

# PM Best Practice Tip & Free Templates!

## Structured mind mapping (aka - the work Breakdown Structure)

A better (and easier) approach to scheduling



### FREE MS PROJECT TEMPLATES from QPM!

Check out these [sample templates](#) for a WBS. MS Project 2003 or 2007 required.

Get a FREE TRIAL of [WBS Director](#) to use with the templates and make it even easier to create a WBS and a schedule!

If you are like many project managers, you are tempted to jump right into laying out milestones and pulling together a schedule, assigning resources, etc. There are many reasons for this and anyone who has done 'real-world' project management knows it. As soon as you are assigned a project, you often get a budget and an imposed deadline for completion, right? Many of us find ourselves behind schedule on the first day of the project.

Since this type of project launch has been going on for a long time, we don't believe we have a chance to change it.

What we do have, however, are a few things that might streamline your project planning process and quite possibly, gain control over that elusive thing called project scope.

Interested?

An easy way to get started is with a WBS template such as the ones QPM has created for you [here](#). Find one that's similar to your project and use it to lay out the deliverables you need to create. We will add new templates so let us know if you don't find what you are looking for – it may be next on our list!

Once you have one that works as a starting point, you need to do the following:

1. Develop a scope statement (get stakeholders to agree on what your project is delivering).
2. Modify the WBS as appropriate (politically and logically – both are important) and document the deliverables for each work package. This becomes your WBS Dictionary.
3. Once you know WHAT you are going to deliver, you can add the logic to create the HOW & WHEN (your network diagram and the activities, resources, time, and cost) to each work package.

Believe it or not, this approach will be easier and will save you time while increasing the likelihood of bringing the project in on schedule and budget with an accurate scope. You will have more control and the right level of visibility for your stakeholders.

Sound like too much work to do this by hand? You can create a WBS within Microsoft Project very easily by using our templates and better yet, using [WBS Director](#). It can help you graphically create the WBS, create a WBS Dictionary, and automatically create the schedule framework for you while you are creating the WBS. In addition, it will make sure that your WBS and the project scope stay in synch and drive the schedule.

Simplify the way you work!