



Section three Setting up a project

Whether you set up the project with others who will be working on the project, or get the basics in place without them will depend on your specific circumstances. There are benefits and drawbacks to both approaches.

3.1 Decision-making and delegation, working together

Ideally it is best to make the important decisions together and delegate the less important decisions to individuals. This way everyone has some independence and a degree of control over their work and you can make sure that you can handle the amount of work you collectively need to get through. You may decide that it is not efficient use of funding to have everyone contributing to a decision about the colour of the staplers, for example!

You need to decide what decisions you should take together, and what can be delegated. If you are not sure, decide if doing a particular bit of work together is a priority in terms of what you are really trying to achieve. It is also worth thinking about which decisions would most benefit from an input of different views or the input of a specific group.

If you are putting a new team together, it is important to build time in for this. Some new teams just 'click'. Other teams include people with very different viewpoints so you need time to uncover and work through the different assumptions and to develop understandings. Sometimes a team that has just 'clicked', can realise after a few months that they don't understand each other so well anymore, and need to refresh their relationships.

3.2 Setting up an office

We assume here that you have a basic office system in place such as a filing system, a place to work and so on. If you do want some support in this area please see www.londonofficespace.com/settingupanoffice.html. There are other considerations you can take into account when you are setting up and managing an office, including sharing back office functions (including photocopiers or payroll support) and ways of 'greening' your business.

3.3 Setting up reviewing and learning systems

You will have set out your commitments to monitoring and evaluation when you prepared your project plan. Here is where you develop how you will implement that. It is a good idea to keep this area as simple as possible. You may also want to think through additional ways that you want to review and learn within your project and set these methods up.

3.3.1 Consultation mechanisms

Consultation is the process by which you get other people's input on either your performance and/or your direction. Key stages to do this are during the set-up and review periods, but you might want to make the most of your 'natural' opportunities too (for example, a community event).

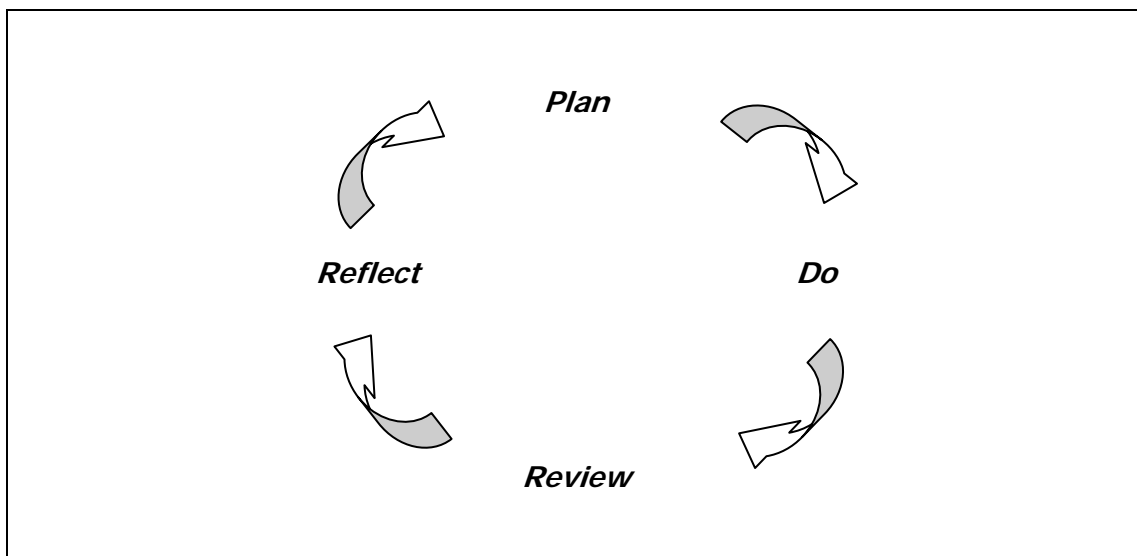
It's important to focus on what you really want to find out so phrase your questions carefully and keep the whole process as simple as you can.

3.3.2 Plan-Do-Review-Reflect cycle

There is a well-known management tool that works as a cycle and contains the following stages of development: *plan – do – review – reflect*. The idea is that first you work out (plan) how you will deliver; you then do it; you then review how well it went in practice (identifying any shortfalls); you then reflect on what you have learnt.

You then use this information to plan how you will do it next time, before doing it again, and reviewing and reflecting again, and so on.

You can use this tool to review and reflect on any aspect of your project. You can do this on your own or in a group.



INTRAC/MC-MED/NGO-SC have developed a more comprehensive planning cycle that goes into more detail around how to most effectively review, reflect and so on. See

The Basis Project online toolkit
www.thebasisproject.org.uk

the INTRAC 'Project Management toolkit 2' link in the further resources section for more information.

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