Developing a WBS & Project Schedule

1 — Define Outcome

Define the ultimate goal of your project. This establishes the litmus test to determine what is included within your project's scope.

2 — Define Scope

Identify the key deliverables required to complete your project's defined outcome/goal. Remember the sum of the parts (i.e., deliverables) must equal the whole (i.e., project's outcome/goal) .

3 — Create WBS

The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is the comprehensive, hierarchical breakdown of your scope into deliverables, sub-deliverables and work packages/ activities. The WBS contains all the work required to complete your project's scope. .. no more, no less. Key points to remember about a WBS:

- Make it outcome-based, not activity-based; it is not a chronological listing of work
- Watch breadth; target seven or less sub-deliverables or activities per parent deliverable
- Do not reflect your organizational structure
- Do not touch a software project application/tool until you have mapped your WBS on a whiteboard or on paper

4 — Sequence Activities

Identify the interdependencies/relationships between the WBS activities which will lead to the chronological flow of activities.

5 — Estimate Effort/Durations

Durations are determined by evaluating activity/task requirements with resource capacity, availability and competency.

6 — Assign Resources

Assign resources by weighing skill sets, experiences and relationships. Activity durations may be impacted once resources are assigned due to resource fit.

7 — Review Schedule

The start and finish dates are now identified. Compress it. Remember to know which activities can slide (and by how much) without impacting your finish date.

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