

## What is Project Management?

### What is a project?

A project is a finite endeavour - having specific start and completion dates - undertaken to create a unique product or service which brings about beneficial change or added value.

### What is project management?

Project Management is the discipline of planning, organizing, and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. The primary challenge of project management is to achieve all of the project goals and objectives while adhering to classic project constraints—usually scope, quality, time and budget.

### What is the history of PRINCE®?

PRINCE stands for Projects in Controlled Environments. It is a project management method covering the organisation, management and control of projects. The Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA), now part of the Cabinet Office, first developed PRINCE in 1989. The intention was to produce a UK Government standard for IT project management.

Since its introduction, PRINCE has become widely used in both the public and private sectors and is now the UK's de facto standard for project management. Although originally developed for the needs of IT projects, PRINCE has also been used on many non-IT projects. The latest version of the method, PRINCE2®, is designed to incorporate the requirements of existing users and to enhance the method towards a completely generic, best practice approach.

### What is PRINCE2?

PRINCE2 is a process-based approach to project management providing an easily tailored and scaleable method for the management of all types of projects. Each process is defined with its key inputs and outputs together with the specific objectives to be achieved and activities to be carried out.

The method describes how a project is divided into manageable stages enabling efficient control of resources and regular progress monitoring. The various roles and responsibilities for managing a project are fully described and are adaptable to suit the project's size and complexity and the skills of the organisation. Project planning using PRINCE2 is product-based which means the project plans are focused on delivering results and are not simply about planning when the various activities on the project will be done.

Driving any PRINCE2 project is the business case, which describes the organisation's justification, commitment and rationale for the deliverables or outcome. The business case is reviewed regularly during the project so as to ensure the business objectives, which often change during the lifecycle of the project, are still being met.

### What are the benefits of PRINCE2?

PRINCE2 provides organisations with a standard approach to the management of projects. The method embodies proven and established best practice. It is generic, non-proprietary and widely recognised.

As well as helping the managers and directors of a project, PRINCE2 also offers benefits to the organisation as a whole. These are achieved through the controllable use of resources and the ability to manage business and project risk more effectively. PRINCE2 enables projects to have:

- A controlled and organised start, middle and end
- Regular reviews of progress against plan and against the Business Case
- Flexible decision points

- Automatic management control of any deviations from the plan
- Involvement of management and stakeholders at the right time and place during the project
- The necessary controls and breakpoints to work successfully within any required contractual framework
- A common language across all interested parties thereby ensuring effective communication channels between the project team, project management and the rest of the organisation

### How is PRINCE2 implemented?

The single most common reason for failure of a PRINCE2 project is the absence or wavering of management commitment to the PRINCE2 approach. Thus, the most important prerequisite to implementing PRINCE2 is awareness and buy-in at the most senior level of the organisation. Once this has been achieved, project staff (from sponsors right through to team members) can be trained to a level of competence appropriate to their individual roles. This training also provides staff with the skills necessary to oversee the PRINCE2 implementation, though often these are augmented by use of external consultancy. This can inject in-depth knowledge not just of PRINCE2, but of the ways in which both the method and the organisation's existing business processes must be married together to create an environment in which PRINCE2 can deliver maximum benefit.

### What training is available?

PRINCE2 courses are available at three levels: Overview, Foundation and Practitioner. The Overview is aimed at managers new to formal project management methods, plus senior managers and executives considering the introduction of PRINCE2 into their organisations. The Foundation is typically for those who will be involved in projects, but not necessarily in a leading role, such as project support staff. The Practitioner level is for anyone requiring an in-depth understanding of PRINCE2, particularly current or prospective project managers. Both the Foundation and Practitioner training lead to optional examinations that will provide successful delegates with an internationally recognised qualification.

### Why AFA?

AFA is one of the original and leading PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organisations (ATOs). Since the introduction of PRINCE2 in 1996 AFA has grown to become one of the largest organisations delivering accredited training, guiding literally thousands of individuals through their examinations. We pride ourselves on:

- Excellent trainers, who are also working as practising project managers
- Some of the most consistent exam pass rates over the last 15 years
- A unique blend of private, public and third sector clients including the UN, police authorities and top 500 companies

AFA was established sixteen years ago as a management consultancy organisation. In 1996 AFA became one of the original group of PRINCE2 Accredited Training Organisations under the scheme administered by APM Group on behalf of the Cabinet Office. AFA quickly established a reputation for being able to deliver training courses that combine excellent exam pass rates with realistic and practical guidance ensuring maximum skills transfer.

AFA continues to specialise in the Best Practice methods, becoming accredited at the earliest possible opportunity to deliver training in:

- MoP™ portfolio management
- MSP® programme management
- M\_o\_R® risk management, and
- P3O® portfolio, programme and project support offices

Five further training strands complete the AFA offering:

- Change Management – accredited by the APM Group
- Benefits Management – developed from experience of MSP training & implementation
- ITIL® Service Management – accredited by ISEB
- APM Qualifications – APM Introductory Certificate and APMP
- MoV™ Management of Value – accredited by the APM Group

### Contact Details

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