Your positive experiences with planning and implementing projects

KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?
The project management cycle
Goal setting

- SMART
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Acceptable for participants
  - Realistic
  - Timebound
Planning in time and essential building blocks

Planning

- Plan backwards: start with delivery date
- Plan realistically: too much optimism is a planning killer
- Plan for a change of plan; include time for the unforeseen
Communication and coordination

- **Communicate**
  - With colleagues (are they supportive?)
  - With partners (do they know what is expected?)
  - With the donor or funder (progress reports, updates, reassuring e-mails)

- **Coordinate**
  - Does everyone know what is expected?
  - Does everyone know what to do: clear division of tasks?
  - Is the workload OK? Evenly spread?
Monitor progress

- Are we on track?
  a. Do you take the time/have you taken a deliberate moment to check if you are on track?
  b. Do you know what you must have achieved by when
  c. Do you invite colleagues to give critical feedback - express concern about certain deliverables?
- Do you need to adapt the planning
  a. What/when is the point of no return
  b. Do we need to reduce ambitions?
  c. Do we need more people, resources?
- Feed back this information into the project planning cycle
Reach goal and learn

- Project only ends once evaluation is done
- Evaluate immediately after end of the project not to lose sight on what happened
- What are therefore the lessons learned?
- Put these lessons on paper and use when needed.
No thanks!

We are too busy
Practical tools for project management

- A kick off meeting
- Your electronic agenda as a planning tool
- Log frames and how to use them
- Risk assessment
- Time management
Kick off meeting

- Always start with round table kick off with everyone involved in a project looking at every aspect of a project (content, admin, finance, organisation)
- Appoint a project leader and agree a clear division of tasks in the team
- Write down what is decided and circulate decisions and action points
- Make and then circulate a project planning
Use your electronic agenda as a planning tool

- Create and share a project calendar with your project colleagues
- Integrate this calendar into your personal calendar
- Put vital dates for the project in the calendar (various project steps, deadlines, reminders)
- Plan your own time with ‘worksessions’
- Allow sufficient time for each step
Basic log frames I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Additional info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position paper</td>
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<td>Workshop</td>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>By</th>
<th>how</th>
<th>what</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>when</th>
<th>Additional info</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More money for research</td>
<td>Raising awareness of importance of research</td>
<td>Information campaign</td>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>X + Y</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Text brochure to be ready by 30 August to allow for editing and printing</td>
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<td>Conference</td>
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<td>Lobbying for higher budgets</td>
<td>Meetings with decision makers</td>
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<td>Director to meet Head of research</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>November</td>
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<td>Chair to meet minister</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Briefing ready for chair by 1 Dec. Director to meet Chair</td>
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Risk assessment

Always check:

- Deadlines respected? Delays? How to mitigate
- People: sick, overloaded, known for being late
- Confusion about who is doing what?
- Postponing the project? Aborting all together?
Time management

- Time is precious; start meetings in time, respect timelines, do not waste others' time
- Be strict and clear from the beginning; too relaxed in the beginning is stress at the end
- Address delays and inefficiencies in clear, assertive ways
- Lead by example; the project leader is always in time
Conclusions

- Take the time to plan, organise, discuss, involve; time saved in the beginning is 3 X lost in the end
- Use simple tools such as your calendar, checklists, log frames
- Be realistic; too much optimism is a project killer
- Lead by example; walk the talk: start in time, deliver in time,
- Better project management leads to better results
- AND more pleasant work
ODS: creating more impact

For more info and contact: www.odsupport.eu