Project Close Activities

Ending Projects Properly

Projects usually have a clearly defined end – a bridge opens for public use, a product launches, or new software rolls out to everyone in your organization.

As you approach the "go live" stage and you're getting ready to hand the new process over to "business as usual," are you looking forward to relaxing for a while, or are you already planning your next project? Either way, before you move on to new challenges, it's important you don't ignore the final step of project closure.

This doesn't just mean dotting the "I's," and crossing the "T's," or tying up any loose ends. It means capturing the lessons you've learned during the project, so that your team – or other departments within the organization – can benefit from them next time. And, it also means taking stock of what you've achieved, and celebrating your successes.

The steps you need to take to formalize the project's acceptance are sometimes called the "close project process." This process verifies that the project has delivered the required outcomes, and that stakeholder expectations have been met. It also makes sure that everyone involved in the project knows how to move forward. Without formal closure, there's a risk that issues may arise, and no one will be assigned to resolve them.

Project closure has many different elements, and the best way to carry out a closure is to plan for it from the start. This way, you can decide which criteria you'll use to show that the project is completed, and you can budget time and resources for the closing activities. As with all goals, it's important to know what you need to do to cross the project finish line.

Sometimes, a project is canceled before it's finished. When this happens, some parts of project closure become irrelevant. However, other elements may still need to be completed.

In this session, you'll learn the steps for closing a project properly.