

Project Start Up

Baseline Plan

Initial Release	1.0
Date:	January 1997

Fine Tuning the Plan

The project startup is a significant milestone in the life of a project. Significant activity resulting in various versions of the project plan has occurred in the concept and planning phases. During project start-up, the project team is formed and the plan is readied for execution.

A final tuning of the project plan typically occurs during the project start-up phase. This fine tuning consists of incorporating changes that result from management review or, in the case of a project that involves procurement, changes that result from contract negotiations. Only minor changes can be made to the plan at this time—major changes require a return to the project planning phase.

Minor changes are defined as a refinement of activities, the addition of oversight and quality activities, and alterations to the schedule. Any change that results in a 10% to 20% increase in cost, schedule, and/or induces a growth in scope should be viewed as a major change.

Establish the Plan Baseline

The first step of the project start-up stage is to finalize the project plan and establish a baseline. Baseline refers to a plan that has been placed under configuration management so that changes to the plan are made under the change control process as discussed in *Configuration Management* of Project Execution.

The baseline process facilitates team communication by ensuring, through the change management process, that when changes occur, all members who were responsible for approving the plan recognize that a change has occurred.

Once the plan has been baselined and approved, the team begins to be assembled and resources are applied. The project is very close to being fully underway.

Plan Approval

During the start-up process, the plan is approved. Approval of the project plan is a significant event in the life of the project as it commits the resources needed to complete the project and moves the project to the project execution phase.

The project approval varies depending on the project and may require approval from the following: the project manager, organization management, user management, Finance, and if required, the oversight entity. If the effort includes contractors, it is also necessary to get the prime contractor and procurement to sign off on the plan.

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Project Name: _____

Date: _____

Plan Release #: _____

Project Manager: _____

Approvals:

Project Manager

Prime Contractor Manager (if applicable)

State Organization Management

User Management

Oversight Manager (if applicable)

Budget Officer

Department of Finance

Other

The sign-off/approval represents a commitment to implement the project as described in the plan. This is a commitment to scope, schedule, and budget.

References:

A template for a Project Management Plan, in Microsoft Word format, is included in Appendix B: *Templates & Sample Forms*.