



## Basic Project Review Questions for Product Developments

based on [Koppensteiner, 2008].

Have you ever wondered how to get the right project information? Wouldn't it be nice to apply one set of basic questions that can help to identify how the project is doing at any phase of the project?

Typically there are two ways of assessing the state of a project either in internal reviews or external audits. This short article focuses on project reviews that are done internally to projects. In comparison project audits are conducted by independent audit groups who are external to the project [Gray-Larsen, 2006] [Heinrich-Roithmayr, 2004]. The questions defined below were formed with the intention to be used at internal project reviews. The objective for proposing basic questions for project reviews is to keep the project in line with its goal and the organization's purpose. Asking essentially the same questions at milestones throughout the project duration will lead to more granularity, detail and precision of the information as the project progresses.

Perspective	Question	Purpose
Product View	Q1. What is the product we are building and why?	Identify the final goal for the project.  At the beginning of a product life cycle the product can only be vaguely described. With each review more product details are discovered and identified if they meet the stakeholders' expectations.  The answer to this question builds the basis of the scope of work and therefore triggers the understanding what resources, knowledge, time, effort and investment are associated with this product development.
	Q2. Is this product feasible as well as achievable and why?	Identify how realistic it is to be successful with the selection of the product and the project plan. The responses to these questions will be associated with the additional risk that needs to be taken into account to develop and deliver this new product.  The answer to this question needs to provide the information if the product can solve the problem it is supposed to address.
	Q3. Is this product marketable and why?	Identify how realistic it is to be successful with this selection of the product. The responses to this question will help to identify if the product concept can address the customer need when it is rolled out to the market.

Perspective	Question	Purpose
	Q4. Is the product functioning at the level of current abstraction and why?	Identify if the product is functional and running within the given time frame.
Process View	Q5. How are we building this product and why?	Helps to identify what technology, processes and methodologies are needed and applied for building the product. The answer to this question is an indicator to the risk and investment the organization is taking for this product implementation.
	Q6. Is the plan predictable and realistic and why?	Identify how realistic it is to be successful with the product development methodology and the project plan. The responses to this question will help to identify gaps between the plan, reality and stakeholder expectations.

### Six basic review questions [Koppensteiner, 2008] .

Start asking these questions at each milestone of your project and monitor what level of information you get. In case the level of information stays the same it is likely that your projects might not have made much progress since the last review.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact [sonja@interglobeconsulting.com](mailto:sonja@interglobeconsulting.com) or +1.408.807.0443.

### References:

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[Heinrich-Roithmayr, 2004], L.Heinrich, A.Heinzl and F.Roithmayr, "Wirtschaftsinformatiklexikon", Oldenburg Verlag, Muenchen, 2004.

[Koppensteiner, 2008], S. Koppensteiner, " Project Mapping and Simulation for Software Projects ", VDM, Germany, 2008.