

Microsoft Project Association Meeting March 29, 2006 Activity Exercise Using Microsoft Project 2003

Scenario: You have been hired by Microsoft to plan their next conference. The project plan provided is the template that you have been given to plan this project. Perform the activities below to complete the planning for this project. The Conference start date is August 15, 2006. Write on the back of this exercise if necessary.

Complete the project plan using Conference.mpp to allow for the following:

1. Open the file Conference.mpp.
2. Turn on the project summary task. Why would you do this?
Tools → Options → View → option is in the lower right corner – click OK
Gives user a Grand total for the project plan and helps when roll up the project as well and use the project with inserted or consolidated projects.
3. At first glance of the project plan you will notice that some of the task names are spelled wrong. Perform a spell check on the project plan and correct the spelling.
Click on the spell check button on the standard toolbar – works similar to Word
4. This project should start on June 28th so there will be plenty of time to plan the conference. Your resources will be not available until that date. Change the project start date to this new date. What is the new ending date for this project plan? September 7, 2006 Will this work? No
5. Assuming that the project plan doesn't fit the timeframe allowed, list at least 5 techniques in MS Project that will allow you to trim the project plan down or adjustments that could be made to achieve the required ending date.
Some ideas are: FF, SS, add lead time, add resources, check to see if some task could be effort-driven, check of incorrect relationships and assignments extend the work day, eliminate time off, eliminate some work

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6. Change tasks using some of these techniques to bring the project plan within required time. How can you make sure that the conference will happen on the required date? Place a "Must start on" constraint on August 15, 2006 or use the deadline. Either way you must monitor the Total Slack column to see if you will actually be able to perform to the constraint that you have set.

7. Do you have any slack in your project plan? How would you check for slack? answers will vary - Insert the column total slack and check for a positive number
how could you add slack to your project plan?
Answers will vary – ideas are: Insert a slack task at the end of the project or after each phase or section, increase the estimate on each task by 10%, add lag time between some tasks to extend the time line without increasing costs, place a constraint on a milestone to move it out later to add some slack time

8. Add yourself as a resource. Your job will be project manager. Make sure to add a rate for your services. Please take note of the other resources on your project plan. View → resource sheet Enter your name as PM with a rate.

9. Create a high level report for your clients to show them the overall project plan. (Hint: a filter is involved) How would you do this?? On the Gantt Chart, select the pull down for filters and select "Milestones"
How could you display a note on Gantt chart that would indicate that "The facility and the caterer could be the same provider". turn on the Drawing toolbar – use text box to add note

10. Assign resources to the conference day's tasks. You will be hiring 20 extra contracted people to work the 3 days. In addition to you, the PM, your 4 employees (Jenny, Andrew, Gill and Chris) will also be working the 3 days of the conference.

How many hours will be worked during the 3 days of the conference?

600 hours (25 people x 8 hrs x 3 days).

What task type should be used for the task days of the conference?

Fixed duration Effort-driven?? NO

3 assignment methods were shown – the one that shows everything that is occurring in detail is the task entry view or Gantt Chart and split screen to show the resource work view of the task form

How could you check for resource availability while assigning resources?

In the assign resources box, select the resource and then the graph button – this will show availability for this project plan only unless you are on Project Server

11. Assign the caterer “Healthy Catering” to the project as the caterer of choice for the conference. There has been a flat fee contract signed for the catering. See the resource sheet for details. (Hint: if there is a flat fee, are the hours that the caterer works a concern??) No- the hours are not a concern. Best way to add this additional cost is by adding the cost in as a fixed cost on the cost table. OR - If you would like to see the resource assigned to the task, remove the cost value from the resource sheet and assign this resource to the task for very little time so it does not effect the hours budget for the project.

12. A field called “Task Owners” as been created and populated. These are the people who are responsible to make sure the task has been completed properly. Insert it into the task entry table. Create a group object to group these values. Then create a filter to filter the table by these values. Also, create a filter to allow you to choose which value you would like at run time??

1) Insert column – right click on a column header and select insert column – select “Task Owners”

2) Create the group: Project → Group by → More groups → New, enter name, field is Task Owners, OK, apply

3) Create the filter: Project → Filter for → more filters → New, enter name, field is Task Owners, test is equal, values = “Select Owner Name”?, OK, apply

13. Create a hammock or overhead task to allow for tracking for Project Management time. Assign yourself to the task at 25% of your time for the length of the project. What is the benefit to the project plan of providing this task?? Create a task, fixed duration, effort-driven off as either a task under the Project Summary task or after the last milestone. The length of the task should be about the same duration as the entire project. Assign the PM to the task at 25%. The benefit of this is to allow the PM to apply time to the entire project and not just individual tasks, establishes the PM cost budget for the project, detracts from PM available time, and allows for a distribution of PM time for the entire length fo the project. Multiple hammock tasks may be used per project.
14. A cost has been incurred and should be updated to the project plan. Task 39 “Send out Conference Pack to Attendees” will require postage for the 4000 packages. Each package will cost \$2.00 to ship. Where could you add this cost? Cost table of the task sheet – in the fixed cost column, add a note to explain the added cost
15. How much will is cost to execute your project plan? varies It has been discovered that you are at least \$3000 over-budget. Be creative and trim down the cost of the conference by at least \$3000. How could you achieve this? Replace resources with cheaper ones – switch the caterer to Bob’s BBQ Catering, trim resource hours, have cheaper resources perform parts of tasks that more expensive resources are assigned to cut down their number of hours, negotiate with vendors for cheap rates – ie: the conference workers, Trim the work of some tasks
16. As part of your project management requirements, your client is requesting a list of all resources, total number of hours each resource will be working per week, and what tasks are they assigned to. Also, include in the report the total number of hours for the project. How can you provide this report? (Hint: there are multiple ways of obtaining this report).
1) Reports → Workload → Resource Usage, 2) View → Resource Usage adjust the time scale to by week – Grand total is not available through this method 3) Create a custom report that is a cross tab report and request a grand total.