

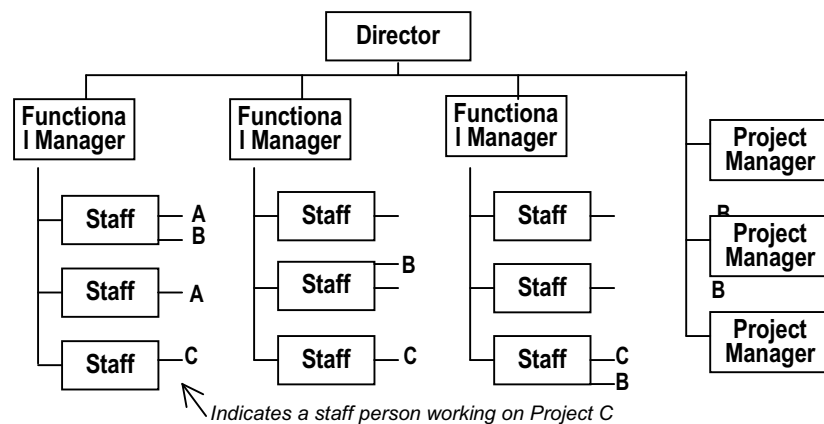
John Moore¹

Types of Project Team Organizations

There are a variety of projects and possible organizational methods for structuring a project team. Differences are dependent upon the size of an organization, type of projects, and general organizational culture. Three general types of project organization are the Matrix, Project-Oriented and Program-Oriented methods.

Matrix Organization

Required when many projects span departments or offices. This structure gives authority to both project and functional managers. Functional managers will be involved in deciding who will work on project teams and will be responsible for long-term administrative duties. Project managers assign, monitor and coordinate work among the project team. The main problem is that everyone has two “bosses” – and, if people are working on more than one project, they will be reporting to even more managers. Yet, in small organizations with limited resources, this may be the best – or only – option. Good communication and working relationships between the project and functional managers are needed.

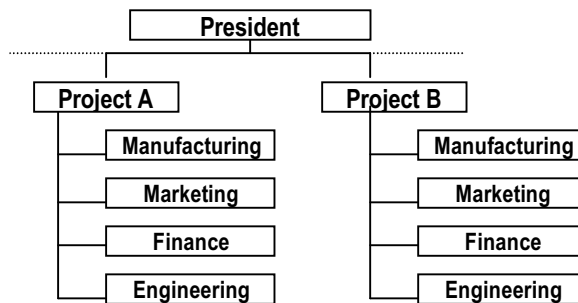


- Staff members report to functional managers as well as project managers
- Project managers have equal authority to functional managers

¹ See footnote page 3.

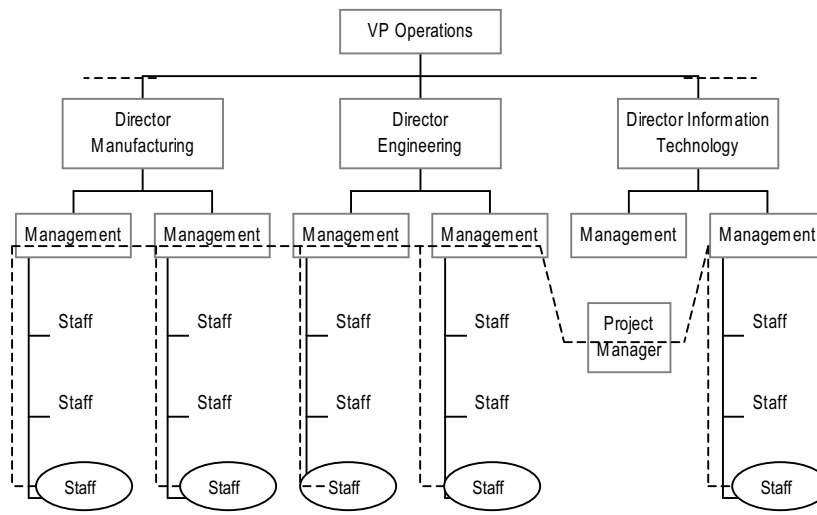
Project-Oriented Organization

This type of organization is appropriate for firms that work on large, long-term projects. Rather than finding projects within and among functional departments, functional departments exist within the project. Project-oriented firms may have redundant operations among multiple projects, but are willing to put up with such inefficiencies in order to maximize effectiveness on the project. The problem with this type is that it can be inflexible and is most applicable to large organizations with large budgets.



Program-Oriented Organization

Another style of project organization revolves around a specific program. Programs consist of many related projects, but, unlike a single project, they have no completion date expected. A government or large business firm provide good examples. For instance, one section of a government agency is responsible for providing driver's licenses. This requires several types of projects, and all of these project functions are carried out within that department. This case shares similarities with project-oriented organizations. An example might be a government health ministry having 15 different projects going on at the same time under one primary program.



○ Project team member - - - - - Communication channels

Before the Project Starts

Pre-project preparation, prior to the onset of the project life cycle, revolves around understanding general organizational goals and those potential projects that the organization may take on. Project managers typically have a good idea as to what types of projects they, and the organization, are going to be involved with. Project managers should communicate closely with those individuals or departments that are responsible for identifying and selecting projects. This enables the project manager to shape the organization's approach to project selection while creating preliminary project plans such as identifying resource needs and likely project organizational structures. Pre-project preparation also includes initial risk assessment. Using historical trends, i.e. experience gained from past projects, the project manager can gain insight into what the next project will require and what types of changes, crises, and potential obstacles to success exist.

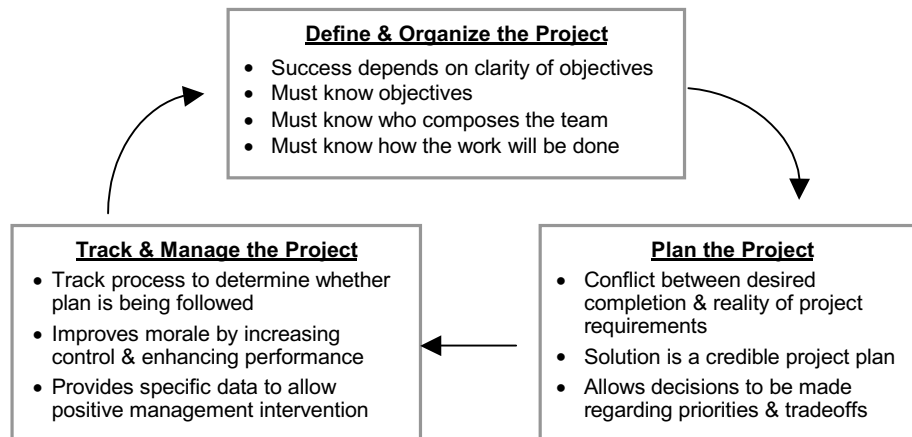


Both during the pre-project and initial project stages, it is important to assess what actors are involved in, impacted by, or who have impact on, the project. **Stakeholder analysis** is a process in which key 'players' are identified and their position vis-à-vis the project assessed. Knowing people who are against the project can be just as, if not more, important as knowing who supports the project.

<u>Stakeholder Name</u>	+	Neutral	-	<u>Reason for Position</u>	<u>Strengths & Weaknesses (relative to project)</u>	<u>Strategy</u>

Rank your stakeholders by relative importance to project success. In meeting the desires of stakeholders, the concept of trade-offs is again used. As the cliché goes, you cannot please all people at all times. Project managers must try to understand the motivations of all stakeholders. Why do certain people support the project while others are against it? Are there political issues affecting senior management perspectives, do they perceive the project as being in line with their individual as well as organizational interests? What information do stakeholders need?

The project life cycle²



Before getting into each individual aspect of the project life cycle, a brief overview of the three primary headings of the cycle will set the stage for further discussion.

■ **Define & Organize the Project**

Project success is tightly linked to the establishment of cogent, concise organizational and project objectives. It is critical for the project manager to understand the project purpose, who will compose the project team, and the manner in which the work will be conducted. In turn, the project manager must ensure that a similar understanding is provided to the team, senior management, and relevant stakeholders.



The need to know project objectives seems like common sense. Yet, time and again, team members – even project managers and senior staff – use the excuse “I didn’t know” as a reason for failure or less than optimum performance. Not knowing is never an excuse; if you don’t know something, find out, ask questions until you do.

- Establish project organization
- Define project parameters
- Plan project framework
- Assemble project definition documents

² Project life cycle information derived from Harvard Business School methodology, *Project Management Manual*, Harvard Business School: Cambridge, 1996.

■ *Plan the Project*

Planning is the backbone of sound project management. Given the importance of project success, the balancing of scheduling demands with the risks involved in shortening the project lifespan can prove contentious; many people, departments, and possibly external institutions have an interest in both when and how projects will be implemented. A sound plan that incorporates stakeholder interests while reflecting project realities is the primary way to focus attention on what is required to achieve success, it is a map of how the project will proceed. If sound plans are not provided, the likelihood of achieving project objectives decreases significantly, potentially leading to catastrophe. Imagine an NGO or government ministry that conducts projects without incorporating budget data and human resource constraints into the planning process. The ensuing chaos may result in the reduction, if not cessation, of the provision of essential goods or services. Key planning steps are:



- Develop the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
- Develop the Schedule
- Analyze Resources
- Optimize tradeoffs
- Develop Risk Management Plans

■ *Track & Manage the Project*

Planning, while the backbone of project management, is not enough. The tracking and monitoring of a project after implementation begins is essential to determining when, why, and how a project differs from original plans; such concepts might be compared to the human body's nervous system. No project will ever go exactly according to pre-existing plans, thus tracking, monitoring, and evaluating the project throughout its lifetime is essential in determining how to adapt plans to meet a changing project environment.



Although such concepts are simple, tracking and monitoring – at the strategic and tactical level (macro vs. micro) – are often not conducted once project implementation begins. Team members focus on their specific tasks without a coordinated attempt to fuse discrete jobs together systematically to move towards stated project objectives. Primary concepts are:

- Collect status
- Plan & take adaptive action
- Close-Out the project

Key aspects of these three areas – define and organize, plan, and track and manage the project will be addressed subsequently as the life cycle is discussed.

The Life Cycle

