

Learning the outline of a business case

In this poster we look at how to prepare the outline Business Case during Starting up a Project process. The outline Business Case provides a high level view and is the foundation for a more in depth Business Case, which is developed in the Initiating a Project Process. It's the Executive's responsibility to create the outline Business Case, whilst it's the Project Manager who creates the Project Product Description.



During Starting up a Project process the Business Case is likely to only provide a high level view. This is the foundation for a more in depth Business Case that is being developed in the Initiating a Project Process. If the project is part of a programme, the Business Case may already have been defined at the programme level.

When setting up and running a project, it is all too easy to concentrate on what needs to get done and how it is to be done, while ignoring why it is needed. The Business Case states why the work is worth doing and, as such, is a crucial element of the project.

During Starting up a Project PRINCE2 recommends the following actions for the Executive:

- Draft the outline Business Case based on project objectives and the reasons for the project as defined in the project mandate
- Understand how the project will be funded
- Review the Lessons Log for lessons related to business justification
- Assemble any background information, e.g. contracts, feasibility reports and service level agreements
- Understand how the project will contribute toward corporate and/or programme objectives
- If appropriate, seek approval for the outline Business Case from corporate or programme management

While the Executive prepares the outline Business Case, the Project Manager will undertake the following activities during Starting up a Project:

- Draft the outline Business Case based on project objectives and the reasons for the project as defined in the project mandate
- Capture the agreed acceptance criteria
- Determine any key milestones
- Capture the customer's quality expectations
- Check the feasibility of any timescale requirements that may have been stated in the mandate
- Capture any new risks in the Daily Log

Although these actions are to be undertaken by the Executive, it's recommended that the Project Manager has a good understanding of the project's Business Case. This will make it easier for the Project Manager to steer the project, make the right decisions and motivate the team members to fully contribute to its success.



The outline Business Case and the Project Product Description form part of the Project Brief, which is one of the major outputs of the Starting up a Project process.