

## 3.2: Project Schedule Management Plan

Project planning is at the heart of the project life cycle and tells everyone involved where we are going and how we are going to get there. It involves creating a set of plans to help guide our team through the implementation and closure phases of the project. The project schedule management plan is one of the sub-plans of our overall project plan. It provides the guidelines to project managers on how to develop a project schedule by defining and sequencing project activities and milestones, and by estimating activity durations. It is the process of establishing the policies, procedures, and documentation for planning, developing, managing, executing, and controlling the project schedule<sup>[1]</sup>.

A project schedule management plan can consist of the following:

- **Unit of measurement**
  - Work hours, days, weeks, months
  - Daily working hours and shifts
  - Weekends and/or off-days
  - Local, national, and federal holidays
- **Creation of the activity list and attributes**
  - Describe how activities and their attributes will be defined, and who will be involved in this process.
- **Level of accuracy**
  - Acceptable range to ensure realistic activity duration estimates
  - Evaluation of the impact of risks on the overall project duration and each individual activity durations based on the project risk management plan
  - Methods describing how the schedule contingencies will be assessed.
- **Activity duration estimates**
  - Estimation methods (e.g., analogous, parametric, three-point, bottom-up)
- **Methods, tools, and software utilized to develop, manage, and monitor project schedule**
  - Specify the organization's procedures, policies, and resource calendars if they should be utilized.
  - Methods and tools such as Gantt Chart, WBS, project baseline, master and milestone schedule, Earned Value Management, and critical path method
  - Software such as Microsoft Project Professional, Excel, Visio, and Jira (for Kanban and Scrum), and online collaboration tools such as Monday, Trello, and Basecamp.
- **Rules and concepts to sequence activities and create an activity network diagram**
  - Critical path method (Forward pass, backward pass, slacks)
  - Critical chain method
  - Predecessor dependencies (e.g., finish-to-start, start-to-start)
- **Rules for monitoring schedule performance**
  - Earned Value Management (EVM)
  - Control thresholds for deviations from the parameters in the schedule baseline
  - Using software such as Microsoft Project
- **Reporting formats**
  - Reporting formats and frequency should be in alignment with other project plans.
- **Approval of the schedule baseline**
  - Who will be responsible for preparation and control?
  - Who will approve the schedule baseline?

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1. Project Management Institute. (2017). A guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK guide) (6th ed.). Project Management Institute. ↩