

Unit 7 Projects

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Making projects work



Keynotes

Sometimes we work on a project with other people and sometimes we work individually. **Projects** can be big or small, but it is always important to know the **aim**.

Important projects usually have a **project manager** responsible for the budget and **schedule**. Many projects have a **deadline**, a fixed date when they need to finish.

Preview What makes a project successful? Put the following in order of importance (1 = most important).

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ a deadline | ☐ a good team |
| ☐ good communication | ☐ a team leader |
| ☐ an aim | ☐ a budget |

Speaking What projects do you work on at college, work or home?

Listening 1

1 Listen to Max Shaw describing a past project. Was it successful?

2 Listen again and choose the correct option a or b to complete the sentences.

- 1 The project finished on a 8 May b 5 August.
- 2 The project finished a before / by b after the deadline.
- 3 The project cost a more b less than the budget.

3 Complete the chart with the past simple verbs in the box. Listen again and check.

decided had met ~~started~~ looked

1 The project started three months ago on 8th May.

2 First, we _____ a meeting and discussed the aim of the project.

3 Then we _____ at the plans and agreed on a budget.

4 After that we _____ who to have on the project team.

5 The project team _____ once a week to talk about the project.

Language check 1 **Past simple affirmative**

We use the past simple to talk about actions and finished events in the past. Some verbs are regular and some are irregular. Study the examples from Listening 1 and complete the rules below.

Regular

- a We **decided** who to have on the project team.
- b The project **started** three months ago on the 8th of May.

Irregular

- | | |
|--|--|
| c We had a meeting. | e We were on time. |
| d The project team met once a week. | f The project was under budget. |

- 1 The past simple affirmative has only one form. The exception is the verb to be. It has two forms: _____ (for I/he/she/it) and _____ (for you/we/they).
- 2 With regular verbs, we add _____ or _____ to the infinitive.



For more information, see page 160.

Practice

1 Write the past form of these verbs from Listening 1.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1 start <u>started</u> | 4 have _____ |
| 2 finish _____ | 5 look _____ |
| 3 meet _____ | 6 decide _____ |

2 Complete the table with the correct infinitive or past simple form of the verbs. Which verbs are regular and which are irregular? Use a dictionary to help you.

Infinitive	Past simple	Infinitive	Past simple
give	1 <u>gave</u>	6	made
2	visited	go	7
say	3	8	sold
4	built	work	9
want	5	10	did

3 Complete the text with the past simple of the verbs in brackets.

Three Canadian students ¹ worked (work) together on a college project last year and their idea ² _____ (make) them a million dollars in ten months. IT students Carl Newman, Elizabeth New and Janet Collins ³ _____ (start) a website to help people with computer problems. Their teachers ⁴ _____ (say) that it ⁵ _____ (be) a good idea. More and more people from all around the world ⁶ _____ (visit) the website. In June they ⁷ _____ (sell) the idea to an international media corporation. Their college course ⁸ _____ (finish) three months ago. Now the three friends live in Toronto and have a successful IT company.



Working English

We can use time expressions to talk about a definite time in the past.
*Three Canadian students worked together on a college project **last year**.*
 (to talk about the year / month / week / day before this one)
*Their college course finished three months **ago**.*
 (to show length of time from the past)
*He was in Toronto **yesterday**.*
 (the day before today)

Speaking

Complete the diary with things that you did last week. Tell your partner what you did using *last*, *ago* and *yesterday*.

Last Tuesday I went to the cinema.

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Ordinal numbers

1 Match the words in the box with the ordinal numbers below.

second	fifth	twentieth	fifteenth	twelfth	first
seventeenth	twenty-second	third	thirtieth	fourteenth	
thirty-first					

1st	<u>first</u>	5th	_____	15th	_____	22nd	_____
2nd	_____	12th	_____	17th	_____	30th	_____
3rd	_____	14th	_____	20th	_____	31st	_____

2 Count from 1st to 31st. Listen and check.

Working English

We can write dates in different ways: *29th October / 29 October / October 29th*.
When we speak, we say: **the** *twenty-ninth of October* or *October the twenty-ninth*.

Speaking

Write three dates that are important for you and your family (e.g. your birthday, the date that you started work or college, etc.). Say the dates to your partner and explain why they are important.

Language check 2

Prepositions of time

Label the circles with *at*, *in* or *on*.

1 _____

July
the morning /
afternoon / evening
March 2008
the spring / summer /
autumn / winter

2 _____

Monday
Thursday afternoon
New Year's Day,
Independence Day,
Christmas Day, etc.
29th October 2007

3 _____

night
four o'clock
the weekend
midnight
Christmas

We do not use a preposition with *yesterday* and *last* (night, week, etc.).



For more information, see page 159.

Practice

Complete the sentences using *in*, *on*, *at* or no preposition (-).

- The project started in May 2007.
- Are you free _____ Monday morning?
- Charles visited the factory _____ last February.
- What do you usually do _____ New Year's Day?
- Ask Sunil to finish the budget _____ the morning.
- The client wanted to see the plans _____ three thirty.

Speaking

Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions about these things. Think of more questions to ask.

When do you usually ... ?

visit friends watch TV go to the cinema have meetings check emails
go on holiday go skiing go to bed

Reading

1 Read the article and tick (✓) the projects that it mentions.

☐ retail ☐ construction ☐ electronics ☐ IT ☐ educational

2 Read the article again. Are these statements true or false?

- 1 George Stephenson's project finished on time. *false*
- 2 Many big projects have problems.
- 3 IT don't have problems with deadlines.
- 4 IT projects are often more than 50 per cent over budget.
- 5 Some projects fail because they are late or have unexpected costs.
- 6 The PMI has members in different countries.
- 7 The Haradh gas project cost more than the planned budget.

3 Underline all the past simple verbs in the article.

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Project management

Project analysis

The importance of managing projects well

¹ George Stephenson built a railway from Liverpool to Manchester in the 1820s. It was 45 per cent over budget and there were a lot of delays. Today, it is still difficult to manage big projects. The construction of Wembley Stadium, the home of English soccer, was £750m (\$1.4 billion) over budget and the project finished late.

² Smaller projects can also have problems. Research shows that IT projects often have problems with budgets and deadlines. In 2004, the cost

of IT projects was usually 56 per cent more than the budget, and most projects took 84 per cent more time than planned.

³ Some projects fail because the work takes longer than planned. Sometimes the cost of labour or materials is more than the agreed budget. But good project management can increase a company's profits. A big German company decided to improve its project management, and the result was that it added one billion euros per year to its profits.

⁴ Project management isn't a new science. It has an international association, the Project Management Institute (PMI), based in Pennsylvania, USA. The PMI sets professional exams that thousands of people take every year. It has 150,000 members in 150 countries. All of the members are specialists in managing projects.

⁵ So, it is possible for big projects to succeed. The Saudi-Aramco Haradh gas pipeline is one example. The \$2 billion project finished six months early and 27 per cent under budget. The project manager and the client were both very happy. ■

Glossary

delay (n) a period of time when you wait for something to happen

fail (v) to be unsuccessful

succeed (v) to be successful

pipeline (n) pipes used for carrying gas from one place to another

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Speaking

Why do so many big projects fail? Think of examples of big projects that failed or succeeded.

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Vocabulary 2 Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

late failed succeeded international more client

- QLD has offices in New York, Rio and Paris. It's an international company.
- This IT project is expensive because the _____ keeps changing the plans.
- Grace doesn't like to be _____ so she always arrives five minutes before the meeting starts.
- The project _____ because we had an excellent team.
- Patricia never studies; she _____ her engineering exams last week.
- The price of materials is high, so we need _____ money in the budget.

Vocabulary 3 **Preposition + noun**

1 Underline three prepositions that can be used with each word.

- under behind over on budget
- on ahead of in behind schedule

2 Which preposition + noun above has a similar meaning to the following?

- on time on schedule
- late _____
- early _____
- at the money available _____
- more than the money available _____
- less than the money available _____

3 Look at the information about three projects and complete the sentences. Use the prepositions above with *schedule* or *budget*.

Project A	Project B	Project C
Agreed start date 12th July	Agreed finish date 25th May	Agreed finish date 30th November
Agreed budget \$120,000	Agreed budget £1.5 million	Agreed budget €800,000

1 Project A: spent \$110,000 and started on 23rd August. It was under budget, but _____.

2 Project B: finished on 25th May and spent £1.8 million. It was _____, but _____.

3 Project C: spent €800,000 and finished on 29th October. It was _____ and _____.

Talking about a project

When we give information in a talk, it helps the listener if we put the points in a clear order. These sequencing phrases are useful for showing the order that things happened. *First* usually introduces the main point and *finally* the last point. *Next*, *after that* and *then* have a similar meaning and we don't use them in a fixed order.

Sequencing phrases

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| 1 <i>First</i> | |
| 2 <i>Next</i> | <i>we</i> |
| 3 <i>After that</i> | |
| 4 <i>Then</i> | |
| 5 <i>Finally</i> | |

Stages of a project

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| a | designed the website. |
| b | had regular meetings. |
| c | planned the schedule. |
| d | agreed on a budget. |
| e | did research. |

Listening 2

1 Listen to a talk by project leader Elsa Newman. What was the aim of the project? Why does she think it succeeded?

2 Listen again and match the sequencing phrases 1–5 above with the stages of the project a–e.

3 Complete Elsa's talk with the correct words in *italics*. Listen again and check. Take turns to give the talk.

I'd like to tell you about a project that my team finished last month. The *aim* plan of the project was to produce a website to help international employees *improve/increase* their English. There were *three/five* stages. First, we agreed on a budget of *\$13,000/\$3,000*. Next we planned the schedule. We had four *months/weeks* to arrange everything. After that we did research. We *emailed/talked* to international employees about the *information/facts* they wanted on the website. Then we had regular meetings to discuss *progress/problems*. Finally, we designed the website when we had all the information that we needed. The project succeeded because we were a good team and we had good communication.

Speaking

1 Prepare a talk about a project. Use the information on your card and the sequencing phrases above. Give your talk to your partner and then make notes about their talk. Student A turn to page 139. Student B turn to page 143.

2 Think of a project that you worked on in the past at college, work or home. Tell your partner about the stages of the project.

Dilemma & Decision

Dilemma: What went wrong?

Brief

You are a director at KPC, a computer company. Your company recently worked on an IT project for Laine Industries. They wanted KPC to supply a new computer system for their headquarters. The CEO at Laine Industries wants to know why the project finished a month late and was over budget.

Task 1

Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions to complete the diary of the project manager at KPC. Use past simple sentences to say what happened.

Student A: *What happened on 11th February?*

Student B: *On 11th February, Paul West at Laine Industries agreed on the GX5 model for the new computers.*

Student A look at the diary on this page. Student B look at the diary on page 143.

Task 2

Work in small groups. Look at the information in the diary and identify why there were problems with the budget and the deadline.

Useful phrases

The main problem was ...

The reason the project was late / over budget was ...

Write it up

Write a letter to Ann Walker at Laine Industries and explain the main problems.

Dear Ms Walker,

We are sorry that this project was late and over budget.

The main problems were ...

Decision:

- Listen to Ann Walker, of Laine Industries, talking about her recent meeting with KPC and the problems that they identified. Do you agree that these were the main problems?

Project manager's diary

11th February _____

15th May *Paul West changes the computer model to the QV9.*

18th May _____

19th May *Have a meeting with Paul about delivery problems.*

20th May _____

26th July *New computer supplier has delivery problems - and is expensive too.*