

the SOW journey.



Creating a Statement Of Work (SOW) is a bit like building a house: in the beginning, everyone is excited. You really want to go for it. Right up until the first setback - at that point, some people will quit or be in a bad mood. Good communication is key: as long as you keep an open line of communication and are clear about what you want, your house (or your SOW) will be just fine.

A Statement Of Work unburdens your organization and leaves more room for you to focus on your other priorities.

But you still need to keep in mind that you have to put time and effort into your SOW. It's not just something that you can get over with quickly. You'll have to keep on adapting the SOW to your needs, and you'll have to refer to the document when doubts or miscommunications inevitably arise.

As long as you're working on your project, you'll have to put effort into your Statement Of Work. What are the biggest pitfalls when creating an SOW, and how can you avoid them? What should you put into your SOW and what should you leave out? We'd love to take you on our SOW journey!





SOW pitfalls.

An SOW describes even the smallest details of your project. In this document, you'll define deadlines, requirements, deliverables ... Needless to say, it's a very important document. What pitfalls should you avoid at all costs?

1. inconsistency.

If you're not working with a centralized SOW model, inconsistency will be your biggest

enemy. If hiring managers only hire their favourite suppliers to take on the biggest assignments, it will be hard for you to know if those suppliers are hired because of their work, or just because of their underlying relationships.

Safety is also often overlooked. Who will make sure that, at the beginning of an assignment, the access to buildings or systems is subjected to strict security measures? Who is responsible at the end of a project for revoking that access and handing back



physical assets? These are subjects that have to be determined in your Statement Of Work.

2. your SOW is too specific or too vague.

Too much of anything is never good, this also goes for creating an SOW. When you define your Statement Of Work too specifically or too vaguely, you'll make life difficult for your suppliers. They won't get the space they need to come up with creative solutions for the problems we all know will eventually arise.

3. not defining your successes.

We often notice that the successes or milestones that companies strive to achieve are defined very vaguely - or not at all - in an SOW. They become susceptible to interpretation, and you risk that the goals you wanted to reach aren't achieved at all, or not in the way that you had envisioned.

4. lax contract maintenance.

Another risk is the lax maintenance of the contract by the hiring managers, who often aren't strict enough when it comes to adhering to the initial agreements. Drawing up a Statement Of Work is a good start, but the document has to be supported by a strict contract maintenance.

5. the SOW isn't proofread thoroughly.

It's important to read the SOW thoroughly when you receive it. Is all the information correct? Do you agree with all the commitments? And, even more importantly: are you capable of adhering to all the agreements?

Check with your colleagues and make sure you're not overlooking anything. Get all the required documents to your supplier as quickly as possible.



what should your SOW contain?

A Statement Of Work typically contains some standard sections:

scope of work.

What is the final goal of your project? What do you want to achieve with it? In this part of your SOW, you'll define your successes.

project goals.

This section defines your goals. How will the project be executed? How much time will it take? What specific steps have to be taken?

timing.

What is the deadline? In this section, you'll often also define where the work will be done.

milestones.

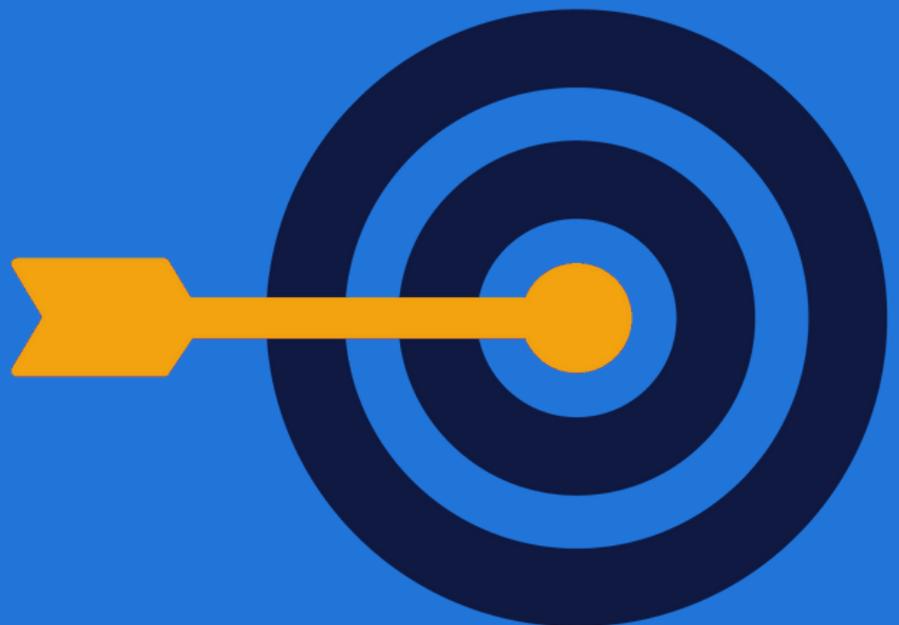
Large projects are often divided into milestones. When a milestone is reached, the way of working of the teams is evaluated and, where necessary, adapted.

tasks.

It's best to describe the tasks in your SOW in as much detail as possible to prevent misunderstandings.

deliverables.

All products and services that need to be delivered during the project. Make sure to indicate all the deadlines at this point.



planning.

This is key in your SOW. It's a timeline of the project's lifecycle containing all the milestones, tasks and resources.

testing.

This is for example necessary when you work with a software development Statement Of Work. If you're working with an FAT or SAT in an industrial environment, or with test benches development, you should also consider including testing in your SOW.

terms & conditions and requirements.

In this section you'll define, among others, the payment conditions and other requirements that weren't discussed in the other sections.

conclusion.

Determine how and by whom the deliverables will be delivered, who will accept them, and who is responsible for the final administrative tasks such as signatures and archiving.



an SOW is a work in progress.

A Statement Of Work can make your life a lot easier, if it is defined correctly.

Every SOW is a work in progress: if you don't pay enough attention to it, you'll fall deep into one of the many pitfalls. But if you apply yourself to it and make sure your colleagues proofread it thoroughly, you'll soon reap the benefits!



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