

In my previous article, I talked about some of the facts that you need to know about work breakdown Structure for projects. In this article, I want to talk about some of the facts that you need to know about activity dependencies for projects. Follow me as we will look at that together in this article.

You are the project manager for the launching of a new product line. if you do not understand the sequence in which the project work must occur, you cannot develop an effective schedule. You will end up with rework and additional costs.

Creating a project schedule network diagram for your project will help you uncover the relationship between risks, and avoid unnecessary work and expense.

## Activity Dependencies

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Activity Dependencies shape the sequence of project activities.

Typical example...

An architect, Brian, designed a residence and has a vision for room layouts.

However, he will not be able to assess the functionality of the design until the builders frame the structure with walls, windows and a roof.

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Once the structure is in place, he will be able to reassess the plan to determine if modifications are necessary.

## #1 Mandatory

A mandatory dependency is inherent to the work itself. It is usually affected by physical constraints. Activities must be performed in a specific sequence for the work to be successful. Mandatory is also known as “hard logic”.

## #2 Discretionary

A discretionary dependency is defined by the project and the project management team at their discretion. It is defined based on the best practices followed in a specific application area or on specific requirements.

If there is no mandatory or external dependency between two activities, the team has some flexibility in activity sequencing.

It is also known as “soft logic”, “preferential logic” and “preferred logic”.

For example, the sponsor will like to see the book’s cover design as soon as possible, so the team may decide to have the cover artwork done before the

inside illustration.

### #3 External

An external dependency is contingent on inputs from outside the project activities.

An example is a book that can't be printed until the shipment of paper arrives.

### **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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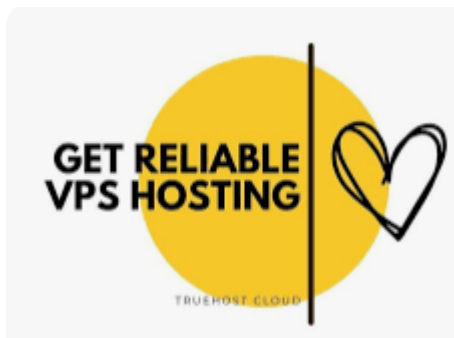
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