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SIMPLE TRICKS
WHEN PLANNING
A PROJECT

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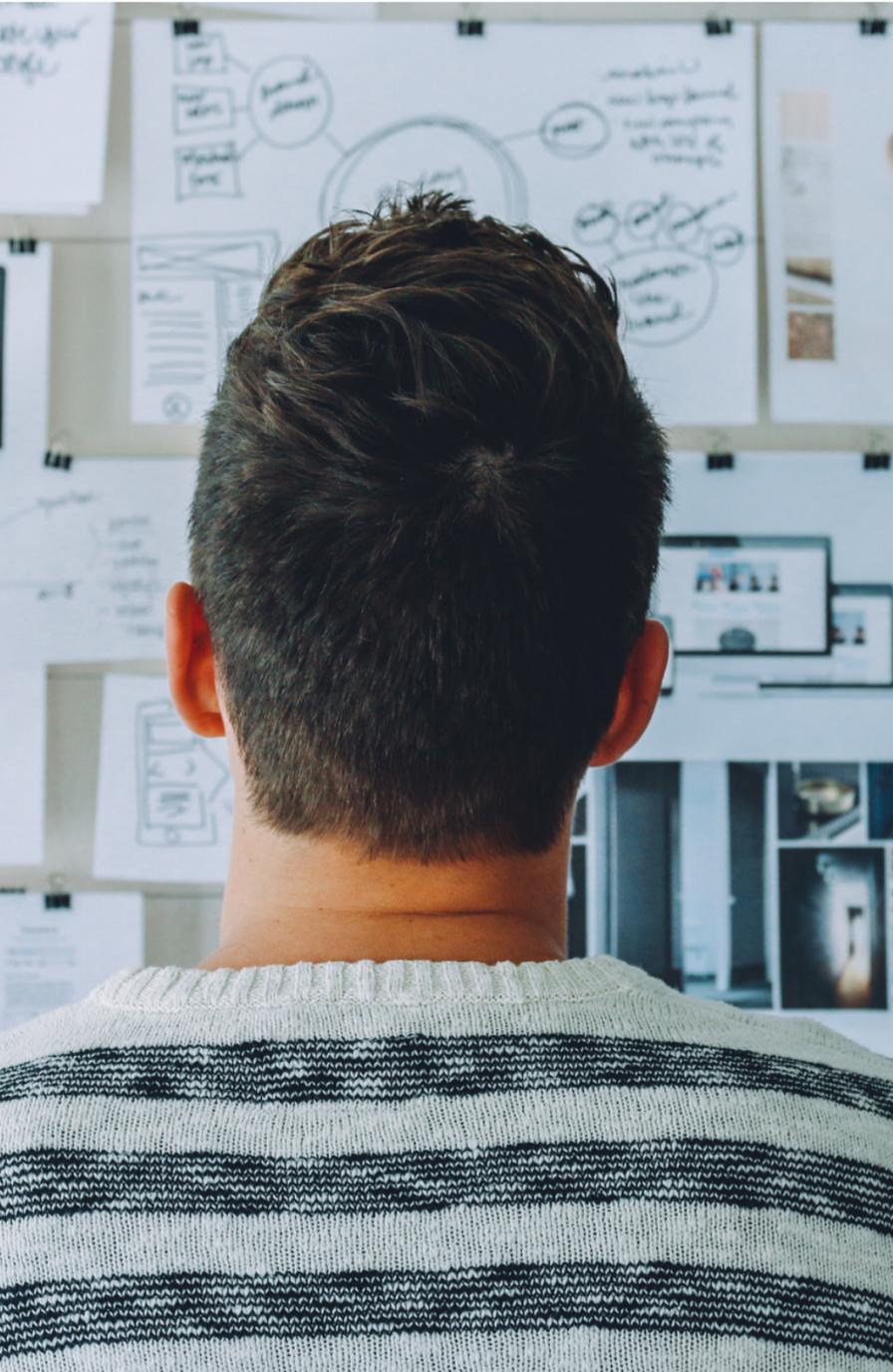
FIRST TRICK

When starting a new project consider **WHAT** you want to ultimately deliver, which final product or service will define that you have succeeded in your project.

Being clear about what it is that you actually want helps you to define **how** you will deliver the project and bring further definition to the benefits you want from it.

This does also in turn help you gauge the level of investment you will need and see if it is worth spending that amount in relation to your anticipated benefits.

Remember that achieved benefits are the real reasons for doing a project.

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SECOND TRICK

Once you have defined the final product of your project, see which products or services you need to have in place to deliver it.

Define those with clarity and make them **measurable** in terms of quality. This avoids later misunderstandings and disappointments.

Making a list of your **PRODUCTS first** helps you to think of the achievements you want and, most importantly enables you to visualise your objectives.

Another advantage is that you will reduce the risk of forgetting something.
This way you will have a complete overview of your project.

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THIRD TRICK

Look at each of the items on your list and create a **TO DO list** for each of them.

Identify if you will do the work yourself or ask people to help you.

Ask for quotes to get an idea of costs and check how that fits in the budget you had in mind.

Don't ignore the RISKS related to working with others.

The further they are from you geographically to more precise you need to be in describing what it is you want them to produce, Create, Manufacture, Deliver.

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FOURTH TRICK

Use a **timeline** (whatever shape or form that takes) and stick post-it notes on which you have described the products you have previously listed.

Place them in the chronological order you think will work best. Move them around as you improve the timing.

This is a great visual aid to help you identify how you can do things more efficiently.

It's alright if you need to move your sticky notes as you go along. Things never stay as planned in a project anyway.

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FIFTH TRICK

Break down your project into **manageable units** over time.

Think logically, and ask yourself this series of questions :
What can be done at the same time?
What can I NOT do before something else is done?
Who will be working on what and when?
When do I need to commit to external contractors?

This simple list will help you define the order in which things will have to be done.

Stick to your plan as much as you can but do remain flexible when needed.

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REMINDER

Consider and Confirm WHAT you need to produce for the project

Define (in measurable terms) the quality you need

List a TO DO list and stick to it with your team

Illustrate visually WHO does WHAT and WHEN (sticky notes on a wall)

Do and follow the progress of production one bit at a time

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ESSENTIALLY

There is no point identifying a list of tasks UNTIL a product or service has been clearly identified.

What will make the project a success?

What do the users need to enable them to realize the benefits for the project.

Focus on PRODUCTS first then define the activities and the dependencies.

Do not ignore risks related to the products, their production and possible impact(s) on other parts of the project.

ACTION PLAN

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before the project

Define your final product clearly

List what it is composed of and describe each item as precisely as possible to avoid surprises

Place your product in some form of timeline to see how you can do things best and move them if needed

Do not ignore RISKS as you do this

during the project

Give work to your teams and external contractors

Follow the work closely

Constantly see if you are on track and if not
see how you can correct and bring that correction

Measure the work done by teams
Verify it fits the bill
Check your list of products as you go along

after the project

Check if everything you set out to do has been done.

Are there items you could not do but can still do later?

What have you learned from this project to help you next time?

Close the project and have a little celebration. You deserve it.

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DRAW A DIAGRAM OF THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF YOUR PROJECT

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DRAW A PICTURE OF HOW THESE ARE LINKED TO EACH OTHER

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ABOUT US

BlueHAT delivers courses, coaching and consulting related to Project, Programme, Portfolio and Risk Management in view to enable organisations to bring Change and allow for deep Business and Personal Transformation.
Our goal is to elevate the owners of businesses and help them become Leaders.

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