
**Work breakdown structures for
project and programme management**

Organigramme des tâches en management de projet et de programme



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 258, *Project, programme and portfolio management*.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on work breakdown structure for those individuals working in project and programme management, and who are involved in developing and using a work breakdown structure. This document incorporates practices to provide benefits for project or programme planning and control, and provides guidance on work breakdown structure concepts, composition and relationships with other structures.

It complements ISO 21500 and ISO 21504.

The target audience of this document includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) managers and those individuals involved in sponsoring projects or programmes;
- b) individuals managing projects or programmes and work breakdown structure practises;
- c) individuals involved in the management of or performance of project management offices of project or programme control staff;
- d) developers of national or organizational standards.

The application of this document may be tailored to meet the needs of any organization or individual, so they may better apply the concepts, requirements and practice of developing and using work breakdown structures.

Work breakdown structures for project and programme management

1 Scope

This document provides guidance for work breakdown structures for organizations undertaking project or programme management. It is applicable to any type of organization including public or private and any size of organization or sector, as well as any type of project and programme in terms of complexity, size or duration.

This document provides relevant terms and definitions, concepts, characteristics, benefits, uses, integration and relationships related to work breakdown structures. It does not provide guidance on the use of processes, methods or tools in the practice of developing and using a work breakdown structure.

[Annexes A](#) and [B](#) provide examples of work breakdown structures and relationships to other breakdown structures.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>
- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

3.1

100 % rule

concept concerning the entire work required to be accomplished to achieve the project or programme scope captured in the *work breakdown structure* ([3.13](#))

Note 1 to entry: The 100 % rule applies to the parent and child elements. The child level of decomposition of a work breakdown structure element represents 100 % of the work applicable to the parent level.

3.2

functional breakdown structure

decomposition of the functions necessary to perform the work elements of a project or programme

3.3

hierarchical decomposition

process of dividing project or programme scope into successively smaller *work breakdown structure elements* ([3.15](#))

3.4

management information system

hardware and software used to support the compilation of information, analysis and reporting of project and programme metrics