

Software Process and Management

Work Breakdown Structure

Outline

- In this lecture we focus on Section 5 of the SPMP
 - Developing a Work breakdown structure (WBS)
 - Dependencies between tasks
 - Scheduling
- Notations for visualizing dependencies
- Many heuristics and examples
 - How detailed should a WBS be?
 - How can you plan a long project when things are unknown or changing all the time?

What is the problem?

- Your boss: “How long will this take?”
- You: “Between 1 and 6 months.”
- People are not happy when you respond that way.
 - You figure out that finishing anytime before six months will meet your promise.
 - Your boss figures that with some hard work you can be done in a month!
- In reality, you don’t have the slightest clue how long it will take, because you don’t know the work to be done.
- Solution: Use divide and conquer
 - To give a good answer you have to break the work down into activities for which you can get good timing estimates
 - From these estimates you compute the estimated project duration

Activities to obtain good time estimates

- Identify the work that needs to be done
 - Work breakdown structure (WBS)
- Identify the dependency between work units
 - Dependency Graph
- Estimate the duration of the work to be done
 - Schedule

Software Project Management Plan (IEEE Std 1058)

 0. Front Matter

 1. Introduction

 2. Project Organization

 3. Managerial Process

 4. Technical Process

 5. Work Elements, Schedule, Budget

➡ 5.1 Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

➡ 5.2 Dependencies between tasks

❖ 5.3 Resource Requirements

❖ 5.4 Budget

➡ 5.5 Schedule

- Optional Inclusions

Let's Build a House

- What are the activities that are needed to build a house?

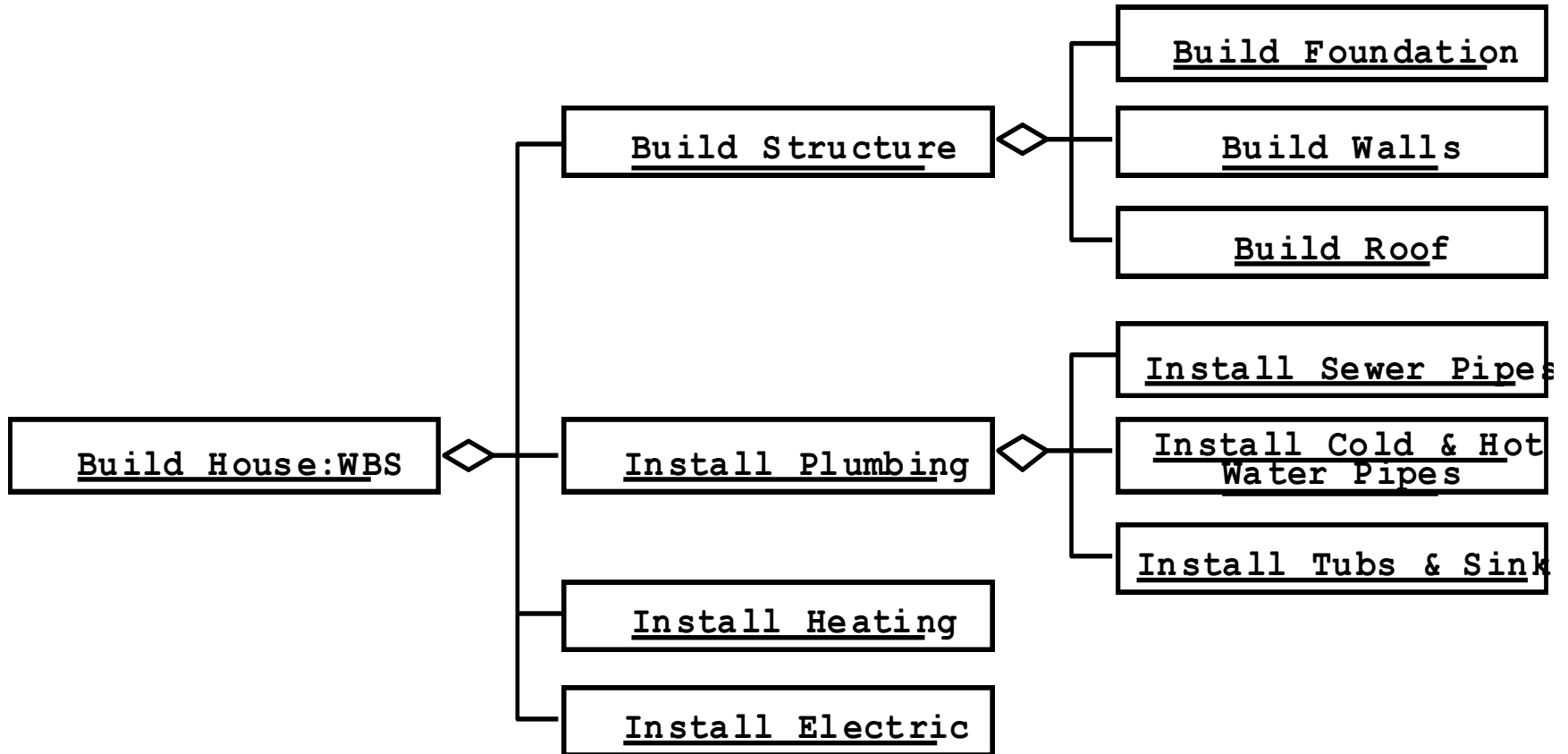
1) Identify the work to be done:

Work Breakdown Structure

- Surveying
- Excavation
- Request Permits
- Buy Material
- Lay foundation
- Build Outside Wall
- Install Exterior Plumbing
- Install Exterior Electrical
- Install Interior Plumbing
- Install Interior Electrical
- Install Wallboard
- Paint Interior
- Install Interior Doors
- Install Floor
- Install Roof
- Install Exterior Doors
- Paint Exterior
- Install Exterior Siding
- Buy Pizza

Finding these activities is a brainstorming activity.
It is required and similar activities are used during requirements engineering and analysis (use case modeling)

Partial Work Breakdown Structure



2) Hierarchically organize the activities

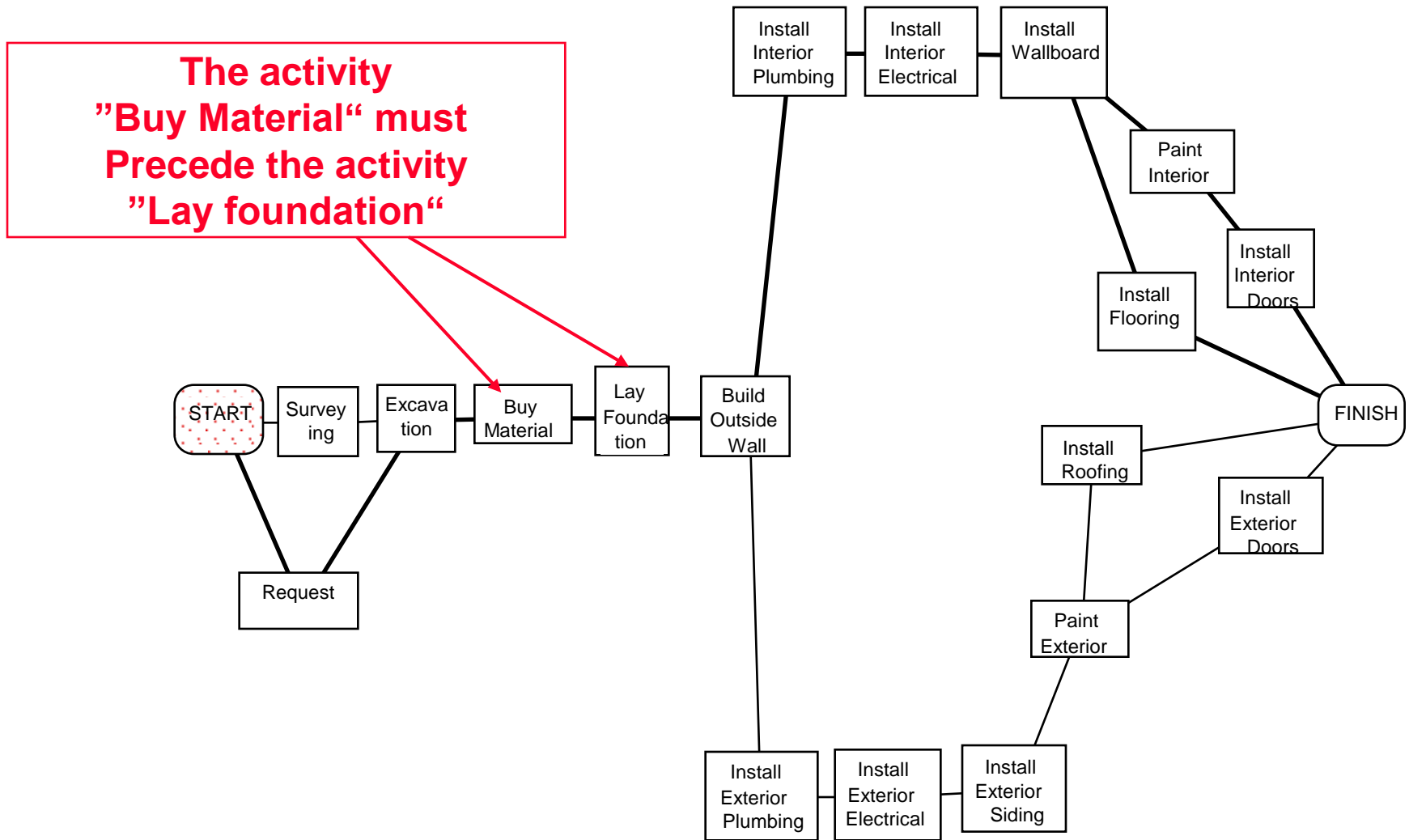
- Building the house consists of
 - Prepare the building site
 - Building the Exterior
 - Building the Interior
- Preparing the building site consists of
 - Surveying
 - Excavation
 - Buying of material
 - Laying of the foundation
 - Requesting permits

Finding this organization involves categorization and refinement. Good after brainstorming, not during brainstorming

3) Identify dependencies between tasks

- **The work breakdown structure does not show any dependence among the activities/tasks**
 - Can we excavate before getting the permit?
 - How much time does the whole project need if I know the individual times?
 - What can be done in parallel?
 - Are there any critical activities, that can slow down the project significantly?
- **Dependencies like these are shown in the dependency graph**
 - Nodes are activities
 - Lines represent temporal dependencies

Building a House (Dependency Graph)

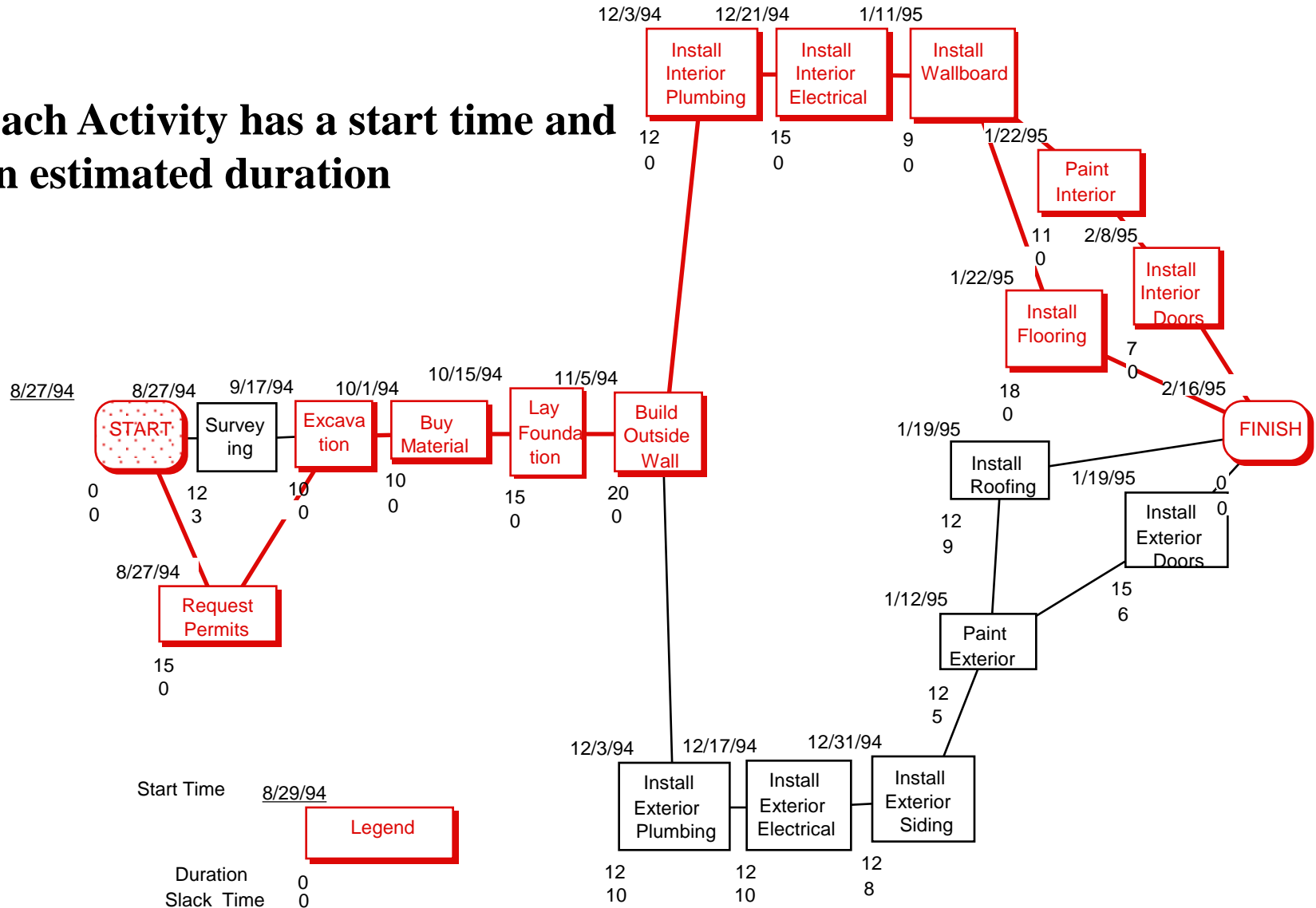


4) Map tasks onto time

- **Estimate starting times and durations for each of the activities in the dependency graph**
- **Compute the longest path through the graph: This is the estimated duration of your project**

Building a House (Schedule, PERT Chart)

Each Activity has a start time and an estimated duration



How do we get good estimate times?

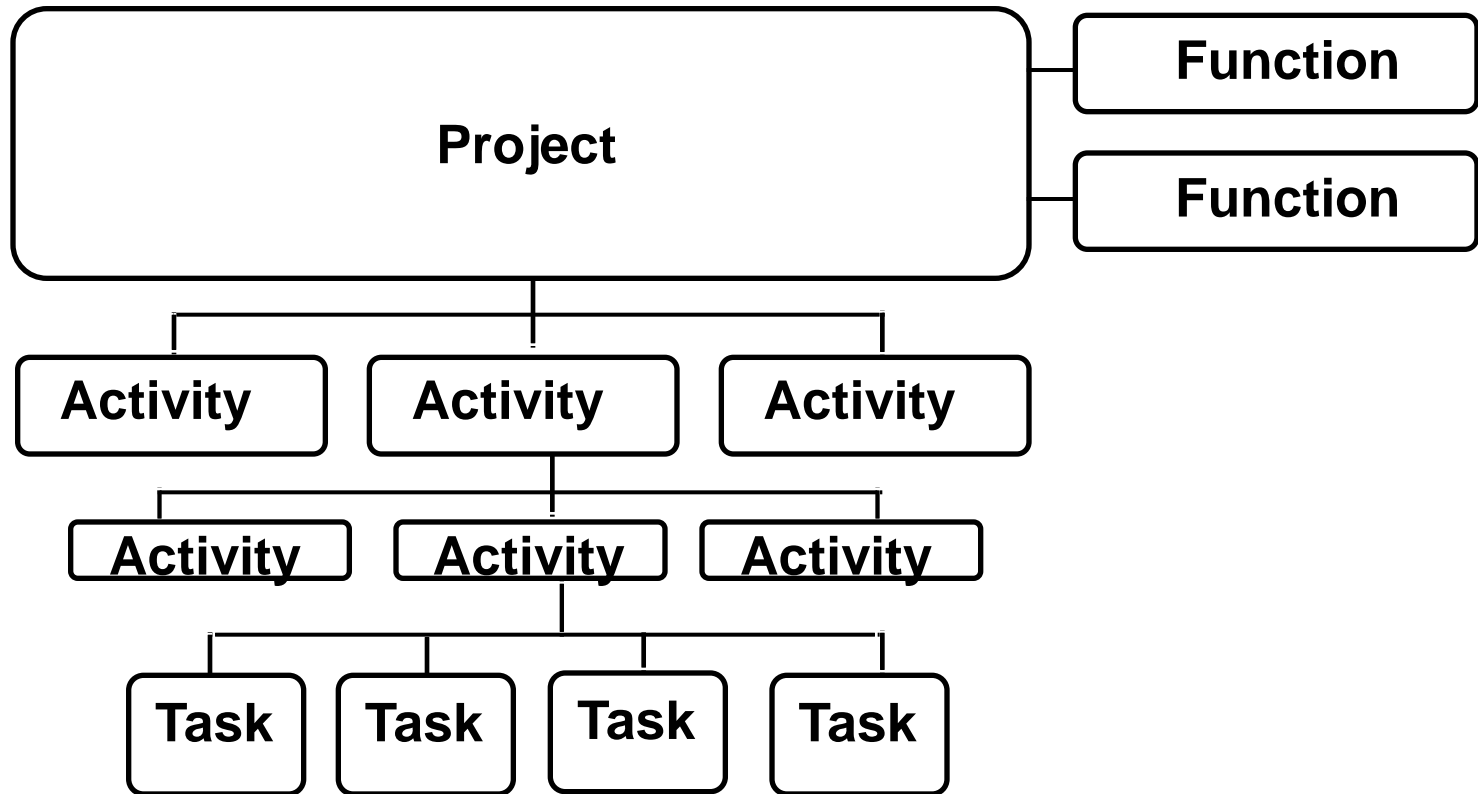
- **Estimation of starting times and durations is crucial for setting up a plan.**
- **We will discuss methods and heuristics on how to do it and how to establish a project schedule.**
 - However, first let us learn a few more technical terms

Recall SPMP Definitions

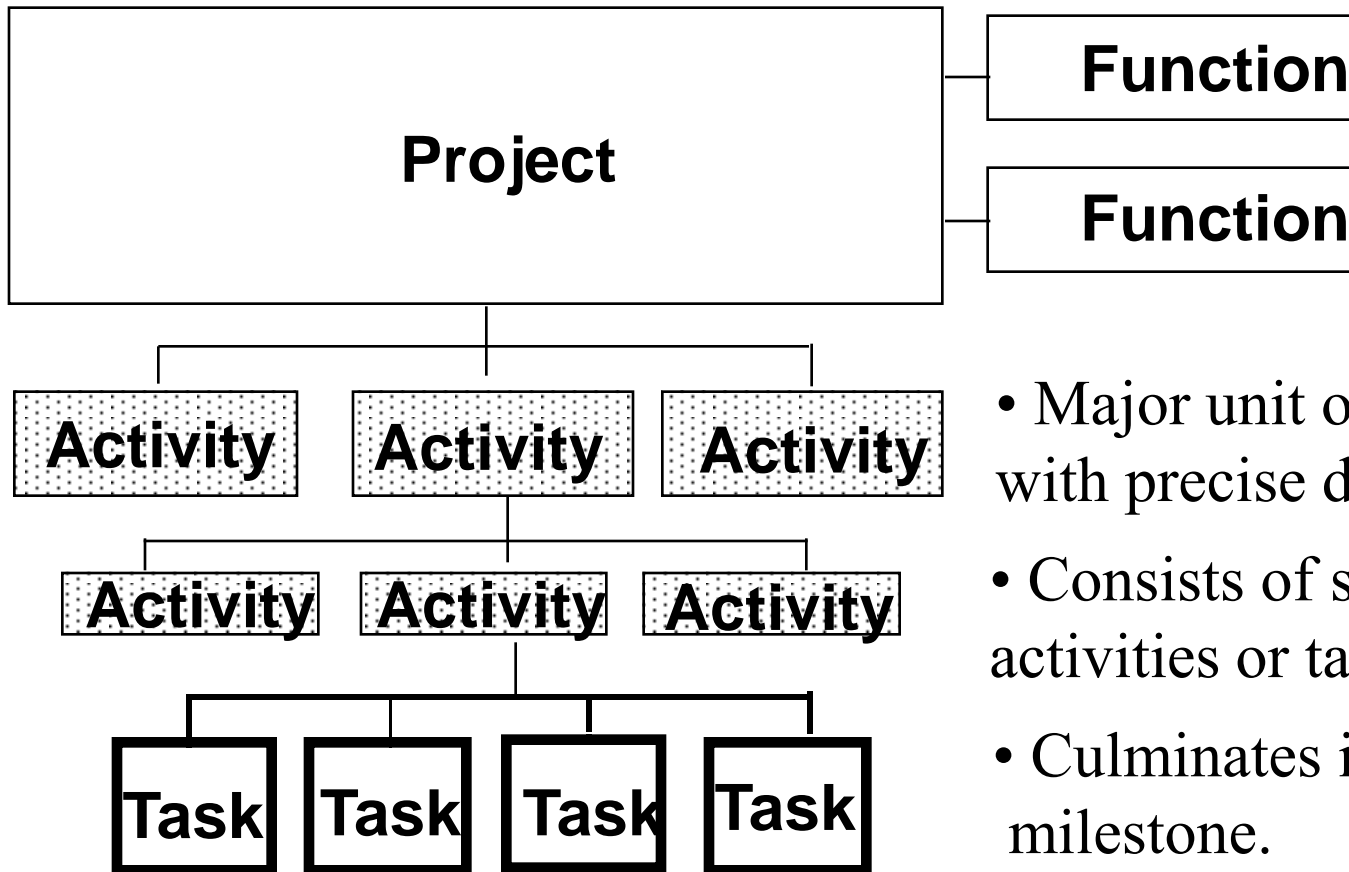
- Project:
 - A Project has a duration and consists of functions, activities and tasks
- Work Package:
 - A description of the work to be accomplished in an activity or task
- Work Product:
 - Any tangible item that results from a project function, activity or task.
- Project Baseline:
 - A work product that has been formally reviewed and agreed upon.
 - A project baselines can only be changed through a formal change procedure
- Project Deliverable:
 - A work product to be delivered to the customer

Definitions: Functions, Activities and Tasks

A Project has a duration and consists of functions, activities and tasks



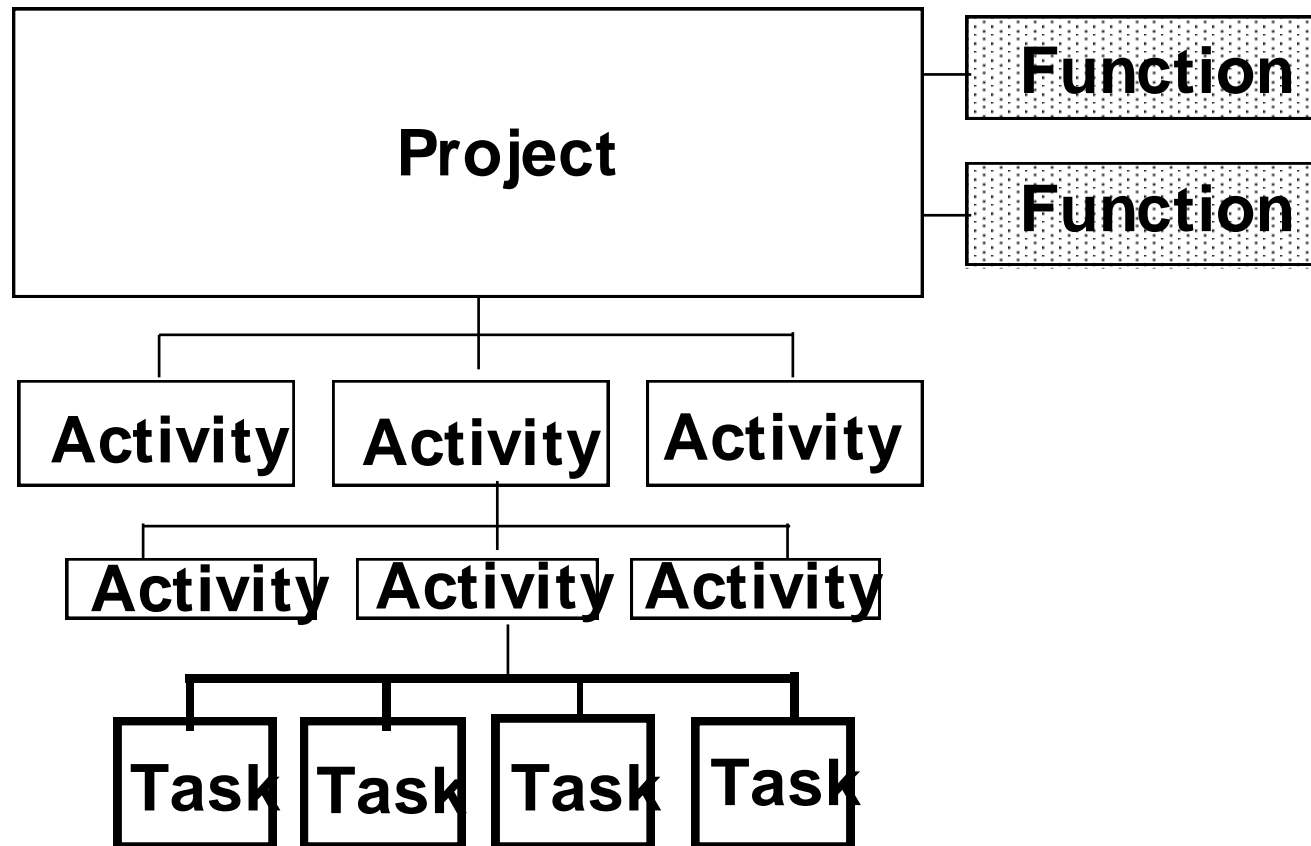
Activities



- Major unit of work with precise dates
- Consists of smaller activities or tasks
- Culminates in project milestone.

Project Functions

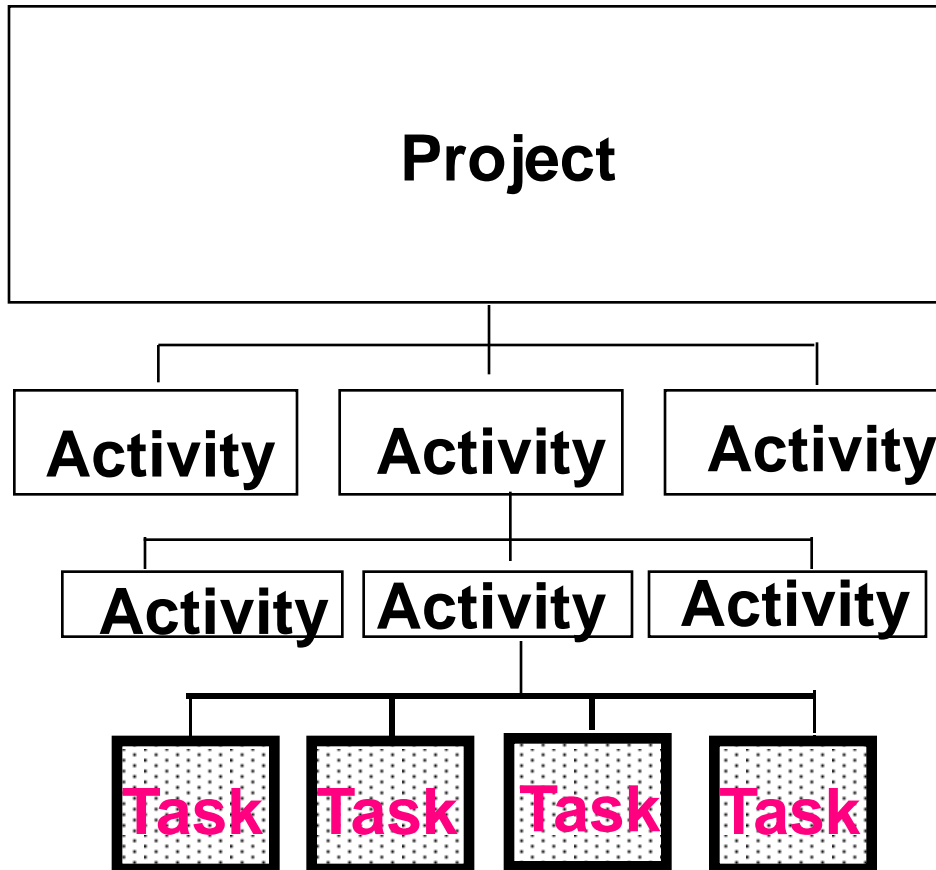
- **Definition (Project) Function:** An activity or set of activities that span the duration of the project



Project Functions

- Examples:
 - Project management
 - Configuration Management
 - Documentation
 - Quality Control (Verification and validation)
 - Training
- Question: Is system integration a project function?
 - It Depends...
- Mapping of terms: Project Functions in the IEEE 1058 standard are called **Integral processes** in the IEEE 1074 standard. Sometimes also called cross-development processes

Tasks



- Smallest unit of work subject to management
- Small enough for adequate planning and tracking
- Large enough to avoid micro management

Tasks

- Smallest unit of management accountability
 - Atomic unit of planning and tracking
 - Tasks have finite duration, need resources, produce tangible result (documents, code)
- The description of a task is done in a Work package
 - Name, description of work to be done
 - Preconditions for starting, duration, required resources
 - Other Work packages that need to be completed before this task can be started.
 - Work product to be produced, acceptance criteria for it
 - Risk involved
- Completion criteria
 - Includes the acceptance criteria for the work products (deliverables) produced by the task.

Determining Task Sizes

- Finding the appropriate task size is problematic
 - Todo lists and templates from previous projects
 - During initial planning a task is necessarily large
 - You may not know how to decompose the problem into tasks at first
 - Each software development activity identifies more tasks and modifies existing ones
- Tasks must be decomposed into sizes that allow monitoring
 - Depends on nature of work and how well task is understood.
 - Work package usually corresponds to well defined work assignment for one worker for a week or two.
 - Work assignments are also called action items

Action Item

- **Definition Action Item:** A *task* assigned to a *person* , a a to-do, to be done by a certain *time*
 - What?, Who?, When?
 - Heuristics for Duration: be done within one week or two weeks
- Action items should be tracked by the project manager
- They should appear on the meeting agenda in the Status Section
- Examples of Todos:
 - Unit test class Foo
 - Develop project plan.
- Example of an action item:
 - Bob posts the next agenda for the context team meeting before Sep 10, 12 noon.
 - The test team develops the test plan by Sep 18

Activities

- Major unit of work
- Culminates in major project milestone:
 - Internal checkpoint should not be externally visible
 - Scheduled event used to measure progress
- Milestone often produces project baselines:
 - formally reviewed work product
 - under change control (change requires formal procedures)
- Activities may be grouped into larger activities:
 - Establishes hierarchical structure for project (phase, step, ...)
 - Activities allow separation of concerns
 - Precedence relations often exist among activities

Developing Work Breakdown Structures

- There are several different approaches to develop and display a work breakdown structure. Each is effective under different circumstances
- Approaches to break activities into detail by
 - Product component approach
 - Examples: Design documents, manuals, the running system
 - Functional approach
 - Analysis, design, implementation, integration, testing, delivery, reviews
 - Geographical area
 - Examples: TUM team, CMU team, off-shore team, ...
 - Organizational approach
 - Research, product development, marketing, sales

When to use what approach

- Distributed teams:
 - Geographical area approach
- Experienced teams:
 - Product component approach
- Project has mostly beginners or project manager is inexperienced:
 - Functional approach
- Project is a continuation of previously successful projects, no change in requirements, no new technology
 - Organizational approach
- When you choose an approach, stick with it to prevent possible overlap in categories

Mixing different WBS Approaches is bad

- Consider the WBS for an activity “Prepare report”
- Functional approach:
 - Write draft report
 - Have draft report reviewed
 - Write final report
- Product component approach:
 - Chapter 1
 - Chapter 2
 - Chapter 3
- Don’t try to mix. Why is this bad?
 - Chapter 1
 - Chapter 2
 - Chapter 3
 - Have draft report reviewed
 - Write final report

How do you develop a good WBS?

- **Top down approach:**
 - Start at the highest, top level activities and systematically develop increasing levels of detail for all activities.
- **Brainstorming:**
 - Generate all activities you can think of that will have to be done and then group them into categories.
- Which one you use depends on
 - how familiar you and your team are with the project,
 - whether similar projects have successfully been performed in the past, and
 - how many new methods and technologies will be used.

The Top Down WBS approach

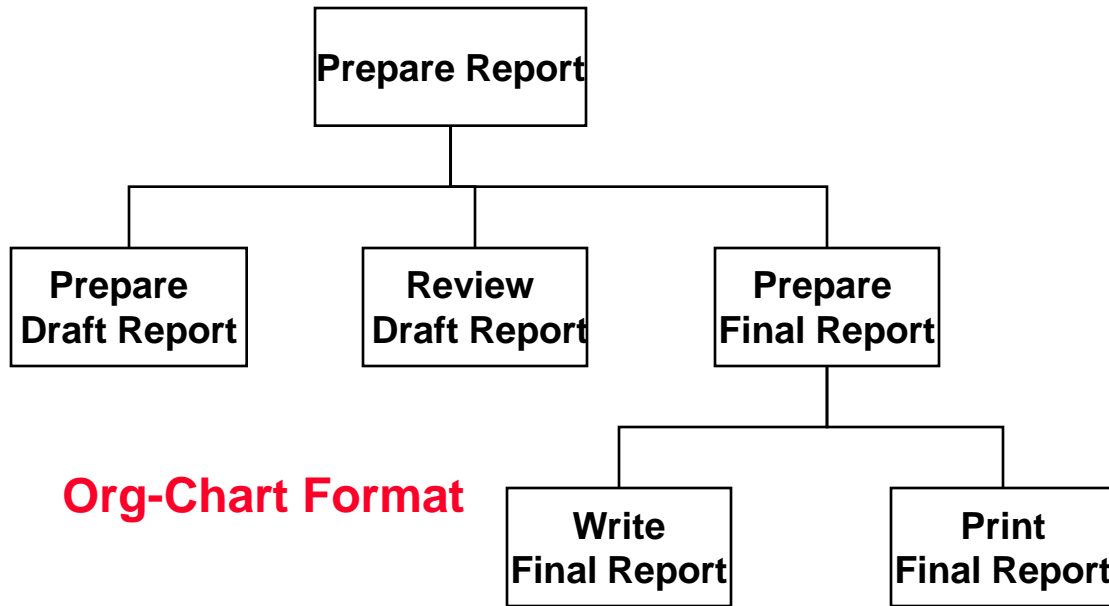
- Specify all activities required for the entire project to be finished
- Determine all task required to complete each activity
- If necessary specify subactivities required to complete each task
- Continue in this way until you have adequately detailed your project.
- **Approach is good if**
 - You are or your team is familiar with the problem.
 - You have successfully managed a similar project in the past
 - You are not introducing new methodologies, methods or tools

The Brainstorming WBS approach

- On a single list, write any activities you think will have to be performed for your project.
- Brainstorming means you
 - Don't worry about overlap or level of detail
 - Don't discuss activity wordings or other details
 - Don't make any judgements
 - Write everything down
- Then study the list and group activities into a few major categories with common characteristics.
- If appropriate group activities under a smaller number of tasks
- Consider each category you have created and use the ***top-down WBS approach*** to determine any additional activities you may have overlooked.

Displaying Work Breakdown Structures

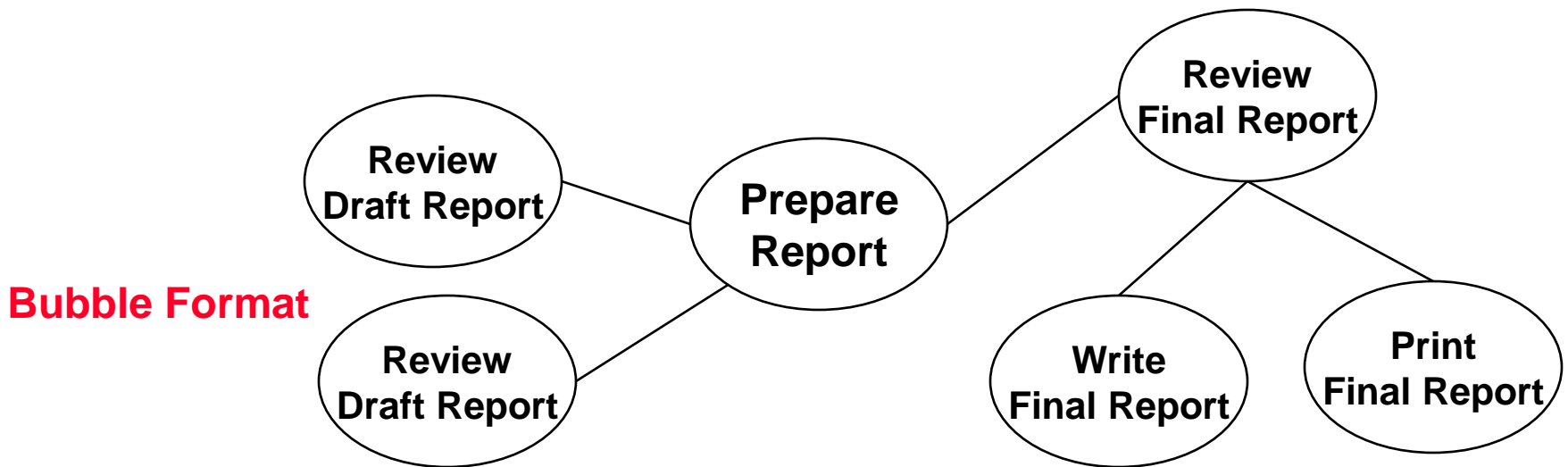
- Three different formats are usually used
- Organization-chart format:
 - Effectively portrays an overview of your project and the hierarchical relationships of different activities and tasks.
- Outline format
 - Subactivities and tasks are indented
- Bubble format
 - The bubble in the center represents your project
 - Lines from the center bubble lead to activities
 - Lines from activities lead to tasks



Prepare Report

- 1.0 Prepare draft report
- 2.0 Review draft report
- 3.0 Prepare final report
 - 3.1 Write final report
 - 3.2 Print final report

Outline Format



Best format for displaying WBS?

- **Org-chart format:**
 - Often good for a “bird view” of the project (executive summaries,...)
 - Less effective for displaying large numbers of activities
- **Outline format:**
 - Easier to read and understand if WBS contains many activities
- **Bubble format:**
 - Effective for supporting the brainstorming process
 - Not so good for displaying work breakdown structures to audiences who are not familiar with the project.
 - Use bubble format to develop the WBS, then turn it into Org-Chart or outline format.
- **In large projects:**
 - Use a combination of org-chart and outline formats:
 - Display activities in org-chart format,
 - Display subactivities and tasks in outline format.

Heuristics for developing high quality WBS

- Involve the people who will be doing the work in the development of the WBS
 - In particular involve the developers
- Review and include information from work breakdown structures that were developed for similar projects
 - Use a project template if possible
- Use more than one WBS approach
 - Do project component and functional approach simultaneously
 - This allows you often to identify overlooked activities
- Make assumptions regarding uncertain activities
 - Identify risky activities
 - These are often the activities that whose times are hard to estimate
- Keep your current work breakdown structure current
Update your WBS regularly

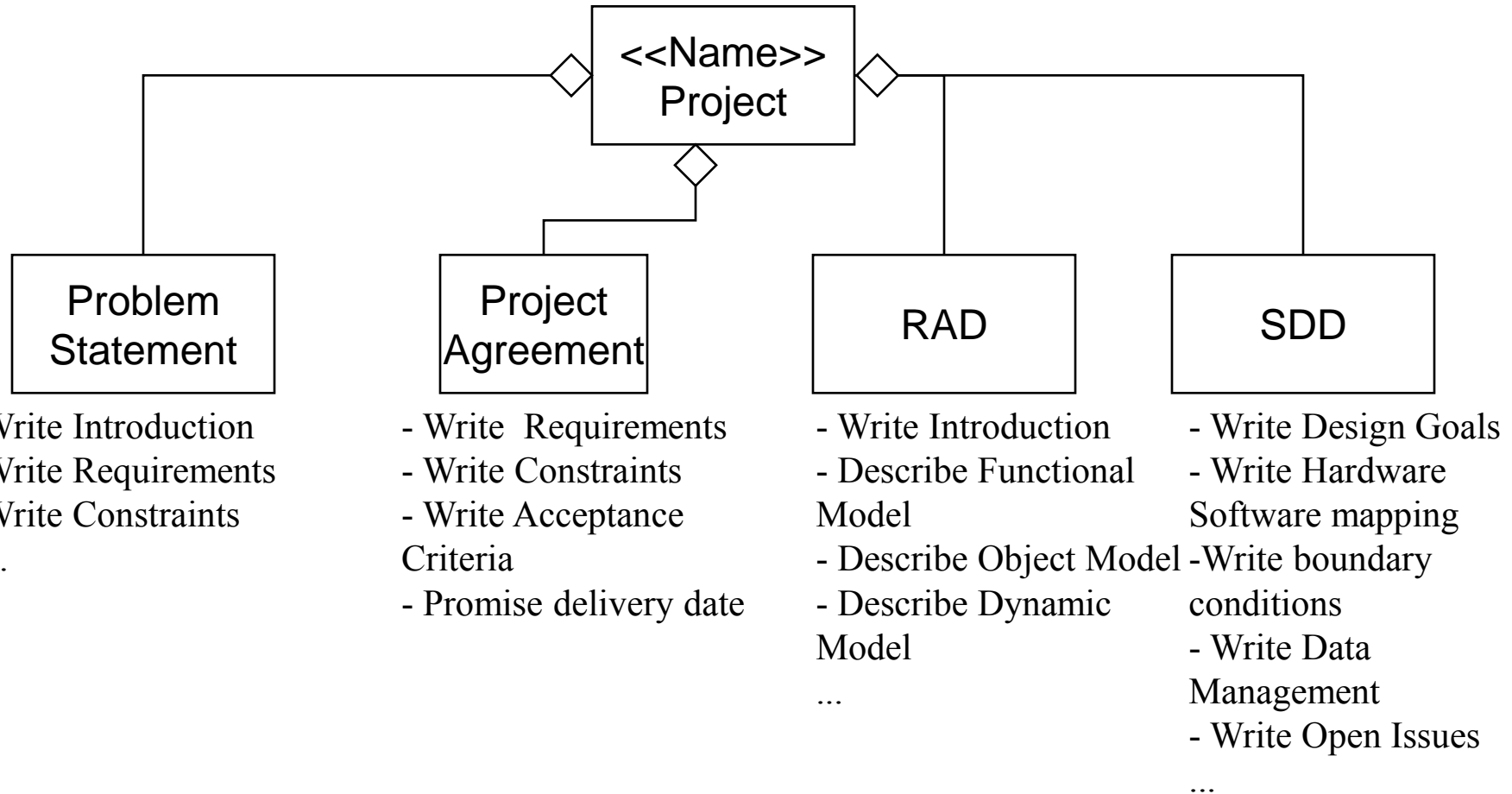
Heuristic: Use Templates

- Try to derive the SPMP from a template, either an existing one or one that you start developing with this project.
 - A template reflects the cumulative experience gained from doing numerous projects of a particular type.
 - Using templates can save you time and improve your accuracy
- When developing templates, develop them for frequently performed tasks (reviews, meetings, ...). “Checklists”
 - Develop and modify your WBS templates from previous projects that worked, not from plans that looked good.
 - Use templates as starting points, not as ending points
 - Continually update your templates to reflect the experience gained from performing different projects.

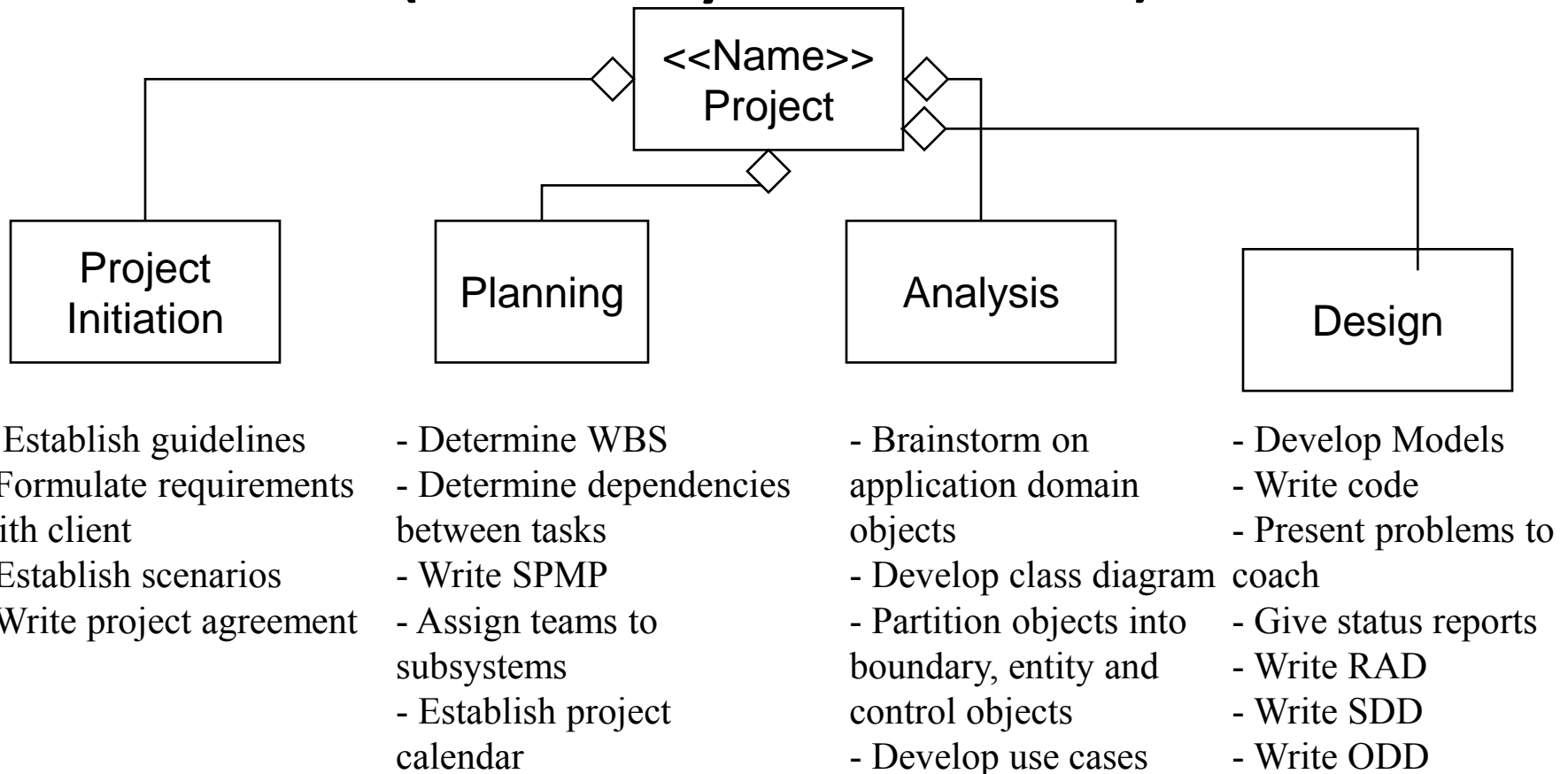
Heuristic: Develop always more than one WBS

- Consider to create more several different hierarchies with different categories for your work breakdown structure.
 - Having two or more different perspectives helps you identify activities you may overlook.
- Good starting point are the following hierarchies:
 - Entity-oriented decomposition
 - Activity-oriented decomposition
- Example: You are running your first object-oriented project.
 - Develop a WBS based on the project documents
 - Develop a WBS based on the software process activities

WBS Based on Project Documents (Entity-oriented)



WBS Based on Software Process (Activity-oriented)



Question: Which activities mentioned in the WBS based on Project documents is left out in the WBS based on Software Process?

Heuristic: Identifying Risky activities

- When you identify activities for a work breakdown structure, you can also identify the risks in your project.
- Risks are usually associated with “unknown information”.
- Unknown information comes in two flavors
 - A known unknown: Information that you don’t have but someone else does.
 - Find out who has the information and determine what the information is. (Interviews, Phone calls, tasks analysis)
 - An unknown unknown: Information that you don’t have because it does not yet exist.
 - Develop contingency plans for each of these risks.
 - These contingency plans need be followed when you find out the information does not exist.
- Write these risks down in SPMP section 3.3 Risk Management

Risk Management Examples

- Risk: Members in key roles leave the project.
 - *Contingency Plan?*
 - Roles are assigned to somebody else. Functionality of the system is renegotiated with the client.
- Risk: The project is falling behind schedule.
 - *Contingency Plan?*
 - Extra project meetings are scheduled.
- Risk: Team 1 cannot provide functions needed by team 2.
 - *Contingency Plan?*
 - The liaisons of both teams get together to solve this problem
- Risk: The SPOT computer will not be available.
 - *Contingency Plan?*
 - We will use an IPAQ instead.

Risk Management Examples cont.

- Risk: The selection of the DBMS takes too much time
 - Contingency Plan?
 - The Database team uses a bridge pattern and provides a test stub to be used by the other teams for data access while the selection process goes on.
- Risk: The customer is not available for discussing and reviewing the user interface during development.
 - Contingency Plan?
 - Make the design decisions that we feel are appropriate
- Risk: No suitable wireless library can be found.
 - Contingency Plan?
 - The wireless team develops its own library

Choose a single WBS format

- Writing the WBS in different formats is good, because it allows you to identify activities that you may have overlooked
- However, after you identify these activities add them to either WBS
- Choose a *single* WBS format to be used in the SPMP and for your project:
 - Nothing confuses people fast than trying to use two different work breakdown structures to describe the same project.

How Detailed should the WBS be?

- Sometimes the activities are not clear at all, especially in software projects:
 - Unclear requirements and/or changing requirements
 - Dependency on technology enablers that appear or are promised to appear after project kickoff
 - Simultaneous development of hardware and software (“concurrent engineering”)
- A project plan, especially for an innovative software project, should not address details beyond 3 months.
 - Even for the first 3 months project activities might not all be detailed, for example when the requirements are unclear or change or introduction of technology enablers is expected.
- How should we describe a WBS for a longer project?

Doing a WBS for Long-Term Projects

- When developing a work breakdown structure for a long-term project (longer than 3 months), introduce at least two phases
- *Phase 1* (3 months): Plan your WBS in detail
 - Here list all activities that take two weeks or less to complete
- ***Phase 2, Phase 3, ... (n-months)*** Plan the WBS for these phases in less and less detail
 - Here list activities that you estimate will take between one and two months
- At the end of phase 1, revise the phase 2 activities to the two week level for the next 3 months.
 - Modify any future activities as necessary based on the results of your first three months work.
- Continue to revise the SPMP this way throughout the project. (SPMP as an “evolving” document)

Phases and large Projects

- Project-Initiation Phase
- Steady State Phase
 - Initial Planning phase
- Project-Termination Phase

Project-Initiation Phase

- Fred Brooks, The mythical months
- Activities
 - Meet with client, develop the scenarios (as-is, visionary) for problem statement
 - Develop an initial top level design: System as a set of subsystems.
 - Establish staffing plan (flat staffing, ramping up)
 - Identify human resources: existing employees, new employees.
 - Hire team members
 - Assign a subsystem to each team. Establish two additional cross-functional teams: Architecture&Documentation.
 - Write problem statement (with client and other stake holders, involve project members early)
 - Write initial SPMP with WBS, without schedule, without budget.
 - Get project plan approved
 - Kick project off with 2 documents: Problem statement and SPMP
- Duration: About 4 weeks
- When?
 - Before project kickoff








Initial Planning Phase

- Usually after project kickoff, often called “planning phase”
- Activities
 - Do innovation management on technology enablers that might influence the design or nonfunctional requirements
 - Revise requirements and initial design if necessary
 - Revise team structure, reassign team members if necessary
 - Revise WBS and dependencies
 - Establish cost and scheduling information
 - Agree with client on requirements, duration and cost of the project (write this in a “project agreement”, a companion document to the SPMP)
- Duration: About 2 weeks time.
- When?
 - Parallel to “requirements elicitation phase”

Project-Termination Phase

- Do a project-review: “What went right, what went wrong”
 - also often called “project post-mortem review”
- Based on input from the post-mortem session
 - Revise your software process, identify in particular any new activities that happened in the project
 - Revise your project kickoff activities
 - Revise the SPMP template (to be reused for your next project)

Where are we?

-  SPMP IEEE Std 1058
-  0. Front Matter
-  1. Introduction
-  2. Project Organization
-  3. Managerial Process
-  4. Technical Process
- ↑ 5. Work Elements, Schedule, Budget
 -  5.1 Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
 - 5.2 Dependencies between tasks
 - 5.3 Resource Requirements
 - 5.4 Budget (=> Lecture on cost estimation)
 - 5.5 Schedule
- Optional Inclusions

Summary

- **Work Breakdown Structure (WBS):** Set of activities to do (“use cases”)
- **Dependency Graph:** Identification of dependency relationships between activities identified in the WBS
- **Schedule:** Dependency graph decorated with time estimates for each activity
- **PERT:** One of the first techniques proposed to analyse complex dependency graphs and schedules
- **Gantt Chart:** Notation used to visualize schedule