FivePaths

Technology Project Life Cycle

4 Steps to Successful Technology Projects

Step #1: Initiation

Initiate a new project by defining its scope and purpose, why this project is important, what will be implemented, and what will make it successful. Activities to complete to initiate projects include:

1. Define and Scope: What do you propose to accomplish? Include which major areas of work are included and which should be excluded.
2. Prove Your Case: Why is this project important to complete? What will success look like? Make sure success can be baselined at the beginning and measured in some way during and after the project.
3. Demonstrate Feasibility: What evidence demonstrates that you can actually get this project done? Show how you have done this kind of work before successfully. Alternatively, describe other models that have been successful, or describe unique capacities and resources available that convince your team that you can succeed.

Step #2: Project Planning and Kick-Off

Set up the structures and expectations for the project that will guide all participants through the project from beginning to end. Activities to complete include:

1. Identify The Team: Who will work on the project?
2. Secure the Cash: What budget is available, and for how long?
3. Define the Project: What are the milestones and tasks? How is the team allocated across these tasks, and when should tasks be completed?
4. Develop a Communications Plan: Who needs to be informed, and at what intervals? How will project team meetings run? How do team members contact each other?
5. Run a Kick-Off Meeting: Explain the project and participants' roles. Gather feedback and amend the plan as required. The project is in motion!

Step #3: Implementation

After the kick-off meeting, the project implementation is underway. Monitoring the progress and quality of deliverables helps identify challenges in advance before they become crises. Activities to complete

include:

1. Deliver Tasks: Get the tasks in the plan completed!
2. Run Regular Project Meetings: Get reports on pending and completed deliverables, address timelines and challenges, and review goals by the next meeting. Check in on the mood of the team and address issues to keep the energy high and quality strong.
3. Communicate Regular Progress: Provide information on visible and not-so-visible progress to people who need to and benefit from being informed.
4. Manage Scope: Measure the resources spent against the level of completion of tasks; factor in out-of-scope activities and requests and decide whether and how to accommodate more work; adjust project expectations as required and communicate to the team.

Step #4: Closure

Completing the project is a big source of change management headaches for many organizations, as the activities and responsibilities of the team change dramatically during this period. Activities to complete include:

1. Final Delivery: Complete final tasks and/or organize all deliverables for completion and deliver this. Generate a clear wrap-up communication to the recipient.
2. Begin Support: Empower the teams responsible for the maintenance of the system, and user support is engaged and effectively working.
3. Feedback: Gather feedback from the recipient and the team on the project implementation. Identify and pursue new project concepts generated from this project. Record learnings for next time.
4. Celebrate! Reward both the recipient and project team for their great partnership on this project - build energy for the next project.
5. Measure Success and Impact: Review measurable successes and devise a plan for measuring them in the near future.
6. Release Resources: Make sure the team and their supervisors know you are complete so they can efficiently turn to other obligations.