

TC 5 (team) -- Project progress report

Worth: 30 points
Assigned: 8 November 2010
Due: 22 November 2010

GizmoFlash Products
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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108

To: All Synthesizer Division engineers
From: Nikola Tesla, Vice President for Innovation
Subject: Synthesizer project progress reports
Date: 8 November 2010

Following the successful oral presentations by our engineering teams on November 4 and 5, we have decided to have each team go forward with its prototype synthesizer-based toy. To help us monitor project status, each team will be submitting a progress report on November 22, 2010. This report will include all activities from project initiation to that date. Please submit your report in memo format. You are expected to include a Gantt chart as a visual in your report.

The progress report (also known as the "status report" or "interim report") is an interim summary and evaluation of the project, aimed at management (in this case, the senior management of GizmoFlash Products). In essence, you are trying to make the case that your project is on track and that the resources allotted to it are being well spent. You do this by

- Providing details of the work done so far, including preliminary results if possible;
- Showing that the project is on schedule (or if not, that it will be on schedule);
- Documenting future steps that will be taken (including changes to the project scope if any are necessary).

Therefore, it will include the following content elements:

- A description of the goals or aims of the project.
- A description of the process that you have followed so far to achieve those goals, including tasks completed to date.
- A description of current work.
- Remaining tasks: how you plan to finish the project, including an updated work breakdown, schedule, Gantt chart, etc. These may be revised per the assessment discussion explained below.
- Preliminary results, findings, designs, or devices you've created, and current or ongoing tasks.
- An **assessment** of the extent to which your product meets and doesn't meet its goals. (At this point you may decide that your original plan isn't achievable and you have to change the scope of the project. Discuss this and any implications it may have for the project).

All of these areas are important, and all of them need to have some attention paid to them. Note that they are **content areas**, not sections. How you structure the actual document is to some extent up to you, but basic structures are in your technical communications textbook and set out

below. A good approach is to focus on tasks, which you have already considered in your progress report. If you see a project as a set of tasks, then for each task you can talk about

- The task itself and how it fits in the larger project.
- What has been accomplished and what hasn't.
- How long it took to accomplish it (if finished).
- Strategy for completing the task (if still ongoing).
- The difficulties, if any, that were encountered and how they were resolved.

If "how they were resolved" involves doing something different than you originally proposed, then you have made a **change in scope**. One of the most important functions of a progress report is to document changes in scope.

Suggested structure

- Memo header
- Descriptive abstract
- Introduction
 - General description of project (aims, scope and duration)
 - List and description of tasks
- Main body
 - Tasks completed
 - Tasks remaining (including those you are currently working on)
 - Preliminary findings and conclusions (if any) and assessment of product (if appropriate)
- Conclusion
 - Assessment of progress
 - Changes in scope (if any)
 - Forecast about completion
 - Contact information
- Attachments

Important note: This is a **team** assignment. Thus you must work together, dividing up the work fairly, and each person on your team will receive the same grade on this report. Each person should sign the College of Engineering's Honor Pledge on the last page of the assignment. This step is essential because unsigned work cannot receive a grade. The Honor Pledge is: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment, nor have I concealed any violations of the Honor Code." For the purposes of a team report, substitute "we" for "I." Note that if anyone does not do his or her share of the work, it's a violation of the Honor Code to receive credit for the assignment--and it's a violation to allow that person to receive credit. If everyone puts in an honest effort, everyone wins.

Feel free to contact Dr. Hildinger with questions.

How to submit your work

One member from your team should submit the PDF file for this assignment on CTools by 11:45 pm of the due date.

Grading scheme

Format: 20%

Good header, good descriptive abstract, contact information at end; useful Gantt chart; any necessary attachments given.

4 8 12 16 20

Introduction: 30%

General description of project; list and description of tasks.

10 15 20 25 30

Content of main body: 30%

Tasks listed in rational order; clear statement of which tasks were completed and when; clear statement of what the team is working on, which tasks remain to be done and when they will be completed; any preliminary findings and conclusions given.

10 15 20 25 30

Conclusion: 20%

Clear assessment of progress; explanation of and justification for any changes in scope; clear forecast about completion.

4 8 12 16 20

Total out of 100%: _____