Gantt Chart

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Managing Innovation

Gantt Chart

(sometimes called a bar chart)

Innovation needs some form of project management; we can't simply press the 'Go' button, and hope. We need to have some kind of a structured framework to help us manage over this uncertainty reducing process. Project management starts with a project plan and this is a very simple concept. It lists what has to happen, what resources are needed, who's going to be involved, when will they be involved, and so on.

 And a very simple version of a project plan is something called a Gantt chart, originally developed by American engineer called Henry Gant. This gives us simple but a powerful starting point, because it gives us a visual view of all the tasks that we need to schedule over time..

Why used?

To help plan the use of resources over time.

When used?

In planning projects and in getting people to think about the implications in terms of resources of their proposals.

How used?

Figure 1 shows what a bar chart looks like for a simple project. The descriptions on the left hand side are of the individual activities and the lines (bars) indicate both the duration and the timing of activities on a calendar basis.

Basically you can see down the left hand side, the vertical column, all the things that have to be done - in this case for a software project. And on the right hand side, over time, what has to be done by when. In this particular version you can even see some names; it's beginning to tell us a bit about who's going to be doing that. But the most important thing is that it's a very quick and easy visual representation of what has to happen by when.

Figure 1: Example of Bar Chart

Task		
Document Current Systems	Mike Smith 100%	
Analysis Complete	11/01/2017	
2. Design		
Design Database	Jennifer Jones 100%	
Software Design	Jennifer Jones 56%	
Interface Design	Jennifer Jones 100%	
Create Design Specification	Jennifer Jones 37%	
Design Complete	2/02/2017	
3. Development		
Develop System Modules	Sam Watson 51%	
Integrate System Modules	Sam Watson 36%	
Perform Initial Testing	Sam Watson	
Development Complete	9/02/2017	
4. Testing		
Perform System Testing	Mike Smith 30%	
Document Issues Found		
Correct Issues Found		