

**Project Management Café Overview**

The Project Management Café is a short blended learning experience oriented around the concepts and skills found in the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic. The Project Management topic will help managers:

* *Define project objectives and scope*
* *Develop a realistic project schedule and budget*
* *Build an effective project team*
* *Assess and manage project risks*
* *Keep projects on track*
* *Communicate project progress and problems to stakeholders*
* *Evaluate project results and lessons learned*

The learning experience has three components:

*60 to 90 minutes 60 minutes Ongoing*

Part 1: Pre-work (self-paced, individual)

Before the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Review the following online lessons from the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic:
  + Understand Project Management
  + Establish Project Scope
  + Develop a Schedule and Budget
  + Assemble Your Project Team
  + Manage Project Risks
  + Monitor Project Progress and Problems
  + Communicate with Stakeholders
  + Close Out a Project
* Complete the online assessment from the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic
* Complete the tool “Worksheet for Clarifying Project Scope” in the “Establish Project Scope” lesson of the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic
* Complete the practice activity “Attend to Stakeholders” in the “Communicate with Stakeholders” lesson of the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic

Part 2: Café session (live, group)

The Café session represents the core element of the learning experience. The session provides an opportunity for managers to:

* Exchange ideas and questions with others
* Discuss the context of how concepts and skills apply in the workplace
* Practice and begin application of those concepts and skills
* Build momentum and support for applying the concepts and skills in the workplace

The Café session focuses specifically on the following concepts and tasks from the Project Management topic:

* Define and manage scope
* Effectively manage essential relationships
* Monitor and manage milestones

Facilitating the Café session as outlined should take approximately 60 minutes. If the facilitator prefers a shorter session or wishes to spend more time on a specific concept or activity, he or she may want to cover only those concepts and activities that are most relevant to the group.

| SECTION | ACTIVITY | TIME |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction** | * Show icebreaker quote and question while participants are arriving to the session (WHY HAS PROJECT MANAGEMENT BECOME THE ESSENTIAL SKILL SET FOR MODERN LEADERS?) * Introduce facilitators. * Review tips for using technology during the session. * Debrief icebreaker question. * Set context: Projects fail at an alarming rate: Research in some industries suggests that fewer than 20% of projects meet basic deliverables for time and budget. So if it’s so important, why haven’t we learned to do it better? We are going to explore tools and strategies for improving our success rate today. * Review session objectives. | 10 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Define and manage scope** | * Facilitate debrief activity: Define project scope. Participants: * Before the session, complete the “Worksheet for Clarifying Project Scope” * Review five key tasks involved in defining a project’s scope * Identify which are the most “predictable” and which are the most challenging to assess * Discuss ways to guard against “scope creep” * Facilitate practice activity: Leverage a project charter. Participants: * Identify key questions that a project charter should address | 15 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Manage essential relationships** | * Facilitate debrief activity: Identify stakeholders. Participants: * Before the session, complete the “Attend to Stakeholders” practice activity * Identify stakeholders for projects in their group * Review a list of actions that are critical to effective stakeholder relationships * Discuss strategies to improve stakeholder relations | 15 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Monitor and manage milestones** | * Facilitate practice activity: Choose the right planning tool. Participants: * Discuss the planning tools most commonly used for their projects * Identify one criterion they consider the most critical in choosing tools to measure and monitor progress on their projects * Facilitate practice activity. Monitor warning signs and keep on track. Participants: * Review a list of common indicators of trouble in keeping a project on track and suggest others to add to the list * Identify the indicator that they see most often and discuss ways to address it * Facilitate practice activity. Complete a “What would you do?” scenario presenting multiple challenges that could potentially derail a project. Participants: * Recommend steps that could be taken to assess the situation and respond effectively in order to get a project back on track * Share personal insights or perspectives based on their experiences or perceptions | 15 minutes |
| **Applying what you’ve learned** | * Review session objectives and skill areas discussed. * Review directions for completing the On-the-Job section of the online Harvard ManageMentor topic, including the action plan. * Close the session. | 5 minutes |

Part 3: Application (self-paced, individual)

After the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Complete the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management. The section provides learners with an opportunity to choose a skill to focus on and create an action plan for applying and developing the skill. Note: If your organization does not include the On-the-Job section in your configuration of Harvard ManageMentor, ask participants to think of two things they can do over the next 90 days to further apply and develop their skills in this area.
* Execute their action plan over a specified time frame (e.g., 60 or 90 days).
* After the specified time frame (e.g., 60 or 90 days), access the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Project Management topic to update the action plan and reflect on the experience.