

# Successful Project Planning

---

In college, students are expected to manage an array of projects. Sometimes these projects can come in the forms of individual, written assignments like research papers, lab reports, and written analysis. In other instances, students are sometimes required to conduct oral presentations alone or in groups. The variety of projects that professors assign students and expect them to complete vary. This can be overwhelming for many students. However, with the right project planning skills, students can not only complete projects on time, but can also successfully execute them. The following are simple steps for creating a successful project plan.

- 1. Break up the project into manageable tasks.** Regardless of how large or small your project is, it is essential to break it down into smaller, more manageable tasks. For example, if you have a 15-page research paper due, break the paper down into sections that you can complete separately. Maybe you could divide the paper into three 5-page sections that you can work on separately as opposed to working on the paper all at once. Breaking up a project into smaller, more manageable assignments makes it easier to work on the project as a whole. This is also a great way to delegate tasks to individuals if you are working on a group project. If the project is broken up into smaller sections, everyone will have a task they are responsible for.
- 2. Complete the project a section at a time.** Never wait until the last minute to work on and complete a project. As mentioned before, breaking up a project into smaller tasks makes it easier to manage. It also helps you complete your project in advance. For example, after breaking up your project into smaller tasks, you can then create your own deadlines for when each task needs to be completed before the project deadline. It's also important to keep in mind that depending on your project, the kinds of tasks you need to complete might vary. The idea is to identify what needs to be done in order to complete your project, and to use this information to break down your project into as many manageable tasks as possible. After doing that, you can then assign deadlines for when each task should be completed.
- 3. Revisit and revise your project plan as necessary.** Now that you have broken up your project into manageable tasks and have assigned deadlines for each task, it is important to stay on track and to revise your plan as necessary. Maybe you discover that one task takes longer than you expected. This should be noted and taken into consideration in your project plan. Make sure you revise your plan to reflect any changes that occur because it will help you stay on task and ensure that you complete the project on time.

Ultimately, completing any project requires creating and executing a detailed and manageable plan.

# Sample Project Gantt Chart

TASKS	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	PROJECT DEADLINE: 10/21/13
Collect resources for research paper.	→						
Create outline for re-search paper.			X				
Complete introduction section of research paper.				X			
Complete historical background section of research paper.					X		
Complete findings section of research paper.					X		
Complete analysis section of research paper.						X	
Complete conclusion section of research paper.						X	

X = completed task

→ = ongoing

<b>TASKS</b>	Week/Date:	Week/Date:	Week/Date:	Week/Date:	Week/Date:	Week/Date:	PROJECT DEADLINE: 10/21/13

X = completed task

→ = ongoing