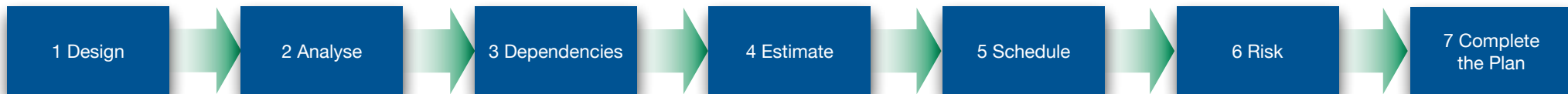


The 7 Successful Steps of Planning

Description: The PRINCE2 7 Steps of Planning, using the Product Based Planning technique. The terms 'Product', 'Output' & 'Deliverable' can be used interchangeably. A significant advantage of product based planning is the ability to surface critical assumptions and constraints. For example, if your project is to build another floor on top of a house a required product will be the floor underneath on which to build the one you are commissioned to deliver. This method is used in PRINCE2, the UK's government mandated method for the management of major projects

Keywords: Business Change, Process, Product Based Planning, Planning, Product Breakdown Structure, Product Flow Diagram, PRINCE2



1) Design the Plan - Define the type of project or approach is being taken. Identify the majors steps or phases of the plan - See the SDLC as an example process

2) Analyse - Produce a Product Breakdown Structure. Add the Products to the Product Checklist (a simple list of products). Detail the Products in the Product Description

3) Dependencies - Produce a Product Flow Diagram to work out the decencies between Products

4) Estimate - work out the activities required to produce the end Product, preferably use a 3 point estimate (worst case, expected duration, best case)

5) Schedule - put the Products (deliverables) & activities into a planning tool along with durations to provide a project schedule. (Microsoft Project, Primavera etc)

6) Risk - examine project risks, and specific risks to the plan (scope creep, risks to schedule) add contingency based on the risk exposure

7) Complete the Plan - Add a narrative to the project schedule and product diagrams, produce a high level 'plan on a page' along with a detailed project schedule and share

Key Success Factors

- * An agreed scope, including exclusions or limitations
- * A clear methodology or approach, such as 'Agile software development' to give your plan a solid outline
- * Focus on Deliverables, Outputs or Products, not activities
- * Remember a plan is a live document - return to it at least once per week and update progress.
- * Baseline & Version Control your plan and ensure any changes are agreed by the Project Board / Stakeholders

What is a Product Description?

A Product Description contains:

A Product name or reference

An Author & An Owner

A Purpose

What it is derived from (i.e. the template or standard)

What is is dependent on (i.e. which other products are pre-requisites)

What it is composed of (outline of topics, components or items)

What format it should be in (e.g. Microsoft Word format, Meeting)

Quality Criteria (what makes a good one) & Testing Method (how you test it)

What resources are required to create it