

Physical Resource Management

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Physical Resource Management

Physical Resources are: Equipment, Materials, Supplies, Facilities, and Infrastructure that are utilized by your project, or become a part of your project deliverable. Physical Resources are different from the Human Resource

The importance of good Physical Resource management is to ensure you have the right Physical Resources at the right place in the right time, in order for your project to proceed as planned. Due to the temporary nature of projects, the Physical Resources you need for your project often belong to someone else and are utilized elsewhere.

Your organization might have adopted resource philosophies such as: Lean, Just-In-Time, Kaisen, Total Productive Maintenance, or Theory of Constraints. If so, you need to manage your project taking these philosophies into account.

Management of Physical Resources consists of four processes: Plan Resource Management, Estimate Activity Resources, Acquire Resources, and Control Resources. These are described below:

A) PLAN PHYSICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

For larger and more complex projects you will want to write a Resource Management Plan (RMP). Your RMP will describe:

> how the resources will be acquired,

> how they will be managed, and

> how they will be used.

As an example, for the equipment shown in the photo above, your RMP could describe that these machines will be acquired through rental, for a specific phase of the project. They would be managed by performing the periodic maintenance which is prescribed by the equipment maintenance manual. They will be used on 12 hour shifts by our staff operators, for example.

Your RMP should also describe the methods you will use to ensure sufficient resources are available where and when they are needed.

Your Resource Management Plan provides input information to your project's Assumptions Log and Risk Register.

B) ESTIMATE ACTIVITY PHYSICAL RESOURCES

If not already done when planning Time and Cost, you will now want to estimate the Time and the Cost of Physical Resources for your project. Consider the types, and quantities, of Physical Resources needed. Equipment rental companies often charge by the number of hours a machine is used, so for this type of rental equipment you would estimate the number of hours of intended use to arrive at a Cost estimate. Other rentals such as scaffolding and power tools will be rented on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.

The use of Physical Resources that belong to your organization might not impact your project cost but likely impact availability for some other project or operation. For this reason, it is important to estimate the Time requirement for the Physical Resources.

We have already seen methods for estimating under Time and Cost

Remember to consider Resource Leveling and Resource Smoothing in your Resource Management Plan.

If the Physical Resources will require a Purchasing activity, give your Purchasing team as much "heads-up" time as possible to prepare.

C) ACQUIRE the PHYSICAL RESOURCES

At the appropriate time you will acquire the Physical Resources and assign them to their respective Activities. Too early acquisition adds unnecessary cost and prevents others from using shared resources. Too late acquisition, of course, impacts project schedule. For similar reasons, timely release of acquired Physical Resources is also important.

Acquiring external Physical resources might require a Purchasing process, some delivery time, or other lead time. Action the acquisition in sufficient time, allowing for these activities.

Pay extra attention to special Physical Resources that are unique and/or critical to your project's success. Special equipment and materials, for example, can greatly impact your project schedule if not delivered on time.

Some Physical Resources might already be pre-assigned to your project so check for possible duplication and for suitability of what has been assigned to you.

You can place the availability of Resources on a Resource Calendar, simply a calendar format modified for this purpose. The availability of resources may impact your Time Plan, so consider this carefully. For example, working in smaller sized facilities might take longer than with those which are more adequately sized. Scarce Resources might only be available at certain times. Your Resource calendar will be very useful in managing Physical Resources.

D) MONITOR & CONTROL the PHYSICAL RESOURCES

After planning, you will want to begin Monitoring and Controlling the outcomes of your project. This process involves ensuring the Physical Resources assigned and allocated to your project (as in your Resource Management Plan) are available as planned; as well as monitoring the planned Vs actual utilization of these resources and taking corrective action as necessary.



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