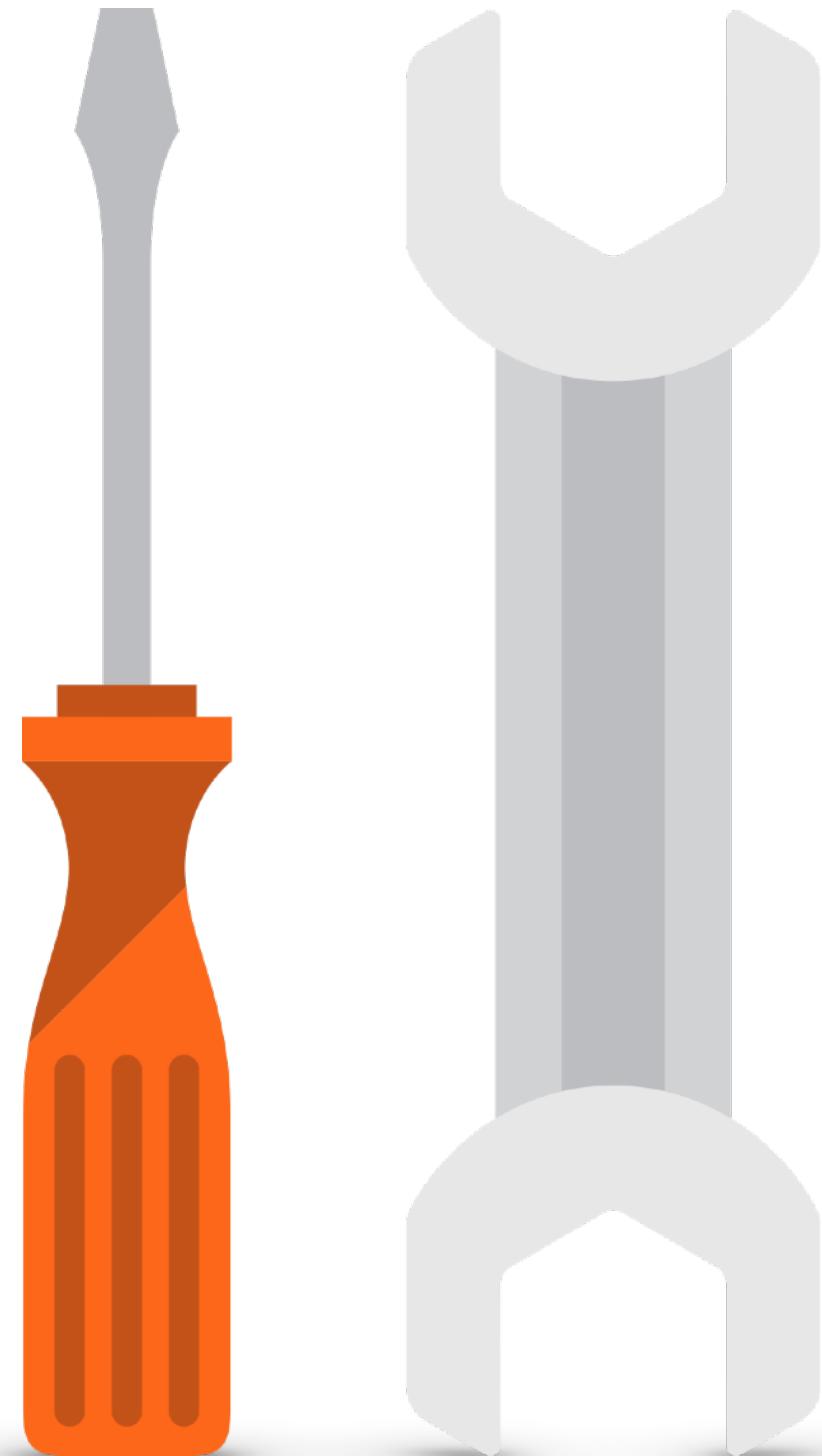
## Expert Judgment

Experts useful in defining activities include those who...

Develop scope information

Create the WBS

Generate project schedules



# Define Activities

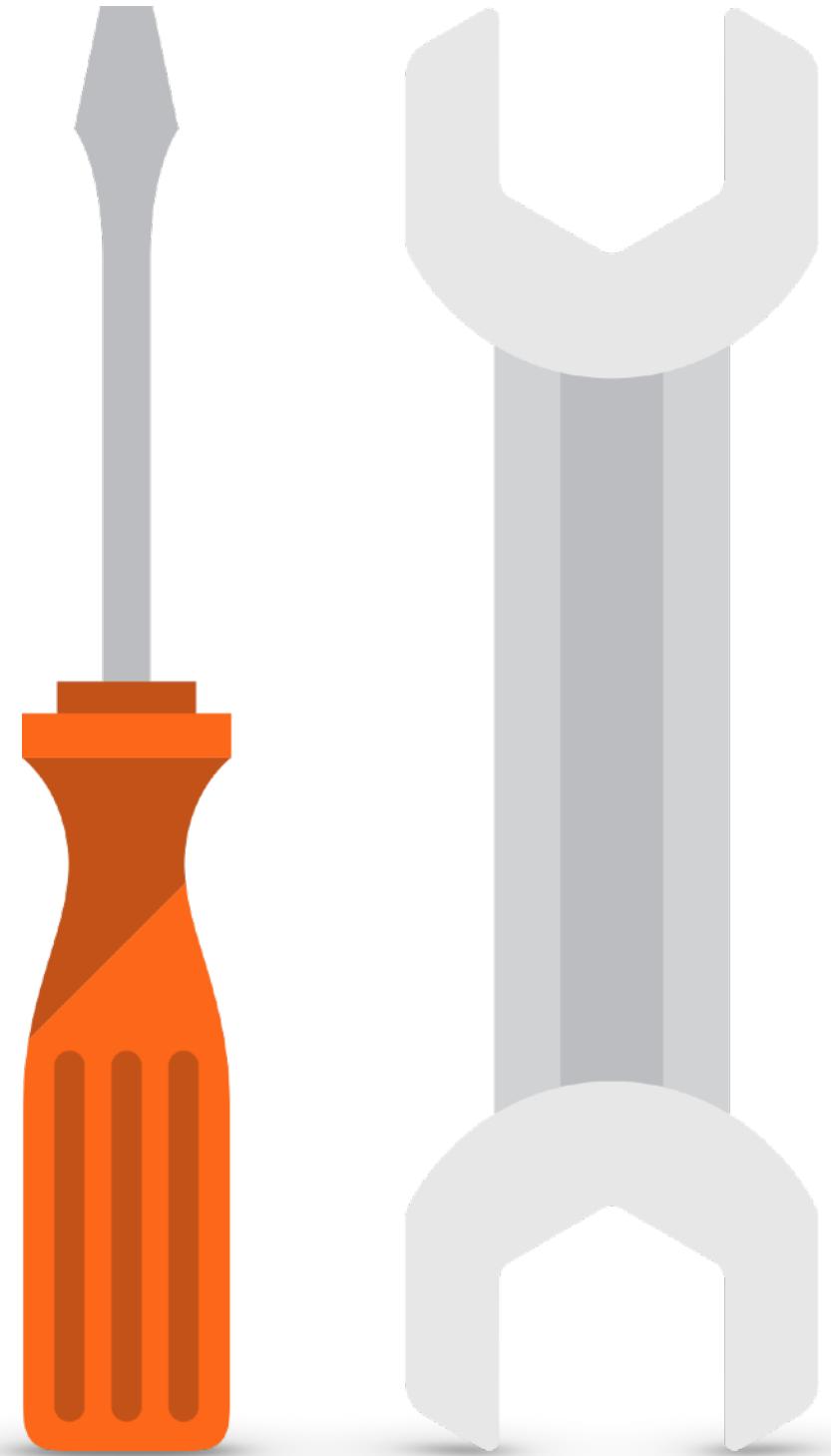
Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Meetings

Opportunity to gather team members  
and experts to define activities



# Define Activities: Process Outputs

# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity List

Includes all scheduled project activities

Information similar to WBS Dictionary  
entries is included:

Activity ID number

Activity description

Unique title

WBS ID



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity Attributes

Activity ID number

Activity description

Unique title

WBS ID



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity Attributes

Activity ID number

Activity description

Unique title

WBS ID

WBS ID

1.3

Activity ID

1.3.1

Activity Title

Set up Twitter API Access

Activity Description

*Create an account at dev.twitter.com and follow the instructions to create a developer account and establish a secret key for AppyPic*

1.3.1 Set up Twitter API Access

Integrate with OS sharing functions

1.3 Twitter Integration

Script default tweet language

# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity Attributes

Activity ID number

Activity description

Unique title

WBS ID

*Added later in the project...*

Activity codes

Predecessor activities

Successor activities

Logical relationships

Leads and lags

Resource requirements

Imposed dates

Constraints

Assumptions

# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity Attributes

Useful in identifying responsibilities, geospatial constraints, administrative details, resources/effort required and more



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Activity Attributes

Helps in sorting and ordering project activities for planning and reports

Attributes vary by project



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Milestone List

List of particularly significant points of time during a project

Milestones may be mandatory (ex. – contractual) or optional (ex. – historical)

Appear on project schedule documents like activities, but with no duration



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

## Change Requests

Progressive elaboration of requirements  
may reveal necessity of additions or  
changes to project scope

Change requests should be handled via  
the **Perform Integrated Change Control**  
process



# Define Activities

Inputs

T&Ts

Outputs

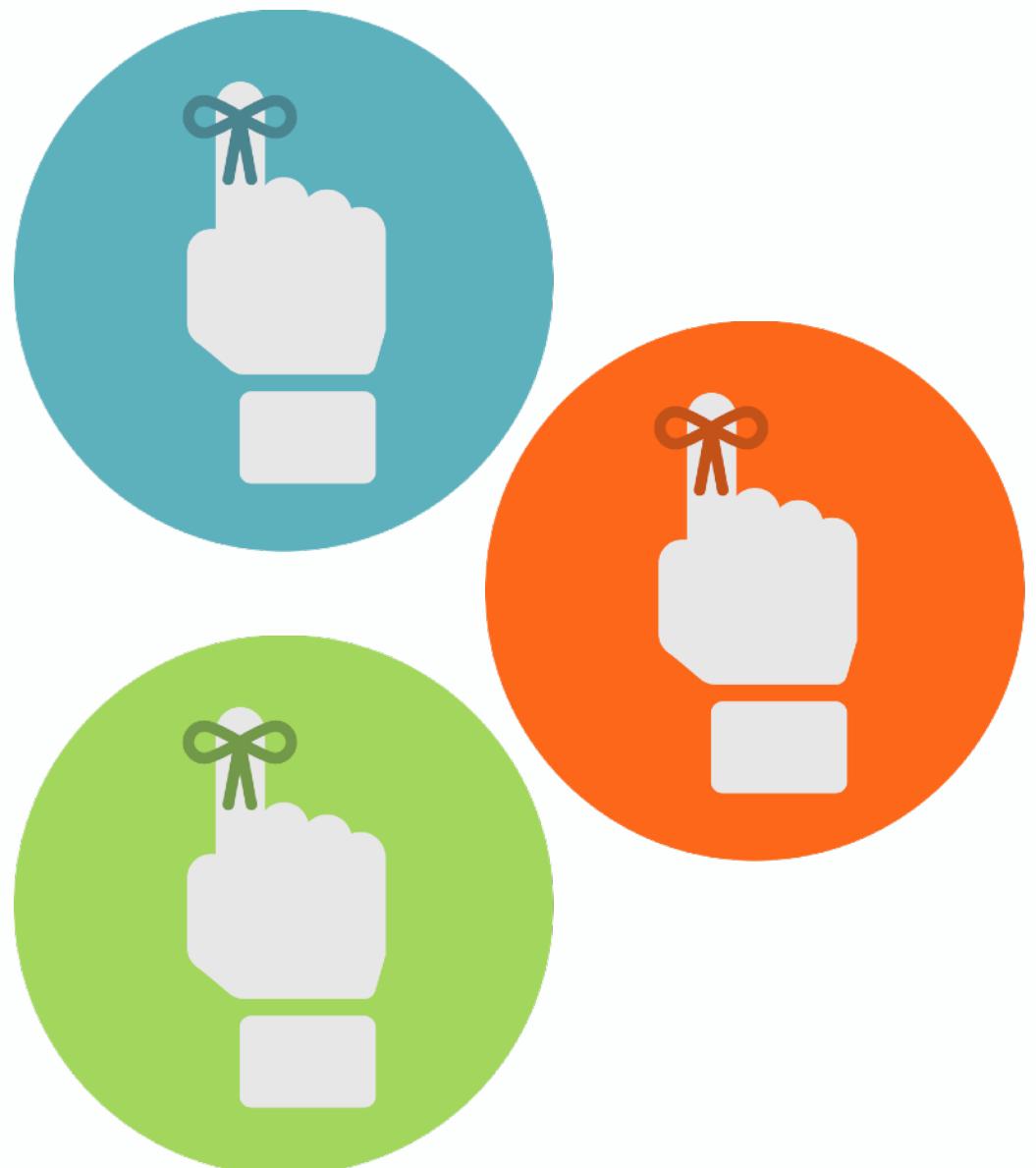
**Project Management Plan Updates**

Schedule baseline

Cost baseline



# Module Review:



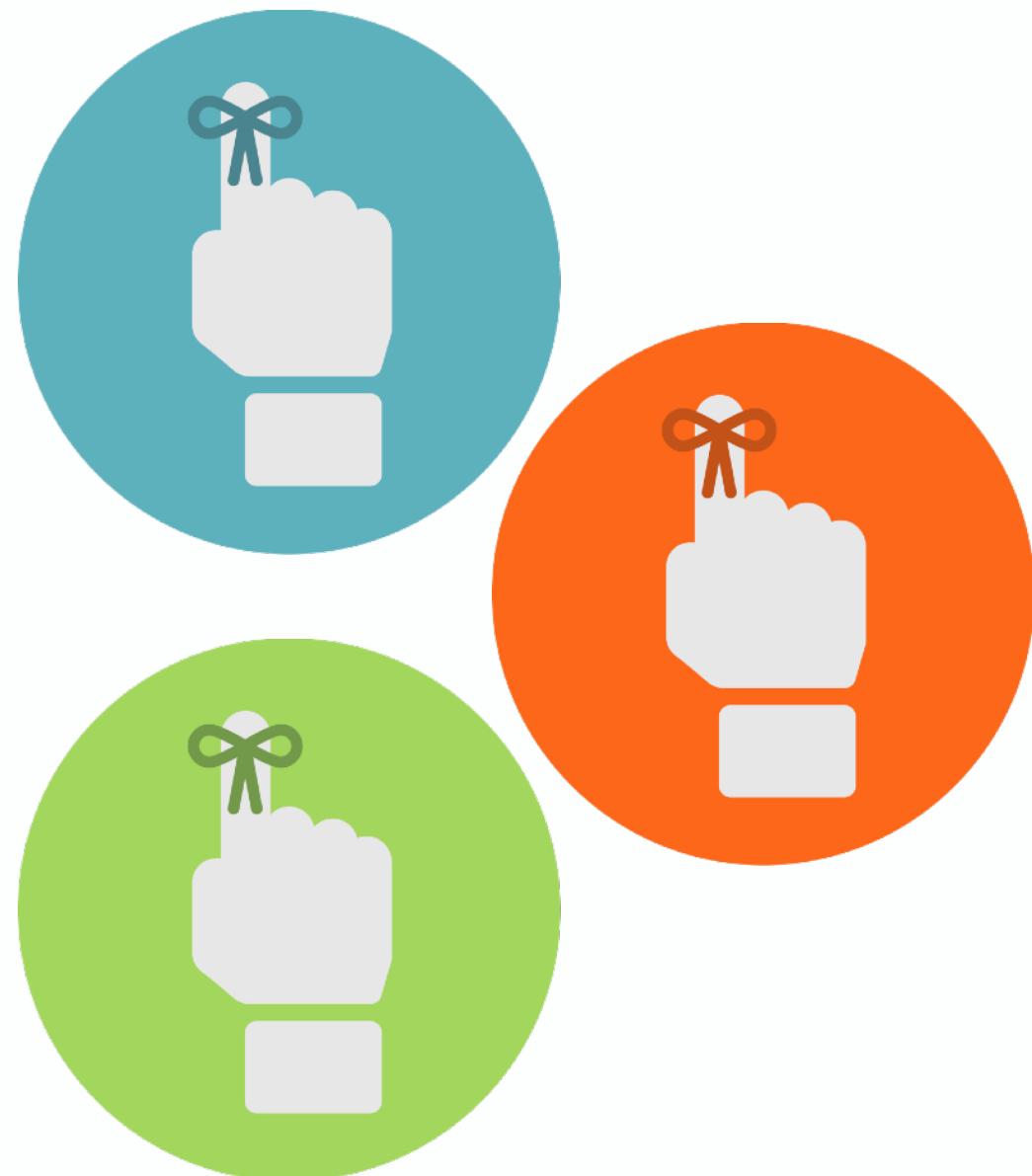
## Defining Project Activities

Decomposes work packages found in WBS into individual tasks that must be completed

An activity list is created alongside or following the creation of the Work Breakdown Structure

Activities may be progressively elaborated as project progresses

# Module Review:

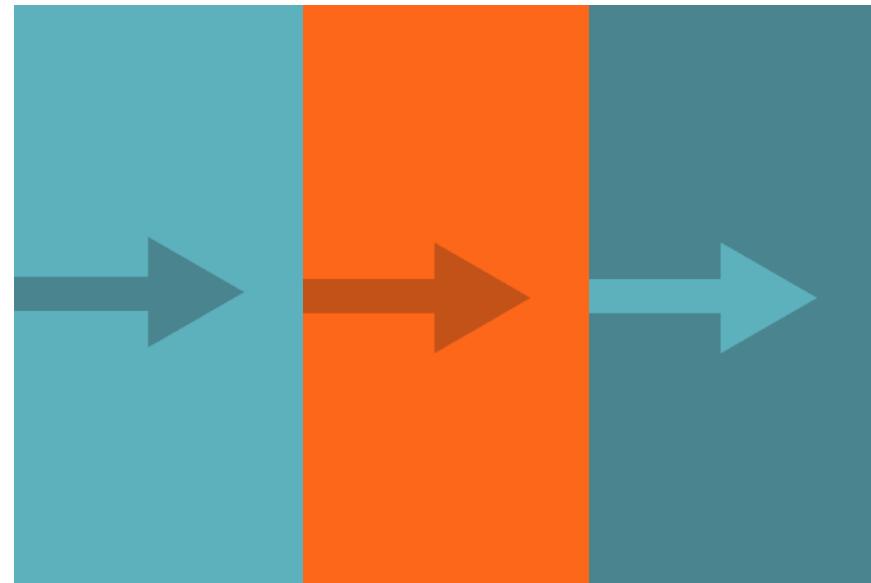


## Define Activities

**Inputs:** Schedule management plan, scope baseline, EEFs, and OPAs

**Tools & Techniques:** Decomposition, rolling wave planning, expert judgment, and meetings

**Outputs:** Activity list, activity attributes, the milestone list, change requests, and project management plan updates



# Sequencing Project Activities