

WBS based Work Processes: The Missing Component in Stage Gate Processes

As stage gate management systems become more widely developed and implemented, it may be time to consider whether these systems will provide significant improvements in project results. The stage gate process is generally described as a project management technique in which a project is divided into distinct stages, or gates, separated by decision points known as gates. Each gate has objectives, or requirements which must be met to pass the gate. These requirements are broadly defined, which subjects them to wide interpretation. Stage gate checklists provide more detailed requirements, but they still do not provide the granularity needed to properly manage and execute complex projects. What is the missing? Well defined work processes based on WBS accounts that interconnect disciplines and stakeholders and provides qualitatively defined acceptance criteria for technical and managerial deliverables. These processes can be logically connected to create a roadmap to follow between stage gates. This roadmap becomes a methodology that proactively supports meeting project objectives. This paper will demonstrate how to develop and use WBS work processes and why they should be the foundational element of a stage gate process.