19. MANAGING PRODUCTION

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Project management 101 *by Zavanak*

19.1 Launching production

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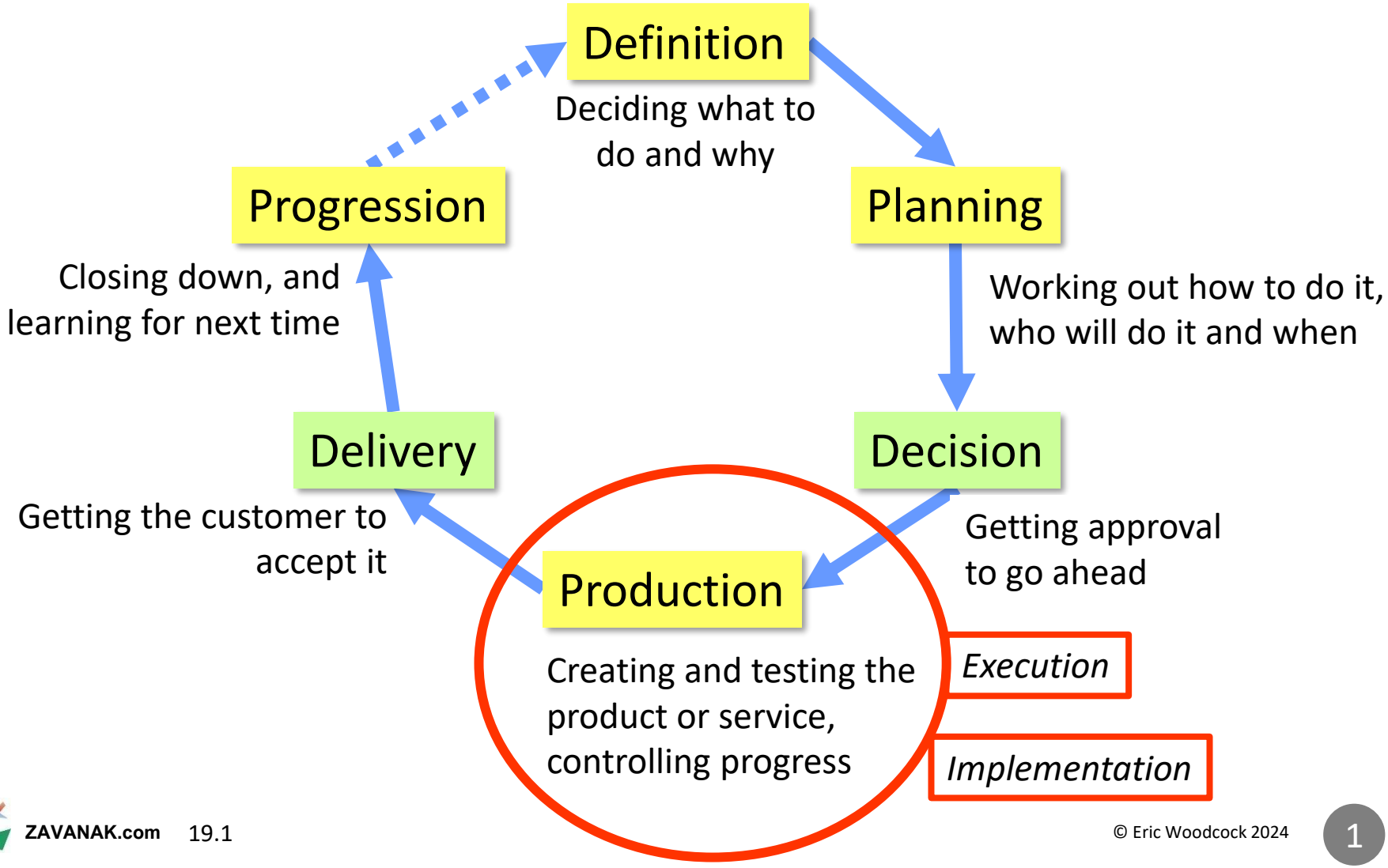
The typical project life cycle



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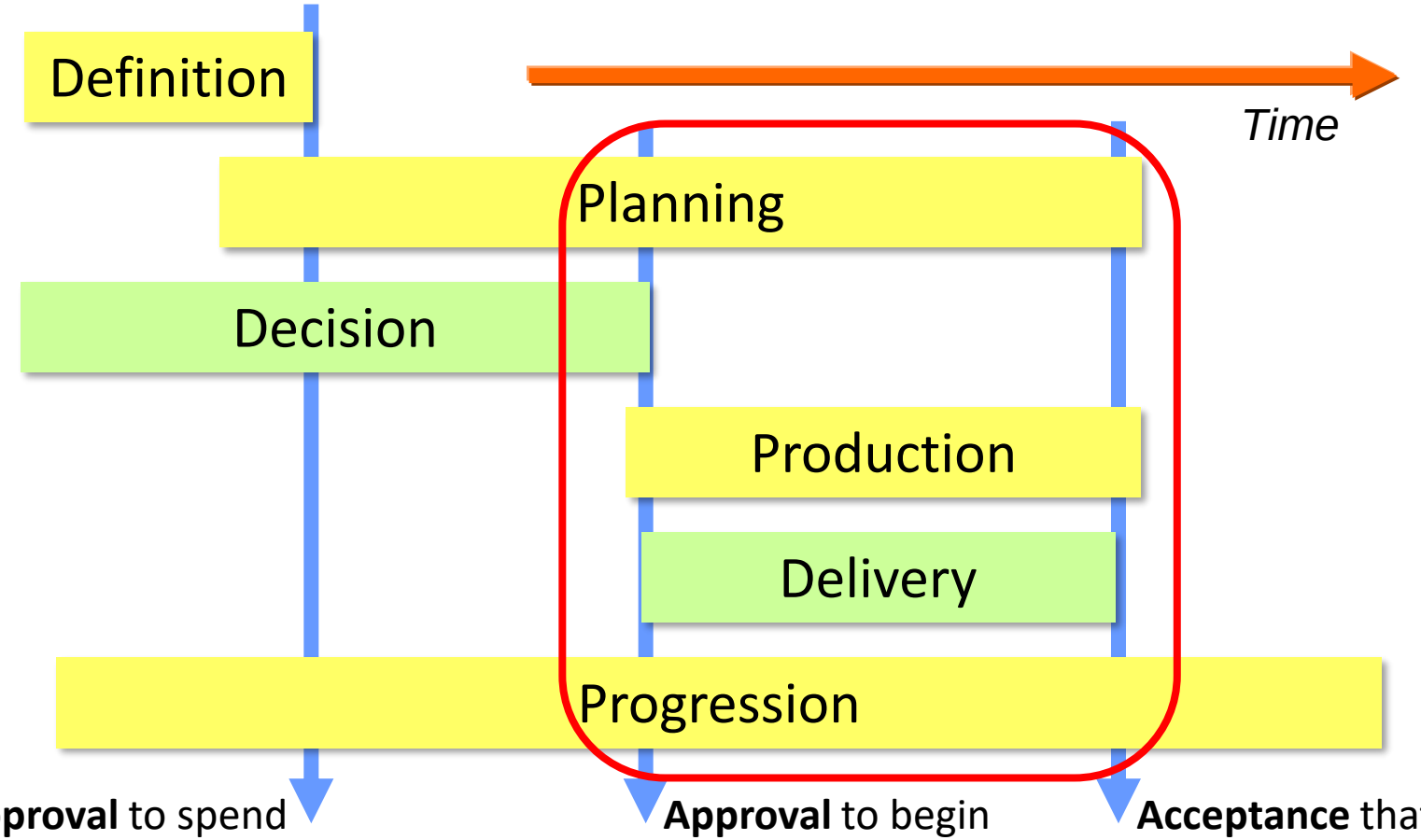
How the project life cycle unfolds



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About the production phase

The production phase turns the defined project inputs into the specified outputs, according to the project plan.

The management and coordination workload increases substantially from previous phases.

As well as working through the plan, a lot of discussion, negotiation and replanning needs to go on.

More than anything else, it is about getting things done.

The aim is always a smooth handover of compliant outputs to a satisfied client.

It is the phase of the project where most of the work takes place and most of the time and resources are consumed. But it may not be the longest.

Stakeholder support needs to be maintained and expanded.

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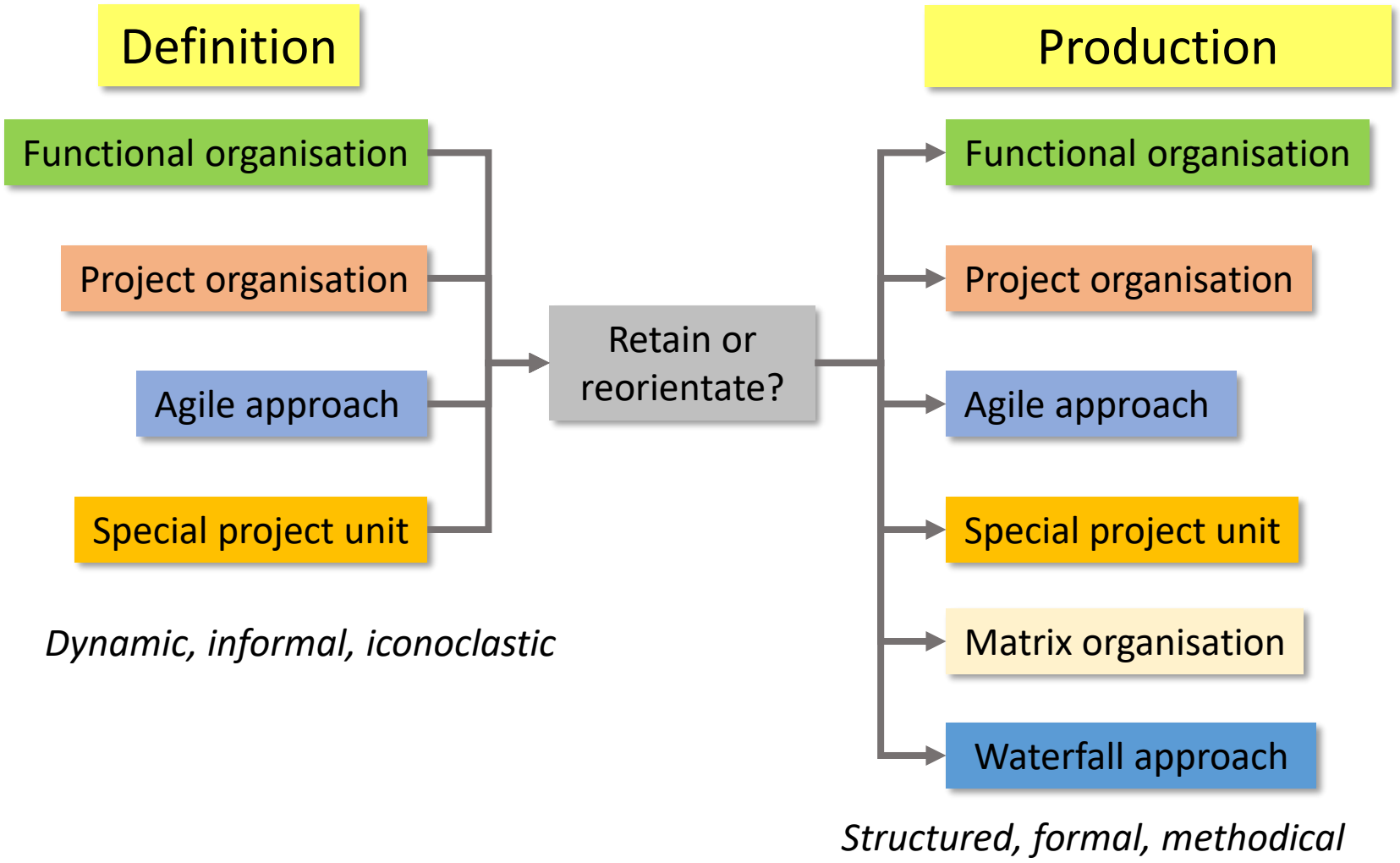
A new shape for the project



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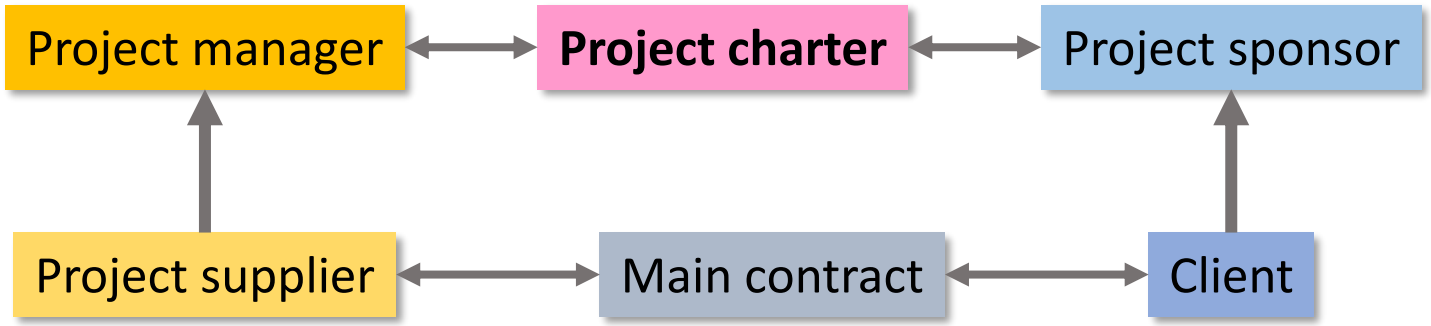
The project charter

The deal between the project manager and the project sponsor

Confirms the reason for the project, and that it will be done according to the business case, project plan and contracts

Summarises the main characteristics of the project: specification, scope, baseline (timescale, budget, quality), organisation, governance, etc.

Embodies the launch checklist



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Another key document: the project manual

Business case | **Project plan** | **Contracts**

Project manual

- Work locations and contact details
- **Summary of main work processes and procedures to follow**
- Summary of project management methodology (if used)
- **Approach to quality management**
- Where to get advice

A working guide to the project, designed to support production and delivery

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Getting the project moving

The first few weeks set the tone for the whole project.

Client focus

Expect client people to be rather confused about what is happening.

Work closely with the customer project manager to clarify what is happening.

Be patient, but avoid being patronising.

A project pact

This is a short statement to remind everyone what the project is for, and why every contribution matters so much.

It is written in everyday language.

And is placed on the project web-site, notice boards, and in general communications.

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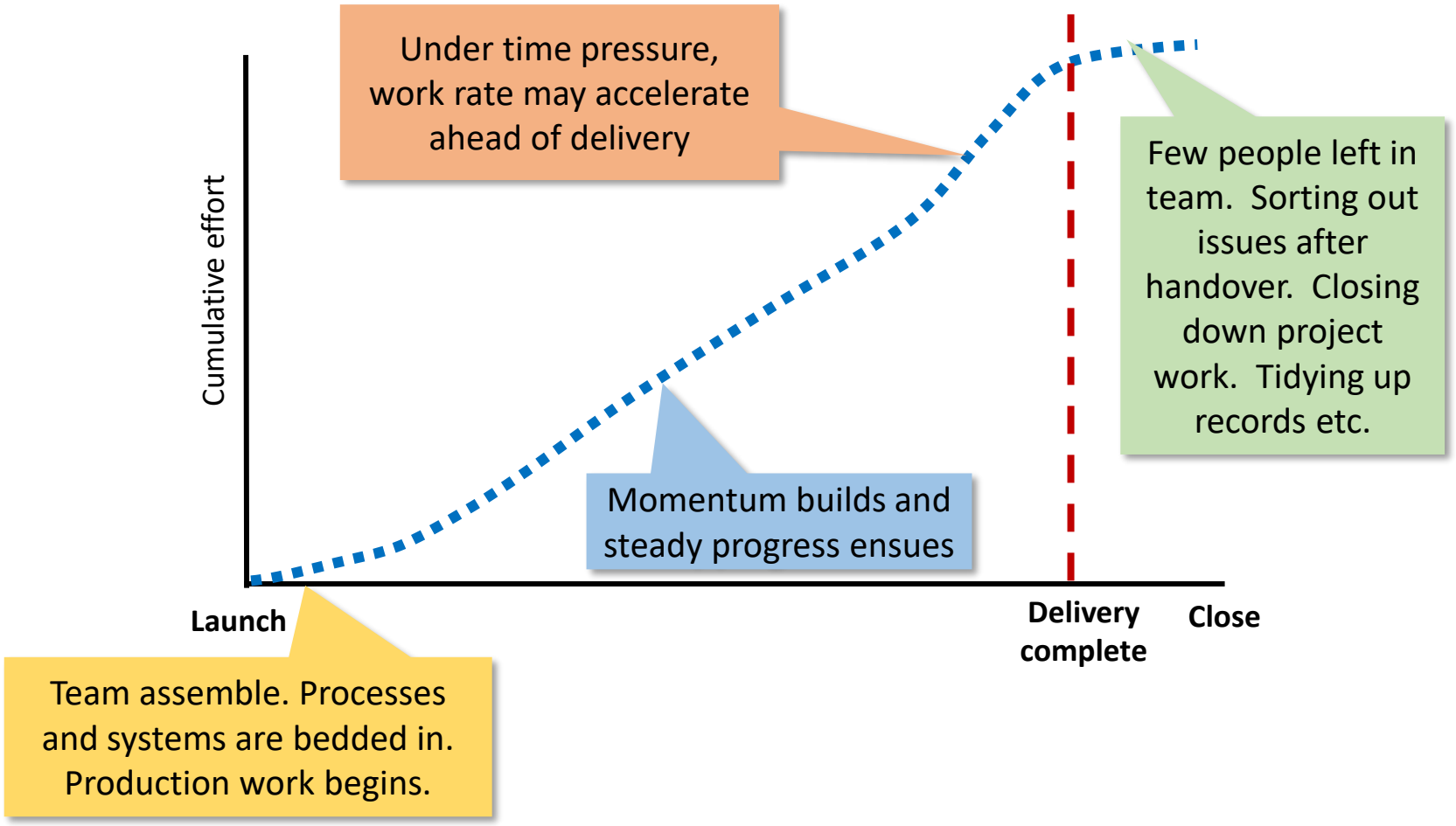
Work effort during production



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Getting ready for launch

Office and site arrangements – where people will work is ready for occupation

Necessary equipment – available, checked, users trained, ready to go

Travel and accommodation – how people will get to their work site and where they will stay sorted out

IT systems – installed, licensed, de-bugged. Inter-operability checked. Back up in place

Security – physical and systems security set up

Work authorities – necessary visas , work permits, licences, etc. obtained

Telecoms – land-lines and mobile devices all functioning, data transfer capacity tested, social media and web-site functioning

Transport – vehicles delivered and ready to use, parking space

Contingency plans – actions should major risks occur defined

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Getting ready for managing

Project governance – project board appointed, right authority and expertise

Meeting schedules – early weeks of internal project meetings, project board dates

Stakeholder engagement – plan to deal with stakeholders, especially over contro-versial aspects of project

Working processes – procedures and systems in place to run reporting, risk management, issue management, change control, quality manage-ment, configuration management, etc

Working capital – timing and flow of cash into the project confirmed

Booking systems – collection of time and cost data against WBS codes ready to operate

Information management – measures to handle, disseminate and store records in place

Support functions – project office and other departments engaged with project

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Project launch

Give the project a **name**

Hold the **inaugural project board** meeting

Have a **project kick-off meeting**

Communicate the existence of the project and its scope throughout the organisation

Announce who is the **project manager** and confirm their authority to manage the project

Declare key **project milestones** and financial targets

Publish the organisation chart showing reporting lines

Run **project launch events** – forming and storming

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Establishing the project team

Forming

Assemble team and sub-teams

Initial briefings from project sponsor and project manager

Storming

Q&A sessions to deal with concerns

Team building events

Norming

Specific training: technical, procedures, health and safety, cultural aspects

Establish team routines

Fine tune working arrangements

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Induction

ORGANISATION

Welcome by an executive

Benefits and opportunities

Organisation expectations and rules

PROJECT

Welcome by the project leader

Project goals

Performance expectations

Routine processes (travel, expenses, etc.)

TEAM

Welcome by the team leader

Team operating principles

Personal kit, ID, security passes, etc

Introductions to colleagues

PERSONAL

Workspace and facilities

Appointment of buddy

Probationary arrangements

Training plan

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Project working conditions

The project working environment must be designed and managed to preserve

- **Health** – avoidance of short- and long-term disease
- **Safety** – avoidance of accidents and physical harm

Health and safety failings will cause:

- **Delay** – to understand what happened and eliminate the cause
- **Labour unrest** – protesting against harmful working conditions
- **Personal tragedy** – where anyone dies or is permanently injured
- **Corporate harm** – from prosecution or expensive litigation

A benign working environment should be seen as an investment

- **Follow relevant legislation**
- Work to the highest reasonable standards, not just local ones
- **Train and encourage people to work safely**
- Incentivise health and safety-conscious behaviour

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