

**Issue Management—Activity Definition****Purpose:**

The objective of this activity is to ensure that:

- Issues are identified, evaluated and assigned for resolution.
- Issue resolutions that are sure to impact the scope, schedule, or quality of the project will go through the change management process.
- Issue resolutions or decisions are documented and communicated to all affected parties.
- Issues that are likely to become risks are reflected in the risk matrix.

The Issue Management process will bring visibility to issues, accountability as to how they are acted upon, and their timely resolution.

**Participants:**

Project Manager, project team, relevant stakeholders

**Inputs:**

Project Overview Statement [1], Project Plan [3], Business Case [4]

**Process:**

1. Define the process for managing project issues.
1. Define who can raise an Issue, who is responsible for logging and tracking issues, who can assign issues for evaluation and planning resolution actions, and other roles and responsibilities in the Issue Management Process.
2. The Issue Management process should be communicated to all project team members and stakeholders.
3. Issue descriptions, resolutions and action plans should be documented well and tracked on an issues log.
4. Define who will maintain the issues log.
5. For each issue,
  - a. Determine the action plan.
  - b. Estimate the effort needed to resolve the issue
  - c. Determine who owns the issue.
  - d. Track the status
  - e. Verify that the issue is closed if the status shows it as closed

**Outputs:**

Issue Management Plan, Issues log

**Issue Management—Guidelines**

1. An issue is an immediate problem requiring resolution.
2. Anyone can raise issues. Issues can be raised in team meetings or during one-on-one conversations with the Project Manager.
3. Resolve issues as soon as possible. Try to solve the root cause; not the symptom. This will ensure that the problem will not resurface. The methods that can be used for solving an issue are:
  - a. Fishbone diagram: Describe the problem or symptoms. Identify potential causes and categorize them. Look at detailed explanations for each cause. Again look at reasons behind the explanation. This will help in arriving at the root cause of the problem. Create an action plan to resolve this.
  - b. Pareto diagram: This will help in categorizing problems according to the frequency with which they occur. You need to focus on the problems with high frequency at first.
4. It may be difficult in some cases to determine any good options for resolution. A less-than-perfect solution may be preferable to deadlock.
5. As a Project Manager, you need to encourage people to accept responsibility and make decisions when appropriate.
6. If there is an impact to effort, scope, cost or schedule, the Project Manager should be involved. If there is an impact to effort, scope, cost or schedule, a Change Request might need to be filed, and the issue becomes a change.
7. If there is an impact to risk, the risk matrix might need to be updated.
8. The formality of the issue management process varies with project size e.g. a Project Manager may resolve an issue concerning a small project but a governance committee might need to step in for larger projects.