

THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT LIFE CYCLE

Timeframe:	6 hours
Learning Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the project context and life cycle
Recommended reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bhunu, S. 2007, 'A closer look at project life cycles', PositionIT, September/October 2007, 37-44, http://www.ee.co.za/wp-content/uploads/legacy/PositionITSept-Oct%2007-37-44.pdf, (accessed 20 February 2014).
Multimedia:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan online. 2012, Project management life cycle – project management 101, [video], Youtube.com., http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=817QqvrZX4U (accessed 30 December 2012).
Section overview	The first section of the Study Guide discusses the project context and project life cycle. We review what you studied in your first year and build on the knowledge by using the project management life cycle as a tool.

Introduction

The first year of project management introduced you to several concepts of project management. Can you remember them? As a revision activity, complete the exercise below:

 Task Questions			
Find the correct answer for Column A in Column B.			
Column A		Column B	
1	An assignment/ task/ job that has to be undertaken and completed within a set time, budget, resources and performance specifications designed to meet the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries.	A	Goal
2	The process of integrating everything that needs to be done as the project evolves through its life cycle in order to meet the project's objectives.	B	Project team
3	A relative series of undertakings that continues over a period of time (normally years) and is designed to accomplish a broad, scientific or technical goal in a long-term plan.	C	Stakeholder
4	A guide for project managers.	D	Project planning
5	The team who plan, implement and execute a project.	E	Cost-benefit analysis

6	A tool can be used in many different situations to assist the project manager to select the best project, options or strategies.	F	Project time management
7	A desire or an intention for ensuring the achievement of an action.	G	Gantt chart
8	A desired end point in development usually endeavoured to be reached in finite time by setting deadlines.	H	Project
9	The aim of this tool is to ensure that a project is divided into specific and manageable sections.	I	Project budget
10	This activity usually refers to the what (activity), when (timeframes), and resources (human, financial and material).	J	Project quality
11	A visual tool to assist you to plan and control your projects.	K	Project scheduling
12	An action of project management where projects are costed accurately and the costs are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that the project remains financially viable.	L	PMBOK®
13	Entails the processes needed to ensure that the project includes all the work required to complete the project successfully.	M	Project scope
14	Examining the management of costs, with particular emphasis on how to control them.	N	Work Breakdown Structure
15	The process to ensure that the project fulfils its obligations to satisfy the project needs.	O	Project cost
16	The specific people or groups who have a stake, or an interest, in the outcome of the project.	P	Objective
17	Refers to comparing the progress against the plan so that corrective action can be taken when a deviation occurs.	Q	Project control
18	Effective technique of analysing a problem.	R	Project management
19	An activity ensuring that the project can run smoothly.	S	Programme
20	Refers to being able to manage the project schedule.	T	Problem analysis

You will find the answers in Appendix A of this manual.

Did you remember everything? If not, you need to read through your first year module as this year is a continuation of what you have learnt.

The Project Life Cycle

Project management studies have shown that projects follow phases. According to Burke (2010: 40 - 41) the project life cycle is divided into four different phases:

1. Concepts and Initiation Phase;
2. Design and Development Phase;
3. Implementation or Construction Phase; and
4. Commissioning and Handover Phase.

Furthermore, in your first year, you learnt that the project management process is divided into five stages:

1. Initiating
2. Planning
3. Executing
4. Controlling
5. Closing

(Source: Project Management Institute, 2012)



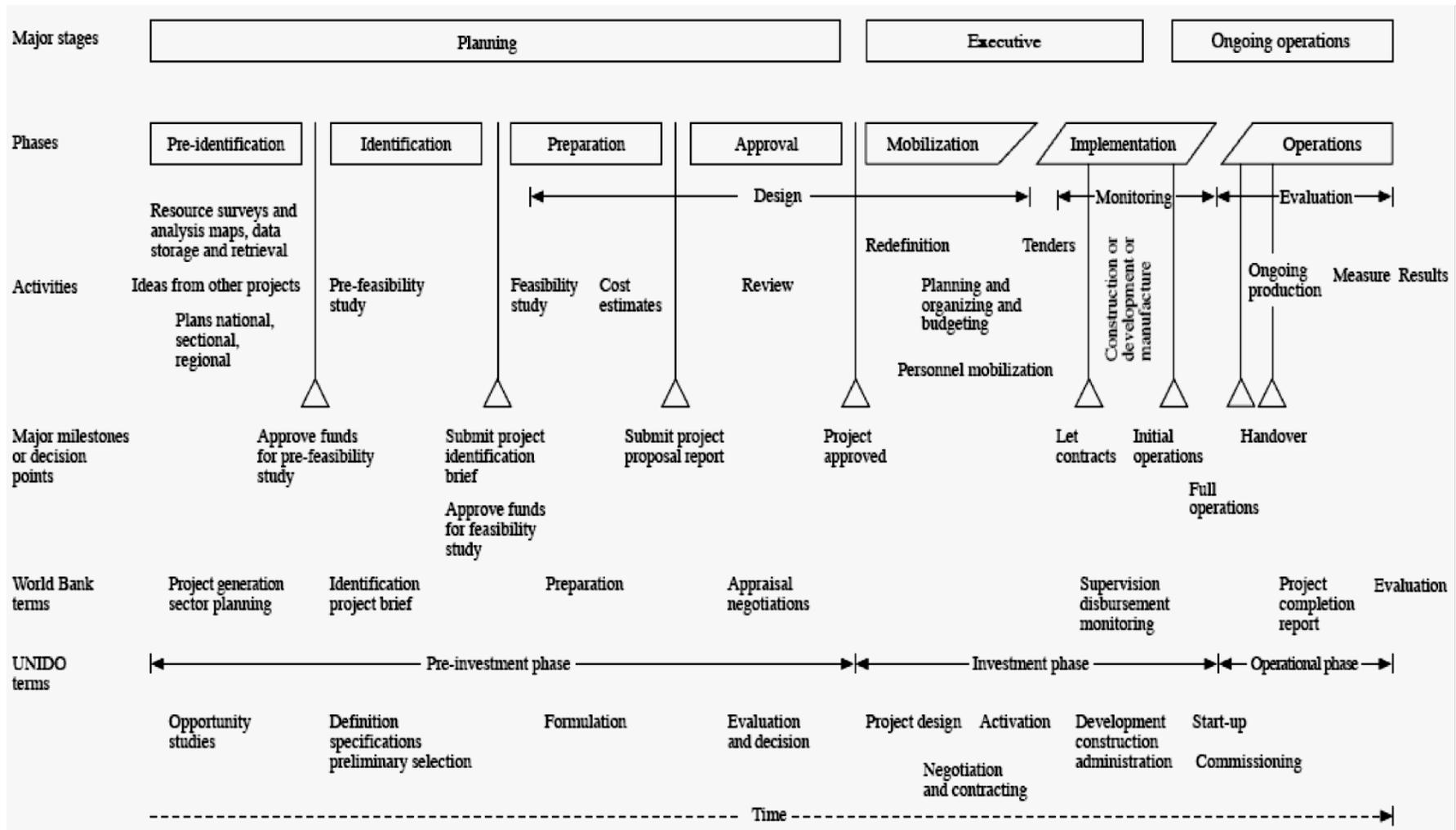
Task Questions

Use your first year Study Guide as reference and briefly explain each stage of the project management process.

According to Burke (2010: 40), each stage can lend itself to the project life cycle. Wideman (2004) explains different perspectives of the project life cycle. Wideman (2004) looks at different studies done on different projects and sets out a project life cycle for each project. One such study identifies the context of a project within surrounding environments.

This is presented in **Figure 1** on the following page:

FIGURE 1: BUSINESS PROJECT LIFE CYCLE



(Source: Wideman, 2004:10)

Figure 1 represents a project life cycle for a banking project. As you can see, the project can be mapped completely on the project life cycle. Project costs, level of effort and all project details can be mapped.



Task Questions

Read the case study below. Use a project life cycle diagram and plot the project. Indicate the project expenditure, level of effort and phases.

A business tale of what it takes to turn around troubled projects.

The year is 2005 and times are good. The business environment is vibrant and the economy is strong. Large businesses are committing large amounts of capital and resources to implement new strategies, establish new capabilities, and open new markets. It was no different at PintCo, where Jack works as a Director of Customer Relationship Management.

Jack walked into work on Monday morning like any other. He dropped his briefcase in his office, grabbed a cup of coffee and headed down the hall to meet with his boss, Brandon, about one of the company's troubled projects. Although Jack had substantial experience, he had only recently joined PintCo after being hired away from a chief competitor. He was still learning about some of the nuances of his current employer.

After the typical morning banter, Brandon and Jack got to the topic at hand. "Jack, I'll get straight to the point. I need to you to take over the Customer Master File project from Paul." Brandon said. He continued, "We hired you because of your significant project management expertise. I know that you've turned around a lot more difficult situations than this." Over an hour later, Jack emerged from Brandon's office and set out to learn more about the challenge that Brandon had posed to him.

Jack was an experienced business leader and project manager. He had seen more than his fair share of ugly projects; some he turned around while others had spun hopelessly out of control. He would be able to tell very quickly how this one would go, based on the makeup and culture of the project team.

Troubled Waters

Over the course of the next few weeks, Jack took over the Customer Master File project, met with key project team members, and conducted dozens of interviews with key stakeholders. It was only a few weeks since Brandon had handed the keys to him for this troubled project, and now Jack was back in Brandon's office to give a rather stark update on the situation.

"Brandon, I've talked to the project team and to key stakeholders, and I know why this project is in trouble," Jack started. "If you truly want me to turn this project around, I'll need your support to make some critical changes."

Brandon, a 20-year veteran at PintCo, knew what was coming. He had seen too many projects start, flounder, and then fail at the company. He didn't want to hear that another project was on the brink of failure, but he asked anyway, "What did you find out, Jack, and what can I do to help?"

Jack drew a deep breath and began to explain his findings. "Brandon, as you know this project has been in flight for nearly 6 months now and it is already behind schedule and over budget." Jack went on, "In talking to the project team and other stakeholders, I don't see the situation getting better without making some pretty significant changes."

Jack's experience helped him to quickly identify a number of critical issues with the project, which he carefully outlined for Brandon:

- "The scope of the project is not well defined,"
- "The IT architects are sitting in their ivory towers and disagree with the project's direction,"
- "The project team is not functioning as a team,"
- "There is a lack of clear executive sponsorship, and"
- "Steve from Marketing is trying to manipulate this project for his own political gain."

"I'm not going to sugar coat this for you Brandon," Jack explained. "I've seen this situation far too often in my career, and if we don't change the situation this project will fail in glorious fashion."

Foundations for Success

Brandon knew that what Jack said was true and he also knew that changing the situation would be difficult, painful, and potentially costly. He reluctantly agreed with Jack, and together they laid out several key changes.

"Thanks for working with me on this Brandon," Jack said. "Just to confirm, let me summarise the changes that we agreed to implement:

"First, we're going to stop the current project and recreate a clear and well-defined scope and get consensus buy-in on the new scope."

"Second, we're going to end the architectural holy wars by assigning key IT architects to the project on a full time basis."

"Third, we're going to co-locate the team and assign members to a full-time basis on the project. No more part-time participation."

"Fourth, Brandon, you agree to be much more visible and an active participant to drive key decisions for the project, and"

"Finally, Brandon - you are going to have a heart-to-heart with Steve and if necessary his boss - to eliminate any political agendas that could derail the project."

Brandon and Jack both agreed with the plan. Jack knew that some of these changes would be unpopular, but without them the project would be doomed. He left Brandon's office with a sense of relief and apprehension. There was still a lot of hard work and heavy lifting yet to be done...

Celebrations

Six months later, Jack ran into Brandon in the break room as they both were angling for their morning coffee refill. "Jack!" Brandon shouted while patting Jack on the back. "Congratulations on getting the Customer Master File project into pilot. By all accounts, it has been a resounding success!" Brandon crowed.

"Thank you," Jack smiled and answered, "but you know it was pretty touch and go after we met in your office to plan the project turnaround. There were a lot of unhappy campers and several of them didn't like the idea of being assigned 100% to the project if you recall."

"But we quickly converted them - and now I see a project team that is hitting on all cylinders," Jack added. "In fact, Sharon told me she was ready to quit six months ago - and now she's happier than ever and up for promotion." Jack explained.

"I love it when a plan comes together," Jack said proudly as he turned to walk away and take on his next big project.

(Source: Howard, 2008)