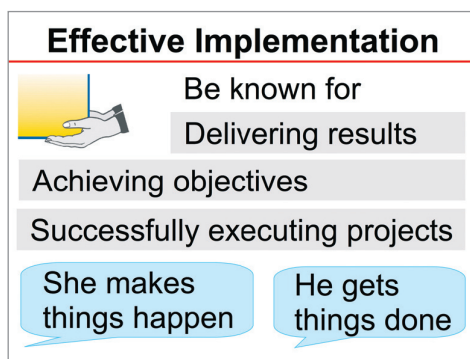# IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

Success is based on strategies actually enacted, plans actually realized, projects actually executed. In order to finish what you have started, you need to adapt your mindset from 'thinker and planner' to 'mover and shaker'. This section shows you how.

Make a difference

Effective Implementation

Be known for
Delivering results

Achieving objectives

Successfully executing projects

She makes things happen

He gets things done

Your goal is to be known for:

- achieving lasting results and long-term effects
- accomplishing your strategic objectives
- successfully executing projects in the face of resistance.

This implies physically moving and doing things that move the project forward towards completion. This a skill that can be learned. Learn to do it even more effectively than you are doing it now.

Develop your storyboard

Examplex: The Movie

Film script .... You

Director .... You

Producer .... Your company

Lead players .... You, your colleagues, opinion leaders, etc.

Supporting cast .. Consultants, Journalists

Think of the trial results as the basis for a movie. You start by developing a concept on how the story will unfold. You write the film script. You are also the director who guides and coaches the actors.

Your company is the producer providing the money. The lead players are you, your colleagues, opinion leaders, and so on. The supporting cast is made up of consultants, journalists, agency people and others.

Keep timelines

**Keep Timelines**

Timing is everything

Motto of the Gatwick Express

Project activities must follow a certain schedule

'Timing is everything.' That is the motto of the 'Gatwick Express', the train running between Gatwick Airport and Victoria Railway Station in London. Make it also your credo. It is essential that the activities of your action plan are implemented on time.

Some software companies offer sophisticated project management support software packages. You may use them to produce detailed plans and nice flow charts on your computer screen and on paper. I personally never needed them. Remember, it's always people who get the job done.

Make the right things happen at the right time

The Right Recipe

Marketing mix

The art of combining ingredients

Mess   Success
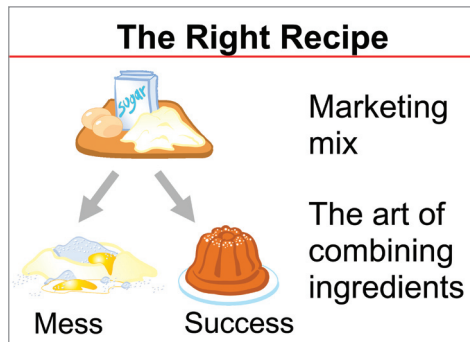
The sequence of events is essential. You need to make sure that the right things happen at the right time. Plan your activities in the logical order.

Just as you have to add ingredients like sugar, flour and water in the right sequence in order to bake a cake, you need to plan the proper schedule of events in order to market clinical trial results successfully. Otherwise you will end up with a mess.

Start with the action plan

Action Plan

Who	What	When	
Andy	• Expert Meetings	10 May	√
Chris	• Press Conference	12 May	√
Tom	• Email to Investigators	15 May	√
.	• Conference - Presentation	.	
.	- Workshops	.	
.	- Satellite	.	
.	- Material	.	
.	• Internal emails	.	
.	• Website online	.	
.	• Lecture tours	.	
.	• Publication	.	

Develop a logical, coherent and consistent action plan. This plan should organize the work flow. Make it short; one or two pages at the most. Long action plans usually never get implemented. Set realistic deadlines. Observe the sequence of events. Make sure you specify who will do what and by when.

Develop the plan with your team. Ask team members what they think are reasonable deadlines. You are looking for their buy-in. If you can accommodate the dates they suggest in your overall project schedule, do so. Otherwise explain why an earlier deadline is needed.

If you have a formal 'Marketing Plan', 'Product Strategy Plan' or 'Commercialisation Plan', add the project action plan to this.

Communicate your deadlines

Deadline
1 Get things done:
Set realistic deadlines
The **latest** time by which something must be completed
Communicate the dates

A deadline is the latest date by which some task must be completed.

You won't get things done until you set a deadline.

You need to communicate the importance of your deadlines very distinctly to all involved.

Make it clear that you take deadlines seriously.

Update your action plan

Making Timelines Visible
Update action plans regularly
Electronically by email
Physically with a printed version

Share the deadlines of the various project tasks with all team members on a regular basis. All of them should be familiar with the project schedule.

Distribute the most recent action plan electronically and in hard copy.

Electronic version:

- post the action plan with deadlines on the intranet
- send regular reminder emails to team members.

Hard copy version:

- produce a printed version and distribute it regularly to team members
- post a printed version on one of the walls of your office
- remember: deadlines printed in black and white have more impact than those displayed electronically on a computer screen.

Keep the project moving forward

Monitoring Performance

Assess progress to see if deadlines are met

Follow up

Check adherence to timelines

Verify if milestones are reached

Continuously assess the progress of your project. Ensure regular follow-up. Remember: what gets measured, gets done.

One senior executive once asked the clinical project manager 'How did this project get ten weeks behind schedule?' The answer 'One day at a time'. Work on your project every day.

Do not postpone, delay, put off or defer timelines, unless absolutely necessary.

Do not prevaricate.

Conduct regular review meetings

Regular Project Reviews

Schedule a rhythm of meetings, for example every Monday morning

Routine Review

Are we on schedule?

Is our project on track?

You need to schedule and hold regular review meetings. Establish a rhythm, so that people know in advance when their progress will be judged. For example, you might invite your team members to regular Monday morning meetings. During these meetings ask:

- are we on schedule?
- is our project on track?
- do we keep the course?
- do we observe the timelines?

If necessary, remind people of pending deadlines.

Find a project coordinator

The Deadline Fanatic

The vigilant time keeper and overseer

Deadline **D**ragon

Project Manager

Project Coordinator

You or ...

Who will invite team members to these regular review meetings? Who is the guardian of the project time lines? You need a project coordinator, someone who assumes the role of 'chief scheduler' and who diligently tracks project progress from day to day. This coordinator checks whether people actually implement the plan on time. If not, he or she will remind people and help them to avoid procrastination. This is an important and demanding role.

The best people for this job are persons who are good completers or finishers, those with an edge for detail, who like to see things through. Do you wish to assume that role yourself? Or can you think of someone suitable in the team? Or do you wish to talk to your boss and your human resource department about a possible candidate?

Hold people accountable

Personal Responsibility

10 April — Reward those who keep their deadlines

13 April — Admonish those who miss their deadlines

Hold people accountable

Make sure you hold people accountable. Reward those who keep to deadlines. Give them credit. Show that you care and that you appreciate their reliability. Recognize their efforts towards achieving a common goal.

Do not tolerate people who frequently overrun their deadlines. Admonish them. You may not have formal authority over team members who miss their deadlines. So you need to sit down with them.

Emphasize that time discipline is essential to the team's success. Point out the consequences of the overrun and explain why this might jeopardize the overall project success. Try to find a solution. If the two of you cannot work out a way forward, initiate a joint conversation with that person's boss.

Make sure everything is on time

The Timing Speed Example

How quickly were slides of results available following the first official presentation?

- ☐ within 1 month
- ☐ within 1 week
- ☒ on the same day

Company representatives handed out the slides immediately after the session.

Opportunity well used!

Have a look at the example and think what you and your team would be able to achieve. If you mark any option other than 'on the same day' you may wish to think about how to improve your project management.

Timing is everything when it comes to communication campaigns for clinical trial results. So make sure everything and everybody is on time!

Avoid missing opportunities

The Timing Delay Example

N trial results: **D** significantly reduced stroke. After the presentation at a major congress, company representatives at the booth offered

- ☐ CD-ROM with study results
- ☐ Brochure with study results
- ☐ An abstract on a sheet of paper
- ☒ Nice coffee mugs

Missed Opportunity

In this real-life example, the results of a trial were very positive: the substance 'D' reduced the stroke risk significantly. The principal investigator presented these encouraging results at a major European congress. Many people (including myself) showed up at the company booth in the industry exhibition and asked for details. All the company representatives could offer were nice coffee mugs. Clearly a missed huge opportunity!

Think about what supporting material your team can offer at your company booth immediately after the first official presentation. Will you get everything ready to present a CD-ROM or a brochure or at least an abstract?