

Project Kick-Starts

What is a Project Kick-Start?

Projects run in the traditional manner can take weeks and even months to get off the ground. This time is generally wasted in set up and scoping activities, in particular gathering views from different people. A Project Kick-Start involves getting everyone involved in a room together. A Kick-Start accomplishes a lot of work, saves time and has many spin-off benefits.

The principles of kick-starting

- Obtain a wide range of involvement
- Use a structured approach and tools and techniques to ensure balanced participation
- Carry out scoping and initial planning
- Save time
- Get 'buy in' and alignment from all involved

When to have a Project Kick-Start

- For any large project or complex projects
- For mission-critical projects
- When a lot of people need to be involved

Who should attend?

- Champion
- Project Leader
- Facilitator (runs the day on behalf of the Project Leader and Champion)
- Team members
- Key players
- Front-line staff as appropriate
- Any others as appropriate

Some logistics

- Typical numbers on a Kick-Start are 10-25 but could be lower or higher
- Typical duration from ½ a day to 1 day

Typical contents

- (1) Introductions, what people want from the Kick-Start and their contribution to the project
- (2) Briefing about and clarification of the remit
- (3) Briefing sessions by key individuals
- (4) Project scoping
- (5) Identification of actions, by who, by when
- (6) Identification of possible problems and obstacles
- (7) Plan communications
- (8) Input on project methodologies and tools as required

Using a Facilitator

Project Kick-Starts, especially those with a large number of people attending always benefit from facilitation. The Project Leader has enough to do on the day as it is without having to worry about the agenda, tools, who is participating and so on. The Facilitator will:

- (1) Meet with the Project Leader (and Champion if appropriate) beforehand to plan the Kick-Start
- (2) On the day, run the Kick-Start working closely with the Project Leader
- (3) Work the tools, in particular run the Scoping Session
- (4) Meet with the Project Leader after the Kick-Start to review and make recommendations