

## Task Assignment Tips

- ❑ Establish Task Assignments
  - Planning Team leader
  - Tasks that leverage team member strengths; shared work load
  - Timelines, deadlines, expectations
  - Identify training needs
  - Update existing EOP's

One of the roles of the Planning Team leader is to **facilitate the creation of tasks**, delegate those tasks as needed (he or she may do some of them), and provide supervision to ensure that the tasks are completed according to the timeline and level of detail required. Tasks should be delegated, when possible, to Planning Team members based on their interests and expertise (as well as their overall ability to commit to the completion of the task). All Planning Team members should complete the Skills Inventory for EM Planning (**see handout 15b**) so that the leader and all members are aware of the collective skill set of the Planning Team. With this knowledge, challenges can be approached by members whose skills complement each other, while at the same time the Planning Team can identify skills that are lacking within the Team and recruit additional members.

**Project Management** is a body of knowledge that many people spend their entire careers mastering. We are not here to become expert project managers, but instead to acknowledge some of the basic steps towards ensuring that project work unfolds smoothly and that desired results are achieved on time. The following steps will help you to plan and launch projects (and their multiple interwoven tasks) and manage them to successful completion:

1. Define what the finished result of the project should look like; quantify it, characterize it, compare it to similar projects, etc. Everyone involved should know exactly what they are striving for.
2. Acknowledge and define the deadline for completion (not of a draft, or close-to-finished product—you want the date of the final deliverable).
3. Discuss the milestones that need to be achieved in order to produce the final deliverable (identify the tasks that need to be completed for each milestone), and then place the milestones in order.
4. Using the deadline date, work backwards on a calendar and include enough time for completing each milestone, thus determining the entire project schedule and timeline.
5. You may want to pay special attention to the dependencies among milestones and/or tasks, and which ones can be done in parallel by different Planning Team member, and which ones need to wait for other milestones/tasks to be completed.
6. When determining the time to complete each milestone take into consideration who is working on the tasks and what resources are needed, and be sure to include some cushion time.
7. The Planning Team leader should then approve the final timeline, tasks, milestones, and delegated team members and resources; he/she should retain a copy of the work plan.
8. The Planning Team leader should send an email or call the team member in charge of milestones prior to each milestone's due date in order to learn a status update.
9. Changes to the project plan and/or timeline should be communicated immediately to all stakeholders involved.
10. Don't forget to praise good work!!!

**Regarding the identification of training needs**, the Planning Team must be a driving force to encourage ongoing training, while at the same time asking participating organizations and professionals what types of training do they need in order to fulfill the role(s) they are expected to play in different emergency situations. It's a fine balance, and no single entity should be left as the entity that is solely responsible for identifying training needs. With respect to plans, always ask:

1. What is being done during the response?
2. Who is doing the What?
3. Does the Who need training to do the What?
4. When is the last time the Who practiced the What?
5. How can we created training for the Who to do the What?