

Every project, regardless of size, should have a project charter. No excuses.

Everything that takes place on the project should be a function of the project charter.

The project charter provides authorization for the project as part of the charter's approval process. It is a visible symbol of what everyone has agreed to do.

The project charter is the initial communication to all of the project stakeholders and defines the general scope, schedule, and cost for the project.

Keep the project charter updated.

This insight is written from a tipped perspective toward an owner organization. All project participants, however, should be aware of the project charter: its importance, its competent parts, usage, and the reasoning behind it. The project charter should be on hand for all participants to review and use. The use of a charter by all project participants is considered important and will provide control ability for all.

The project charter is a true reflection of what leadership believes will be the project characteristics. Although it contains the usual suspects, such as schedule milestones, budget, project description, and its requirements, the charter also provides objectives of the project, performance metrics (also known as expected outcomes), deliverables expected, and responsibility and decision-making roles.

The charter is where the executive and senior leadership of the organization can set the background as to why this project is being accomplished. Beyond scope, schedule, and cost, the project may provide the capability of the company to meet earnings goals and productivity enhancements. The project may also provide the participants the ability to stretch their personal learning and to develop themselves to an ever-increasing skill set.

The context is not just project requirements and its deliverables, but a wider array of dimensions necessary for

sales metrics, process enhancements, human capability improvements, and the intended long-term investment in assets and human capital. This is the leadership role in assuring the charter contains more than just the basics of the project, but also contains the context of the long-term sustainability of the company.

The project team leadership has a huge responsibility to ensure the entire context is understood and reflected in the project charter. The charter has an inherent communication ability to draw alignment of the leadership stakeholders involved and to articulate the strategic thrusts to be executed by the project. At a minimum, the charter developers should ask the broader questions of the context landscape and display those interests within the document.

The organization leadership of performing the project and the organization leadership of receiving the deliverables should both be very clear as to what is expected, why it is important, and how the project will fulfill the strategic objectives of the company.

The development of a complete project charter is the first step of a project and may be completed before formal approval of the project. It is important the charter be revised when the project has significant direction or scope changes such that it is current. It is important the charter reflects the human side of leadership, not just the technical activities. The

The project charter should contain at a minimum:

Project description A brief description of the project and the reason it is being undertaken. This can be one to two paragraphs.

These broad statements concern what is planned to be accomplished. The goals cannot be mutually exclusive, conflict with other goals, or be too easy or too hard to achieve. Set goals that are a mix of challenging and readily achievable activity. These specific goals should number in the two to four range for most projects.

The objectives should be specific and measurable. The project objectives list should be the top six to 12 achievements expected

