

# What is project management? assignment

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Original definition: The process of planning and organizing resources in order to achieve a predetermined goal, on time and within budget. I've identified common themes in the literature on project management with a possible definition to include: the monitoring and controlling of skills, tools and techniques used to produce agreed benefits and meet project requirements (Association for Project Management 2006; Murray-Webster and Simon 2007; Papal 2008; Adrenal and Preston 2010). These themes coincide with my first definition in which I have also touched upon aspects from the Iron Triangle; however, I did not identify quality as a defining factor.

I have found that using a set standard of conditions to measure project success, for example: achieving a result to a set standard, within budget and within a certain timeshare (Burton and Michael 1997; Olsen 1971 cited by Atkinson 1999; Association for Project Management 2006) will not suffice in the current business climate. Can Project Management be defined? Although people have attempted to define project management, is it possible to have one universal definition that encompasses project management?

It was only in the latter half of the 20th century that project management became a well-known term (Weaver 2007); since then, project management has continued to change due to more regulations within projects and an increased demand for formal project training (SSI International 2009) and with this, the definition has changed too. Project management cannot be defined simplistically as it is a complex combination of management, planning and the management of change (Rises 1993 cited by Atkinson 1999).

Atkinson (1999) suggests that project management is an evolving phenomena which will remain vague enough to be non-definable. Perhaps the reason for the high number of project failures is due to the definition of project management itself. Limiting success to a set of restricted criteria (cost, time ND quality) only sets projects up to fail and may not be appropriate to all projects as Turner (1996, p. 6) suggests that project management is the “ art and science of converting vision into reality.

Atkinson suggestion is supported in the definition provided by the Association for Project Management (2004 cited by Mallory 2010), where projects are referred to as transient endeavours and proves Atkinson theory is not dated. Project management does continue to evolve. However, new factors to define project management and project success have been identified. These factors will be explored in this paper. Projects are unique Projects are unique, transient endeavours undertaken to achieve a desired outcome” (Association for Project Management 2004 cited by Mallory 2010, p. ). Every project is different, no two exact same projects will take place -?? adding further to the notion that project management is difficult to define. It is important to understand a project and have several different perspectives of your project. Noses and Kelly (2003) identified nine project areas which are integral to project success: integration, scope, time, cost, quality, human resources, communication, risk and procurement. Not only is high project management knowledge important to project success but it is useful to have a holistic view of the project life cycle.

Projects may be unique, but lessons learned from previous projects are usually similar, does this impact on the uniqueness of a project? Atkinson (1999) identified that project management is a learning profession based upon past mistakes and contributes to the idea that project management is constantly evolving and changing. Taking this into account, if project management includes unique endeavours, how can it be defined? Business Benefits Debates have taken place over whether the purpose of project management is to meet client expectations.

Project clients define project requirements and deliverables, therefore, is project management the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to meet client requirements and expectations? (Darrell and Preston 2010). Potential and Sheehan (2012) state that it is essential for project management teams to ensure their project outcomes support their company business strategy and sustainability – rather than focusing on meeting traditional time, budget and performance goals.

Project management is a channel for business change (Mallory 2010); however, this change may not be solely related to business. Project management can be implemented in any situation of change; for example, organizing aid support after the 2004 tsunami. It is clear that project management is not only applied to guarantee business benefits, is also the most effective vehicle for change in a vast number of sectors (Association for Project Management 2006).

Project management provides a service to an organization requesting change which should be achieved before a chosen end-point (Murray-

Webster and Simon 2007) supporting the assumption that projects are also temporary endeavours (Project Management Institute 2004 cited by Mallory 2010) This means that projects need to be planned and controlled in order to create change (Burton and Michael 1997) as well as having project teams that understand the importance of their projects to business success (Potential and Sheehan 2012). Conclusion Definitions give an outline of a subject – this is why project management is so difficult to define.

Due to projects being so unique and continuing to change and evolve with time, the definition of project management must progress with this. At this point in time, finding literature that contradicts definitions expressed by the Association for Project Management (appendix A) and the Project Management Institute (Appendix B) is difficult. These definitions provide a top line explanation of project management without going into specifics. Although Atkinson research was carried out 15 years ago, project management is still changing and being used in different sectors and therefore redefining itself.

I do agree with my initial definition to an extent, however other factors need to be considered (for example specifying that projects are unique and temporary) to form a holistic definition of project management. I believe you can define project management to an extent; however it will need to be redefined with time. New definition: Project management is a temporary and unique process in which resources (people, money, time, and equipment) are utilized in order to produce a planned change.