

Series: Project Management - Part 1:

Why should the planning be at the beginning of each project

Our series "Projektmanagement" is regularly devoted to important topics relating to the project work. The first part deals with the question of why the planning of projects is of great importance for the future success of projects. It does not matter how complex the projects are to be processed. A structured plan is an indispensable tool for a successful project manager.

Again and again, there are indications that a comprehensive plan should cover 30% of the total duration of the project. But it is precisely this extra effort during the planning phase that pays off during the project implementation. However, in reality it is always apparent that a detailed project planning is not always the function that it should actually have.

For this reason, the following are the arguments why you should not dispense with planning in project management.

Provide overview

Flowcharts are initially used to provide an overview of the project. It is only when you have divided the entire project into individual projects and work packages that it is possible to get an accurate picture. You can see the real logic of a project. The individual subprojects can be coordinated with one another and set in relation to one another in terms of time.

Resources

Once you get an accurate picture of the project, you are able to identify and plan the necessary resources for the implementation. How many employees are needed and how can they be used in time? What costs will be incurred and how much time will the project take? The answers to these questions can be presented in a project structure plan.

Objectives

Gradually, it is possible to specify the project objectives. Through a project plan one can imagine what works and what may not go. Thus, unnecessary errors and risks can be minimized. In this case, the plan is used both for the subsequent procedure and as an argumentation basis with internal and external communication partners.

Communication and motivation

In projects often the activities of several employees have to be coordinated. Coordination requires the communication of tasks and objectives. Plans serve as a structured communication basis. This also leads to greater transparency for the employees, who can also incorporate their ideas into the overall project. A point which should not be underestimated in employee motivation.

Control

A plan always acts as a control element. Only when a project plan is available, it is possible to compare the actual situation with the setpoints. In this way deviations and changes can be recognized, analyzed and evaluated. Projects always have a dynamic structure to respond to. This also means that the planning for the start of the project is not finished. Rather, plans have to be adjusted on an ongoing basis.

Include in totality

In many companies, many projects are implemented at the same time. The individual projects are therefore always dependent on each other and must be coordinated accordingly. A project plan thus not only allows for control within the project, but also between the totality of all projects.

Use for the upcoming project

A project plan allows the comparison between setpoints and actual values. However, project controlling is not limited to project management. Rather, the plan also serves to control the target. Possible errors can thus be avoided when planning future projects.

The individual arguments show that the functions of project planning are diverse and of great importance for the success of projects. It is precisely for these reasons that this should not be dispensed with. Furthermore, the boundaries between planning and implementation are blurred in modern project management. Project planning is ubiquitous.

The use of a project management software is an important and supporting tool for many companies.