

Project Execution: How to Rock Your PM Superpower

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Without doubt execution is not at the top of the glamor list. But it is where the magic happens and 'stuff' gets done!

While planning lays the groundwork and strategy charts the course, execution is the force that propels projects forward, turning visions into reality. As a PM at the head of a team of skilled individuals; execution is their combined efforts, driving success with precision and agility.



Let's start with the fundamentals of execution:

Part 1 – The Fundamentals

The Art of Phased Deliveries

One of the fundamental aspects of executing a project efficiently is the phasing of deliverables. Just as a composer orchestrates movements in a symphony, a project manager coordinates phases of work, ensuring each delivers tangible outcomes. This approach not only provides clear milestones but also allows for continuous evaluation and adaptation. Phased deliveries enable teams to maintain momentum while adjusting strategies as needed, minimizing risks and maximizing efficiency.

Pro Tip: Act to proactively engage stakeholders at each phase to ensure alignment and minimize surprises. Transparency fosters trust and enables smoother transitions between project stages.

Navigating Through Reviews and Sprints

Reviews and sprints act as vital checkpoints along the project journey, providing opportunities for reflection, refinement, and realignment. Reviews allow stakeholders to assess progress, offer feedback, and recalibrate objectives if necessary. Sprints, on the other hand, emphasize iterative development, breaking down complex tasks into manageable chunks. Together, they foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement, driving projects towards successful outcomes.

Pro Tip: Leverage sprint retrospectives as opportunities for continuous improvement. Encourage open dialogue and empower team members to share insights and suggestions for enhancing processes.

The Power of Detailed Execution Lists

At the heart of effective execution lies the detailed execution list—an exhaustive inventory of tasks, dependencies, and deadlines. Much like a well-organized playbook, this list serves as a roadmap for the team, guiding their actions and ensuring alignment with project objectives. By breaking down larger objectives into actionable steps, project managers empower their teams to tackle challenges systematically, fostering accountability and productivity.

Pro Tip: Break down tasks into smaller, manageable chunks to maintain momentum and ensure that you execute at pace without causing overwhelm of the team. Celebrate incremental progress to keep motivation high and morale strong.

Embracing Parallel Activities

In the dynamic landscape of project management, undertaking parallel activities is the key to optimizing resources and accelerating progress. While sequential workflows have their place, parallel activities allow teams to multitask effectively, leveraging diverse skill sets and minimizing bottlenecks. This approach not only enhances efficiency but also enables teams to adapt swiftly to changing priorities and constraints, driving projects towards timely completion.

Pro Tip: Establish clear communication channels to coordinate parallel activities effectively. Regular check-ins and status updates help prevent bottlenecks and ensure smooth collaboration. Everyone needs to know what they are doing and how their piece fits into the overall picture.

Essential Delivery Materials: The Execution Plan

entral to successful project execution is the execution plan—a comprehensive document outlining strategies, timelines, and responsibilities. Acting as a linchpin for project governance, the execution plan provides stakeholders with a roadmap for success, aligning efforts and expectations. Furthermore, it serves as a reference point for other key documentation, such as risk registers, resource plans, and communication strategies, ensuring coherence and consistency across project deliverables.

Pro Tip: Keep the execution plan dynamic and adaptable to reflect changing priorities and evolving circumstances. Regularly revisit and revise the plan to stay on course and address emerging challenges.

[Download my free Project Execution plan](#)

Navigating Decision Points

In the fluid landscape of project execution, decision points often emerge, shaping the trajectory of the project. These pivotal moments require careful consideration and strategic foresight, as they can influence the direction, scope, and timeline of deliverables. By leveraging data-driven insights and stakeholder input, project managers can navigate decision points effectively, steering projects towards successful outcomes while mitigating risks and uncertainties.

Pro Tip 6: Develop a culture of informed decision-making by gathering data, soliciting diverse perspectives, and weighing potential outcomes. Embrace uncertainty as an opportunity for innovation and growth.

Part II – Executing Your Project Activity

Here's an overview of some of the key project lifecycle options:

1. Linear or Waterfall Lifecycle:

Overview: The linear or waterfall lifecycle follows a sequential progression of phases, typically including initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure. Each phase must be completed before moving onto the next, making it well-suited for projects with clear and stable requirements.

- Pros: Provides a structured approach, easy to understand, and facilitates detailed planning.
- Cons: Limited flexibility for changes, potential for lengthy feedback loops, and challenges in adapting to evolving requirements.

2. Iterative Lifecycle:

Overview: The iterative lifecycle breaks the project into smaller cycles or iterations, each encompassing planning, execution, and evaluation. After each iteration, feedback is gathered and used to refine subsequent iterations, enabling incremental progress and continuous improvement.

- Pros: Facilitates early delivery of partial solutions, promotes stakeholder involvement and feedback, and allows for flexibility and adaptation.
- Cons: Requires effective management of scope and expectations, may encounter challenges in defining clear endpoints for iterations.

3. Incremental Lifecycle:

Overview: Similar to the iterative approach, the incremental lifecycle involves dividing the project into manageable increments or modules. However, each increment delivers a distinct portion of the final product's functionality, allowing for progressive elaboration and phased delivery.

- Pros: Enables early delivery of functional components, reduces risk through incremental validation, and supports evolving requirements.
- Cons: Requires careful coordination to ensure seamless integration of increments, potential for increased complexity in managing dependencies.

4. Agile Lifecycle:



Overview: The agile lifecycle emphasizes flexibility, collaboration, and responsiveness to change. It advocates iterative and incremental development, with a focus on delivering value to customers through frequent releases and continuous feedback loops.

- Pros: Emphasizes customer satisfaction and adaptability, promotes self-organizing teams and continuous

improvement, and fosters rapid response to changing requirements.

- Cons: Requires a high level of collaboration and communication, may face challenges in scaling to large or complex projects, and relies heavily on active stakeholder involvement.

5. Hybrid Lifecycle:

Overview: The hybrid lifecycle combines elements of different lifecycle models to suit the specific needs and characteristics of a project. It allows organizations to tailor their approach based on factors such as project size, complexity, and stakeholder requirements.

- Pros: Offers flexibility and customization, enables organizations to leverage the strengths of multiple approaches, and accommodates diverse project contexts.

- Cons: Requires careful planning and coordination to integrate different methodologies effectively, may increase complexity in project management and governance.

6. Extended Lifecycle:

Overview: The extended lifecycle model extends beyond the completion of a project's primary objectives to encompass ongoing maintenance, support, and optimization activities. It recognizes that the value of a project often extends beyond its initial delivery and requires ongoing attention to sustain benefits and address evolving needs.

- Pros: Ensures the long-term viability and sustainability of project outcomes, fosters a culture of continuous improvement, and maximizes return on investment.

- Cons: Requires dedicated resources and governance structures for ongoing support and maintenance, may encounter challenges in prioritizing and allocating resources among competing priorities.

7. Product Lifecycle:

Overview: The product lifecycle represents the stages through which a product passes from conception to retirement, including development, introduction, growth, maturity, and decline. It encompasses activities related to product planning, design, manufacturing, marketing, and support, with each stage presenting unique challenges and opportunities.

- Pros: Provides a holistic view of a product's journey, enables organizations to anticipate and respond to market dynamics, and informs strategic decisions related to product development and portfolio management.

- Cons: Requires ongoing investment in research and development, marketing, and support activities, may face challenges in managing product transitions and end-of-life considerations.

Each of these project lifecycle options offers distinct advantages and the choice of approach depends on

factors such as project objectives, stakeholder preferences, and organizational culture.

By understanding the characteristics and implications of each lifecycle model, project managers can make informed decisions to drive successful project outcomes.

By incorporating these perspectives into project management practice organizations can adopt a more holistic approach to value delivery, spanning from project initiation to long-term sustainability and beyond. These models complement traditional project lifecycle approaches by recognizing the importance of ongoing support, optimization, and adaptation in maximizing the value of project outcomes and product offerings.

My final word – By embracing concepts outlined, project managers can harness the power of execution to drive projects towards successful completion. Get hyperfocused on your project's execution and transform your visions into reality.

Wishing you continued growth on your mission to greatness!



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