

GANTT Charts

Purpose:

Gantt charts are helpful for planning and guiding projects. They are most appropriate for small- to medium-sized projects, but can be used for larger projects, such as capital projects on occasion. They are ideal for most planning projects that a department or college would be involved in.

Gantt charts are particularly helpful ways of dealing with scheduling tasks, understanding critical paths of a project, and planning of resources. Two concepts are particularly important in terms of the use of Gantt charts, the concept of sequential and parallel tasks.

Parallel tasks are those that can go on at the same time. Projects often take much longer than necessary because people assume that one thing follows another. A simple example would be the signatures on a form. If each individual is approving a project, do they need to sign-off on the idea one after the other, or could multiple proposals be sent out at the same time and each reviewer sign within the same time frame?

However, using the same example, there may be a reason for the approvals to come sequentially. It may be that the dean does not want to give approval if the chair has not signed off first. Sequential tasks must occur one after the other. Both sequential and parallel tasks are well represented in Gantt charts.

Gantt charts can be developed using VISIO software.

Example:

ID	Planning An Event	Start	Finish	Duration	Oct 2003		Nov 2003		Dec 2003		Jan 2004		Feb 2004		Mar 2004					
					9/28	10/5	11/2	11/9	12/7	1/4	1/11	1/18	1/25	2/1	2/8	2/15	2/22	3/7		
1	Develop concept	10/1/2003	10/28/2003	4w																
2	Arrange keynote speaker and panelists	10/20/2003	11/21/2003	5w																
3	Make arrangements for facility and food	11/6/2003	11/19/2003	2w																
4	Design and finalize brochure	11/10/2003	12/5/2003	4w																
5	Advertise event	12/5/2003	2/16/2004	10.4w																
6	Conduct event	2/16/2004	2/16/2004	.2w																
7	Evaluate and follow-up	2/17/2004	3/1/2004	2w																