

Creating What We Want – Part One

Creating Effective Experiences

1. Consider Using An Agile Template
2. Be Open To Gaining New Skills
3. Develop A Creative Mindset
4. Recognize Creative Patterns
5. Identify Wisdom And Skill

No project plan or charter is complete without a project management timeline. Project management timelines provide a simple visual overview of a project from start to finish and lead to increased work efficiency among teams. As simple as timelines appear when you see them on paper, breaking down a project into an effective timeline may feel overwhelming, especially to novice project managers. So, if this is your first experience creating a project management timeline, or even your 563rd, use these eight no-fail steps to perfect your next timeline.

1. Consider Using An Agile Template

Determining the scope of your project is another part of the project management process you need to complete before you can create your project timeline. A project scope statement outlines the deliverables you plan to produce by the end of a project.

1. Clearly moves us in a desirable direction

ELEVATE UNDERSTANDING WITH **S.A.S.S.Y.**, **A.T.O.M.I.C.**, AND **S.M.A.R.T.** PERSPECTIVES



- 2. Sufficiently broad to add what we want as we discover along the way
- 3. Sufficiently agile to allow adjustment as we learn how to best get what we want with specific details as well as large course corrections.

As a quick example, let's say you and your friends want to plant a garden. A scope statement could look something like this: We will produce a 100 sq ft vegetable garden that produces tomatoes, peppers, kale, potatoes, peas, green beans, and corn.



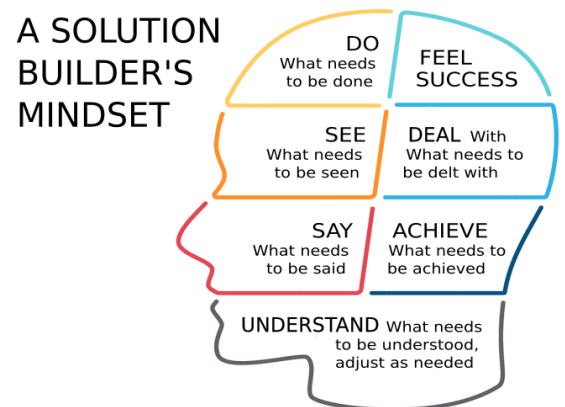
2. Be Open To Gaining New Skills

To create a work breakdown structure (WBS), start from your scope statement and break your deliverable or deliverables into smaller pieces. You aren't getting into tasks yet, just smaller deliverables. Another name for this section is the scope baseline, and each sub-deliverable is called a work package.

Continuing with our garden example, you could say that your WBS is to produce:

3. Develop A Creative Mindset

Now you can make a to-do list for each work package. Think about the gap between your baseline and your goal. What needs to happen to get from the starting point to the desired end point? Take note of tasks that are similar across work packages. This process will help you determine dependencies in the next step.



4. Recognize Creative Patterns

Dependencies are tasks that cannot be started until another task has been completed. For example, you can't plant your tomatoes until after the ground has been tilled. In this scenario, determining dependencies for a project management timeline will be relatively straightforward, but for more complex processes, mapping dependencies might give you a few gray hairs.

Creating a flowchart or diagram is helpful for visualizing and identifying these dependencies. You may find it helpful to use swimlanes or color coding to designate which team or individual will take responsibility for each task. Here, the work of ... is split into two teams by color:

5. Identify Wisdom And Skill

Go back to your ... and consider how long it will take to accomplish each task. Assume that the responsible party is working diligently on the task without interruptions. If you are unable to accurately estimate the needed time, work on this section with an expert who can give you some guidance.

The example below includes a swimlane to show that all of the buying tasks will be done together.



Creating What We Want – Part Two

Organizing Creative Frameworks

- 1. Establish Evaluation Frameworks**
- 2. Align Strategies And Solutions**
- 3. Select And Observe Patterns Of Trust**
- 4. Look For Relevant Preferences**
- 5. Strengthen And Support**

Most often, your limiting resource will be the availability of your team members or employees. In this step, you need to consider when they will be able to spend time working on an allotted task. Even though it may only take a day of dedicated work to complete an assignment, you may need to expand the amount of designated time to a few days or even weeks if there are many other projects occurring simultaneously. In the garden example, it will only take four hours from start to finish, but with everything else going on, your team will need two weekends to get it done. Therefore, when you create a project timeline, you will reserve several days for each task.

1. Establish Evaluation Frameworks

Project milestones allow you to track the progress of your projects from start to finish. This way, if you get behind, you will know far in advance of your final deadline and be able to adjust your plans or expectations to stay on target.

LEADERSHIP TEAMS	TRANSITION PLANNING	EVALUATION PREPARATION
MANAGEMENT TEAMS	COVERAGE NEEDS	EVALUATION CRITERIA
PERFORM TEAMS	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	EVALUATION RESULTS
SUPPORT TEAMS	SUPPORT SYSTEMS	EVALUATION CONSEQUENCES

2. Align Strategies And Solutions

This is the fun part! It's time to create your project timeline. Line up your tasks end to end, adjust their lengths to reflect the amount of time allotted, and then add milestones to polish things off. Voilà! You have a completed project management timeline. Isn't it beautiful?



3. Select And Observe Patterns Of Trust

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4. Look For Relevant Preferences

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Pro tips

To optimize your experience creating project management timelines, here are a few

tips:

- Before anything else, set the start and end date of the project and adjust your labels.
- Next, decide whether you are using a line or a block timeline. Use the structure that best fits your project. Basic line timelines help identify key milestones, where block timelines make it easy to visualize teams and specific task progress.
- Determine the labels of your project based on the timeline. Labels can be in seconds, hours, days, weeks, or even years.
- Stack multiple timelines and that labels only appear on the bottom timeline.
- Color-code the different timelines or rows to organize the project and keep everyone on the same page.
- Alter intervals, but only in complete increments.

If you decide to build your project management timeline in Lucidchart (see our templates below), watch this tutorial for additional tips.

Project management timeline templates

Use these project management timeline templates from Lucidchart to get you started!

Project Milestones Timeline Template
Block Timeline Template
Project Timeline Example Template (With Imported Data)

Ready to get started? Timelines make it easy to keep the entire project on track. Give stakeholders a realistic projection for the project and communicate expectations.

Clarify deadlines and keep projects on track using our **timeline maker**.

About the Authors

The XTechGroup is a content writer for Lucid Software. When she's not making the world a better place through effective communication, she enjoys reworking recipes to include more vegetables . . . sneakily!