

Project management basics - turning jargon-ridden methodology into practical down-to-earth skills

This course aims to provide its participants with key practical steps to setting up and running a project which, while based on project management methodology, are simple and easy to follow. The concepts and tools used in each session are handpicked from various approaches to project management in order to create the most useful process. The sessions are designed to bring real-life examples and interaction to participants, turning them into a light and engaging experience, while offering much learning.

Course duration: 6h split into 4 1.5h sessions

Group size – 10 – 20 participants

Cost: £60 per session (£240 for the whole course)

Course outline:

1) Getting it right versus almost right – the initial project set-up and planning

“Setting oneself on a predetermined course in unknown waters is the perfect way to sail straight into an iceberg” (Henry Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*)

This opening session will explore the principles of setting up any project, but particularly those where there is a general idea and a little-known problem, coupled with a multi-stakeholder, complex environment.

We will be looking at the first steps of setting up a discovery phase of a project – helping us to understand what the problem is, what needs to be done to address it and, most importantly, providing us with exactly the right evidence to back up our project (and potentially justifying funding it!).

This session will be practical, interactive and scenarios-based to provide real life skills and a fun learning experience.

2) Getting it right on the target – project aims, objectives and scope

The second step in our journey is to use the evidence gathered in the first step to formulate correct project aims and objectives and to then determine its scope. This is a critical step, which we can compare to setting navigation tools on a ship to make sure it takes the right course (as opposed to being adrift at sea).

In this session, we will look at the art and practice of setting SMART goals (NOT as easy as people think) and using tools to help us identify key levers in achieving our aims and objectives and building an action plan with clear milestones.

This session will be practical, interactive and scenarios-based to provide real life skills and a fun learning experience.

3) Are your stakeholders mere tick-boxes? – how to get the right people on board and build relationships for your project

One of the biggest, yet often undermined, challenges of any people-facing project, is winning people over to support it, be it as funders, customers, decision-makers, influencers of colleagues. The key to success is to involve the right people at the right time – starting from initial discovery, through user-centred design and to further scale-up and to deliver a sustainable project, when we need the right supporters to protect and grow its fruits.

This session will guide the exploration of who our project stakeholders are and offer practical tools and techniques on engaging different types of stakeholder groups to maximise the success potential and minimise project risks.

This session will be practical, interactive and scenarios-based to provide real life skills and a fun learning experience.

4) Expect the unexpected – project risk management and resilience thinking

“In complex environments, resilience often spells success, while even the most brilliantly engineered fixed solutions are often insufficient or counterproductive” (Stanley McChrystal, *Team of Teams*)

This session will explore risk identification and management from the point of view of resilience building – understanding that in complex, changing environments and in multi-faceted projects, threats and issues do happen but can be withstood or sometimes even turned into an opportunity.

This session will be practical, interactive and scenarios-based to provide real life skills and a fun learning experience.

About me:

Kasia Muszynska

I'm a project and change management consultant with experience of designing and delivering award-winning projects and taking them through a life-cycle from a localized pilot through to national programmes of work. Previously employed in the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, I have worked freelance with a number of clients over the last 4 years, including Leeds Children's Hospital, National Children and Young People's Diabetes Network, NHS North West Clinical Network and CounterCulture.

I am also a certified coach with experience of working with individuals and teams, helping to achieve specific goals and delivering development training.