

TOP 5 considerations to successfully kick-start your project in 2018

With 2018 at our doorsteps, (hopefully) a healthy budget and lots of interesting ideas, now is a good time to consider what really may become a gamechanger for your project(s) this year. The points I will make below have a mining industry background, however, they can well be part of any project management plan in any industry sector.

1. **Project team kick-off meeting:** before the field season begins, it is usually a good idea to gather the project team and discuss the year ahead. The manager with an oversight role briefs the team about KPIs and the 'bigger picture' what the company intends to achieve and how this can be done. It is also decided which staff work on which aspects of upcoming projects. A review of results and learnings from the previous year may formulate this year's strategy. At the end of the process a timeline in the form of a Gantt chart (subject to changes) and a budget plan will be produced.
2. **Training & CPD:** before the team heads out into the field or gets busy with technical tasks, it is important to review any skill gaps present and schedule relevant training. This particularly applies to new employees or graduates, but also more senior staff who may have not done a specific task for a long time. Examples are: HSEC, First Aid, specialist interpretation techniques or software training.
3. **HSEC and Logistics sorted:** Health & Safety can be a showstopper, particularly when operating in difficult and remote environments. Therefore, ensure that all HSEC documents are completed and/ or reviewed before anyone mobilises to site. Equally, the logistical aspects of a project can rapidly develop into a nightmare, if not organised properly. Ensure that the required logistical support is available and thought through.
4. **All permits acquired & contracts signed in time:** Make sure all permits have been applied for and granted before field activities start. For example, you want to avoid to arrive in the field all ready for a drill campaign and then realise that the water extraction permit and/ or the drilling contract are not in place. Of course, the same applies to

stakeholder and community engagements and your 'social license' should not only be present, but also sustainable.

5. **Quarterly review meetings:** It is of great importance to get the team together at least once every quarter to review progress against key milestones and KPIs set out during the initial kick-off meeting earlier in the year. This will allow to modify your strategy and adapt the work plan to any deviations resulting from the work in the previous quarter. It is also a good idea to include subject matter experts or consultants in these meetings, who are not involved in the project on a day by day basis, as they may have valuable input from a neutral perspective.

Good luck and all the best for 2018!

Benedikt Steiner, 05/01/2018