

Gaining Project Approval and Acceptance

This article will teach you about the project management plan (PMP) approval process, project kickoff meeting, and how to make an effective presentation.

A project management plan (PMP)

A project management plan (PMP) is a document that a project manager creates to clearly define the project's goals, the processes the team will implement, and how the manager will monitor and control the processes to accomplish the project goals. This plan is essential for project success. Without a PMP, you cannot expect a project to be delivered timely and successfully. Developing this plan requires a lot of work, analysis, and collaboration.

The PMP approval process

Here are the steps involved in the PMP approval process.

First, the project manager must gain sponsor approval for the project. The project manager presents a baseline presentation to the sponsor to achieve this goal. After sponsor approval, the project manager schedules a kickoff meeting to present the complete plan to stakeholders. After the stakeholders accept the plan, the plan becomes the project's baseline.

Reviewing the kickoff meeting

A kickoff meeting should be brief. The information you provide to stakeholders should have been presented, discussed, and negotiated at the planning stage.

According to the Project Management Institute (PMI), presentations can be formal or informal. Formal presentations, such as a kickoff, are recorded and shared with a wide audience. Informal presentations do not need to be shared. Note that the conversations made before the formal meeting to gain consensus are informal.

Making effective presentations

Five important factors determine the effectiveness or success of a presentation. These include:

- Being prepared
- Being organized
- Using the expertise of a Subject Matter Expert (SME)
- Documentation

- Meetings before the meeting.

Being prepared

The most important factor in determining presentation success is “be prepared.” Never present if you do not understand the presentation material. As a project manager, the project sponsor expects you to be an expert in understanding and managing the project. You should anticipate potential questions and be ready to respond satisfactorily.

Being organized

Another important factor related to a successful presentation is “be organized.” Develop an agenda for the kickoff meeting and stay within it. The agenda should:

- Introduce and overview the project and the project team,
- Share key project details such as the scope, schedules, costs, and risks, and
- End with a formal recommendation for approval, cancellation, postponement, etc.

Using the expertise of a Subject Matter Expert (SME)

Being a project manager, you should try to learn as much about the project as possible. That said, you might not be able to answer all the questions that participants ask during the kickoff meeting. Therefore, ensure an SME is available and ready to answer these questions.

Documentation

Documentation is another crucial factor that a project manager must consider making an effective presentation. You must document every step you’ve taken before the kickoff meeting. This includes the approval from the sponsor and the acceptance obtained from the stakeholders. You should share this documentation with the stakeholders during the kickoff meeting.

Meetings before the meeting

The last important factor a project manager should consider for a successful presentation is “having meetings before the kickoff meeting.”

The information shared in the baseline presentation and during the kickoff meeting should not surprise the stakeholders. Before the kickoff meeting, collaboratively, all the necessary negotiations must be made, and the project manager should define the scope, schedule, and budget. Collaborate with the sponsor and the key stakeholders at every stage of the planning process. The best approval and acceptance meetings are approved.

Conclusion

Developing a PMP is crucial for the success of any project. It helps to clearly define the project goals, processes, and how the project manager will monitor and control the processes to achieve the desired outcomes. The project manager must be prepared and organized, use the expertise of an SME, document every step taken, and collaborate with the project sponsor and key stakeholders at every stage of the planning process to ensure a successful presentation. By following these steps and considering these factors, project managers can increase the chances of project success.