

Practical Planning – Part 2

Focusing on Results

Planning

Group Exercise

You will be learning and applying management techniques to develop your plans:

- Working Backwards (Merlin Theory)
- Next Stage (Planning Horizon)

You will then see how these management principles coupled with the planning toolkit will enable you to produce robust plans.

Planning – Working Backwards

- Our brains are more powerful than we realise, we can create a vision of the future and describe it and then work backwards to find out what we needed to have done to arrive there.
- Advantages - Better estimating and a more logical flow of deliverables i.e. Results – Outcomes – Outputs - Activities
- Disadvantages - Nearly always end up in the past, giving us only four options:
 - Don't do the project
 - Move the end date
 - De-scope so we can deliver in the timeframe
 - Take Risk, where we can control it

Planning - Horizon

By combining “working backwards” to develop the project plan we then need to plan the next stage in more detail.

What is a stage? It is as long as you can maintain control.

By planning forward, which we are good at for short term planning, we can determine how long a “stage plan” is. It is when we start taking risk or guessing too much or hoping that something will happen.

A stage plan should be 100% **guaranteed** to work (within tolerance)

Planning with Post-it-notes



Planning Exercise

Group Exercise

Using your chosen Solution Tree do the following:

1. Prepare your planning area (paper on the table or on the wall) – you will need to scale it
2. Using your “result” post it notes from the modified Solution Tree, place them on your planning area and then work backwards. First, by breaking down the results into any interim results and then keep working backwards with any deliverables that may be needed
3. Using your “approaches” post it notes from the modified Solution Tree, place them on your planning area and work backwards, ensuring they are aligned with the results that need to be achieved.

Note: Keep referring to your Vision as well as the original Problem Tree to check that the solution being developed is fit for purpose. Consider keeping a flip chart of “assumptions” that you make. You have the rest of today to finish this.

Planning – Is the project fit for purpose?

- Changing the View
- This is the first of many inputs where we get a chance to learn how to keep viewing the project from different views. Some are through the eyes of experts and some are “planning” related.
- Planning View – “Quality”. Only think about quality i.e. How will you guarantee that all the critical deliverables are fit for purpose the first time? How will you ensure that the project delivers its outputs to a high standard? That we get the best possible results?

Planning – Resource?

- Changing the View
- Planning View – “Resource”. Only think about resource i.e. How will you guarantee that the project has the right resource at the right time? What is your procurement strategy/plan? What are the resource constraints? Who will be doing what – what roles and responsibilities are needed to do each key deliverable?
- Expert View – See if there is someone in the room with a Resource background. Ask them to review your project and see through their eyes as you look at your plan.

Planning – Cross cutting views

- Capacity development
- Gender mainstreaming/Social inclusion
- Environment
- Health and Safety
- Human Rights
- Finance
- Protection of civilians
- Security
- Legal
- Any others “Views”?

Now plan “Forward” for the first stage