

# Project management written assignment 1

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



2012-02-MAN-435-OL009: Project Management Written Assignment 1 1.

Discuss the principal reasons why project management has become such a popular business tool in recent years. Business has changed in the past 20 or so years. Products are being produced more rapidly and with the introduction of globalization competition has become more abundant. There is a need to become more customer focused but at the same time quicker to market while still reducing cost. Doing business the old way is just not cutting it anymore. Project management gives companies the ability to focus on many things at once without losing focus on their core business model.

Processes become projects that have a start and finish and can be tracked and quantified from beginning to end. Projects also give the company the ability to become more innovative by bringing people from different departments together. This promotes fresh thinking and upsets the status quo which is a good thing. 2. Suppose that you are in charge of a production line. What is expected of you as a process manager? Now suppose that you are assigned the task of making a radical change to the production process. What then would be expected of you as a project manager?

As a process manager you are in charge of making sure the day to day operation is running smoothly and that you meet your immediate quotas. You are also in charge of managing people. Managing people includes disciplining workers when need and conflict resolution. A process manager, especially on the production line level is not involved in big picture thinking and only needs to be concerned with what is happening in their department. If I were tasked with revamping the production line my day-to-day would

change drastically. My main focus would be less about the process and more about the project.

Instead of managing people directly it would be more about managing the project and the conflict resolution would be more focused on how to make the team members work together for the common goal. The project would probably be more big picture oriented instead of focused on just the task at hand. More would be expected of me than just meeting quota. 3. Describe the basic elements of the project life cycle. Why is an understanding of the project life cycle relevant for understanding project management? The project life cycle consists of the conceptualization phase, the planning phase, the execution phase, and the termination phase.

Understanding the project lifecycle is important because it is the base of all project management. You take one phase out and the project will fail. You cannot start a project without a good scope, or blueprint. The project lifecycle is set up so that you cannot move on to the next stage in the cycle without going through the previous stage. I also want to mention the termination phase. This is where you terminate the project and put together a document that explains the delays and fixes that helped the project come to fruition. 4.

Compare and contrast the three organizational structures discussed in the text: functional, project, and matrix. Provide examples that show the difference between the three, including some of the advantages and disadvantages of each. There are three main organizational structure types used in business today. They are functional, project and matrix. They each have their strong points and weaknesses. I will list the strengths and

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weaknesses of each while comparing them to each other. The functional structure is based around having similar activities grouped into departments. An example of this would be an accounting department.

The strength of the functional structure is that you have a group of experts located in one department which makes choosing someone with a certain expertise more efficient. The weakness to this structure comes when you try to allocate people to projects. Their loyalty will always be to their function which usually puts the project on the back burner. The project structure takes some of the stress of the project managers by making it so they don't have to be second to a functional manager. They get full access to their own people and the loyalty is always on the project. The downfall to this structure is that they may have a lack of expertise.

Especially since project structures usually go to external sources when needing a specific type of expertise. Therefore they lose that expertise when the project is completed. The matrix structure is good in that it combines strengths from both the functional structure and the project structure by placing the functional and project managers on the same level. The downfall comes when there is disagreement on where the resources should be best allocated. This structure involves more negotiating and politics than the other structures and takes a special skill set to be an effective project manager.