

Definition of Planning

Planning is defined as the intelligent estimate of resources required to perform a predefined project/endeavor successfully at a future date within a defined environment.

The key terms are

1. **Estimate** – Estimation indicates anticipation using the best guess of the planner. It is likely to vary from the actual values. Estimation indicates that Planning precedes performance. Estimation is carried out based on organizational norms (also known as organization baselines) or the best educated guess when such norms are not available. Estimation is basically a prediction of the future.
2. **Resources** – cover the 5 M's, “Men (people, term “men” is only used for the sake of rhyme), Materials, Methods, Money and Machines (equipment)”. Resources are always applied over a period of time (duration). Some resources deplete on utilization like money and materials. Other resources are recurring like people, equipment and methods.
3. **At a future date** – the dates for executing the project are in the future and are typically decided during the course of planning
4. **In a defined environment** – the environment where the work is going to be performed. The environment is either known or is defined during the planning exercise. Any variation in the environment would have an effect on the plan. The Environment refers to a wide variety of conditions including work logistics, workstation design, technical environment, tools, techniques, processes, methods of management, prevailing morale at the workplace and corporate culture to name a few.
5. **Project/endeavor** –a specific scope of work defined as a project or any human endeavor including running operations for a specific period.

This definition gives us a framework to understand and assimilate the process of planning.

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