

How to...

Kick off a project



Whether it's a new client or one you've worked with before, the way you begin a project sets the tone for the rest of the project. Here are our top tips for ensuring every project starts with a bang!

1 **Research your client before you meet them**

Make a good impression by researching the client, their company culture and history, their competitors and the industry before you meet with them.

2 **Arrange the kick off at the client's offices**

Kicking off the project at the client's offices allows you to get a feel for their culture and also offers the chance to meet everyone who'll be involved, even if they can't all attend the meeting.

3 **Confirm information before the meeting**

Send out a questionnaire in advance to gather basic information such as contact details. The meeting can then focus on discussions about project aims, learning objectives and timescales.

4 **Invite the right people**

As well as the project managers and senior stakeholders, invite the technical manager and any SMEs. Discussing their motivation and work schedules allows you to mitigate risks early on.

5 **Ask the SMEs to bring relevant materials**

Discussing content and agreeing learning objectives at the meeting gives you a good understanding of the subject matter and ensures that everyone is on the same wavelength.

6 **Explain the project lifecycle**

Take the time to explain exactly how you will run and manage the project, clearly highlighting your expectations of client stakeholders, risks and the impact of missed deadlines or scope changes.

7 **Set up weekly progress calls**

Agree a time for weekly conference calls about project progress. Even if the time sometimes has to change, a placeholder helps to maintain momentum and keeps the project on everyone's radar.

8 **Establish a project timeline**

Following the meeting set up a timeline of deliverables and face to face meetings, noting any periods of unavailability. Highlighting key dates lets people plan ahead and schedule review times.

9 **Create a project definition document**

After kick off, write a project definition setting out the approach, learning outcomes and content. Get client sign off to confirm that everyone agrees before beginning any instructional design.

10 **Don't assume anything!**

Even if you've worked together before, confirm everything as if it were the first project. Getting the small details right from the very start will minimise hiccups throughout the rest of the project.