

Animation 11.2

A project is a temporary endeavour with a defined beginning and end using pre-determined resources in terms of cost, quality and time.

As projects are often medium to long term undertakings they are best managed via a number of stages. This helps to add some structure and assists the Project Manager to allocate resources to each stage of the project.

When drawn on a time graph the rate of progress will vary depending on the stage the project is in.

The first stage is the Scoping stage. Here the project is defined and communicated to all stakeholders - all those people who may be affected in some way by the project. Progress here is slow to ensure that all requirements are covered.

The Planning stage is next. Here again the progress has to be slow as every activity required needs to be identified and planned meticulously. It is usual for a Work Breakdown Structure and a Planning Chart, either a Gantt chart or Network diagram, to be constructed during this phase.

Resources are allocated and an outline cost and overall time for the completion of the project are then calculated.

Once the plans have been agreed then implementation can begin. Here the momentum of the project starts to kick in and progress can be relatively fast for the majority of the activities required.

At the end of the implementation phase the speed of the project slows down again until it reaches the Evaluation stage.

Here the formal acceptance of the project and handover to the customer takes place. A review of actions taken and looking for opportunities to take into future projects are also a key part of this phase. Many projects also include a formal closure and disbandment of project team members at this stage.