

# 21 Project management

## A We must finish on time

Josh Damon is a building engineer with a construction company:

'I'm working on an important **project** at the moment, a very big office building. I **manage** the project. I'm the **project manager**.

'The building must be **completed** by December next year. It mustn't be **late**. We must **finish on time**. Any **delay** would be bad. Projects must not take **longer than planned**. This is one of the most important things in **project management**.'



## B The schedule

This is the **schedule** for the project.

|                        | Year 1  |         |          |         | Year 2  |         |          |         |
|------------------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
|                        | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec |
| Build the foundations  | x       |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |
| Build floors 1-20      |         | x       | x        |         |         |         |          |         |
| Build floors 21-40     |         |         |          | x       | x       |         |          |         |
| Build floors 41-60     |         |         |          |         |         | x       | x        |         |
| Put in the electricity |         |         |          |         |         |         | x        |         |
| Painting               |         |         |          |         |         |         | x        | x       |
| Completion             |         |         |          |         |         |         |          | x       |

It is now January in Year 1. Look at the different **stages** of the project.

For example, building the **foundations** – the part under the ground – **will take** three months, from January to March in Year 1.

Building floors 1-20 is **going to take** six months, from April to September in Year 1.

Josh explains:

'If we **finish on schedule**, the building will be completed in December next year. In other words, the **deadline** is December next year. It would be great if we **finish ahead of schedule** – before the time planned – or **on schedule** – at the time planned. We don't want to **get behind schedule** – finish after the time planned.'

## C We're behind schedule

Look at what really happened to the building project.

|                        | Year 1  |         |          |         | Year 2  |         |          |         | Year 3  |         |          |         |
|------------------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
|                        | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec |
| Build the foundations  | x       | x       |          |         |         |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |
| Build floors 1-20      |         |         | x        | x       | x       |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |
| Build floors 21-40     |         |         |          |         |         | x       |          |         |         |         |          |         |
| Build floors 41-60     |         |         |          |         |         |         | x        | x       | x       | x       |          |         |
| Put in the electricity |         |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |         | x       | x        |         |
| Painting               |         |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |         |         | x        |         |
| Completion             |         |         |          |         |         |         |          |         |         |         |          | x       |

**Instead of taking** three months, building the foundations **took** six months. So, it took **three months longer than planned**.

**Instead of taking** six months, building floors 21-40 **took** three months. It took **three months less than planned**.

Note

Note the spelling of **planned**, not 'planed'.



**21.1** Use expressions from A opposite to complete these sentences.

- 1 When something is planned to take six months and it takes a year, there is a .....
- 2 When you finish a project, you can say that it is .....
- 3 The person who manages a project is the .....
- 4 If something isn't finished on time, it is finished .....

**21.2** Write sentences about the other stages in the project in B opposite, using the verb in brackets. Look at the examples before you begin.

- 1 Build foundations (will)  
*Building the foundations will take three months, from January to March in Year 1.*
- 2 Build floors 1–20 (going to)  
*Building floors 1–20 is going to take six months, from April to September in Year 1.*
- 3 Build floors 21–40 (will)  
.....
- 4 Build floors 41–60 (going to)  
.....
- 5 Put in electricity (will)  
.....
- 6 Painting (going to)  
.....

**21.3** Look at C opposite. Write sentences to say what really happened in the building project. Look at the examples before you begin.

- 1 Build foundations  
*Instead of taking three months, building the foundations took six months.  
It took three months longer than planned.*
- 2 Build floors 1–20  
.....
- 3 Build floors 21–40  
.....
- 4 Build floors 41–60  
.....
- 5 Put in the electricity  
.....
- 6 Painting  
.....

**Over to you**



Think about one of your recent projects. How long was it planned to take? How long did it take in the end?

# ANSWERS

- 21.1** 1 delay                      3 project manager  
2 completed                    4 late

- 21.2** 3 Building floors 21–40 will take six months, from October to March.  
4 Building floors 41–60 is going to take six months, from April to September.  
5 Putting in electricity will take three months, from July to September.  
6 Painting is going to take six months, from July to December.

- 21.3** 2 Instead of taking six months, building floors 1–20 took nine months. It took three months longer than planned.  
3 Instead of taking six months, building floors 21–40 took three months. It took three months less than planned.  
4 Instead of taking six months, building floors 41–60 took a year. It took six months longer than planned.  
5 Instead of taking three months, putting in the electricity took six months. It took three months longer than planned.  
6 Instead of taking six months, painting took three months. It took three months less than planned.

## Over to you (sample answer)

We had a six-month project to replace all our computers. But instead of taking six months, in the end it took 18 months. It took a year longer than planned.