

The Concise PRINCE2®

A Pocket Guide

Second edition

Colin Bentley



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FOREWORD

Many books have been written about PRINCE2. The only problem is that where they try to cover all of the method, they are BIG books that take a lot of reading.

This book is intended as a refresher; a reminder of all the salient points of the method without drowning you in detail. You don't need to skip, don't need to 'cherry-pick'. In one brief document, it reminds you of the essentials of the method. It is an ideal basis for anyone, for example, who is preparing for the PRINCE2 Foundation exam or setting out on their first few PRINCE2 projects. In a flash you can remind yourself of any part of the method, using it as a checklist that you are on the right road to a successful project.

The book fits easily into a pocket or handbag and is an ideal refresher or learning aid as you travel to work, for example, on the train or on a plane. Its easy-to-read, rubric style lends itself to quick absorption of the keys to the method.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Colin Bentley has been a project manager since 1966 and has managed many projects, large and small, in several countries. He has been working with PRINCE2, PRINCE and its predecessor, PROMPT II, since 1975. He was one of the team that brought PROMPT II to the marketplace, wrote the major part of the PRINCE2 manual and is the author of all revisions to the manual until the 2009 version.

He was the Chief Examiner for PRINCE2 from its beginning until 2008 and wrote all Foundation and Practitioner exam papers, and marked them until they reached the massive volumes that are sat today.

Now retired, he has had over twenty books published, has lectured widely on PRINCE2 and has acted as project management consultant to such firms as The London Stock Exchange, Microsoft Europe, Tesco Stores, Commercial Union and the BBC. He still writes books on the PRINCE2 method and has updated them all to reflect the 2009 version.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

What is a project?

A project is a temporary organisation for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to an agreed Business Case.

What makes projects different?

- temporary
- cross-functional team
- more risky than BAU (Business As Usual)
- bring about change
- unique.

Project variables to be controlled:

- costs
- timescales
- quality
- scope
- risk
- benefits.

PRINCE2 benefits:

- can be applied to any type of project
- projects are driven by viability of a Business Case
- recognition of responsibilities
- product focus

Introduction

- different plan levels for different management levels
- tolerance setting / management by exception
- stakeholder involvement throughout the project life
- all projects share common vocabulary
- promotes consistency of project work
- established and proven method
- supports project management learning and continuous improvement
- provides assurance, assessment and audit capabilities
- wide expertise support
- exam-based accreditation.

Principles:

- continued business justification
- learn from experience
- defined roles and responsibilities
- manage by stages
- manage by exception
- focus on products
- tailor to suit the project environment.

CHAPTER 1: PROCESSES

Starting up a project

Purpose

- To answer the question, ‘Do we have a viable and worthwhile project?’
- To ensure prerequisites for DP (directing a project) and authorisation of IP (initiating a project) are in place.

(See [Table 1: Starting up a project.](#))

Directing a project

Purpose

- To enable the Project Board to be accountable for the project’s success by making key decisions and exercising overall control.

(See [Table 2: Directing a project.](#))

Initiating a project

Purpose

- To establish solid foundations for the project.
- To enable the Project Board to understand everything about the project – the cost, time, benefits and risks – before committing to major expenditure.

(See [Table 3: Initiating a project.](#))

Table 1: Starting up a project

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Appoint the Executive and Project Manager	Project mandate	Corporate or programme management	Corporate or programme management	Executive and Project Manager role descriptions
			Project Manager (PM)	Daily Log
Prepare the outline Business Case	Project mandate	Corporate or programme management	Executive	Outline Business Case
Capture previous lessons	Previous lesson reports	Quality assurance	Project Manager	Lessons Log
Design and appoint the project management team	Executive appointment	Corporate or programme management	PM - produce Exec - approve	Project management team structure and role descriptions
Select the project approach and assemble the Project Brief	Project mandate	Corporate or programme management	Project Manager	Project approach Project Brief

1: Processes

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Plan the initiation stage	Project Brief		Project Manager	Initiation Stage Plan
			Project Manager	<i>Request to initiate a project</i>

Table 2: Directing a project

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Authorise initiation	<i>Request to initiate a project</i>	Project Manager (SU)	Project Board	<i>Initiation notification</i>
	Project Brief	Project Manager (SU)		
	Project Product Description	Project Manager (SU)		
	Project management team appointments	Project Manager (SU)		
	Initiation Stage Plan	Project Manager (SU)	Project Board	<i>Authority to initiate a project</i>
Authorise the project	<i>Request to deliver a project</i>	Project Manager (IP)	Project Board	<i>Stage authorisation</i>

1: Processes

6

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Authorise the project cont.	Project Initiation Documentation (PID)	Project Manager (IP)	Project Board	<i>Project authorisation notification</i>
	Benefits Review Plan	Project Manager (IP)		
Give ad hoc direction	<i>Request for advice</i>	Project Manager (CS)	Project Board	<i>Advice and decisions</i>
	Highlight Reports	Project Manager (CS)		
	Exception Report	Project Manager (CS)	Project Board	<i>Exception Plan request/Premature close</i>
	Advice and decisions	Corporate or programme management	Project Board	<i>Premature close or new issue</i>
Authorise a Stage or Exception Plan	Request to approve Stage / Exception Plan	Project Manager (SB)	Project Board	<i>Stage or Exception Plan approval</i>

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Authorise a Stage or Exception Plan cont.	End Stage Report	Project Manager (SB)		
	Next Stage Plan or Exception Plan	Project Manager (SB)		
	New Product Descriptions	Project Manager (SB)		
	Project Plan	Project Initiation Documentation		
	Business Case	Project Initiation Documentation		
	Lessons Report (optional)	Project Manager (SB)		
Authorise project closure	End Project Report	Project Manager (CP)	Project Board	

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Authorise project closure cont.	Closure recommendation	Project Manager (CP)		<i>Closure notification</i>
	Original PID			
	Lessons Report	Project Manager (CP)	Project Board	<i>Lessons Report</i>
	Follow-on action recommendations	Project Manager (CP)	Project Board	<i>Follow-on action recommendations</i>
	Benefits Review Plan	Executive	Project Board	<i>Benefits Review Plan (to corporate)</i>

Table 3: Initiating a project

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Prepare the Risk Management Strategy	<i>Authority to initiate the project</i>	Project Board (DP)	Project Manager	Risk Management Strategy
	Project Brief	Project Manager (SU)	Project Support	Risk Register
	Daily Log	Project Manager (SU)		
	Lessons Log	Project Manager (SU)		
Prepare the Configuration Management Strategy	Project Brief, Daily Log, Lessons Log and Risk Register		Project Manager	Configuration Management Strategy
			Project Support	Configuration Item Records
			Project Support	Issue Register
			Project Manager	Updated PMT team structure

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
			Project Manager	Updated role descriptions
Prepare the Quality Management Strategy	Project Product Description	Project Manager (SU)	Project Manager	Quality Management Strategy
	Project Brief, Lessons Log, Risk Register and Issue Register		Project Support	Quality Register
Prepare the Communication Management Strategy	Project Brief, Lessons Log, Risk, Quality and Configuration Management Strategy		Project Manager	Communication Management Strategy

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Prepare the Communication Management Strategy cont.	Risk Register	Project Support		
	Issue Register	Project Support		
Set up the project controls	Project Plan	Project Manager (IP)	Project Manager	Project controls (part of PID)
	Lessons Log, Project Brief, Quality , Configuration, Risk and Communication Management Strategies		Project Manager	Updated project management team structure
			Project Manager	Updated role Descriptions



Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Create the Project Plan	Lessons Log, Risk Register, Issue Register, Project Brief, Project Product Description, Quality, Configuration, Risk and Communication Management Strategies		Project Manager	Project Plan
			Project Manager	Project Plan
			Project Manager	Updated PMT structure

Activity	Input	From	By	Output
Create the Project Plan cont.			Project Manager	Updated role descriptions
Refine the Business Case	Outline Business Case	Executive (SU)	Project Manager	Detailed Business Case
	Project Plan	Project Manager (IP)	Project Manager	Benefits Review Plan
	Risk Register	Project Support		
Assemble the Project Initiation Documentation	(Detailed) Business Case, Project Plan, Quality, Risk and Communication Management Strategies		Project Manager	Project Initiation Documentation
				<i>Request to deliver a project</i>
				<i>Stage boundary approaching</i>

Controlling a stage

Purpose

- To assign and monitor work, deal with issues and risks, report progress and take action to ensure that the stage stays within its tolerances.

([See Table 4: Controlling a stage.](#))

Managing product delivery

Purpose

- To act as a link between the Team Manager and the Project Manager.
- To cover the requirements for accepting, executing and delivering project work.

([See Table 5: Managing product delivery.](#))

Managing a stage boundary

Purpose

- To provide the Project Board with enough information to confirm continued viability and acceptability of risks.

([See Table 6: Managing a stage boundary.](#))

Closing a project

Purpose

- To obtain confirmation that the project product has been accepted.
- To recognise that the objectives in the Project Initiation Documentation (PID) and agreed changes have been achieved (i.e. recognise that the project has nothing more to contribute).

(See Table 7: Closing a project.)