



KD TRAINING SOLUTIONS

CHARTERED MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT



PROJECT GUIDELINES

1 October 2008

INTRODUCTION

If you have never completed an investigation and produced a project report before, you may feel that this is the most daunting part of your programme. You will be surprised how many candidates have been in your shoes and yet they have all come through it for the better – some actually enjoy it!

You will be allocated a tutor to help you with your project from the initial idea to completion and you will have access to that person in the same way you currently have access to your Unit tutors. Once your project has been assessed by your tutor, it will be moderated by a member of KD Training Solutions and presented to the CMI External Verifier in the same way the majority of your Unit assignments are.

Your chosen project will help you consolidate your learning and give you a chance to use areas from each of the Units to solve a management problem. This will, obviously, also benefit your employer because you will be solving a real life issue at your own organisation.

Where do you start?

First of all you have to find a **management problem** worth investigating! The best thing to do this is to speak to your line manager or someone senior in your organisation and ask them for ideas. If you can, try to get more than one idea and then you can carry out initial investigations and choose which one will benefit you and your workplace the most.

To give you some ideas on the sort of project that candidates have taken on in the past, here are some suggestions:

- Maybe your team is not performing as well as it could be and would benefit from some development
- Maybe you have a manual system of some kind that would benefit from computerisation
- Maybe your organisation has an issue such as high turnover of staff or high levels of absenteeism
- Maybe there are some quality issues that need resolving
- Maybe you have a real case for capital investment
- Maybe there is a history of poor performance or poor discipline and you want to introduce a new set of procedures

Whatever project you choose please make sure that it has a management focus and not a technical one.

Project proposal

Once you have decided on your project area you need to develop, with the assistance of your line manager, a project proposal that includes the **AIM** and **OBJECTIVES** of your project. An example is shown below:

- **Aim** – The aim of this project is to investigate the possibility of introducing information technology into the handling of XXXXXX
- **Objectives** – This will be achieved by:
 - Giving a brief description of the current system and highlighting problem areas
 - Carrying out a review of information handling and comparing it to the current process
 - Drawing conclusions about the current system and the impact of those issues highlighted
 - Making specific and realistic recommendations that will improve the system and make it more efficient and effective

If there are any boundaries that you must stay within, such as a budget, then you should indicate this in your AIM.

Once you have completed your project proposal, you should get your line manager to sign it and pass it to your supervising tutor for final agreement. Once the proposal has been agreed, you can start your project.

What next?

A good project will be one that is planned, researched and written up properly. In order to achieve this, you should think about planning your project **before** you start. This will include looking at each section of your project and calculating how much time you will need and producing a schedule you can focus on. **If you are not sure, then please speak to your supervising tutor**

I am ready to start!!!

Well done for getting this far! You have now agreed your terms of reference with your tutor and decided when and how you will carry out your research and investigation. On the next page is a suggested layout for your project and what each part should contain:

- **Front cover** – your front cover should contain:
 - Your programme title (i.e. Chartered Management Institute Diploma in Management – Level 4)
 - The title of your project
 - A suitable illustration
 - Your name and job title
 - The date in which the project is submitted
 - Your CMI registration number

- **Acknowledgements** – This is an opportunity to express your thanks to anyone who helped you with your project and should be a simple list of names and short comments on how they helped you

- **Table of contents** – This shows the contents of your project.

- **Introduction** - All projects require some kind of introduction and this should be about 1 page that contains:
 - A brief history of your organisation
 - An overview of the department where the problem exists
 - A short description of the problem and its impact on the team/department/organisation

- **Part A - The literature review** - It would be difficult for you to carry out an investigation, analysis, comparison or evaluation without having some kind of theory to drive your project. This means that you have to carry out what is called a "literature review" in your chose project area. The theoretical knowledge that you find will guide the second stage of your project. Your literature review should be about 1,000 words long, should contain theory from several sources and be logically laid out. There should be no analysis, evaluation or anything else other than pure theory.

- **Part B – Methodology** - The next thing to decide is how you are going to gather "real life" information that you can later compare to your literature review. The important thing is that the method you use enables you to gather valid and reliable information and could be anything from a questionnaire to a structure interview. Gathering information by questionnaire often results in what we call "quantitative" information and doing the same from an interview will result in "qualitative" information. You also need to think about how

and from where or whom you will collect your data and how you plan to organise it and you will have to explain all this in your project under this section.

- **Part C – Data collection and Analysis** - As you will probably be quite close to the problem under investigation, you will obviously have your own views and what is wrong and what needs to be done. Whilst your views are important more could be learnt by taking into account:
 - Information that already exists in the form of reports, records or complaints
 - The opinions of others involved through the use of questionnaires or interviews as suggested above
 - How other organisations do it
 - What you might find on the Internet, in the library or from the Institute information centre

If you decide to use a questionnaire, make sure you get it agreed with your tutor before you use it. Maybe you can find a questionnaire on the Internet that you can modify to suit your needs. Why re-invent the wheel? Also be aware that people are unreliable when it comes to filling in questionnaires and returning them. You will have to build time into your project for both the design and receiving back of your questionnaires.

With all of the information you receive look carefully at what parts of it you can turn into diagrams/illustrations or drawings as these add great effect to any piece of written work.

Once you have gathered your data, you will need to analyse it and write up your findings. Here you should consider the use of diagrams, illustrations and drawings to make it more interesting. You are only required to “analyse” your findings and report them, not do any comparison to your original literature review – that comes next! An example of data analysis might simply be that when analysing the question “do you agree SMART objectives before a task takes place” 4 out of 5 team leaders said no and this could be illustrated as part of a diagram or chart

- **Part D – Data discussion** - This is where you look at the similarities or differences between your literature review and your data analysis and make comments. An example based on the previous paragraph could be written like this:

- Although objectives should be agreed before an activity takes place it is clear that this is not the case as 4 out of 5 team leaders were not aware of this requirement which more often than not, results in poor planning
- **Part E – Conclusions** - In this section you should be drawing key conclusions from your data discussion. You should be aware that any conclusions must include **what** you are concluding, **why** you are concluding it and what the **impact** of your conclusion is. You must also make sure that you do not include any new information that was not in the main body of your project i.e. do not draw conclusions that you have not discussed. It is not normal practice to include any “references” in this section.
- **Part F – Recommendations** - Having drawn conclusions, you can now put forward some recommendations remembering that you might state that things have to stay the same! Otherwise, you will be putting forward suggestions for improvements in the future and, if you do this, you must make sure your recommendations are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime bound. Recommendations must come directly from your conclusions and no new information should be included. It is not normal practice to include any “references” in this section. Remember, also, that your recommendations should come from the theory that you gathered in your literature review or as near as possible as you can get to it.
- **Executive summary** – This should be written **after** you have completed your report. It is a summary of the whole project and should normally not exceed 1 page of A4. It is also designed to whet the appetite of the reader and this can be achieved by including:
 - A brief explanation of the problem investigated
 - Whether any problems were encountered during the investigation (i.e. information or people not being available at the time)
 - What methodology was used (i.e. questionnaires or interviews)
 - What general conclusions were drawn (i.e. WHAT, WHY and the IMPACT)
 - What general recommendations were suggested (Specific, Measurable, Agreed/Achievable, Realistic, Time-Bound)

- **Bibliography** - This is a list of the resources you have used to help you complete your project and you should list them using the Harvard Referencing System as shown on our web site. Try to make sure that your references are reasonably varied i.e. books, articles, internet, reports etc
- **Appendices** - In this section you would place any proof of key areas of your project. If you use a questionnaire, you need to place a copy of all completed ones as an Appendix. If you are referring to large documents, please do not place them in your project. If necessary, place a copy of the front page of the document as the Appendix.

Administrative requirements

Here is a list of useful tips when writing up your project:

- After writing up each part of your project agree it with your tutor
- Try to word process your work and make sure you use the spell-checker
- Get someone else to proof-read your work
- Use plain, high quality, A4 paper and double space your work
- Make sure all pages and Appendices are clearly numbered
- If you are referring to work completed by other people, make sure you use the Harvard Referencing System
- Do not use a folder or spiral bound your work, simply staple it in the top left hand corner
- Your work should be between 4-4,500 words in length
- **You need to produce 1 copy of your final report** It will be used for assessment purposes (internal and external) and kept by the Centre for quality purposes. You should produce a copy for your own needs. You will be given a copy of the assessment grading sheet and relevant comments

How will your work be assessed?

The CMI have very specific criteria against which your project will be assessed which will be carried out by KD Training Solutions. Your project will be assessed using the marking sheet on the next page and is based on the following headings:

- **Aim and Objectives**
- **Introduction**
- **Literature Review**
- **Methodology**
- **Data Collection**
- **Data Discussion**
- **Conclusions**
- **Recommendations**
- **Overall Presentation**

Project confidentiality

Please be assured that the contents of your project will be kept strictly confidential and only used in the event of quality control samples by the CMI.

And finally.....

Many people have been in your situation before and your supervising tutor is very experienced in the guidance of projects. The simple answer is: if in doubt ask!!

Chartered Management Institute
Diploma in Management
Project Assessment Criteria

Candidate: Name: CMI Registration Number:

Criteria	Partially Achieved	Fully Achieved
<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you introduced your organisation/department and identified the problem and its current impact? Have you also indicated any restrictions that might affect your project? 		
<p>Literature Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you carried out sufficient research and has it been written up in a professional and logical manner, using the Harvard Referencing System where appropriate? 		
<p>Methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you explain why you chose your methodology and was it appropriate to the project, providing valid and reliable information? 		
<p>Data Collection and Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did you collect sufficient data from various sources and did you fully discuss it against your literature review? 		
<p>Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you drawn logical conclusions from your data discussion and have you clearly indicated what they are, why they were reached and what their impact might or does have? 		
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are your recommendations clearly linked to your conclusions and are they both practical and SMART, taking into account any prior restrictions? 		
<p>Overall Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is your project presented in an easy-to-follow format and is it of the quality expected of a Level 5 CMI candidate? 		

Signed: Name: Date:.....