
University of Notre Dame

<Project Name> Project Charter

Revision 1.0

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1. Executive Summary

This section contains a brief summary of the overall Project. It should include a summary of the project purpose, major business objectives and benefits, major deliverables and key dates where appropriate.

2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Purpose

This section gives the background of a project and how the project was initiated. It also describes the overall business objectives for the project, ensuring that the business context the project has to be seen in and the related business process issues and opportunities for improvement are described.

2.2 Project Scope

2.2.1 Scope Content

The objective of the Scope chapter is to clearly describe what is in the scope of the project but also what is outside its scope. This is critical to manage expectations of all stakeholders of the project. This is increasingly important since projects more and more span across University functions.

Some of the typical questions to be answered in the scope are:

- What functionality / services are planned to be delivered?
- What are the process boundaries?
- Which business functions are included in the scope?
- What are the inputs to the project? If not commonly known, they can be supplemented with a brief explanation, including where they come from and why they are important.

In order to be as clear as possible, it is advisable to also state what of the above is not included in the scope.

2.2.2 Scope Management

In today's dynamic environment it is not sufficient anymore to document the scope of a project at its start and assume that it wouldn't change or perceived to have changed during project execution, mainly for larger projects lasting a longer period of time. The scope of a project needs to be managed.

Adjustments might be required based on changes in the environment (e.g. project resources are withdrawn for other priorities, additional functionality is required for good business reasons, business locations might be added or withdrawn, etc.).

Any change of scope during project execution must be documented including type of change, date of change, who approved the change, schedule impact, and budget impact. The project manager has to make sure that scope changes and its ramifications to the overall project are communicated to the stakeholders of the project and are understood and accepted by the stakeholders of the project.

This section will outline the process to be used on the project for managing the changes in scope including, how project scope changes may be initiated,

who the review and approval authorities are, and what level of change can be authorized by individual team members.

2.3 Project Objectives

2.3.1 Business Objectives

This section contains the business objectives to be reached through the execution of the project. Generally, these objectives are related to business process improvements/productivity improvements, customer satisfaction and quality improvements. The objectives should be described as they relate to the strategic objectives of the University and as much as possible, be measurable.

2.3.2 Information Technology Objectives

This section contains the information technology (IT) objectives to be reached through the execution of the project. These objectives are related to IT service improvements or productivity improvements within the IT environment (e.g. new IT capabilities, increase the expertise and bench strength of our staffs, obsolescing and eliminating old applications and technologies).

2.3.3 Project Execution Objectives

This chapter describes the execution objectives in three key areas

- Deliver the project with expected functionality/capability
- Deliver the project on time
- Deliver the project on budget

Although flawless execution is the overall objective, it has to be understood in the right context. Each project will be driven by differing factors and decisions will need to be made regarding each of the above key areas. This section attempts to outline which area(s) should be given more consideration when making those decisions. Is time the most critical driver? Can the system be delivered with less than complete functionality? Is there any flexibility in the budget?

Different projects vary in the degree of risk in terms of planned or required project completion date, available/lack of (critical/skilled) resources or other business circumstances. Low risk projects which come closer to routine type execution work should achieve the three project execution objectives constantly. High risk projects mean that there is a higher chance for failure in terms of achieving the three objectives listed above. Project teams who accept the responsibility for the execution of a high risk project should not be blamed for failures relative to the three success criteria of project execution. High risk projects most of the times require pioneer type work where exploration results and learning experiences of “productive failures” are part of the desired results.

2.4 Assumptions

This section describes the known assumptions regarding the environment in which the project and resulting system will be operating. It will also include assumptions

regarding end user knowledge and training, availability of resources, expected calendar impacts to the progress of the project, and any other assumptions that the project team must consider during execution of the project.

3. Project Approach

3.1 Project Deliverables and Quality Objectives

Key deliverables of the project and/or sub-projects should be included here (in bullet format). Project reviews will then go through this list of key deliverables and check actual progress made versus plan. For each deliverable, describe its quality objectives in terms of output quality and approval requirements.

3.2 Organization, Responsibilities, and Key Stakeholders

This section will list the project team and stakeholder for the project to include:

- Project Sponsor
- Project Functional Lead
- Project Technical Lead
- Project Manager
- Project Steering Committee Members (if known)
- Project Team Members (business and IT if known)
- Key Stakeholders, their relationship to the project and their needs from the project.

Additionally, if there are defined limits to responsibilities or any clarification of the roles that individuals will perform during the project, those should be described here.

3.3 Dependencies

This section identifies any dependencies that are outside the direct control of the project team or outside the scope of the project that will affect the project success, such as dependent infrastructure projects.

3.4 Facilities and Resources

This section identifies the project's requirements for facilities and resources such as office space, computer and office equipment, and support tools.

3.5 Support Activities

This section describes the support activities such as training, quality assurance, and documentation support that the project team may require.

3.6 Risks

It is critical for effective risk management that risks are identified as early as possible and that they are communicated immediately to the stakeholders of the project. The creation of adequate contingency plans is the other important part of managing risks effectively. For all risks described below, adequate contingency plans based upon an impact analysis must be included in the description and in the project plan aimed to eliminate or reduce the risks.

3.6.1 Risks Regarding Project Realization

This section identifies and documents all risks known at project start or occurring in the course of the project realization. They are related to project completion time (e.g. fixed completion deadline), project budget (e.g., fixed budget, potential budget variability/variances), project deliverables (e.g., changing scope and deliverables), resource and skill-level availability, and process partner satisfaction (e.g., changing expectations, deliverables not defined and agreed to).

3.6.2 Risks Regarding the Product/Service

This section identifies and documents all risks known at project start or occurring in the course of the project realization in terms of the objectives, benefits, and quality of the functionality/service to be delivered by the project. This would include introduction of major new processes and new technical infrastructure.

3.6.3 Issues List

Part of good risk management is keeping an issues list, which ensures that all issues are documented and known to all project members. Key issues need to be highlighted and reported in the appropriate project review meetings. Project team leadership owns the list of open issues. All Issues must be identified to the technical or functional leaders and must have a person assigned responsible for solving the issue and a date by when the issue needs to be resolved. This section lists the major issues at any given point in the project and identifies the method by which they are being recorded and tracked.

3.6.4 Major Events

As the project progresses major events impacting the project will occur that need to be recorded. These events may be internal related to the business or IT environment or external related to our vendors/consulting partners or general business conditions. As these events occur they should be described and the impact assessed.

3.7 Project Schedule

This section lists the major milestones of the project to include expected phase completion dates when known to a degree of accuracy that can also be supported. For example, the date for completion of the next phase of a project should be set to an exact date, but earlier in a project, the Go Live date may be described as 3rd quarter of a given year then later refined as the project proceeds. When a project is date driven, that should also be indicated here.

See Appendix A for the detailed project plan and schedule.

3.8 Cost/Benefit Estimates

This section defines the expected budget for the project, including the major assumptions used when estimating. Provide as much of a breakdown as is known at the time such as, consulting costs, hardware costs, software licensing costs, functional or technical backfill costs, etc. List estimates in terms of one time and

ongoing annual costs. Additionally, when there are known financial benefits defined for the project, list those with assumptions used in estimating.

4. Communication Plan

Many projects are executed in a very complex environment. People from different parts of the organization, both IT and business, as well as external teams usually work together in order to complete a project successfully. Excellent communication between the various groups involved in a project as well as the management is therefore key to the success. To meet such challenges an effective project organization has to be defined. In addition, effective communication processes must be implemented.

4.1 Steering Committee and Tollgate Meetings

Steering Committees should be established mainly for large and complex projects. They meet regularly at tollgates and as agreed by all members. In addition they meet on request of the project team. Their major tasks are to control the progress of the project, make decisions as required and give guidance to the project team. This section should indicate the plan for these meetings and it should be updated with the actual date, attendees and major subject of each meeting.

4.2 Project Core Team Meetings

Project Core Teams ensure that progress is controlled which includes the review of all aspects of the project. Project core team meetings must be held regularly and are organized and run by the project leaders. They are held according to a defined schedule and on request. This section should indicate the plan for these meetings and it should be updated with the actual date, attendees and major subject of each meeting.

4.3 Information Meetings

The objective of information meetings is to keep all stakeholders of the project informed and involved which is critical to the success of the project. Information meetings are designed and held depending on the phase the project is in, who needs to be informed about what, and whose involvement needs to be requested at what time.

4.4 Review Meetings

The objective of review meetings is to review key deliverables of the project with process and IT experts. Review meetings are designed to improve the quality of the delivered solution. They are intended to reach outside of the immediate project team for review participants. This section should indicate the plan for these meetings and it should be updated with the actual date, attendees and major subject of each meeting.

5. Appendix A: Project Plan and Schedule