

**PMEducation**

**ISSUE LOG**

**What is the Issue log and what is its purpose?**

Project communication is one of the key factors of project management success. Openness and sharing of problems and issues is one of the key principles of Professional Project Management.

“Issues” have been variously defined as:

* A point or matter in question or in dispute, or not settled, over which there are opposing views or disagreements.
* A pending matter or problem which must be resolved during the project execution phase.

The first definition is specific to disagreements between people, whereas the second definition is broader and refers to all problems. Adopt **one** of these definitions and stick with it!

In any case, the Issue Log is a living document which presents issues, and the actions which must be taken to resolve the issues, which have arisen beyond the extent of the planned work. These issues must be documented, and a priority of their resolution must be set, along with the responsible person, and a deadline. Monitoring the progress, of resolving the issues, is described by different statuses, reflecting the current state of the issue.

**When is the document prepared?**

The Issue Log document should be presented to the project team during the kick-off meeting. This document is used by individual members of the team to record issues they have encountered.

**Who participates in the Issue Log process?**

**All members of the project team** write in the Issue Log. The Project Manager looks after the Issue Log and assigns the tasks of resolving the issues to specific Team Members. The Project Manager also makes sure that the issues are resolved in time to meet the satisfaction of the Team Members and the Project Goal, and that the Project Sponsor is kept informed. It is advisable to share the Issue Log with the entire team so that all members of the team can see the current status of the issues, as the issues often affect their assigned Activities.

**When is the document used?**

The document is used in the **planning and execution phases of the project**. It is used every time there is a new issue or change in status of an existing issue.

It is also used as a supporting document for ongoing and final evaluation. The document provides an overview of issues that have arisen during the implementation of the project and how they have been resolved. It is also a good source for learning how to deal with issues when implementing similar projects in the future (lessons learned).

**Process of preparing the document**

1. Fill in the project header.
2. Allocate to each issue a unique ID, name, and description.
3. Define the impact of the issue if not resolved, and determine the issue priority. When determining the priority consider, in particular, impacts on the time schedule, budget, and quality.
4. Allocate a person responsible to resolve the issue, and in cooperation with this person define the action necessary and review/ revise the deadline. The person responsible and the deadline are essential for successful resolution of the problem.
5. Update the issue status and add new issues, whenever there is a change. Keep the Issue Log current.
6. Do not delete issues, instead use status as ‘Complete’ or ‘Cancelled’. This will help to keep a continuity and a progress overview for the future.

**Note** It is advisable to use the Issue Log in such a way that it is accessible to the whole project team. Therefore, a shared folder or online tool like Google Docs are recommended