

Project Initiation Guide

Emmanuel BRUNO
Université de Toulon, LIS UMR CNRS 7020
emmanuel.bruno@univ-tln.fr

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This document outlines the structured approach to project initiation, covering all aspects from initial concept to development kickoff.

1 Project Initiation Overview

Project initiation establishes the foundation for project success by:

1. Defining Project Scope and Vision

- Articulating clear project objectives and success criteria
- Establishing boundaries and constraints
- Creating a shared vision among stakeholders

2. Conducting Feasibility Assessment

- Technical feasibility analysis
- Business case development
- Risk assessment and mitigation planning

3. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

- Mapping key stakeholders and their interests
- Establishing communication channels
- Setting expectations and securing buy-in

4. Resource Planning

- Team composition and skills requirements
- Budget estimation and allocation
- Tool and infrastructure needs

5. Project Governance Structure

- Decision-making framework
- Reporting mechanisms
- Change management process

2 User Research Plan

As a critical component of project initiation, user research ensures we build solutions that address real needs and create value.

2.1 Research Objectives

1. Validate User Personas

- Personae are fictional characters created to represent the different user types that might use a site, brand, or product in a similar way.

- Confirm our personas accurately represent our target audience
 - Identify gaps or misconceptions in our user understanding
 - Refine persona details based on real user data
2. **Test Feature Hypotheses**
 - Validate assumptions about user needs and preferences
 - Identify feature priorities from the user perspective
 - Discover unaddressed pain points in existing solutions
 3. **Assess Usability**
 - Evaluate ease of use across key user flows
 - Identify friction points in the user experience
 - Measure task completion rates and satisfaction
 4. **Track User Satisfaction**
 - Measure NPS (NPS: Net Promoter Score), CSAT (Customer Satisfaction Score), and other satisfaction metrics
 - Identify drivers of satisfaction and dissatisfaction
 - Monitor trends in user sentiment over time
- ## 2.2 Research Methods
- ### 2.2.a Qualitative Methods
1. **User Interviews**
 - Format: 45-60 minute semi-structured interviews
 - Participants: 5-8 users per persona category
 - Focus: Current habits, pain points, aspirations
 - Timeline: Pre-development phase and post-MVP release
 2. **Contextual Inquiry**
 - Format: Observation of users in their workout environment
 - Participants: 3-4 users per persona category
 - Focus: Real-world usage patterns and environmental factors
 - Timeline: Early development phase
 3. **Usability Testing**
 - Format: Moderated task-based testing sessions
 - Participants: 5 users per test round
 - Focus: Task completion, pain points, satisfaction
 - Timeline: Multiple rounds throughout development
 4. **Focus Groups**
 - Format: Guided group discussions with 6-8 participants
 - Participants: Mixed representation of personas
 - Focus: Feature prioritization, concept evaluation
 - Timeline: Pre-development and pre-release phases
- ### 2.2.b Quantitative Methods
1. **Surveys**
 - Format: Online questionnaires with both closed and open questions
 - Participants: 200+ respondents across target segments
 - Focus: Feature preferences, current habits, competitor analysis
 - Timeline: Pre-development baseline and quarterly after release
 2. **Analytics**
 - Format: Automated in-app usage tracking
 - Participants: All app users
 - Focus: Feature usage, retention patterns, user flows
 - Timeline: Continuous after MVP release
 3. **A/B Testing**
 - Format: Split testing of UI variants or features
 - Participants: Random sample of users

- Focus: Comparative performance of design alternatives
- Timeline: Post-MVP for ongoing optimization

4. **Diary Studies**

- Format: Structured self-reporting over 2-week periods
- Participants: 10-15 users across personas
- Focus: Long-term usage patterns and integration into daily life
- Timeline: Post-MVP release

2.3 Participant Recruitment

1. **Recruitment Channels**

- Communities on social media
- Partnerships for local recruitment
- User research platforms (UserTesting, Respondent)
- Newsletter and in-app invitations (post-launch)

2. **Screening Criteria**

- Alignment with defined personas
- Experience level variety
- Device/OS diversity
- Demographic representation
- Fitness goal diversity

3. **Incentive Structure**

- Interview participants: \$50 gift cards
- Survey participants: Prize drawing
- Beta testers: Early access and premium features
- Diary study participants: \$150 compensation

2.4 Research Schedule

1. **Pre-Development Phase** (2 months before development)

- Initial user interviews
- Baseline survey
- Competitive analysis
- Persona validation

2. **Development Phase**

- Prototype testing every 3 weeks

- Feature prioritization workshops
- Contextual inquiry sessions

3. **Pre-Release Phase**

- Beta program usability testing
- Satisfaction baseline survey
- Final UX evaluation

4. **Post-Release Phase**

- Weekly analytics review
- Monthly user satisfaction pulse
- Quarterly in-depth research studies
- Continuous A/B testing

2.5 Data Analysis & Synthesis

1. **Qualitative Analysis**

- Thematic coding of interview transcripts
- Affinity mapping for pattern identification
- User journey mapping
- Pain point prioritization matrix

2. **Quantitative Analysis**

- Task success metrics (completion rate, time-on-task)
- Engagement metrics (retention, feature usage frequency)
- Satisfaction metrics (NPS, CSAT, effort scores)
- Funnel conversion analysis

3. **Synthesis Methods**

- Jobs-to-be-Done framework
- Opportunity scoring (importance vs. satisfaction)
- Experience mapping
- Feature prioritization matrix

2.6 Deliverables & Knowledge Sharing

1. **Research Reports**

- Detailed findings documents
- Executive summaries
- Video highlights from user sessions
- Quantitative dashboards

2. **Actionable Artifacts**

- Updated personas

- Journey maps
 - Design principles
 - Feature prioritization matrices
3. **Knowledge Distribution**
 - Bi-weekly research shareouts
 - Research repository in Notion
 - Design team workshops
 - Development team insights sessions

2.7 Ethical Considerations

1. **Privacy & Data Protection**
 - Clear consent procedures
 - Data anonymization protocols
 - Secure storage of research data
 - Compliance with GDPR and other regulations
2. **Inclusive Research Practices**
 - Diverse participant recruitment
 - Accessible research methods
 - Consideration of cultural differences
 - Accommodations for participants with disabilities
3. **Responsible Reporting**
 - Fair representation of user perspectives
 - Acknowledgment of research limitations
 - Protection of participant identities
 - Transparent methodology documentation

3 Project Charter Development

The project charter serves as the authoritative document that formally authorizes the project.

1. **Charter Components**
 - Project purpose and justification
 - Measurable objectives and success criteria
 - High-level requirements and deliverables
 - Budget summary and timeline
 - Key stakeholders and their roles
 - Project manager authority level

2. Charter Creation Process

- Initial draft development
- Stakeholder review and feedback
- Refinement and finalization
- Formal approval and sign-off

3. Charter Template

```
# [Project Name] - Project Charter

## Project Purpose
[Brief statement of why this project exists]

## Business Case
[Summary of business justification]

## Project Objectives
[Specific, measurable objectives]

## Scope
[High-level scope statement]

## Key Deliverables
[List of major deliverables]

## Timeline & Milestones
[Key dates and milestones]

## Budget
[High-level budget information]

## Team Structure
[Key roles and reporting relationships]

## Approval
[Signatures required]
```

4 Initial Project Roadmap

The project roadmap provides a strategic overview of key deliverables and their expected timelines.

1. Roadmap Development

- Feature prioritization framework
- Release planning approach
- Milestone definition

2. Roadmap Components

- Major releases and timeframes
- Key features by release
- Dependencies and critical path
- Resource allocation by phase

3. Roadmap Visualization

- Timeline representation
- Feature grouping by theme or epic
- Confidence indicators

5 Project Kickoff Meeting

The kickoff meeting marks the official start of the project execution phase.

1. Meeting Preparation

- Agenda development
- Pre-meeting information distribution
- Stakeholder invitation and confirmation

2. Kickoff Meeting Agenda

- Introductions and roles
- Project charter review
- Vision and objectives clarification
- Roadmap presentation
- Team working agreements
- Communication plan review
- Next steps and immediate actions

3. Post-Kickoff Activities

- Meeting minutes distribution
- Action item tracking
- Follow-up sessions as needed

6 Integration with Subsequent Phases

The project initiation phase connects directly to subsequent project activities:

1. Requirements Engineering

- User research findings feed directly into requirements development
- Project charter constraints guide requirements scope

2. Agile Process Setup

- Roadmap informs initial backlog development
- Team structure established in initiation guides agile team formation

3. Solution Architecture

- Feasibility assessment informs architectural decisions
- Technical constraints identified in initiation shape architecture ``