

There are seven key components to a work plan, which the project manager must establish before the team starts substantive work on the project:

1. *Scope of work*
2. *Tasks, activities, and deliverables*
3. *Contracts with the client and consultants*
4. *Design team*
5. *Project schedule*
6. *Internal project budget*
7. *Administrative procedures*

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work must be clearly defined or refined by the client, project manager, key members of the design team, and consultants together. This process builds solid working relationships and provides the basis for the contract between the client and the design firm and consultant firms.

Essentially, the scope of work describes what is to be done—what is the project. All project parameters and requirements should be reviewed. Project parameters include the client's goals for the project, the design firm's project goals, the phases of work necessary to deliver the project, the deliverables associated with each phase of work, the overall project budget, and schedule expectations.

At the center of this discussion is the question of overall level of design for the project. While the broad phases of work may be the same for a relatively straightforward project and one that is more complex or "high end," the scope of work for the two projects will be quite different. This discussion should address aesthetics, level of design detail, material selections, maintenance requirements, and environmental concerns. It should also address issues such as the requirement for flexibility in the design to accommodate future change, start-up and long-term operating costs, and the impact of anticipated future business plans on the design of the facility. If all project parameters and requirements can be discussed, everyone can start on the same foot.

A client's availability and decision-making process may affect the project, either in time, money, or relations. It is important to discuss these topics so

that everyone has the same expectations as the project moves forward. Some clients are unaware of the amount of their time a project may require, and their unavailability may slow down the project. Some clients are unable to devote time to the project except for key decisions and rely heavily on the experience of the design firm they have selected to produce the project. Some clients have lengthy review processes by multiple parties for decisions and approvals, which require time and extensive presentation materials.

TASKS, ACTIVITIES, AND DELIVERABLES

Once all of the project parameters and requirements have been discussed and documented, the next step is to develop a detailed list of the tasks, activities, and deliverables necessary to fulfill the scope of work.

At various points in the project, the tasks and activities result in products, or deliverables, that document a component of work. In order for the team to begin work on the project, it must be broken down into components of work that combine and build upon each other to produce the desired project. In order for the project manager to be able to build a project with detailed tasks and activities, some of which are sequential and some of which are parallel, the project manager must have the right kind of project experience. He or she must have been a part of similar efforts—either as a team member or as leader. The more detailed the list of tasks, activities, and deliverables, the easier it will be for the team to execute the project. The structure of their work is in place. The project manager has thought through each component of work and how it interfaces with other components of work. The team has their road map and is free to focus their creative energy on the work itself.

The list should be used to select or finalize the design team or consultants based on the skills required for each component of work, and to determine the number of staff hours required to produce the project—and thus the fees for the project. Even though normative data exist for fees per square foot for interior design services, the best way to calculate professional service fees and explain the fees to the client is to show how the fees are based on staff hours for each task, activity, and deliverable. It is a mistake to enter into a contract with a client until this step is complete.

If, when calculated, the fee is too high, the project manager can make reductions by adjusting the tasks, activities, and deliverables. Ultimately, it may be necessary for the project manager and client to review the list together if there