

Introduction to Documentation Project Management

AGENDA/TOPICS

Introduction and Agenda Review	5 mins
The Project Planning Lifecycle	5 mins
Information Gathering	5 mins
Resources	5 mins
EXERCISE #1	5 mins
Estimating	5 mins
EXERCISE #2	10 mins
Identifying Tasks	5 mins
EXERCISE #3	5 mins
Scheduling	5 mins
EXERCISE #4	10 mins
Project Kickoff and Monitoring	5 mins
EXERCISE #5	10 mins
Project Wrap-Up	5 mins
Session Wrap-up and Q&A	at end

EXERCISE #1:

For one full-time writer, how many working hours are they available for work in a year? A month? A week?

How much project-related time can you expect from one-full-time employee? What is the remainder of the time spent on? What percentage would you use to calculate project versus non-project related time?

Knowing these numbers, how much work can you reasonably take on in a month with a team of two full-time writers? Ten full-time writers?

How would these numbers change for contract writers versus full-time employees?

EXERCISE #2:

You are asked to provide a time estimate for developing a user manual for Microsoft Agenda, a new software product that your company is developing.

Here is the information you have been provided for this project:

- The product will allow users to create meeting agendas, update topics and timeframes quickly, track and produce reports on equipment needed, rooms required, room setup requirements, and speaker rosters.
- The development team has estimated that it will take 800 hours to develop the software.
- The project is just starting, and a prototype will not be available until July 1.
- The lead designer and subject matter expert for this project announced her resignation from the company last week. An ad was just placed on monster.com to begin recruiting a replacement.
- Today's date is May 1, and the product must be available for shipment by September 30 in order to scoop the competitor's similar product and be available for the brisk holiday shopping season.
- Your most experienced writer is wrapping up the documentation work for another project now, and the work on this other project should be completed before the end of May.

Your team has developed many user manuals for Microsoft products in the past. On a recent, similar project, the total time spent developing and delivering the product was 2100 hours, broken out as follows:

Development:	1000 hours
Documentation:	500 hours
QA:	500 hours
Release/packaging:	100 hours

Based on this information only, what would be your initial estimate for the time required to develop the documentation for this project?

What project-specific factors would affect this initial estimate?

Based on the information provided, do you think you will be able to complete this project on time?

EXERCISE #3:

For the Microsoft Agenda product, you and your writer meet to develop an initial list of tasks and milestones.

Based on the time spent on prior projects, your team, on average, spends the following percentages of total project time in these stages of the project:

System research:	10%
Audience analysis:	10%
Content planning:	10%
Developing a first draft:	35%
Draft Review:	10%
Editing and Revision:	20%
Production:	5%

How much time do you expect your writer will spend on these tasks?

Which of these tasks are too large and should be broken into smaller subtasks?

What are some interdependencies in these tasks?

EXERCISE #4:

You and your writer have done enough initial research to develop an initial content plan for the document. It will include the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Installation
- Defining Meeting Parameters
- Entering Agenda Items
- Re-arranging the Agenda
- Producing Meeting Reports
- Index

Assume that your writer can start writing on the project full-time starting June 1.

Your writer has already requested a week off for a family vacation the first week of August.

With this information, schedule the project. Will you be able to complete the document on time?

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January	February	March
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
April	May	June
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July	August	September
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October	November	December
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