

Guideline questions for milestone meetings

Use

Milestones are an important element of project management. Milestone meetings provide an opportunity to pass in review the project so far. This review is organized in a structured way: the attainment of intermediate objectives and quality objectives is examined, the atmosphere in the team is discussed and the next steps forward are planned. The following questions help you to plan and manage the milestone meetings.

Planning a milestone meeting

Participants

- Who should participate? (project team, advisory/steering group, client)?

Conducting a milestone meeting

Review of the past project stage

- Have the intermediate objectives and the quality objectives for the past stage been reached?
- Have all the intermediate objectives agreed by contract been reached?
- Have the chosen strategies been successful?
- Have the implemented measures shown the desired effects? If not, why?
- Are there any positive or negative reactions (from the institution(s) responsible for the project, the target group(s), the media)?
- Was there opposition and conflict? Why?
- Were the resources allocated to personnel adequate?
- What is the participants' opinion on processes within the project (motivation, communication, teamwork)?
- How is the atmosphere in the project team?
- Have the deadlines been kept?
- Have the costs stayed within the given budget frame?

Conclusions

- What successes can be demonstrated?
- What disappointments?
- Should the project be continued or abandoned?
- How can the non-attainment of an intermediate objective that was stipulated by contract be justified?

Conducting milestone meetings (cont.)

Detailed planning of the next stage

- Have the contextual conditions changed since the last milestone meeting?
- As a consequence, do the intermediate objectives for the next stage need to be adapted?
- Which intermediate objectives must be given priority?
- Which quality objectives need to be fulfilled in the next project stage?
- Is there need for action regarding cooperation and networking activities (if the contextual conditions have changed for example)?
- Are enough staff and work time allocated to the project in order to accomplish the next stage successfully?
- Is there a need to negotiate for or acquire more resources?

Remark

Carefully taken minutes of a milestone meeting are a good basis for writing an intermediate report for the client.