

I am ALOK KUMAR , and I am submitting this write up for claiming the 60 PDUs for completing by MS Project training completed on 16-March-2021.



Why MS Project?

MS Project is a Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Software – used to be called Enterprise Project Management (EPM) solution assisting Program and Portfolio managers in investment appraisal, project selection, assessing strategic fit and continued business justification on an ongoing basis for resource optimisation across program and portfolio in delivering value.

It assists Project Managers like me in extracting required information and reports and providing alerts and early warning signs with appropriate solutions when possible.

It helps in capturing organisational best practices with regards to workflow models and resource skills in enterprise templates, while developing consistent ways of describing and tracking project activities across the organisation. It helps in collecting, analysing and reporting broad range of data related to various projects in timely and informative ways while allowing action from virtually anywhere and any device.

Scheduling:

One of the first uses of the MS Project is to have a Schedule for the Project, and this is usually defined in the Schedule Management Plan.

Scheduling options in MS Project:

Major work items can be outlined as summary tasks which are comprised containing sub tasks, to show just the level of details as required. Summary tasks are automatically scheduled by default, duration is calculated from the earliest start date to the latest finish date of the sub task. When summary task is manually scheduled, it will be calculation just like automatically scheduled, but when a duration is changed, then MS project calculates it separately.

Recurring Tasks:

A project often has tasks which are happening at regular intervals, such tasks which occur at recurring intervals are called Recurring tasks. Eg – Weekly meetings, Monthly updates, Quarterly reviews etc.

Recurring tasks indicator appears in the indicator field

Inactive Task:

MS Project allows to mark a project as inactive, if you do want the task to appear but no want it to appear in the scheduling calculations. These tasks do not affect the schedule.

Schedule Optimisation:

Optimisation for Time can be achieved by crashing, fast tracking etc

Optimisation for Time and Cost: Make-Buy-Rent decisions etc

Optimising for Time, Cost and Resources – make alterations to Resource Critical path etc

Tracking features of MS Project:

- Status dates or by default current date is used for providing the information on the project.
- % Completed can be used for providing status of a task on current date by updating the tasks.
- Can also be calculated if you update duration, then % completion is marked by itself.
- Tasks on Track can be marked On track from the Schedule Menu.
- Baseline bars are appearing if enabled, and progress bar can be compared with the baseline.
- Progress bar can be dragged to match the date of completion you want to update and will update the progress of the task.
- Set progress lines at set intervals like weeks or months basis to track against set intervals.
- You can select specific dates to display the progress lines
- Line Styles can set for the same

Percent Completion of Task:

Tracking Values:

- If a task has a single resource assigned to it , the actual values can be used for both task and resource.
- If the task has multiple resources, the actual work value that entered for the task are distributed or rolled down to the assignments according to their assignment units.
- If a task has multiple resources assigned to it, the actual work values for one assignment are rolled up to the task.

Updating the project quickly can be done by updating the Project Schedule task.

In case you want to complete entire project, then no need to select the task. By default MS project will reschedule the entire project based on remaining task.

If Project has to be stopped or standby then use the option for Reschedule incomplete work to start after is used.

Tracking Tasks:

Ways of tracking tasks progress:

- % work complete – it is based on effort or work hours spent by resources on task.
- Physical % Complete – shows % of physical work accomplished.
- MS Project by default uses % complete for Earned Value Analysis.

Another aspect is Actual Cost against Baseline Costs. MS Project calculated Actual Resource cost automatically based on Actual resource usage using a view such as Resource Usage view.

- Multiples Baselines Gantt View
- Tracking Gantt – shows % complete against each task
- Team Planner view

Formatting:

Formatting can be changed for printing etc.

Filters:

Variety of Task Filters and Resources Filters are provided in MS Project. Multiple filters can be used to customise a project view. Multiple filtering criteria can be set and logical operators can be used for creating these filters.

Grouping:

Grouping is another technique we can use to present data for information analysis and decision making and better visualisation.

Earned Value implementation in MS Project:

Determining actual work accomplished accurately at any point of time is the essential part of a project management activity and is not very easy to be done. This determines the accuracy of forecasts.

% Complete value is based on value of Duration, Actual duration and remaining duration as provided by the Project Manager. This is the default option in MS Project.

% Work Completed – Resources status % work completed is automatically updated by MS Project.

Physical % Complete – Gives more reliable results, values have to be manually entered for tasks.

Value analysis and Project Budgeting using MS Project:

Earned value analysis and Project budgeting can also be done using MS Project. This helps project managers in monitoring and controlling project performance and provide better insights into risk and other areas. It provides opportunities for course correction and risk mitigation. PV, BAC, AC, ACWP, SV, SPI, CV, CPI, EAC, VAC, TCPI and ETC all can be derived at any point of time using the MS Project providing these valuable insights into the Projects performance.

Multiple Projects:

MS Project makes it easy for Project managers to plan multiple projects and share resources across large project by creating sub projects which can be setup as individual projects with their resources and constraints. By creating a large project and inserting sub projects can be used to get a bigger picture for large projects.

Collaboration features:

MS Project 2016 can be combined with PWA or MS Project Server or Sharepoint etc.

Content Feedback

The Online training provided by Prothoughts learning was very useful in understanding and getting trained on MS Project. The content was tailored in a way that the candidates touch on the basics of Project management and get to understand how MS Project is suited to Project managers for the project management perspective. It is highly useful and recommended for anyone trying to get trained on MS Project and its applications in Project Management.