

Determining Project Outcomes

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

Project managers will define outcomes so that they can determine what work will be in scope and what will be out of scope. This is done by documenting the following elements, which will be covered in this tutorial:

1. [Project Deliverables](#)
2. [Project Requirements](#)
3. [Project Assumptions](#)
4. [In and Out of Scope](#)

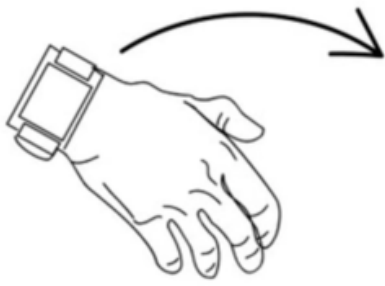
1. Project Deliverables

Project deliverables are the outcomes that are the focus of the project, and all work is targeted at creating deliverables. A project might have one deliverable, or it might have many interrelated deliverables.

IN CONTEXT

You are a project manager within an organization that creates a watch with tablet computer-like functionality. It is your responsibility to list all deliverables that must be created by the time the project ends.

The watch itself is, of course, a deliverable. However, a prototype watch might also be a deliverable. The software that runs on the watch is likely a deliverable too. Documentation on the operation of the watch will almost certainly be a deliverable. Users need to know how to operate the product.



PROTOTYPE
SOFTWARE
END USER DOCUMENTATION
~~SALES AND MARKETING MATERIAL~~

As the project manager, it's also your responsibility to note which deliverables won't be created by the project. In this case, perhaps sales and marketing are not a deliverable.



TERM TO KNOW

Project Deliverables

Defined outcomes that are the focus of a project and are the basis for all project activities.

2. Project Requirements

Project requirements are essential elements that define the specific features and capabilities necessary for the successful completion of a project. These requirements emerge from the project's goals, objectives, and stakeholder expectations. While some objectives may lead to a single requirement, most projects involve multiple requirements.

A project requirement is very specific about what must be accomplished. It is the criteria to determine if this work is a success. The requirements set the quality standard for evaluating the project's success.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** Consider this project requirement:

"Design a smartwatch with the capability to receive instant notification of a phone call, allowing the user to answer the call with no more than one action."

This has very specific criteria:

- Instant notification of a call: The smartwatch must promptly notify the user when a phone call comes in.
- Ability to answer a call with no more than one action: The user should be able to respond to incoming calls efficiently, ideally with a single action.

Remember, project requirements play a crucial role in shaping the project's outcome and ensuring its alignment with stakeholder expectations.



TERM TO KNOW

3. Project Assumptions

Project managers must also document **project assumptions** made about a project or its deliverables. These also emerge from reviewing expectations and consulting stakeholders.

Assumptions are different than expectations in that assumptions are assumed to be a true prediction of the future. Expectations will only occur if the project delivers on its work.

⇒ **EXAMPLE** An assumption on the tablet watch project might be that the project may assume that the existing tablet development team will contribute three software engineers to the tablet watch team.

Assumptions can be made about nearly anything assumed to be true and applicable to a project, such as the resources available for work, the accessible technology, or the support organizations or individuals might provide a project.

Project managers will need to use discretion to determine what assumptions are listed so as not to be too detailed. If there is a chance that a false assumption is a risk to the project, then that assumption should be included.



TERM TO KNOW

Project Assumptions

Considerations that are viewed as essential for successfully managing a project and achieving project outcomes.

4. In and Out of Scope

Deliverables and requirements are then used by the project manager to determine what work is in scope and out of scope for a project. **In scope** means the project is responsible for the work. **Out of scope** means that it is not. In other words, what the project will do, and what it won't do.

**IN SCOPE * PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR
EACH PROJECT DELIVERABLE.**

WHAT A DELIVERABLE WILL DO.

**OUT OF SCOPE * SPECIFIC EXCLUSIONS FOR
PROJECT DELIVERABLES.**

WHAT A DELIVERABLE WON'T DO.

It's simple to understand why we document what a project will do. But why document what it won't do?

Successful project managers do this because projects and deliverables are complex; it's difficult to gather 100%

of the stakeholder expectations.

↪ **EXAMPLE** Regarding the tablet watch, in scope may be the capability to make and receive phone calls. Out of scope work might be the ability to take photos.

Discussing what won't be a deliverable opens up the opportunity to gather information about expectations. By stating what is in and out of scope, allows stakeholders to review and discuss, should there be any disagreement about what is in and out of scope. This is how outcomes are determined.



TERMS TO KNOW

In Scope

Performance criteria for each project deliverable (what a deliverable will do).

Out of Scope

Specific exclusions for project deliverables (what a deliverable will not do)



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that a project manager must document **project deliverables**, such as prototypes and documented instructions. **Project requirements** are very specific. A project manager will also document what is **in and out of scope** to ensure that **project assumptions** do not lead to misunderstandings later in the project.

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Jeff Carroll.



TERMS TO KNOW

In Scope

Performance criteria for each project deliverable (what a deliverable will do).

Out of Scope

Specific exclusions for project deliverables (what a deliverable will not do).

Project Assumptions

Considerations that are viewed as essential for successfully managing a project and achieving project outcomes.

Project Deliverables

Defined outcomes that are the focus of a project and are the basis for all project activities.

Project Requirements

Features and capabilities that establish performance criteria for project deliverables.