In my previous articles, I have looked at all that you need to know about [the work breakdown structure for projects.](#) In this article, I want to look at all that you need to know about how to optimise the project schedule. Follow me as we will look at that together in this article.

Now the procedures …

#1 Consider resource-levelling options

There is a need for you to consider the resource levelling options for the project. You have to ask the following questions when you are doing that,

- Can you pull needed resources from activities with float and apply them to critical resources?
- Can you authorise overtime to meet your project requirements?
- Is shift still possible?
- Can an activity be contracted out to free up resources during a critical period?

#2 Consider fast-tracking

There is a need for you to consider fast-tracking the project in order to ensure that the project finishes on time. Ask the following questions when you are going that:

- Can any activities on the critical path be done concurrently that we originally scheduled sequentially?
- Are there any discretionary dependencies that could be done completely

independently?
- Are there any increased costs associated with fast-tracking activities?
- What are the associated links?

#3 Analyse activities

There is a need for you to analyse activities on the critical path to determine if crashing the schedule will produce a viable option. You need to ask the following questions :

- Are there any activities on the critical path that can be shortened if more resources are added?
- What are the costs associated with crashing the activities?
- Which activities will provide the biggest duration decrease while incurring the least amount of incremental cost?
- What are the resource allocation implications of crashing the activity? Will some key resources be overextended? Will all resources be available when needed?
- Are there any quality implications associated with crashing the activities?

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#4 Overallocated resources

You need to identify if any resources are overly allocated. You also need to prioritise the project tasks the resources are responsible for and delay those tasks that can be performed later, to avoid over-allocation of resources.

#5 Viable scope

You also need to analyse each of the activities on the critical path to determine whether reducing the scope is a viable option for reducing the duration of the project.

#6 Recalculate critical path

There is a need for you to regulate the critical path after you have re-compressed the schedule. This will help you to know the number of days that you have been able to save after you might have [compressed your schedule for the project.](#)

#7 Review schedule changes

Also, you need to review schedule changes with key stakeholders. Since some of them are Subject Matter Experts, it will enable you to get their expert opinions on the subject matter. It will also allow them to be aware of the changes that have been made to the project.

#8 Revise the schedule

After all your schedule Compression assignments have been done, you will need to revise the schedule again in order to discover if you have made any mistakes

in the course of optimising the project schedule. Once that is confirmed, you have to distribute it to other project stakeholders.

Typical example…

You created a draft schedule for your company's website project. At the draft schedule meeting, the sponsor informs you that the schedule must be compressed by a week so that the new website will go live on time to coincide with a major industry conference.

You analyse the critical path and discover that two activities could be performed concurrently, instead of sequentially, you fast-track the activities and gain the needed week, then review the critical path and confirm that it has not been altered.

You review the revised schedule with the project sponsor and obtain approval. The schedule becomes the baseline for the project.

Action Point
PS: I know you might agree with some of the points that I have raised in this article. You might not agree with some of the issues raised. Let me know your views about the topic discussed. We will appreciate it if you could drop your comment. Thanks in anticipation.

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