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## **Up and Running with Microsoft Project**

### **A two day programme**

This up and running programme on Microsoft Project (MSP) is for those people who are familiar with project management techniques and have had exposure to Windows. We introduce MSP using a practical case study. On the second day, we allow delegates to set up their own projects and practise the full project life cycle for themselves.

### **Key elements of Microsoft Project**

Projects fail, in the main, because of a lack of planning. This lack of planning allows managers to impose unrealistic timescales, and people to think they can achieve results in a shorter time than is possible. Projects also get badly out of control before anyone is aware of the problem.

Project planning addresses the problems of controlling a project in terms of time, resources, and costs. Project planning allows you to think about what activities are required and estimate their time, cost and resources. Using computers to develop a project plan adds the advantages of speed and accuracy. A computerised plan can assess the time and resources used to date and the requirements to complete the project. Managers can see if things are going according to plan and if not why not and the implications. Managers then assess what alternatives they have to get the plan back on track. Computers also allow you to ask “What If” questions, enabling you to come up with several possible solutions to a problem.

However, the use of Microsoft Project brings its own dangers in that if you do not design your plan correctly you will spend excess time correcting and updating it on the computer, time that you need to manage the project. Therefore, it is imperative for you to learn how to optimise Microsoft Project ensuring that it is an effective tool and not something, which just prints off Gantt charts, which people ignore.

### **The programme enables participants to:**

- Understand the basic concepts of Microsoft project and use it effectively
- Plan a project using either PERT or Gantt chart methods
- Build an efficient Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
- Create a resource and logistics requirement plan
- Update the plan with actual data and ask, ‘What if’ questions
- Produce all necessary reports to support a project
- Administer multiple projects

### **Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the course, people will be able to build, manage and update project plans with confidence.

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**The programme covers the following:**

**Microsoft project Introduction**

- ◆ Menu
- ◆ Tools bars
- ◆ Gantt chart view
- ◆ Task form, active view bar
- ◆ Split bar and split box and changing views.

**Setting up a new project**

- ◆ Project summary information
- ◆ Environment options
- ◆ Calendar and working and working times

**Tasks and milestones**

- ◆ Tasks
- ◆ Milestones
- ◆ Using tasks and milestones
- ◆ Outlining your project
- ◆ Entering tasks and milestones

**Estimating time to perform tasks**

- ◆ Determining duration
- ◆ Setting duration
- ◆ Entering duration
- ◆ Scheduling methods
- ◆ Noting task assumptions

**Linking tasks to schedule the project**

- ◆ Deciding task sequence
- ◆ Task relationships
- ◆ Setting a start or finish date for a task
- ◆ Linking several tasks with a finish-to-start relationship
- ◆ Splitting tasks
- ◆ PERT Analysis

**Assigning Resources and costs to tasks**

- ◆ Assigning resources
- ◆ Scheduling resources
- ◆ Assigning costs
- ◆ Work profiles

**Evaluating the schedule**

- ◆ Project dates
- ◆ Critical tasks
- ◆ Slack and non-critical tasks
- ◆ Checking resources
- ◆ Checking costs
- ◆ Updating the plan
- ◆ Task relationships and constraints

**Tracking progress and updating the schedule**

- ◆ Tracking progress
- ◆ Analysing variances
- ◆ Corrective action
- ◆ Progress lines

**Communicating progress - Reports**

- ◆ Overviews
- ◆ Activities
- ◆ Costs
- ◆ Assignments
- ◆ Workload

**Managing multiple projects**

- ◆ Using a project template
- ◆ Using sub-projects
- ◆ Sharing resources between projects
- ◆ Viewing multiple projects