5.Managing projects and tracking progress

Once you have your project clearly scoped out, it is time to start planning how to manage a project by planning appropriate schedules and managing a **project plan**. While the project plan is usually created in pre-production, it is used and iterated upon throughout the production phase to track the project's progress.
The project plan takes the elements identified in the design document and project charter and sets specific tasks and deliverable dates. The producer or project manager will often create this plan and update it as necessary when changes need to be made. They will also create a **project tracker**, which can be part of the plan itself or created separately, to measure progress against the defined tasks and required deliverables. If you don’t create and follow a project plan, the result is usually scope creep — the continuous adding of new ideas and features to your plan — which can lead to the project failing, being late, or going over budget.

Some guidelines to successfully track projects, for both individuals and teams, include:

- ◦ Identify the necessary project steps.
  ◦ If working in a team, identify and assign specific project roles and responsibilities.
  ◦ Create a timeline with specific deliverables and due dates.
  ◦ Identify common problems and issues in project management, such as scope creep and overly ambitious design plans, and tight time constraints.
  ◦ Determine when the completed project is due.
  ◦ Set due dates for each smaller piece of the project that will build to the overall project.
  ◦ Create reasonable time frames for each project phase.
  ◦ If working in a team, designate task owners for each task on the list.

Creating projects for clients

If you are creating a project for a client, there are some additional considerations that can help support effective project management:

- ◦ Identify clear project roles — this includes identifying the person who serves as the liaison between the client and the group, and key stakeholders for different elements of the project.
  ◦ Understand and clarify client expectations.
  ◦ Plan to support clear communication with the client — identify the ways you will communicate with your client and any online collaborative tools needed to review

the project with their client.

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