Planning to Perform: The Application of Project Management Principles to Recital Preparation

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PLANNING TO PERFORM: THE APPLICATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES TO PIANO PERFORMANCE

By

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A DOCTORAL ESSAY

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PLANNING TO PERFORM: THE APPLICATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES TO PIANO PERFORMANCE

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Many musicians, artists and other creative thinkers often struggle with organizational skills in preparation for events that require detailed planning, notably recital preparation. Musicians often find themselves ill-prepared and must reschedule the event, recycle music that they do not wish to perform, or ultimately perform at a lower standard. Currently, there is no standardized, established model for pianists or other types of musicians to guide them in setting up a recital and successfully executing all of its parts from start to finish.

This study, through discussion of the employment of project management principles, aids artists in putting together a performance successfully. Specifically, it explored the planning and execution of all facets of the performance. This study sought to present a guide on the basic steps in planning a successful recital using the established methodology of a business model and applying it to piano performance.

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how project management principles can be applied to recital preparation, planning and execution. The study addressed the returning performer; however, aspects of this study can be used by the student and seasoned professional alike. Results of the study generated an integrated project plan, illustrating the project life cycle of piano performance.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

What is a project? In our everyday lives, we encounter projects - or what people
demean projects - all of the time. One might consider a project something that you would
do at home, perhaps organizing a dinner party, painting your dining room or building a
deck on the back of the house. Perhaps a student has a project that has been assigned
from class, or a department at work has decided to upgrade all of its computers. Humans
have been working on projects for thousands of years: the erecting of Egypt’s pyramids,
the constructing of new cities and towns, the building of railroads to link a country
together; the list is endless. The American Heritage Desk Dictionary defines a project in
three different ways: “1. A plan or proposal; a scheme. 2. An undertaking requiring
concerted effort. 3. A research undertaking.”

According to A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK),
“A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or
result.” The PMBOK goes further, stating that “Temporary means that every project has
a definite beginning and definite end.” That being stated, virtually any unique
undertaking could be considered a project. Could then, the preparation and execution of
a piano recital be considered a project? Given the definitions above, yes. Each

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performer in and of themselves is unique; how they perform and interpret the music is especially unique.

With the definition of a project established, what then is project management?

Traditionally defined,

Project management is a methodical approach to planning and guiding project processes from start to finish. According to the Project Management Institute, the processes are guided through five stages: initiation, planning, executing, controlling and closing. Project management can be applied to most any type of project.¹

Many businesses worldwide use project management principles as a means for successful execution of their projects, from computer hardware installation to the expansion of real estate holdings, or the development of a new food product, to name a few. The same principles that guide the planning of business projects are applicable to music, specifically preparation for a piano recital.

Rationale for the Study

Although most people are not aware, elements of project management occur in our lives each day. For example, one has decided to throw a 50th birthday party for a relative. Where will it be held? How many people will you ask to attend? How much will be spent, and has a budget been determined? What type of food? Will dinner be served? What time will it start, and when will the party wrap up? Will there be music at the party, and will it be live or recorded?

Perhaps one may want to renovate part of their home. Where does one begin, with architectural plans? To what extent will the renovations occur? Will the room be

gutted, or are will paint, floors and window treatments be replaced? Will the room be expanded? Is there a vision of how the room will be used once renovated? What is the overall budget? Can the renovation match the level of the budget or should only cosmetic changes be made? And when would the room be completed? Although seemingly elementary examples occurring in everyday life, such scenarios (the party or the home renovation) become the project; therefore, the execution of the project is project management.

Many musicians, artists and other creative-thinking people often struggle with organizational skills in preparation for events, programs and other engagements that require detailed planning, notable among them recital preparation. Often musicians find themselves ill-prepared and must reschedule the event, recycle music that they do not wish to perform, or ultimately perform at a lower standard. Currently, there is no standardized, established model for pianists or other types of musicians to guide them in setting up a recital and successfully executing all of its parts from start to finish.

At some point in their careers, artists may find themselves in a geographic area where they want to perform but are without the appropriate resources at their disposal. They may not have an agent nor musical contacts in the area, and they do not know how to get started. When a performance is given while the artist is in school, many of these details are taken care of in a behind-the-scenes manner by university staff, schedulers and technicians, and often taken for granted by the uninitiated student performer. Upon leaving school, a fortunate number of artists will have obtained agents, and in such cases many of the ongoing details in the planning phase of future recital performances will be
taken care of as well. Yet, often times, artists find themselves in a position of performance planning on their own.

This study, through discussion of the employment of project management principles, will aid artists in improving the preparation process in successfully putting together a performance. It includes information on the planning and execution of all facets of the performance, including repertoire selection, time management in practice sessions, as well as selecting performance venues and marketing methods. Presenting a guide on the basic but necessary steps in planning a successful recital using established methodology of a business model and applying it to piano performance can aid performers in the execution of a well-planned and competent approach to their recital. The recital, in this case, becomes the project.

Can a piano recital be carried out without the formal, documented use of project management? Many musicians may say yes. But at what level of success and at what quality of performance? Will it be delivered within the time constraints, if any, of the performance venue? And will the performance be of high musical quality and delivery? By formal recognition of how project management can be useful in planning for piano performance, one can maximize success and minimize failure of a scheduled recital.

By way of current research, project management is an unfamiliar strategy in the approach to piano performance. However, its application is beneficial to the performer because of overall value in envisioning an end result; its application can be a useful tool in illustrating how to plan and execute the incremental steps between initial preparation and ultimate performance. It is a systematic approach for getting from point A to point B. Though issues may arise over the course of time from inception of the recital planning
to the performance, the use of project management can help identify risks, document conflicts and negotiate potential “red flag” areas where the planned deliverables – the recital’s performance – could be compromised. For example, perhaps the performer struggles with memorization. How will this issue affect the outcome of the recital if not but in a negative fashion, unless identified and addressed in the early stages of preparation? By identification as a formal stage of project management planning, measures to combat memory slips can be taken at the outset of the project to minimize a negative outcome. For this example, the performer may choose different music, maybe integrating several familiar or accomplished pieces to substitute in a difficult repertoire. Perhaps the timetable for memorization is lengthened, or additional, smaller performances in a less formal environment are incorporated into the larger performance plan. Each of the aforementioned can and should be considered in the project plan, as they are each singular components comprising the whole of the recital. This is the idea behind project management: minimizing risk to maximize success.

Objectives of the Study

The initial objective of the study is to provide musicians with a high-level understanding for implementing project management principles into recital preparation for the most favorable outcome. Within the scope of that understanding, the study explores how those principles can be applied to virtually anything that can or needs to be organized, planned and executed prior to the deliverable – the recital. That exploration will result in a direct link to the “how-to’s” of organizing a well-executed performance, from beginning to end. The performance then becomes the “project.” This study also
incorporates the consideration of technology and software that can be used effectively to strengthen individual components in executing the plan.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how project management principles, typically applied in a business setting, can be applied to recital preparation, planning and execution. The study addresses the returning performer, defined as an artist who has been away from performing with their instrument for a number of years and have aspirations of returning to the concert stage. However, aspects of this study can be used by the student and seasoned professionals alike.
CHAPTER TWO

METHOD

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the application of project management methodology to piano recital performance. What will be shown is how the process areas of project management traditionally used in business settings can be applied to effective recital preparation.

This study commenced by gathering literature sources detailing the topic of project management’s application to music. In the primary review of sources, little was found available in the way of instruction of project management principles to music in direct correlation to performance. Following those findings, sources on the disciplines of project management and recital preparation were gathered and explored separately. After reviewing sources, I engaged in informal consultation with project management professionals. These professionals are former business colleagues with whom I worked on projects throughout my employment as a Project Management Consultant at Electronic Data Systems. They are: Sam Lane, Judith Lane, and Seth Kerekes. Sam Lane is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and is a Principle Information Systems Engineer for the MITRE Corporation in McLean, Virginia. Judith Lane, MBA and PMP, also with the MITRE Corporation, is currently supporting Department of Homeland Security Headquarters (Offices of the CFO and the CIO) in the areas of program management, investment management, and strategic direction. Seth
Kerekes, MBA and PMP, is an E-Business Manager for Johnson & Johnson Health Care Systems, Inc., in Piscataway, New Jersey.

After accumulating and reviewing the appropriate literature sources and consultation with colleagues, the outline of the paper was determined. The essay is contained in eight chapters, and is detailed in the following paragraphs.

Following the introduction of project management and recital preparation in chapter one and the method in chapter two, the third chapter begins with the definition of the terms “project,” and subsequently “project management.” Since these terms are not part of the vernacular of most musicians, a fairly lengthy and thorough definitions are provided so that the reader has a conceptual understanding of project management and how its discussion with regard to recital preparation makes a strong case for its employment in a musical discipline. Project management terminology is defined and the historical significance of project management (i.e., how it came to be, its application in the world today, and the importance thereof) is dicussed. Following that, the concept of the project plan and the project life cycle is introduced. The project management process groups (1) the areas of initiating, (2) planning, (3) executing, (4) monitoring, and (5) closing activities are explained. Additionally, the nine knowledge areas of project management are also outlined: integration management (which includes project plan development and execution), scope management, time management, cost management, communications management, procurement management, quality management, human resources management, and risk management.

Chapter four is entirely dedicated to the explanation and creation of the project plan. The topic area is large and important enough to the understanding of project
management for inclusion as a singular chapter. Within this chapter, four areas of the project plan are outlined: the project charter, the work breakdown structure, the project schedule, and the cost spreadsheet.

The next section of focus within this essay, chapter five, is devoted to the subjects of recital planning and preparation. To begin, performance-centric literature that discussed techniques and strategies for effective practice sessions was reviewed, the psychological aspects of performance as well as the topic of performance anxiety, and how those areas can be incorporated into a project plan. Following the literature review is a section developed again through informal consultation of colleagues; however, this time, with music faculty of various institutions who maintain active performance schedules. The three faculty members in informal consultation are: James Nalley, DMA, Assistant Professor of Piano at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida; Tomoko Kanamaru, DMA, Assistant Professor of Music (piano) at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, New Jersey; and Nitza Kats, Associate Professor of Music (piano) at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. For the purposes of my study, an extensive set of questions on methods and/or strategies they use in preparing for a recital, including, specifically, their approach to choosing the recital program, determining a timeline for preparation of the music, and methods of structuring practice sections were constructed. Those responses, along with the information from the literature review, are incorporated in the last section of the chapter, in which an overview and outline of recital preparation is provided, and the project plan created. Additionally, their responses are summarized in the chapter, with the raw responses detailed in the appendix.
The paper’s sixth section is devoted to the actual application of project management principles to piano recital preparation. In other words, how can a model that is traditionally used in standard business practice be translated into something beneficial for music performance. The project management process areas and their relationship to the outline of recital preparation are then outlined. By doing so, how recital preparation and the execution of the plan essentially become the large-scale “project,” and how a project plan can be developed in order to achieve success is illustrated. Employing the framework of the project management process areas, an actual project plan for executing a recital from start to finish was developed.

The seventh and final declarative section of this essay is devoted to technology in project management and how it, too, can be used in order to augment a project’s success. This section primarily focuses on describing current software available for use and includes discussion of Microsoft Project to aid in scheduling, documenting tasks and developing an overall project timeframe, Visio and Microsoft PowerPoint for possible graphic uses for project work and process flow, and Microsoft Publishing (as one graphical application example) to design a program for the audience, provide text of the performer’s biographical information, and other possible uses such as developing advertising materials or employing data collection among audience members.

Following, then, are conclusions based on the findings of applying project management methodologies to piano performance.
CHAPTER THREE
DISCUSSION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides an overview of the standard elements of project management. It begins with definitions of a project, project management and the corresponding terminology found throughout this essay. These definitions are drawn from a number of sources in project management-based literature, as well as current sources from the world wide web. The definitions section is followed by a historical overview of project management, noting the emergence of project management in business and military contexts in this country. Additionally, an overview of the project management knowledge areas is provided, followed by an introduction and explanation of the project plan. Within the area of the project plan, the project life cycle is discussed, as well as the project management process groups, which outline the processes and activity areas that take place within a project. Further discussion and details specific to development of the project plan will take place in chapter four of this essay.

Definition of a Project

As discussed in Chapter One, the leading authority on project definition is *A Guide to The Project Management Body of Knowledge*, often referred to as the PMBOK.
The Project Management Body of Knowledge is the sum of knowledge within the profession of project management. As with other professions, such as law, medicine and accounting, the body of knowledge rests with the practitioners and academics who apply and advance it.²

It serves as the bible among steadfast practitioners of project management at any level, including executives, project managers, customers, consultants and researchers. Its purpose “is to identify that subset of the Project Management Body of Knowledge that is generally recognized as good practice.”⁵ Its documentation is comprehensive, well-organized, and provides an overall guide to project management from the leading authority on project management, the Project Management Institute (PMI). The PMI is a worldwide organization, with a 200,000-plus membership that sets the standard for project management implementation and fulfillment. Additionally, the PMI created a certification achievement level for project managers. Many business and government organizations now require their project managers to be PMI certified as a condition of employment. J. Davidson Frame, a recognized leader in the field of project management, states in his book that:

the PMBOK Guide, as it is known, attempts to define the core competencies of effective project professionals. It identifies nine areas of project management competence. The first four are obvious: project management professionals should be competent in the areas of scope management, time management, cost management and human resource management.⁶

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⁵ Ibid.

In like manner, the book *Project Management A-Z, A Compendium of Project Management Techniques and How to Use Them*, by Alan Wren, also defines project management, giving credibility to its techniques of skillful application. There are many different variations on the definition, and most are applied to a business perspective, where the concept of project management originated. Wren describes a project as:

a unique process consisting of a set of coordinated and controlled activities, with start and finish dates, undertaken to achieve an objective conforming to specific requirements, including constraints of time, cost and resources.  

This book begins with a glossary of common project management terms. It is then organized by main project management topic areas, with terms and concepts listed alphabetically.

To further examine Wren’s definition, projects have very specific start and end dates. “What marks the start and finish dates, the limited and finite duration of a project? End dates tend to be very clear and very public. We often know them long before anyone has given a serious thought to starting.”  

This observation also holds true in music, both production and performance.

The purpose of a project is to attain its objective and then terminate. Conversely, the objective of an ongoing operation is to sustain the business. Projects are different because the project concludes when its specific objectives have been attained, while operations adopt a new set of objectives and the work continues.

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8 Ibid.

Again, while this was originally intended for business, the application can also be applied to piano performance preparation. The recital is the “project,” yet most pianists will continue to work on technique throughout their careers, often times changing approaches due to musical requirements, mastery of technique, addition of skill sets, or unforeseen changes in his/her physical abilities that are beyond their control. Given that, this technique work can be considered “ongoing operations.”

**Definition of Project Management**

With the technical definition of a project now established, then what is project management? Richard Luecke from *Harvard Business Essentials* define project management as

the allocation, tracking and utilization of resources to achieve a particular objective within a specified period of time. This form of management focuses on the characteristic activities of a project, namely, a set of activities that (1) aims to produce a unique deliverable and (2) is time-bound within clear beginning and ending points.10

Given that definition of project management, we can aptly apply it to music and recital preparation. The unique deliverable becomes the recital, and as discussed before, the beginning and ending points are clearly defined once the decision has been made to do the recital, with the end point of the project being the recital. This book is well written and provides a general framework for managing projects. It is organized first by reviewing the project management processes, from defining the project, planning, managing, closing and summarizing the project, then digging into specific areas. Its target audience is not the novice, nor is it aimed at the high-level manager with years of

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experience in project management. This book was chosen mainly for its material organization, but also because it is small and compact in presentation. It is not designed to make you an expert, nor will it lead you through lengthy academic research. Instead, it provides action-oriented advice that you need to quickly become more effective. The book addresses two aspects of project management: (1) techniques of project management (including design, planning, and execution) and (2) dealing with team issues that prove vital to the success of the project. It does not bog down the reader with technical terminology, which was especially helpful, given that this author demonstrates applicability to the music world from the business world.

Another source I have chosen, also comparatively lesser in breadth to other sources on project management, is the *Project Management Methodology, A Practical Guide for the Next Millennium*. The book’s authors define project management as “the tools, knowledge and techniques for leading, defining, planning, organizing, controlling, and closing a project.”11 The framework of the book focuses on learning about project management from the life cycle view of a project, which will be addressed later in this chapter. The book can be fairly complex, but it was found that the authors were straightforward in their description of the project life cycle and areas within project management. The back matter of the book describes its being a suitable guide for “project and financial managers; systems analysts; manufacturing plant managers; cost engineers; project executives; executive management directors; software developers; and graduate-level students in these disciplines.”12

A book which introduces the concepts of project management in a straightforward, simplistic manner is titled *Painless Project Management*, written by Pamela McGee and Peter McAliney. This book is laid out in two sections, focusing on learning about project management and managing simple projects, respectively, then delving into methods for managing larger, more complex projects. As with most of the project management books referenced in this essay, this one presents a fairly complete guide to managing projects. In many ways this book tends to be simplistic; however, readers uninitiated into project management would aptly gain a basic level of understanding by reading this selection. It presents project management in a business context, with real-life examples of project management in action. Another positive aspect of this text is its use of diagrams, models and templates throughout. This book will referenced later in this essay when illustrating elements of the project plan.

**Definitions of Project Management Terminology**

This section defines project management terms that will be used throughout this essay. The stated terms are defined according to *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*:

- **Baseline** – The approved time phased plan, plus or minus approved project scope, cost, schedule, and technical changes.
- **Process** – A set of interrelated actions and activities performed to achieve a specified set of products, results, or services.

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12 Ibid.

Project – A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. Temporary means that every project has a definite beginning and definite end.

Project Management – The application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements.

Project Management Body of Knowledge – An inclusive term that describes the sum of knowledge within the profession of project management. As with other professions such as law, medicine and accounting, the body of knowledge rests with the practitioners and academics who apply and advance it.

Project Management Plan – A formal, approved document that defines how the project is executed, monitored and controlled. It may be summary or detailed and may be composed of one or more subsidiary management plans and other planning documents.

Scope – The work that must be performed to deliver a product, service, or result with the specific features and functions.

Stakeholders – Person or organization (e.g., customer, sponsor, performing organization, or the public) that is actively involved in the project, or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected by execution or completion of the project.¹⁴


Historical Overview of Project Management

As far as I have determined, only a few sources exist on the history of project management and how it began in this country. With the exception of a few brief entries in the book by J. Davidson Frame, most of the sources I have located and reviewed to date have been online. From the website of University of California at Berkeley, Yale Braunstein states that:

Project Management, in its modern form, began to take root only a few decades ago. Starting in the early 1960’s, American businesses and other organizations began to see the benefit of organizing work around a project
and to understand the critical need to communicate and integrate work processes across multiple departments and professions.\textsuperscript{15}

Braunstein’s article is part of a group of course documents from his 2002 course at the University of California, Berkeley, \textit{Analysis of Information Organizations and Systems}.

An additional two sources, also found online, include references further back in U.S. history prior to the launch of Russia’s first earth satellite.

Project Management was not used as an isolated concept before the Sputnik crisis of the Cold War. After this crisis, the United States Department of Defense (DOD) needed to speed up the military project process, and new tools (models) for achieving this goal were invented. In 1958, the DOD invented the Program Evaluation and Review Technique, or PERT, as part of the Polaris missile submarine program. At the same time, the DuPont corporation invented a similar model called CPM, Critical Path Method. PERT was later extended with a work breakdown structure or WBS. The process flow and structure of the military undertakings quickly spread into many private enterprises.\textsuperscript{16}

Another complementary online source, this one from AllenWeb, retraces points throughout civilization, stating essentially that:

Civilization, as we know it today, owes its existence to the engineers. The story of civilization is, in a sense, the story of engineering – that long and arduous struggle to make the forces of nature work for man’s good. The story of engineering, pieced together from dusty manuscripts and crumbling relics, explains as well the state of the world today as all the accounts of kings and philosophers, generals and politicians.\textsuperscript{17}

And although it certainly makes for a strong case (and interesting reading) that engineering eventually led to the rise of project management, I am not certain that the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Yale Braunstein, \textit{The History of Project Management}, 2002 [online] available from www.sims.berkeley.edu/courses/is208/s02/History-of-PM.htm; Internet, accessed 12 October 2005.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} AllenWeb, Project Management History/A History Leading Up to the Beginning of Project Management, [online] available from www.members.aol.com/AllenWeb/history.html. Internet, accessed 12 October 2005.
\end{itemize}
argument is convincing enough for staking the whole of project management on those
grounds alone. However, from an applicability standpoint, it does offer some
substantiation that project management can be applied to other disciplines, because it
arose out of other disciplines, namely men who were “irrigators, architects and military
engineers.”18

In the book *Visualizing Project Management*, the authors briefly discuss a history
of project management through recent decades, but generally focus on a “new” look at
project management. Historically, project management as its own concept came about
because of need.

In the grand old days of American management, when it was presumed
that all problems and mistakes could be controlled by more rigorous
managerial oversight, the canonical solution to organizational error was to
add more oversight and bureaucracy.19

Upon further examination, this book is clearly aimed at the business and engineering
professional, focusing on overall concepts of project management, as well as details and
technical aspects. The author’s goal is to simplify and clarify system engineering and
project management. Although it can be moderately to extremely technical, it can be
useful on many levels in learning about project management. The author’s focus is on a
four-part model: vocabulary, teamwork, the project cycle, and project management
elements. Despite the focus on system engineering, it seems to be a fair approach in
discussing project management processes.

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18 Ibid.

19 Forsberg, Kevin, Hal Mooz and Howard Cotterman. *Visualizing Project Management. A
Introduction of the Project Plan: The Project Life Cycle

In order to have a thorough understanding of project management methodology, an understanding of a project plan must be reinforced. To begin a project plan, there first must be an understanding of the phases of a project. Each project, no matter its size or industry focus, has a beginning, middle and end. As stated earlier in this chapter, such is the accepted standard for the definition of a project. Within a project however, there are certain phases which, overall make up the project life cycle. During the project life cycle, phases of the project are defined so as to connect the beginning of a project to its end. It must be stated however, that the project life cycle is not the same as project management process areas, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Project life cycle descriptions can be very general to extremely detailed, depending on the level and complexity of the project. The project life cycle can also include forms, charts and checklists that can provide structure and control to the project. The following figure shows a typical sequence of the phases of a project life cycle.

Fig. 1. The Project Life Cycle
The project life cycle usually defines the following:

- Work to be done in each phase
- When the deliverables are to be generated in each phase
- Who is involved in each phase
- How to control each phase.\(^{20}\)

Characteristics of a project phase usually include completion and approval of one or more deliverables. For example, in recital preparation, a deliverable could be interpreted as an interim performance goal. Perhaps a piece or a movement of a piece is performed by memory at a lesson, or mastery of technical command over a difficult passage is attained. Bear in mind that a deliverable is a measurable, verifiable work product, so it needs to be something that can be produced. The deliverable is “part of a generally sequential process designed to ensure proper control of the project to attain the desired product or service.”\(^{21}\) Deliverables often will mark the end of a project phase; however, completion of a phase does not necessarily mean that the next phase may begin.

The chart on the previous page indicates three phases that will be a part of each project: initial, intermediate and final. The chart also indicates what is required for the input of the initial phase: the idea of the project, as well as the establishment of the project management team. It is within this phase that the idea for the project has been documented, a team has been put in place, and the kickoff of the project happens. In this concept stage, the potential project manager works with all interested parties to establish a clear reason for the project going forward. The reason for the project needs to include clear, articulate definitions of:


\(^{21}\) Ibid, 22.
• The issue or project to be addressed/solved
• The goals and benefits of undertaking such a project
• The objectives of the project
• The needs and wants
• The potential project scope
• The risks and impacts associated with the project
• The cost analysis
• The return on investment

Outputs from the initial phase include the project chart and scope statement. Examples and explanations of these documents will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

The intermediate phase of the project life cycle is the largest, often during which most of the work is done for the project. Outputs for this phase include the project plan in its baseline form as well as documented incremental progress and acceptance. The third or final phase of the project life cycle shows the approval and handover outputs of the project. It also shows the project deliverable – or what is often referred to as the end product.

One area that can influence the life cycle of the project is the project stakeholders. Project stakeholders are “Anyone with a vested interest in the outcome of the project. Also, those who provide requirements or input as to the project’s outcome.” When starting a project or any endeavor of this nature, it is important to carefully identify the project stakeholders. These people may carry responsibility and authority over you and/or the project. That being said, they also may have a positive or negative influence.

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23 Ibid, 4.
on the project. Simply put, positive stakeholders are interested in seeing the project succeed. Negative stakeholder’s interests are better served if the project doesn’t succeed.

In business, there are key stakeholders on every project. This may or may not be the case for recital preparation. Stakeholders may include the project manager, the customer (audience), the project management team (people doing the work of the project), the sponsor (person or group that provides the financial resources) and influencers. Influencers, in addition to project stakeholders, are people or groups that can positively or negatively influence the outcome of a project.

Project Management Process Groups

Within the context of the project life cycle, there are areas known as process groups. These are standard, accepted work units for projects and contain the following activity areas: initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing processes. These process groups have activities that overlap and integrate with each other. However, not all knowledge, skill and processes should be prescribed for each and every project uniformly. Each project is unique; therefore, the given processes applied are unique as well. Standard project management methodology contends that the project manager is always responsible for determining what processes are appropriate for a certain project. Given that, project management can be tailored to suit any kind of project because each project in and of itself is unique. While some projects may require activities addressing risk, other projects may focus more on quality. The degree to which project management is applied will depend on many aspects, but mostly will depend on the focus of the project and the stated initial requirements.
According to project management standards, these groups are generally defined as the following:

Initiating Processes: Defines and authorizes the project. These processes facilitate the formal authorization to start a new project or project phase. Within this phase, descriptions of the project objectives are established, the initial project scope, deliverables and duration of the project is also established, in addition to determining the phases of the project.

Planning Processes: Defines and refines the objectives and plans and manages a successful project. The project scope, cost and scheduling of tasks or activities takes place. The creation of the work breakdown structure, cost estimations, risk identification, quality and communication plans are established.

Executing Processes: Integrates people and other resources to carry out the project management plan for the project. The project team is determined in this process, information is distributed, and quality assurance is performed.

Monitoring and Controlling Processes: Measures and monitors progress to identify variances from the plan so that corrective action can be taken when necessary to meet project objectives. Change control, as well as schedule, cost, quality and risk monitoring are in effect in this process. The project team management and performance of the project is reported.

Closing Processes: Formalizes acceptance of the project, services or result and brings the project to an orderly end. These processes are used to formally terminate all activities of a project or project phase. Performance of the project team is discussed – what worked, what didn’t. Project performance is also documented for future reference and improvement for other projects. End products are produced and distributed.\(^{24}\)

Overview of Project Management Knowledge Areas

The Project Management Knowledge Areas, as defined and outlined below, are identified sub-areas of the project management plan. Depending on the size and

complexity of the project, each knowledge area will have its own plan with associated work and tasks. However, each will relate to the overall project plan. The stated areas are defined according to *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge.*

Project Integration Management – Includes the processes required to ensure that the various elements of the project are properly coordinated. Integration, in the context of managing a project, is making choices about where to concentrate resources and effort on any given day, anticipating potential issues, dealing with those issues before they become critical, and coordinating work for the overall project good.

Project Scope Management – Includes the processes required to ensure that the project includes all the work required, and only the work required, to complete the project successfully. Project scope management is primarily concerned with defining and controlling what is and is not included in the project.

Project Time Management – Includes the processes required to accomplish timely completion of the project.

Project Cost Management – Includes the processes involved in planning, estimating, budgeting and controlling costs so that the project can be completed within the approved budget.

Project Quality Management – Includes the process activities of the performing organization that determine quality policies, objectives, and responsibilities so that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken.

Project Human Resource Management – Includes the processes that organize and manage the project team. The project team is comprised of the people who have assigned roles and responsibilities for completing the project.

Project Communications Management – Includes the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, distribution, storage, retrieval, and ultimate disposition of project information.

Project Risk Management – Includes the processes concerned with conducting risk management: planning, identification, analysis, responses, and monitoring and control on a project; most of these are updated throughout the project.
Project Procurement Management – Includes the processes to purchase or acquire the products, services or results needed from outside the project team to perform the work.\textsuperscript{25}

Summary

After reviewing this chapter, one may have noted the many aspects of project management that can and should be addressed when studying this subject. What has been touched on in this chapter is only at the surface of project management. After reviewing my documented sources in this area, it has been concluded that there is significantly more to examine; however, for the purposes of this study this author has chosen to highlight only those which magnify this essay’s premise. Much repetition was found on the subject of project management, and beyond what has been stated, nothing to aid in applicability to music performance. Most of the sources were increasingly complex, and outside the bounds of what was needed for this study.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, 9-10.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT PLAN

In order to go forward with a project using project management methodology, a project plan must be created. How is a project plan developed, and what components are necessary for successful execution? In this chapter, a project plan is developed and explored, as well the creation of key integral elements of the plan. Specific examples of the project charter, work breakdown structure, and scope statement is illustrated. The chapter will also include analysis of the project sub-plan areas, which include risk, quality, cost, schedule, scope and communication.

Developing the Project Plan

McGhee and McAliney in Painless Project Management advocate using an Integrated Project Plan for simpler projects. This four-part model seems ideal for acquiring a basic understanding of a project plan and the know-how to put one together. It is laid out in the following manner:
The first document that must to be created is the Project Charter. The project charter is the foundational document that formally authorizes the project and steers the wheel for the entire project. To cross reference with elements of the project life-cycle (see graph pg. 22), the activities taking place in creating a project charter are found in the initial phase. The charter can be a simple one page document but should address some or all of the following:

- Project management mission statement
- Project goal statement
- Statement of scope
- Project objectives
- Critical success factors
- Critical success measures
- List of relevant risks
- List of assumptions
- List of constraints
- Primary project driver
- Identification of all stakeholders, sponsors, clients and other interested parties.  

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To examine these items in closer detail, the project mission statement is an outgrowth of the initial concept of the project and answers the question of what you are going to do in the project. In a business context, the mission statement is already in existence and the project goal statements emerge from an organization’s strategic plan. The goal statements answer the question of how the mission is going to be accomplished.

The Statement of Scope is the next item within the project charter to be addressed. Keeping in mind the definition of project scope (the umbrella of work that needs to be done for the project), outlining this area is extremely important. McGhee and McAliney state that “the smaller the project scope, the more likely the project is to be successful. In addition, the shorter the time lapse between freezing the project specifications and delivering the product, the more likely the project is to be successful – both augur well for spending that time in planning.”

Following the scope statement will be the project objectives. This is simply a listing of what is intended to be accomplished by doing the project and is normally brief. In the business context, project objectives are usually created by the stakeholders. In recital preparation however, this may not be the case. Project objectives can be mandated by the project manager or any number of people on the project team.

Critical success factors and critical success measures are the next two topics to address within the project charter. Wikipedia defines a critical success factor as “an element which is necessary for an organization or project to achieve its mission.”

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid, 69.
These items are listed so that awareness of them is brought to the table. For example, say that one of the project objectives is to play a 20th century piano concerto. A critical success factor for the project would be that the chosen accompanist would need to have the appropriate skills and experience to play the repertoire. Critical success measures, although probably not applicable in recital preparation, are actually high-level requirements and are often based on numeric formulas.

In terms of performing a project, there is always a certain amount of risk. Risk is the unknown – what could (or could not) happen. “Risk means uncertainty, and uncertainty can have a positive or negative outcome.”30 Relevant risks should be identified as early (and as often) as possible in the planning process. Additionally, risk identification is ongoing throughout the life of the project. As tasks are accomplished and completed, new risks often appear. Many project managers conduct a risk analysis prior to the start of the project, including “what-if” scenarios. If the documented relevant risks following the analysis are deemed too great to the success level of the project, the project may need re-evaluated.

Assumptions should be listed for all aspects of the project. Assumptions allow us to extend what we know about the project. An assumption is the opposite of risk – the known versus the unknown. Conversely, constraints narrow the project manager’s range of options available to plan, schedule, execute and control the project. All projects have constraints, and it is important, as with risk, that they are identified early. Constraints can

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fall into many different categories for a project: business, administrative, organization, legal, among others. For example, a budget constraint for a recital may be the hall rental. Your budget allows for $200, but the hall rental is $500. Although a very simple example, this is a project constraint and should be considered in the project plan.

The primary project driver is the next area to address within the project charter. Within a project, there are three areas that drive its momentum: time, cost, and the scope or requirements.

![Fig. 2. The Project Driver](image)

This triangle figure shows equal representation of the three main areas of a project. However, in many projects, these areas are not all deemed of equal importance or value. Planned decisions are affected based on what primarily drives a project. Is it time? Then most decisions will be sacrificed for the schedule. If scope is the driver, then a project that is late in delivering the end result is permitted. If cost is the driver, then lateness and changes or alterations in scope are allowed.

The last area to address under the project charter is the project stakeholders. As stated in chapter three, it is important to know who all of the players in the project are.
When compiling this list, determine which role or roles each person will play during the phases of the project. McGhee states that “all projects will have naysayers. Whether you list the negative stakeholders in the Project Charter is a matter of political acumen and judgment. In any case, list all stakeholders from high to low.”31 Knowing who these people are and what roles they play may affect the outcome of the project, and should be accounted for during the planning process. Depending on the result of this list, changes in the plan may need to take place.

When all of these items are identified and documented, the project charter can then be signed-off on. In a business scenario, this sign-off is normally given by the project sponsor. Within the context of recital preparation, the “sign-off” can come from any number of people; namely, you, as the project manager.

The Work Breakdown Structure

Once the Project Charter has been completed and signed off, the vision and goals of the project need translated into identifiable tasks so that the actual work of the project may begin. This second area in the Integrated Project Plan model is called the Work Breakdown Structure. The Work Breakdown Structure, or WBS, “defines the work that must be done to create the product or service the project was created to produce.” Further, “the WBS provides a road map for the project team, laying out the overall work effort required.”32 It is normally represented graphically or as an indented list or outline. Both ways will be represented in this essay. The WBS is one of the key elements, or

31 Ibid, 75.
32 Ibid, 81-82.
rather the heart of the project plan, because it serves as the basis for scheduling, budgeting and costs, and risk assessment.

There is no one single approach to WBS preparation; however, it should begin as a sketch, with task ideas written down in a logical format. McGhee and McAliney suggest three ways to organize the WBS for your project:

- By work cycle or phases
- By content or subject matter
- By deliverables.

In chapter one of this essay, it was explained how project management techniques are used in everyday life: the highlighted example was throwing a birthday party. To build a WBS, one might use a building block approach, like an organizational chart. If the tasks are organized according to subject matter, the first level WBS may look something like this.

![Fig. 3. The High-Level Work Breakdown Structure](image-url)

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33 Ibid, 82-83.
The highest level box contains the project name, and underneath the large subject areas that need to be addressed for the party: planning, food, room and equipment, guests, staff, and entertainment and music. But this is not the work that needs to be done for the project. At this point, only high-level organizational subject areas of the plan are shown. The figure below shows a multi-level WBS.

Fig. 4. The Lower Level Work Breakdown Structure

From this illustration we can now get an idea of the work that needs to be done for this party. From this level, the outlined work areas are divided again into manageable work tasks.

Another method to illustrate a Work Breakdown Structure is through an outline list, or what sometimes is referred to as a leveled WBS. The information is the same as the graphical representation above, but the layout and form changes. The first or high-
level task areas are indicated with numbers one through six. The next levels down (or sub-tasks) are indented and indicated with decimal points. This format will continue until all tasks for the project have been listed. For this example, the Party Project will again be used, but expanded to show 3rd level sub-tasks.

Throw a Birthday Party Project Leveled Work Breakdown Structure

1.0 Planning
   1.1. Party Plan
   1.2. Budget
   1.3. Coordination
2.0 Dinner and Drinks
   2.1. Menu
   2.2. Shopping List
   2.3. Cooking
   2.4. Serving
3.0 Room and Equipment
   3.1. Room/Hall
       3.1.1. Book the Regal Room at the Hilton
   3.2. Table/Chairs
   3.3. Decorations
       3.3.1. Contact Party Store for Decorations
       3.3.2. Research and order floral centerpieces
   3.4. Table Settings
   3.5. Piano
4.0 Guests
   4.1. Guest List
   4.2. Invitations
   4.3. RSVPs
5.0 Staff
   5.1. Hall Coordinator
   5.2. Shopping List
   5.3. Cooking
   5.4. Serving
6.0 Entertainment
   6.1. Music
   6.2. Presentations
In constructing the WBS, the highest-level work component is grouped into manageable areas. From there the work is divided into activity areas and smaller tasks. The granularity of the tasks is based upon the experience of the workers on the project team.

The Schedule

The third key document in the Integrated Project Plan is the project schedule. This schedule is developed from the detailed task list within the WBS. However, the schedule is the WBS that is taken a step further. In order to create a project schedule, estimates need to be done for all of the tasks listed in the WBS. These estimates are actually a calculation of the length of time it will take to complete a specific task.

Using the WBS, the project manager and project team determine the sequencing of the tasks, and also which tasks are dependent on each other for completion. The act of compiling these tasks is called dependency analysis. So, each task will have an effort estimate tied to it, as well as dependencies. When all tasks are tied together, the path of the tasks is then examined. This path is called the Critical Path. PMBOK defines the critical path as “Generally, but not always, the sequence of schedule activities that determines the length of the project. Generally, it is the longest path through the project.”

Once the task effort has been determined and the task dependencies have been identified, a schedule can be created. In project management, a schedule is normally created in a software program that will show the tasks listed by WBS number, from the

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high-level summary areas down to the lowest-level tasks. Often times, people within the industry refer to a schedule as the Gantt Chart. Simply put, a Gantt Chart is a time-scaled horizontal bar chart showing the start, finish and overlapping of tasks on a timescale.

The Gantt Chart allows the project manager, the project team, and any and all interested parties to visualize the project and its progress in calendar or timeline terms. It can answer questions like: “Are we on time, ahead of or behind schedule?” “How much money has been spent so far?” “How many hours have been devoted to the project?”

A Gantt chart will be illustrated in chapter six, when the project plan for recital preparation is put together.

Schedule alterations occur when the number of work hours have been specified for the project team and project manager to work. For example, if the project team has determined that a specific task will take 20 hours to complete, it may end up taking a full calendar week to be accomplished depending on the number of available work hours during that week. McGhee and McAliney offer the following example:

We may indeed work a 40-hour week, but we are not productive for those entire hours. First, there is lunch. Subtract 5 hours from 40. Of the 35 hours left, 7.5 are for maintenance; coffee, bathroom, routine office interaction, and other events. This leaves the well-disciplined worker with 27.5 hours per business week left for actual work. If we are dedicated full time to one project task, it will take us almost one week to complete that task. Therefore, one 20-hour task will take almost one calendar week on our Gantt Chart, if the project worker is scheduled full time on that task. If he or she can devote only four hours per week to that task, the time span (duration) for that task will stretch out to 5 weeks on the Gantt Chart.

This scenario is a prime example of how task estimates should be done realistically.

McGhee and McAliney suggest using a formula to calculate the number of work hours in


36 Ibid, 93.
a day to determine the efficiency ratio. This ratio takes into account the actual number of
hours a person will work in a day, the actual number of days a person will work in a
month (minus sick/personal time) and even more time for perhaps a longer workday,
more coffee, etc. The effort is then converted to duration using this ratio, and the result is
the productivity level for a project worker. Once the productivity level has been factored,
a realistic time estimate can be determined for tasks. This is done primarily because real-
life situations happen. People get sick, child-care issues happen, or other everyday issues
occur, which will ultimately affect the on-time completion rate of tasks within the
project.

The Cost Spreadsheet

The final part of the Integrated Project Plan is the cost spreadsheet. In a business
context, resource cost is developed through what is called the “effort estimate.”
Normally, the project manager develops costs based on the Gantt Chart (calendar time
spent). In recital preparation, those types of costs may not play a role in this type of
project; however, there are still costs that should be identified and addressed according to
the WBS and project schedule. An example of a cost spreadsheet will be shown in
chapter six.

Summary

After many iterations and revisions to the project charter, the WBS, the schedule,
and cost estimates, a baseline project plan is created. Once the baseline project is
approved, the project can then move into the execution phase. The baseline plan plays a
significant role in overall plan management, because the plan is then frozen for a moment in time. After that point, the plan becomes alive. Changes to the plan will and do occur. Having a baseline (or the original) is like having a constant reference for your project.

Following chapter five, which addresses the many sides of recital preparation, an integrated project plan for recital preparation is created. This plan will be based on what has been explained and shown in this chapter as well as aspects of recital preparation, which are outlined in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RECITAL PREPARATION

Review of Recital Preparation and Performance-based Literature

Recital preparation and planning can encompass a wide variance of methodological, practical and technical forms. One might think of recital planning as merely choosing repertoire and practicing until the day of the performance arrives, but there is substantially more involved, if the intent of the recital is to be of more substance than, simply, performance.

As a part of this document, many sources have been reviewed that address recital planning and preparation, but each of its own scope and nature. Some sources align from the perspective of focusing on the performer’s psychology and awareness while at the instrument. Others come from a more strategic perspective, as with the documenting of actions and outcomes in the hope of a successful performance. Yet others originate from the perspective of drawing from past experiences, including analysis of past successes and failures.

In my research, many sources were found to aid the performer in planning for a performance. These include several books, articles from periodicals, and one Master’s-level thesis which is central to this discussion on preparation for a performance; all of which cover a helpful variety of topics within that area, and without which this essay’s premise would fall short of its expression of a well-rounded discourse in aligning two
seemingly different subjects – business management and performance preparedness – in a fashion to promote and advocate their alliance. A review of these materials will be incorporated into an overview and outline of a project plan to be covered later in this chapter.

The first book examined, *The Art of Practicing, A Guide to Making Music from the Heart*,37 is strictly devoted to practice strategies, including psychological, practical and spiritual approaches. It discusses at length methods of promoting effective practice so that the daily regimen of making music becomes something that the performer can enjoy, not dread. These methods are implemented in a ten-step approach, which the author divides into four categories: preparatory steps, physical techniques, psychological techniques and sensory and intellectual techniques. This author highlights only a few of the steps in the treatment of Bruser’s approach below, but ones that will be incorporated into the overall project plan for recital preparation because of their usefulness in addressing mind/body interrelationship for effective performance practice and implementation.

The first three initial steps which will be discussed herein are preparatory steps before actual practicing. Step one is titled simply, “Stretch.” This section focuses on preparing our bodies for the practice session. The author notes that “On the day of a concert, performers instinctively take good care of themselves. We rest, eat good food, avoid stressful activities, and generally do everything possible to relax and energize ourselves for making music.” However, “we seldom take such care before practicing. We typically approach our instrument in come-as-you-are fashion, carrying a load of

physical tension and mental clutter.” The author advocates stretching to mentally and physically prepare ourselves for practice, and has outlined 13 specific stretches for that purpose.

Step two is titled “Settling In.” This step centers around cultivating your own presence at the instrument. The author discusses being present with yourself and the music. This phrase “being present” has been widely employed as a spiritual term, and is often tied to meditation techniques, which the author discusses as a subtopic in this step. Beyond spirituality though, “presence” has significant meaning for musicians. As a performer, the importance of being engaged with your mind, body and heart can lead to a much higher sensory level with the music. In a practice situation, this presence makes us much more aware of the sounds we make as well as the motions we make with our bodies, leading to a more effective use of our time with the music. We can remove the clutter from our minds and focus solely on the task at hand.

Step three is titled “Tune into your Heart.” With such an esoteric title, one might wonder how that can be applied to preparing to practice. But in delving further into the author’s position, the reader finds the text centered again around mental preparation. The author is asking the reader to mentally prepare for practice by “listening” to his/her heart so that they might be able to convey the message or feelings that the composer intended. This may be accomplished by thinking of a happy memory, or perhaps even a time of emotional upheaval. “Whatever state of mind you’re in, this step allows you to penetrate the heart’s protective shield and enter the world of intense warmth and vitality.” She adds, “Recalling such feelings is how to tune into your heart.” The author suggests that

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38 Ibid, 29.
we reflect on those times to draw out those feelings to remember who we are and why we are here.

Step five, as part of the practical practicing approach, and the next phase which is being highlighted here, encourages us to follow our curiosity when we practice. This step addresses challenges we face when practicing, such as resistance, balance, meeting deadlines and adjusting to the amount and length of practice sessions. The author urges flexibility in practicing, so as to eliminate the sense of rigidity that, once decided, a plan cannot be adjusted.

In *The Perfect Wrong Note*, by William Westney, a book with an intriguing title, the author examines the approach to practicing and performing, beginning with “first starts” with music as children. One specific chapter which this author believes beneficial and of particular import to this essay is chapter four, “Step by Step, A Guide to Healthy Practicing.” In it, Mr. Westney provides a process to practicing that is thorough, yet not so overwhelming that most musicians could not find measurable benefit in its application and use. This author found his insight into practicing fits well into developing a plan for recital preparation. Westney’s 10-step approach to healthy practicing is as follows:

1. Warm up in a leisurely way; awaken to your body
2. Remind yourself what the instrument feels like
3. Remind yourself of your general intentions for practicing
4. Choose a section to focus on – decide exactly where you will begin and end
5. Imagine in energetic detail how you want the specific passage to feel

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39 Ibid.

6. Plunge in with gusto – no caution!
7. Observe results closely
8. Relax and take a moment to digest.
9. Decide, on the basis of the evidence, whether to repeat the same steps, consolidate your gains, or move on to another focus.
10. Clear your head every twenty minutes or so by getting up and walking around for a couple of minutes. This is a highly concentrated activity, and breaks keep you refreshed in body and mind.\(^{41}\)

Westney’s approach to practicing was found exemplary in its rationale for developing an individual plan to practice.

Practicing also cannot have an all-purpose recipe because each musical piece is unique and presents unique challenges. People are also unique in their personalities and learning strategies or preferences; some love methodical routines, some thrive on novelty and intuition, and some want rational explanations for everything. What works wonderfully for one may not be so good for another; thus there are countless effective ‘right’ ways to practice anything, and it’s not very helpful to offer doctrinaire advice.\(^{42}\)

Additionally, Westney addresses the art of performing, in which he includes information on the challenges of and opportunities presented by the performer’s inward focus, as well as the outward focus of communicating with the audience.

The book *Musical Performance,\(^{43}\)* edited by John Rink, is a collection of articles on performance in music. It is divided into four sections: Conceptions and Preconceptions, Learning to Perform, Making Music, and Interpreting Performance. According to the editor, “The sixteen essays in this volume are intended to unravel the complexities of performance and to bring to light aspects of learning, playing and


\(^{42}\)Ibid, 47.

responding to music relevant to performances at all levels.” Although most of the book focuses on the psychological studies of music performance, it was found it to be accessible because of its applicability to an integral portion of this essay and, as this author will note, to music students and music teachers as well. It is well organized with an extensive bibliography for further reading. One article in particular, “Preparing for Performance” by Stefan Reid, is particularly appropriate to the subject of this essay. Part of his opening paragraph is compelling to the planning argument in the scope of recital planning. He states “Most performances are one-off events, rarely lasting more than a couple of hours at most, but they are cultivated during days, weeks or even years of intense work.” He goes further, stating:

> Whether practice is intended to develop technique or formulate an interpretation, it will be most effective when the musician has clear, achievable goals and has decided on the means of realizing them. The most common approach is to simplify the task through the division of the musical material into small chunks of accomplishable size to ensure a measurable degree of progress.

This is a verifiable example of how musical practice can be incorporated within into an overall project plan, by breaking large sections of the overall goal into smaller, targeted, achievable goals.

The next book reviewed, *Musical Excellence,* is another collection of articles on performance in music. It is written in three sections: Prospects and Limits, Practice

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44 Ibid, xi.


46 Ibid.


Strategies and Techniques, and Interventions. Each article is written by differing authors, many of whom have advanced degrees in psychology. The book’s editor states that the collection is intended “to assist musicians in developing personal strategies that will enable them to ‘feel like performers’ and to perform to the best of their ability.

Bringing together the findings of applied research on performance enhancement, based in many cases on insights and intuitions contributed by experience performers themselves, this volume offers guidance to musicians on types of performance preparation that have been shown to help in developing and maintaining musical excellence.49

Additionally, the editor advocates that many of these techniques can “assist in reducing the performance-related anxiety that can make the experience less rewarding that it should be.”50

Of all the books examined, Musical Excellence comes closest in aligning project management with recital preparation. Although many of the techniques developed in its pages are not formally recognized as being a part and parcel of project management, this author contends they are. For example, the chapter titled “Strategies for Individual Practice” advocates three phases of strategies: planning and preparation of practice; execution of practice; observation and evaluation of practice. The model is shown on the subsequent page.


50 Ibid.
Fig. 5. Strategies for Individual Practice

There is a direct correlation from these three phases to project management, therefore the planning and preparation phase relates directly to the startup and planning phase of a project; the execution of practice relates to the execution phase of the project; and the evaluation/metastrategies relates to the monitoring and control phases of project management. Further explanation of the project management phases will occur in chapter five when the elements of project management are explained in detail.

Stewart Gordon’s book, *Mastering the Art of Performance, a Primer for Musicians*,\(^\text{52}\) addresses the complexities and demands of performance. The author examines the planning stages of performers to aid them in determining their strengths and

\(^{51}\) Ibid, 86.

weaknesses. He then develops exercises to help musicians (1) analyze why they perform, (2) set goals for performance, and (3) develop a performance philosophy. He addresses performance anxiety as well as strategies to manage criticism following a performance, the first of which this author has seen within performance-related materials.

Although loaded with information for the performer, the book can overwhelm at times. The author addresses many problem areas for the performer and provides exercises in order to improve. This author is most impressed, however, with his writing on why musicians perform, and the importance for performers to have their own philosophy for performing. There is, indeed, an art to performing, or at least there can be. Gordon’s contention is that many times musicians go out and simply perform, without much planning or forethought, and certainly no philosophy behind the performance, namely, why?

Gordon addresses four areas in his book on why we perform, which shall be incorporated later in this chapter in the recital preparation outline. He states that there are four possible areas of performance, all worthy of exploration. They include: A response to a challenge; A desire for a reward; A love for our specific field of human endeavor; and A service for an ideal or greater cause.53

Other performance-related books focus more intently on the psychology of performance preparation, drawn from writer’s experiences working with musicians and noting/analyzing their mental states. One such book, The Performer Prepares,54 is a comprehensive approach to performance technique. This author “borrowed heavily from


the work of pioneers in sports psychology, especially their techniques developed for training Olympic athletes.”55 These ascribed techniques were used with athletes to “attain optimum performance,”56 and likewise, the author feels that these techniques can also be applied to musicians. Throughout the book, Mr. Caldwell writes about several performers, citing their individual performance issues, and the techniques used to overcome them. These techniques evolve from a psychological perspective, including imaging your performance. But from a planning perspective, Caldwell created his Action/Outcome Grid, which, in itself, is a wonderful tool for use in preparation, execution and post-performance follow-up.

After my review of numerous articles, this citations for this essay have been narrowed to seven selections offering information about general recital preparation, such as programming and determining the proper amount of time to learn a piece or pieces. One article, Solo Performing Odyssey,57 by Gail Berenson in the American Music Teacher, encompasses the journey of an artist who returns to the performance stage. The author writes of her experience in preparing for a recital after a 10-year hiatus from performing. Ms. Berenson serves as the example of a “returning performer”, as defined in chapter one of this essay. She touches on a few areas that are addressed in this essay’s planning stages of a recital, such as determining the program, and the learning and subsequent memorization timeframe needed for repertoire. She also includes a post-performance analysis, which I would also advocate into a recital/project plan. One

55 Ibid, 3.
56 Ibid.
interesting aspect of the article is the author’s conclusion on why pianists are, in great numbers, abandoning solo recitals. Issues such as the lack of focus, memory, feelings of isolation and finding adequate practice time are addressed.

My next referenced article, The Solo Recital: A Systematic Approach to Preparation and Performance, is from the ITG Journal. It is clearly written from an instrumentalist’ point of view and focuses on college-level student recitals, but it is an article that would benefit most all musicians if reviewed from time to time. What was found of special interest was the author’s information on choosing repertoire – he discusses choosing appropriate repertoire based on the performer’s strengths and weaknesses, which may include technical proficiency and tone quality. Additionally, he advises on program order and how it relates to repertoire choice – types of works and how they fit into a program. The author discusses practice techniques and addresses endurance when it comes to the day of the performance.

An offbeat, yet interesting and useful article, Pianist’s Palate: An Approach to Programming, by Robin McCabe, is a one-page article presenting a brilliant comparison of programming for a piano recital to preparing a five-star meal. “The performing artist’s creative process is much like that of a chef: he prepares his recital diligently, not only thinking of each ‘dish’ he will serve, but of how and when to present each offering so as to effect a balanced and nourishing evening.” The author goes on to say that “The art of programming demands study, cultivation and a street-sense with


60 Ibid.
regard to the order of the music.” The author does not provide a great deal of information, but what he does give is solid and worth mentioning in this essay when determining a program during the initial planning phase of the recital.

A Musical Celebration: A Practical Guide to Planning and Hosting Your Own Recital, was written by a violist for Strings magazine, who decided to return to performing after being away from it for several years. Again, this serves as yet another example of a returning performer. In it, Hook discusses eleven points on planning the recital, but it is her first point that this author found to be the most useful and one that deserves inclusion in my essay: “Ask yourself, Why am I offering a recital? The answer to this question will set the tone for the rest of your planning.” Of all of the literature I have examined to date, this is the first instance that I have found that asks the necessary question: “Why do a recital? For what purpose or end?” Further, the posing of this basic question demands the response of incorporating a planning phase of the recital. And although this book is written for string players, the information is readily transferable to pianists.

In addition to books and articles, there was credible information found for this essay in a Master’s level thesis written in 1998 by Beverly L. MacDonald, “A Journal of Practice and Research for the Preparation of a Graduate Piano Recital,” for The College of New Jersey in 1998. MacDonald’s thesis is a detailed description of the author’s

61 Ibid.


63 Ibid, 24.

process of preparing for a graduate piano recital, specifically to fulfill graduate degree requirements, commencing in 1995 and continuing through to the solo piano recital given in 1998. The author brings strong organization to the paper, notable in detail in each of the sections, and encompassing techniques used in practice and in research for the recital program. It closes with a discussion on the topic of self-evaluation. MacDonald also incorporates advice on reducing performance anxiety and techniques for positively managing anxiety. Performance anxiety can play a large part in determining the outcome of a performance, and the management of emerging or long-standing performance anxiety should be addressed in the project plan for the recital if performance anxiety is a known problem for the performer. Overall, this author found MacDonald’s paper to be thorough and quite beneficial in my own research for this essay.

Informal Consultation with Colleagues on Recital Preparation

The second part of this chapter looks to share information on recital preparation gathered from colleagues who are on faculty at various colleges and universities, and who actively maintain a performance career. The three faculty members in informal consultation are: James Nalley, DMA, Assistant Professor of Piano at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida; Tomoko Kanamaru, DMA, Assistant Professor of Music (piano) at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, New Jersey; and Nitza Kats, Associate Professor of Music (piano) at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. Each is a member of their respective piano faculties and performs regularly at their institution, as well as throughout the United States.
A series of questions for each colleague was formulated centered on how they prepare for a recital. Each colleague received the same questions. Their responses are summarized below, with the raw responses contained in the appendix of this essay.

Question One: Have you ever given a recital where you needed to arrange for anything yourself? If yes, what were the types of things that you had to arrange or establish?

The respondents had varying answers for this question, as it mostly depended on the venue. Nitza Kats usually has to arrange things for her recitals, the others, usually not. James Nalley and Tomoko Kanamaru are represented by artist management, and with the exception of CD sales, have most of the recital details arranged prior to the performance.

Question Two: When planning to perform, do you establish a recital date first, or do you select repertoire first and then set a date? What types of parameters do you use to determine these things?

Again, the respondents had varying answers. James Nalley chooses his repertoire first, and then he (or his agents) searches for performance opportunities. As applied faculty at Radford University, Nitza Kats stated that the performance date is always chosen well in advance (often a year or more). She chooses the repertoire after the date has been established.

Question Three: Do you have a method on choosing repertoire? How do you determine the speed in which you learn something in order to meet the given deadline? Do you ever document what you need to learn in a timeline or set interim goals?

Each of the respondents chooses repertoire differently. Tomoko Kanamaru is primarily a collaborative artist, so usually the repertoire is chosen for her. She states that she learns music fairly fast so that she can expand her basic repertoire to ease preparation
for future performances. James Nalley plans well in advance but aims for a fairly balanced program. Nitza Kats tries to maintain balance in her programs but often incorporates themes and pieces with key relationships.

Question Four: How do you structure your practice sessions? Do you prepare ahead of time what you will work on?

Most of the respondents do have some sort of an idea or plan prior to sitting down at the piano. With limited practice time, James Nalley and Nitza Kats seem to focus on a particular movement of a multi-movement work, new music, or sections within the pieces.

Question Five: Have you or any of your students missed a set deadline for a performance? What was the outcome? Did you perform what you had originally intended?

With the exception of a severe weather issues, none of the respondents have missed a deadline for performance. All of the respondents, at one point in time or another, have had a student miss a performance. James Nalley acknowledges that missing deadlines for performances happens many times with students; however, this is the reason they are in school, to learn about professionalism and time management.

Question Six: For yourself or your students, have you ever considered using a documented method for proper practice, planning and execution of a recital? If so, what is that method?

The respondents each had a different response to this question. James Nalley incorporates pre-planned practice sessions into a daily routine. This combination usually helps him meet a deadline. Nitza Kats does not have such documentation, although had
students who documented their recital experiences in a journal which was shared with others in a classroom environment.

Question Seven: For the purposes of future planning and execution, do you ever document learning experiences from a performance?

Both Nitza Kats and Tomoko Kanamaru stated that they do not document performance experiences. Tomoko Kanamaru notes that due to the number of performances she gives, she would rather spend the time at the piano instead of the computer. Nitza Kats states that she has documented issues with stage crews and recording programs. James Nalley does document things such as memory slips and items that may enhance a future performance.

Overview and Outline of Recital Preparation

In order to put a plan together for a recital, one must begin with three initial steps:

1) Make the decision to do the recital.
2) Outline the decision areas: who, what, where, when, why.
3) Develop a first-level recital plan.

Once the decision has been made to perform and the accompanying justification has been documented, a plan can then be formulated. Prior to tying this information to project management principles – it is necessary to first create an outline from the five areas of justification: who, what, when, where and why.

Conventionally the last of the Five W’s, – why – this ending point will be this author’s starting point within the outline. Why perform? Why give a recital? This question should be answered at the beginning, because it will influence all aspects of an initial outline. As noted earlier in this chapter in a statement by Sara Ann Hook for
Strings magazine, the decision to perform should be understood within oneself and documented. The documentation is necessary so that if the performer needs a reminder of why they are performing, the intended or stated goals are available for review. Having that documentation might provide some perspective and clarity when issues arise during preparation. However, within that documentation, there are some questions to be answered: Are you performing because you have been asked by someone to perform? Or perhaps you have a willingness to share your music or play a certain type of music you love? Do you have something to say at the instrument or are you doing it for enjoyment? Is it pure communication, or simply pride? These are all valid reasons, but whatever the reason, it should be documented. Many times through the preparation process of a recital, it is easy to lose sight of why musicians perform at all. Having that initial documentation is a great reminder of our performance and goals, and can perhaps influence a higher level of preparation.

The next area to be examined in the outline of recital preparation is “who.” Who will be performing? Will you be giving a solo recital, or will it be a chamber recital with, perhaps, a small ensemble? Also, who will be involved in the preparation of your recital? Do you have a coach or teacher? Do you have friends, family or professionals available for smaller performances or artistic advice? Do you know a qualified technician who can be available prior to the performance? These people should all be included in the “who” section of your outline.

The third area of consideration is “what.” What kind of event will you have? Will your event be just a recital, or is it for charity or perhaps a free-will offering? Will
the event have a reception? And what will you program for this event? Will you choose
new music versus previously-performed music or a combination of the two? Will you
choose a “balanced” chronological program so that there is equal genre representation or
will you present a themed recital? Will you perform a newly composed or modern work,
or a premiere or a commissioned work? Will you incorporate key relationships or
musical ideas among the pieces?

The fourth area of consideration of the outline is “when.” When will you give
this recital? Does the date you choose give you an appropriate timeframe to learn new
music? Is there an appropriate timeframe to set interim performance goals? And what
time of the year is best to give your recital? Is there an influence of work schedule,
holidays and/or vacations? Which day of the week is best, and what time of the day is
best for you to perform?

The last area examined for our initial outline is “where.” Where will the recital be
given? When the venue is chosen, what is its availability? What is the condition and
viability of the instrument? Is the quality of the venue appropriate for the performance in
which you want to give? Is there an ability to record the recital at that venue? Are there
costs involved? What kind of acoustics are in the hall and what will be needed musically
to make adjustments at the time of performance?

All of these questions should be answered as the performance plan is put together.
As a start, the initial outline of a plan might look something like this.

Who:

- Yourself (solo recital)
- Chamber or Ensemble recital
- Other participants (coach/teacher, colleagues, technician, family/friends)
What:
- Repertoire/programming
- Charity/Free-will offering
- Reception

When:
- Appropriate timeframe to learn new music based on:
  - Available practice time
  - Learned skills
  - Motivation
- Appropriate timeframe to set interim performance goals, performance anxiety issues (if necessary)
- Time/day of the year (around work schedule, holidays, vacation, etc.)

Where:
- Choosing the venue:
  - Availability
  - Condition/viability of the instrument
  - Quality of the venue/appropriateness
  - Acoustics
- Ability to record performance (if warranted or necessary)
- Cost for venue rental
- Rehearsal time in venue
- Audience capacity

Why:
- Documented decision in wanting to perform
  - Willingness to share music/gift
  - Have something to say/communication
  - Pride, joy of performing
  - Willingness to perform certain types of music.
- Requested performance through contractual obligation

Summary

After reviewing many sources on recital preparation, there were significant, although previously unproven, relationships to project management principles and methodology found. Many of the authors and surveyed colleagues advocate planning, strategizing, and plan execution as necessary components for success in performance –
the same approach as the principles of project management followed in the business world.

Now with the initial outline of the recital preparation documented, the tie-in to formal, project management methodology can begin. Within the following chapter, a project plan for a recital will be developed in outline form, using the Integrated Project Plan framework, provided at the end of chapter four.
CHAPTER SIX
APPLICATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES
TO RECITAL PREPARATION

At this point in this essay, and for the purpose of aligning project management theory within the conscripts of recital performance, all pertinent information has been laid out for the creation of an Integrated Project Plan for recital preparation through employment of project management principles and methodology. The necessary tools and techniques have been outlined; the applicable terms and concepts have been explained. Now it is time to move forward and create a baseline plan for recital preparation. It should be noted, however, that the recital preparation plan put forth in this chapter is fictitious, and created solely for the illustration of the project plan and project life cycle.

Integrated Project Plan for Recital Preparation

The recital project plan begins with the idea or concept of giving a recital. In reviewing project management elements, as well as elements from the recital outline from the previous chapters, the initial groundwork has been laid out for large planning areas of the Integrated Project Plan (IPP): the Project Charter, the Work Breakdown Structure, the Project Schedule and the Cost Spreadsheet. Before proceeding any further down the planning path, the project needs to be named. Many times in a business context, the project name can be very important to the success of a project, depending on the project itself. For example, in a high-level, high-security government project, the
name is often a veiled acronym, or abbreviated so that the nature of the project is not apparent to even company insiders. Project requirements for such projects are often written with that mandate as part of the contract. In this essay, and for lack of a better title and simplicity in illustration, the project will be named Spring 2008 Recital.

In order to apply project management to our recital outline, it is necessary to review those five parts of who, what, where, when, and why, and see how they will make up our four-part Integrated Project Plan. I have created a diagram to better illustrate how these items fit into the IPP.

![Diagram of the Integrated Project Plan](image)

**Fig. 6. The Integrated Project Plan**

Notice that all the areas of the recital preparation outline serve as inputs to the project charter. Those inputs from the charter make up the WBS and the schedule. The Project Charter, WBS and schedule then serve as inputs to the cost spreadsheet. Once those documents are completed, a baseline Integrated Project Plan (IPP) is created.
The Project Charter

To review, the project charter is the steering wheel for the entire project. It provides a description of the project’s intended work and expectations for results. Remember that the charter, as referenced in chapter four, should include the following: a project goal statement, scope statement, project objectives, risks, assumptions, constraints, the primary project driver, and a listing of the stakeholders of the project.

As stated prior in this essay, project charters do not have to be complex documents. Notice the simple nature of the one that follows. It is concise and to the point, stating in one page, all pertinent information about the project.

A project charter should leave no room for doubt or speculation on what is required or what needs to be accomplished at a high-level for the project. On that note, the charter should spell out the ends, and not the means to get there. Details of the project are incorporated into the WBS, schedule and cost spreadsheet. Given that, our project charter for the Spring Recital 2008 may look like the one in Figure 7.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name:</th>
<th>Spring Recital 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Goal Statement:</td>
<td>To perform a high-level, solo piano recital. This recital will be performed because of: 1) a love of music 2) a requested performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Scope:</td>
<td>Recital will be approximately seventy minutes in length, memorized. Program will include works from classical, romantic and modern periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project objectives:</td>
<td>To perform works from all music genres To highlight a new composer’s work To feel comfortable performing publicly again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant risks:</td>
<td>Memorization Performing a new work; effectiveness Failure in front of audience Musical message not sent to audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions:</td>
<td>Venue of recital is available and viable for a recital Instrument at venue is viable Feel confident in musical abilities enough to perform in public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints:</td>
<td>Available practice time Lack of experience performing new works Budget for hall rental, reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Project Driver:</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders:</td>
<td>Project Manager (me) Project team: Teacher/coach Support system: family, friends Other: colleagues/musicians Piano technician Venue contact person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7. The Project Charter
Also worth noting is that the activities that are occurring in this stage of the project belong to the initiating areas of our project management process group. Since the charter is intact and covers all aspects of the project, the charter can be signed-off on by the project manager – and stakeholders, if necessary. The project kick-off can now begin, and we can move from the initiating processes to the planning processes of the project.

The Work Breakdown Structure

The next document to be created in our Integrated Project Plan for recital preparation is our Work Breakdown Structure, an outline of the work that needs to be done for our project. The WBS will address some of the aspects of the recital outline, although some will also fall into the project schedule and cost spreadsheet.

To create a WBS, the project manager and project team members (if necessary and when available) brainstorm on the work to be done. From the scope statement and project objectives, we can get a high-level sense of what needs to be accomplished. All ideas are written down so work areas can be grouped together. If the WBS is formed by subject area (as illustrated by the outline in chapter four) the high-level areas will look like the one in Figure 8:

**Spring Recital 2008 High-Level WBS:**

1.0 Planning  
2.0 Programming  
3.0 Venue  
4.0 Communication  
5.0 Performance
Or, as shown previously, using a graphic model with a building-block approach.

![Spring Recital 2008 Project High-Level Work Breakdown Structure](image)

Fig. 8. The Spring Recital 2008 Project High-Level Work Breakdown Structure

The next step, following the documentation of the high-level WBS, is to document all levels of tasks within this outline. The documentation is not complex and can be done in any fashion – as simple as using a legal pad and pencil, or as formal an electronic spreadsheet. The bottom-line approach to flushing-out tasks is that all ideas, even the most basic and mundane, should be considered and written down. After everything has been put on the table, the project team can decide later what should be included in the overall WBS, and at what level of detail. A graphic representation of the next level down on the WBS follows.
Fig. 9. The Spring Recital 2008 Project Lower-Level Work Breakdown Structure

To illustrate and drill down to lower-level tasks, let’s focus on the first area in the WBS – planning. The elements of the project plan, and what we do for the project in those terms, need to all be accounted for in the WBS. All activities related to initiating and planning should be included in this area. All work associated with the creation of the project charter, the work breakdown structure, the project schedule, the cost spreadsheet and the integrated project plan is put in this area. Additionally, any changes to the project plan are accounted for in this area as well, under the sub-section Change Control.
The next areas of focus fall under the ongoing activities of project execution and the monitoring and controlling aspects of the project life cycle. The project has been formally kicked-off, and all activities past the planning stages have begun. It is in these areas that the recital program is determined, the performance venue is chosen, and the communications about the recital are captured. The multi-leveled WBS is as follows, outlining the five areas of concentration for the projects, and all tasks that need to be accomplished under those headings, in graduated outline form.

1.0 Planning
   1.1. Creation of the Project Charter
      1.1.1. Outline and document project charter areas
      1.1.2. Write project goal statement
      1.1.3. Determine statement of scope
      1.1.4. Determine project objectives
      1.1.5. Document relevant risks
      1.1.6. Document assumptions
      1.1.7. Document constraints
      1.1.8. Determine primary project driver
      1.1.9. Determine and document stakeholders
   1.2. Sign-off of project charter
   1.3. Creation of the WBS
      1.3.1. Outline high-level WBS areas for Project Plan
         1.3.1.1. Planning
         1.3.1.2. Programming
         1.3.1.3. Venue
         1.3.1.4. Communication
         1.3.1.5. Performance
      1.3.2. Development of lower level tasks
         1.3.2.1. Planning
         1.3.2.2. Programming
         1.3.2.3. Venue
         1.3.2.4. Communication
         1.3.2.5. Performance
   1.4. Creation of Project Schedule
      1.4.1. Input WBS data into project management software
      1.4.2. Conduct task-dependency analysis
      1.4.3. Determine Date of Recital (March 22, 2008)
      1.4.4. Determination/Analysis of date-driven project
1.4.5. Determine project milestones
1.4.6. Incorporate project deliverables
1.5. Creation of Cost Worksheet
   1.5.1. Determine relevant costs based on project charter, WBS, and project schedule
   1.5.2. Input data into cost worksheet
   1.5.3. Compare and reconcile costs against budget
1.6. Creation of Baseline Integrated Project Plan
   1.6.1. Integrate and review elements from project charter, WBS, schedule and cost worksheet to develop IPP
   1.6.2. Sign-off on IPP
1.7. Change Control
   1.7.1. Determine change control process for project plan

2.0 Programming
   2.1. Determine represented musical genre from scope statement: classical, romantic, modern composers
      2.1.1. Choose recital pieces based on length and scope statement
      2.1.2. Determine programming order
      2.1.3. Determine program encore
      2.1.4. Purchase music
   2.2. Review recital programming with coach/teacher or other project colleagues

3.0 Venue
   3.1. Research performing venues for viability of room and piano
      3.1.1. Churches
      3.1.2. Music store recital halls
      3.1.3. Schools
         3.1.3.1. Colleges and Universities
         3.1.3.2. High Schools, Middle Schools
      3.1.4. Civic Buildings
   3.2. Determine time in hall for practice and performance
   3.3. Research costs
      3.3.1. Room rental
      3.3.2. Piano technician
   3.4. Determine Reception
      3.4.1. Food/Drinks
      3.4.2. Determine reception costs
      3.4.3. Determine length of reception
      3.4.4. Determine equipment/setup needed
         3.4.4.1. Refrigerator/coolers
         3.4.4.2. Tables/chairs

4.0 Communication
   4.1. Publicity/Advertisement
      4.1.1. Determine recital advertisement type
4.1.1.1. Posters
4.1.1.2. Website
4.1.1.3. Email distribution list
4.1.1.4. Invitations
   4.1.1.4.1. Paper
   4.1.1.4.2. Email

4.2. Program
   4.2.1. Create recital program
   4.2.2. Write program notes (if applicable)

4.3. Determine printing/duplicating costs

4.4. Recording
   4.4.1. Determine recording costs
   4.4.2. Book recording engineer
   4.4.3. Review equipment needed (if necessary)
   4.4.4. Review venue set-up requirements

5.0 Performance
5.1. Document changes from baseline plan for project
5.2. Performance related tasks prior to Recital
   5.2.1. Determine practice schedule/routine leading up to performance
   5.2.2. Determine Practice Routine
   5.2.3. Practice for Recital
   5.2.4. Set up/Receive lesson times with Teacher/Coach
   5.2.5. Determine recital performance milestones
      5.2.5.1. Perform Beethoven Bagatelles for Teacher/Coach
      5.2.5.2. Perform Chopin Mazurkas for Teacher/Coach
      5.2.5.3. Perform Modern work for Teacher/Coach
      5.2.5.4. Perform Schumann Kinderszenen for Teacher/Coach
      5.2.5.5. Perform Liszt Valse Caprice for Teacher/Coach
      5.2.5.6. Perform Liszt Ballade No. 1 for Teacher/Coach
   5.2.6. Book project team, other stakeholders for performance milestones
   5.2.7. Perform Recital Run-through on own
   5.2.8. Perform Recital Run-through for project team members in recital hall
   5.2.9. Determine performance outfit and cost
   5.2.10. Purchase reception food/drinks

5.3. Day of performance tasks
   5.3.1. Determine routine for day of performance
   5.3.2. Perform sound check with recording engineer
   5.3.3. Verify reception items in place

5.4. Day of Recital
   5.4.1. Conduct day of performance routine
   5.4.2. Perform Recital!

5.5. Follow-up with recording engineer to receive recital recording
The WBS will go through much iteration until a final version is drafted and approved. As the WBS is developed, one may find that not as much detail is needed as listed above. Some people require more so that they know that all t’s are crossed and i’s are dotted; others do not. The comfort level for detail tasks is at the discretion of the project manager, and in the case of recital preparation, most likely, it will be you.

The Project Schedule

The project schedule is created from the task list in the Work Breakdown Structure. To develop the schedule, a project management scheduling tool will be used, for ease of data entry as well as the relationships between tasks, otherwise known as task-depency analysis. The scheduling tool will be examined in closer detail following the close of this chapter.

Scheduling software is not difficult to use, however it does take some time and patience if you are new to the technology. Essentially, the software functions as a large database, capturing information from the task list. This information can be manipulated and shown in many different ways. When used properly, this tool indicates how long a task will take to complete, based on the available resources and the number of work hours dedicated to each given task. It can also show the relationships between the tasks, and the start, stop and completion percentages of tasks.

Each task has an entry for duration, and a start and stop date. As the project manager and team work through inputting the WBS, the duration of the tasks are entered. If tasks are linked together properly, the duration of each specific component influences
when all other tasks can begin or stop. If tasks have been linked together using the software, the tool will automatically force the task to begin on the next available date.

For the purposes of this essay, the created graduated WBS outline for recital planning has been taken and input to a software scheduling tool. See the figure below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>WBS Task Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Spring 2008 Recital</td>
<td>298 days</td>
<td>Fri 6/1/07</td>
<td>Tue 4/1/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>23 days</td>
<td>Fri 6/1/07</td>
<td>Sat 6/23/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Creation of the Project Charter</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Fri 6/1/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td>Outline and document project charter areas</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Fri 6/1/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2</td>
<td>Write project goal statement</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Sat 6/2/07</td>
<td>Sun 6/3/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.3</td>
<td>Determine statement of scope</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Sun 6/3/07</td>
<td>Sun 6/3/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.4</td>
<td>Determine project objectives</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.5</td>
<td>Document relevant risks</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.6</td>
<td>Document assumptions</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.7</td>
<td>Document constraints</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.8</td>
<td>Determine primary project driver</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.9</td>
<td>Determine document stakeholders</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/4/07</td>
</tr>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Tue 6/5/07</td>
<td>Tue 6/5/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
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<td>6 days</td>
<td>Wed 6/6/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1</td>
<td>Outline high-level WBS areas for project plan</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Wed 6/6/07</td>
<td>Sun 6/10/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.1.1</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Wed 6/6/07</td>
<td>Wed 6/6/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Thu 6/6/07</td>
<td>Thu 6/6/07</td>
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<td>1.3.1.3</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Fri 6/8/07</td>
<td>Fri 6/8/07</td>
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<td>1.3.1.4</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Sat 6/9/07</td>
<td>Sat 6/9/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.1.5</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Sun 6/10/07</td>
<td>Sun 6/10/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2</td>
<td>Development and expansion of lower level tasks</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.2.1</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
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<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
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<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.2.5</td>
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<td>1 day</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/11/07</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
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<td>7 days</td>
<td>Tue 6/12/07</td>
<td>Mon 6/18/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1</td>
<td>Input WBS data into project management software</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Tue 6/12/07</td>
<td>Tue 6/12/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.2</td>
<td>Conduct task-dependency analysis</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Wed 6/13/07</td>
<td>Sun 6/17/07</td>
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Fig. 10. The Spring Recital 2008 Project Schedule and Gantt Chart

There are many things to take notice of in this diagram. First, from left to right, the scheduling tool gives each task an ID number. This aids in the task dependency analysis because tasks are easily linked together in another data field by that number.

Second, the WBS outline number is readily visible and next to the task description. The graduated outline enables the user to more easily understand which tasks are higher level tasks and which ones are sub-tasks. Each task has a duration tied to it, so once that is
calculated and the tasks are linked together, the project manager has a much better idea of how long things will take to be completed. For example, task #12 is the Project Charter sign-off. This task may not begin until all tasks (1-11) have been completed. A duration of one day has been indicated for all of those tasks, with their completion on June 4. If task 11 is made the predecessor of task 12, the charter signoff will occur June 5.

As stated earlier in this essay, in a business context, the schedule would be set up so that the tasks are estimated by the number of available resources, and the number of hours tied to those resources. It gives a concise view of how long tasks will take for completion.

The graphic to the right of the text is what is called the Gantt Chart. The Gantt Chart is a graphic representation of the duration of the tasks over a period of time. It also indicates the dependencies of tasks and project milestones, so that the project manager and team can have a display of knowing when the most important tasks are due.

For the purposes of illustration, the project begins on June 1, 2007, and ends on April 1, 2008. The project milestones include performances for the teacher or coach for each piece, as well as for project team members. The project culminates with the recital happening on March 22, 2008, followed by the printing of the recital’s CD, and documentation of lessons learned from the project. Since the project had the projected date of March 22, 2008 chosen for the recital, the project manager (you) are then forced to work within the confines of that time period; ergo, constituting a date-driven project. This date can be a good motivator, but also may not be a realistic time-frame to give a recital if there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. venue, time available, and repertoire
selection). However, according to our colleague interviews, that is often the case with performing artists – dates must be chosen first, followed by the performance plan.

Creating a project schedule can be involved and complex, but it is not necessary in order to produce a product or deliverable of good quality. A good rule of thumb is to make sure that the work in the WBS is well-organized and at a manageable level. Find the happy medium between the minutia-level tasks and the higher-level tasks, and the work will remain controllable.

The Cost Spreadsheet

According to the Work Breakdown Structure, there are several cost areas that must be accounted for. This may be done separately within a spreadsheet, or it may be incorporated into the project schedule by way of the scheduling tool. Again, the tool operates like a database, so the view is changed to show tasks that may have additional costs tied to it. In a business context, all tasks will have costs tied to them because of their association with available resources (people) assigned to the project.

As the view in the project schedule has changed from task input to cost input, notice the following differences in Figure 11.
Fig. 11. The Spring Recital 2008 Project Cost Worksheet

At this point, the total cost so far of the doing this recital is $900. In this project, not all tasks have costs tied to them. However, the cost of hall rental, the reception, technician and formal wear (not shown in the figure) for the recital all should be calculated in the overall planning of this recital. This spreadsheet indicates those estimated costs, as well as the actual costs. Once the money has been spent, you are able to determine the variance between the two and make changes to the plan as necessary.

The Baseline Integrated Project Plan

Since the Project Charter, the Work Breakdown Structure, the Project Schedule and the Cost Spreadsheet have been created, we can now call this our Baseline Integrated Project Plan. It is at this point that the project plan is frozen for a moment in time. This
does not mean however, that the plan is immoveable or unchangeable. It simply means that you follow this plan until you encounter a change. If a change needs to be made, then appropriate measures are followed to ensure that all aspects of the change are accounted for in the project plan. If just simply means a change in documentation, then that is all it entails. Again, this does not need to be complex, the process just needs to work for the project manager and the project team.

Project Execution

It is at this point in the project where the actual work of the project begins. Once the baseline plan has been approved, activities of the project can start; the kickoff of the project becomes official, often times marked with some type of project team get-together. In the case of piano performance, perhaps this can be something more personal – a small gathering of its key people. At any rate, it is up to the discretion of the project manager and the project budget. Such gatherings can be a great morale booster for the team members or an informal meeting to introduce all parties, no matter what type of event is taking place.

Additionally, this is where the importance of the project schedule comes into play. Within the scheduling tool, one has the ability to view which tasks start via the calendar. These views are pre-programmed into the application for ease of use. The project manager or team members can simply look at the calendar to know which tasks start when.

As the project progresses through the life cycle, change can and does happen. For example, say you are not able to meet a performance milestone with one of the repertoire
pieces on your program. What happens? Is the recital compromised? Not necessarily. One can decide that a milestone date has to change in order to meet another date, or to accommodate life’s happenings. Unexpected things happen, so there may be deviations from the original plan. This becomes the point where good planning is an absolute necessity of the project plan. If most other elements in the plan are solid and on track, there is a good possibility that the project will still function at the proper pace and meet the intended deadline and deliverable.

Within the scheduling tool, the plan can be saved as the baseline: a picture in time of the original plan. Once changes are made, the tool captures that information as well, noting variance in text and graphics. As tasks are completed throughout the project life cycle, the project manager indicates that in the project schedule. Not only can this be a powerful tool to make sure the work is being accomplished, it can also serve as a motivator – seeing forest for the trees, if you will. Graphic illustration can be an encouraging mark of performance when the completion of tasks is indicated and milestones are met.

Project Closure

When all tasks have been completed, the project officially can be closed. As with a project kick-off, there are often times when a party or some type of celebration is conducted for all of the hard work done by everyone to achieve project success. From the technical side of the project, all tasks within the project schedule are indicated as completed and all costs are reported. Although the project manager may do this
throughout the life of the project, this is often a good time to review the actual plan to the baseline plan. Variance analysis and interpretation of the original plan take place here.

Many businesses conduct a post-project analysis, sometimes referred to as a project post-mortem. Usually, however, this term is used only in reference to a failed project to analyze what went wrong in the project and why it did not succeed. A project usually fails because estimations of the project work were not realistic within the given resources, or an unrealistic timeframe for project completion was put on the project team members. As such, the goal of using project management on any project is to deliver the end result on time and within stated requirements and costs.

Summary

As stated earlier in this essay, all projects, regardless of nature and complexity, have a life cycle. That is to say, a beginning, middle and end. The beginning stage activities involve planning and project kickoff activities, the middle stage involve project execution activities – where the work of the project is taking place; the closing activities involve following through on project deliverables and documenting lessons learned. With applying this to piano performance and to the specifics of the proposed recital program used as illustration in this chapter, we are able to see the life cycle of a recital as well.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CURRENT TECHNOLOGY IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

There are many tools available in today’s market to manage projects effectively. Businesses today have the ability to purchase and use extremely complex, contemporary – and often slick – web-based applications, far and above what is available for the general public. Large, complicated projects – ones that deal with high-level system engineering processes or top-secret government projects – often are managed using the latest, most sophisticated (and often the most expensive) software and technology available.

However, a great number of businesses direct their projects and project management methodology with standard software that is found on many home computers. It is this latter type of technology that will be the focus of this chapter.

Description of Current Software and Uses in Recital Preparation Project

Although there are many software application choices available on the market to help manage a project, for the purposes of this essay, and because this author had the most experience with them, Microsoft products were chosen, specifically, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Project, Microsoft Visio, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Microsoft Publisher. Additionally, most of these tools, with the exception of MS Project and Visio, are available in PC and Mac versions.
Microsoft Word, in addition to being the standard for word processing, also has picture insertion and drawing capabilities. This product was used to create the Work Breakdown Structure and the Project Charter (see figure 7). This software also can be used for the creation of documentation within the project, such as programs, program notes, information for guests, etc. Although not shown in this essay, Microsoft Word also can be used to create plans in the project sub-level areas, such as communication plans and human resource plans.

A more sophisticated application than Word, in terms of graphical layout creation, is Microsoft Publisher. Invitations, flyers, postcards and other necessary marketing elements within the project plan can be generated with this software. Publisher’s inclusion of preformatted “wizard” templates make quick work of designing hand-out, brochures, programs and flyers. It is worth noting that you can create similar products albeit simpler in scope with Word, but as primarily a text creation tool it’s use for graphics creation is not as intuitive as Publisher’s.

The software used in creating the graphics for the project in this essay was Microsoft PowerPoint and Microsoft Visio. PowerPoint is presentation creation software, with higher-level graphics capabilities than either Word or Publisher. Although there are other software programs on the market that have more inventiveness and conceptualization for creating graphics, this software was chosen for its ease of use, and because it is bundled as part of the Microsoft office suite. Figures are shapes are easy to create and manipulate, such as the case with two graphics created within this essay: figure 1, showing the project life cycle, and figure 2, indicating the project drivers.
Visio, a product recently acquired by Microsoft, is unique in its many capabilities and features helpful in developing the project plan. To begin, Visio is programmed to construct high-level organization charts. While managing a project, it is often times helpful to have a visual of the project team, to easily identify the work areas a person is assigned to within a project, or perhaps who they report to. The beauty of Visio is that the work to build a graphic is done on a grid. Shapes and objects are drug, via mouse, from a menu onto the grid for easy manipulation. For the purposes of this essay, a graphical representation of the Work Breakdown Structure (see figures 3, 4, 8, 9) was built in Visio, as well as the graphic illustration of the project plan inputs and outputs (see figure 6).

The software requiring the highest learning curve of all of these products is Microsoft Project. This sophisticated project management tool is first and foremost a scheduler tool, but one that can be very powerful in managing a project. As stated earlier, it is essentially a database, with many types of views and charts to present the various aspects of a project. Only two of those views were highlighted in this essay: the Gantt Chart (see figure 10) and the Cost spreadsheet (figure 11.) This program is an excellent tool to implement the WBS hierarchy and outline, and assists project managers and team members in providing and receiving correct data for their project in order to manage it more effectively. Although proven a useful tool for many people, it is my contention that as it is not bundled in with the basic Microsoft suite programs, most people would not have access to this program, unless purposefully purchased.

Although the costs of the project can be input and maintained in Microsoft Project, they can just as easily be maintained in Microsoft Excel, a software program that
will be on most peoples’ computer via the standard Microsoft Office Suite. This powerful spreadsheet tool can help create a budget and show project costs as readily as Microsoft project; however, the WBS data would need to be input into the program via a “cut and paste” from Microsoft Word.

As we are now in the age of global economies of scale and online mass communication, managing projects has had to go this way too. In addition to using software programs for the PC, many individual and corporate project managers have opted to manage their projects virtually. With today’s companies working offsite from headquarters, or halfway around the world, there is a market for being able to share and manipulate data in real time. For example, Google offers a free area within the mail function called Google docs. This is a storage place for documents that can be shared between users. It is simple, easy to use, and best of all, free.

Another example of a current online service is Wrike.66 This website is a simple online tool to help plan and collaborate activities with other people through email. The website describes its mission as “a leader in online Project Management.”67 Their lowest-level membership is free; however, there is a cost based on the number of project users. Projects are created online and tasks are disseminated via email, depending on their due date. Although one must be granted a license to use the site, it was found to be very user-friendly and on trend with current expectations for immediate real-time, 24x7 communication.


67 Ibid.
Summary

With the multitude of software applications available to consumers in this ever-increasing technology-drive global market, options for managing a project abound in what was listed and used for this essay. Applications were specifically chosen based on my professional experience with them and because my computer already had them installed; therefore, no extra monetary costs. Because they are integrated, I found efficiencies with their use in streamlining my creation of documents and graphics for the project in this essay.

For the purposes of recital preparation, this author advocates one to start with the application(s) already on their computer, as most newer PCs come with factory-direct software installed via the Microsoft Office bundle. It is important to be creative, but more important is what will work best for the user without adding undue time and cost to the recital planning process.
CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS

In conducting this study, this author has come to see and understand first-hand the benefits of formal and proper planning for performance. The research of current authors and performing colleagues all point to this planning trend – whether it is mental or physical strategies, or simply better time management for practicing, the current literature suggests that planning is effective. Therefore, using elements of traditional project management can and do work for this type of project. From this, the following conclusions have been drawn.

First, using this methodology forces the performer to write things down. Most people can follow a plan, but most people cannot follow a plan that has not been shared or documented in some way. The value of formulating ideas and communicating them with others for the purposes of project success is extremely valuable. The method to accomplish the documentation is not the most important either; if the ideas are hand-written or constructed on a computer, it is a start in the right direction. Documentation of ideas forces the performer to make a plan and stick to it. Goals and objectives can be formulated and more easily identified. Information becomes clearer and more streamlined.

Second, a documented plan does not have to be complex. One of the most important aspects of having a plan is that it be usable. This plan, at whatever level of
complexity should be in a form that works for the performer. If a cost worksheet is found not necessary to the overall success of a project, then it shouldn’t be used. Likewise, if a communication plan is found to be necessary, then it should be created. What has been shown in this study is that project management can be applied and used for recital preparation – however simple or complex it needs to be. The building blocks for successfully planning and execution are shown here.

Third, as it has been indicated throughout this essay, plans can and should be adjusted throughout the life of the project. There are always occurring events in a person’s life that impact plans. Sometimes performers get injured. Sometimes chosen repertoire is too difficult or isn’t being learned at the rate it should be in order to meet the intended deadline. Plan should be readjusted accordingly. If more practice or coaching time is needed in order to make a piece come together, then it should be planned for accordingly. The goal is to follow the plan as closely as possible, with the knowledge that adjustments will be made throughout the life of the project.

This is not to say, however, that changes should be made constantly without regard to the plan. That is not the point of recognizing change. The point of change is to make sure that it is recognized in reference to the existing, or baseline, plan. Once a change is being considered, the outcome of that change needs to be analyzed to determine what impact it will have on the overall success of the project.

Fourth, from a personal point of view as a performer, my own recital preparation has been improved. Throughout the course of this study this author found many aspects worthy of inclusion in my own plan for recital preparation. I have implemented better practice strategies and have analyzed the time I do have to practice more. I have spent a
great deal of time considering the different programming aspects in relation to my own interests and skills as a performer. Additionally, I recognize the value of leaning on a team during the process of preparing for a recital. A project team or support system for a recital is a realistic and necessary part of the process.

Finally, to some, considering a recital as a project may be intimidating, but the benefits of proper planning and execution far outweigh the alternative of being unprepared and risking a failed recital. The goal for every musician is a well-received, satisfying and dynamic performance. Using this methodology is a means for improving the overall preparation process achieving that high-level performance.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX

INFORMAL CONSULTATION WITH COLLEAGUES
RAW RESPONSES TO STATED QUESTIONS

Question One: Have you ever given a recital where you needed to arrange for anything yourself? If yes, what were the types of things that you had to arrange or establish?

James Nalley: Yes, it all depends on the venue. Back when I was first starting to regularly perform, sometimes it was an arranged recital [in a church or library]. At that point, everything had to be booked ahead of time: hall, rehearsal time, programs, advertisement, piano tuning, stage hands, etc. Now that I am performing in either a 1) University setting/series or 2) established concert series…everything is arranged for you: all advertisement, ticket sales, programs, photos, posters, recordings, piano tunings, rehearsal time and reception. Today, the only thing I have to personally arrange is the sale of my CD’s after a concert. This usually means having someone in charge of the table and exchange of money. Sometimes this even means having a table ordered and appointing someone to meet at a certain time to place it in a certain part of the room.70

Tomoko Kanamaru: A) The performance engagements for me are not normally self-produced today. The presenter and/or the co-performer(s) would be mainly in charge of the details including the date, rehearsal schedules, travel arrangements, and even the program contents. I would be asked for suggestions and feedback, but I am normally not the one who has overall control. For example, when I am asked to play a concerto, the

70 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.
representative [via the orchestra manager] may ask me to submit the potential options or will simply send me the initial inquiry with a specific piece. If it were a chamber music/accompanying-type of performance, the co-performer(s) would discuss the potential reps with me. Occasionally, a concert presenter would ask me to arrange a program of a certain length on a certain date/venue. In this type of situation, I would have control over much of the program contents. [If the program includes chamber music, I may also have control over with whom I would be playing, for the most part.] However, when I was a student, my degree recitals were self-produced. In addition, I regularly assist my students for their senior recitals, which are also self-produced. B) These include the date, venue, and the program. In addition, the schedule for the dress rehearsals and the recital hearing needs to be set. As a non-musical part of the preparation, one needs to arrange the program printing [possibly including the program notes] and such miscellaneous things as posters and invitations.\textsuperscript{71}

\textit{Nitza Kats}: Yes, most of the time. Since I am teaching at a University, I have to request, more than a year in advance, for a specific date for my recital and arrange for rehearsal times on stage. I am in charge of writing my own program, program notes and the proof-reading before the Department’s office takes care of program printing. I email program information to the publicity office on campus for press announcements.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{71} Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email.

\textsuperscript{72} Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.
Question Two: When planning to perform, do you establish a recital date first, or do you select repertoire first and then set a date? What types of parameters do you use to determine these things?

James Nalley: For me personally, I select repertoire for a recital first, then I [or my agent] begin to look around for recitals. Repertoire is usually selected based on general overall appreciation. In my experience, a complete recital of random 20th century works are USUALLY not appealing. I like to mix it up to make myself more marketable. Then once the venue is interested, dates are proposed. There is usually a “window” of dates available, or the venue gives me a range of their times.73

Tomoko Kanamaru: For the degree recitals, one has to follow the recital booking system at the school. The reps are normally expected to cover several different styles, unless it is a lecture recital, so one would plan to cover different materials over the course of the preparation.74

Nitza Kats: As applied faculty, it is expected that I perform an annual recital. Normally a recital date is established first. Rarely, some of the repertoire may be considered before the recital date has been established, since I usually have to reserve a date for next year’s recital BEFORE performing my current one.75

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73 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.
74 Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email.
75 Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.
Question Three: Do you have a method on choosing repertoire? How do you determine the speed in which you learn something in order to meet the given deadline? Do you ever document what you need to learn in a timeline or set interim goals?

James Nalley: A) My programs are usually somewhat chronological in the beginning of a program. I start with something Baroque or Classical…nothing else. I like to end the first half with something “different,” 20th century, or a premiere. The program should be 90 minutes or so, with the first half 60 minutes, and the second half, 30 minutes. The second half usually works to program exciting or romantic show-off works. It really leaves the audience happy. B) I rarely cram for a recital. I have even changed programs due to this feeling that I am running out of time. I plan WELL ahead, sometimes a year. I always set interim goals, but I never document it. I usually work on new pieces in deadlines of months; not weeks or days.76

Tomoko Kanamaru: I do not have a specific methodology to determine the speed of learning except simply based on experience. The key is to learn fast and to learn more [pieces] in order to expand the basic repertoire before you really need the pieces. I would recommend starting this as early as possible in your career. I also suggest to my students that they try to do the back-track planning: here is the recital hearing date, how many lessons from now until then, how many studio-classes from now until then? So, what do you have to accomplish this week? Please notice that the goal is the “hearing,” not the recital. From a programming view, it would be good to incorporate the current projects with the back-burner projects. For example, if there is a CD recording project in a year, then the performance programs during that season could include some of the music for

76 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.
the CD throughout the season whenever such flexibility is possible. Obviously this does not apply to the academic degree recital situations.77

_Nitza Kats:_ A) I try to maintain a “healthy” balance in my programs and variety of styles when choosing the repertoire. I imagine how pieces may fit together on the program, either by contrasting each other or complementing one another. Duration of pieces is also an important factor. I consider keys of pieces and how they relate to one another [I try avoiding, for instance, a tritone relationship between two adjacent selections.]

Normally, the major part of the program consists of newly-learned repertoire, but I may include some works performed years back. Occasionally I plan a specific theme for the program, like focus on scherzos and humoresques, pieces related to spring-time, etc. Because of my background, I always include Israeli works on my programs – something the audience looks forward to. B) Two main factors determine the time invested in preparation for the recital: experience and availability of time. Since I have been performing for many years now, I developed a sense for what it would take to get the program ready on time [of course, we always wish we had those extra two weeks to make it better…] I set a deadline of at least a month prior to the performance for complete memorization. Additionally, I schedule “preview” performances at a friend’s home, retirement center, etc. I record those performances for additional self-study and critique. As for availability of time, during school days time is a lot more limited, thus more practice is done during weekends or school breaks. I have never documented the learning process, but have set interim goals all along and tried to follow them.78

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77 Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email.

78 Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.
Question Four: How do you structure your practice sessions? Do you prepare ahead of time what you will work on?

*James Nalley:* My practice time is limited, so I definitely have to focus on my practice sessions and how they are approached. I generally have three hours a day to practice, but I must have an idea. It is not random. For instance, I focus on a movement here or there, followed by some of a new work, and practice parts of old. Sometimes I spend the time running a complete work.  

*Tomoko Kanamaru:* I do not in particular. Perhaps I should. I know what needs to be done though. Plus I no longer have the luxury of getting a chunk of regular practice time when I was a student. So, my practice session would be the numerous bits of time throughout the day [night, is more like it.] However, I do occasionally go away for a week at a time to isolate myself in order to prepare for something major [simply catch-up.] When this happens, I would do nothing but practice/rehearse, and I would have a plan/goal of accomplishment by the end of the week.  

*Nitza Kats:* Side by side with actual practice, I find myself constantly practicing away from the piano during the months of preparation. This includes going through the pieces in my head during my sleep, walks, etc., mostly unintentionally. Close to the recital date I do systematic mental practice – analyzing and running through the pieces in my head from beginning to end. I find this to be a most valuable tool, which reinforces my memory and boosts my confidence. Rotation is an essential factor in my practice. I avoid starting always with the same piece. When working on a multi-movement work, I focus each time on a different movement. Within the pieces, I devote substantial time to

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79 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.

80 Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email.
the endings and proceed, in sections, backward toward the ending, until I start all the way from beginning to end. At the same time, I play through the pieces a lot too, to get a feeling for the overall structure, emotions, technical demands, and to keep my stamina in form.81

Question Five: Have you or any of your students missed a set deadline for a performance? What was the outcome? Did you perform what you had originally intended?

James Nalley: I have never missed a deadline for performance. But I have known many people to completely change or cancel programs due to missed deadlines. For professional pianists, this is bad. They are usually called “unprofessional” or not invited back. Sometimes to save themselves, original programs are put in place. As far as students, this happens all of the time. Every semester, some date or deadline is missed. But that is why they are students, they are learning about time management and professionalism.82

Tomoko Kanamaru: A) Underestimating the preparation time could happen to students. I make the following steps clear to my students: 1. Learn/memorize the piece 2. Play [well] at the lesson. 3. Play at the studio class. Repeat the process as necessary. Play at a preparation recital (departmental recital, retirement home/church performance, etc.) Repeat the process as necessary. In this way, the students have many short-term goals, which would make it easier for the student to know where he or she is in the preparation process. B) There was one situation that a student found a certain piece more difficult than they originally thought. Because of the above method, he luckily realized it very

81 Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.
82 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.
early in the preparation process. The solution for this specific situation was for him to use another piece by the same composer. The alternative piece was a multi-movement work, and the student had played one of the movements previously, so it was not totally recycled or completely brand-new. It still turned out to be a substantial presentation, despite the change. For professional situations, missing the deadline simply cannot happen. If it ever becomes unavoidable, one would be expected to find a substitute of the same level or higher, to say the least.83

Nitza Kats: Once I had to postpone a recital for a week late because of a severe snow storm. Same program, as planned, was performed. One of my graduate students had to postpone a recital because of illness, but the original program was performed on the rescheduled date.84

Question Six: For yourself or your students, have you ever considered using a documented method for proper practice, planning and execution of a recital? If so, what is that method?

James Nalley: Other than my routine or pre-planned practice sessions, that usually helps me meet a deadline. I share this with students as well and although it is not perfect, they do alright.85

Tomoko Kanamaru: Please see my response to the last question. When I was teaching younger students, they would have the notebook with very specific assignments [that I

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83 Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email
84 Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.
85 James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.
write during the lessons] and the practice record sheet. College students seem to be fine without going that far. They do take extensive notes, however.\textsuperscript{86}  

\textit{Nitza Kats}: I have not used such documentation myself. As for my students, two of my undergraduate students wrote journals of their experiences with recitals, sharing those journals with the rest of my piano studio during a performance class. The journals revealed that giving a recital was an eye-opening experience, and sharing it with the rest of the studio was a good outlet to expressing their feelings and informing their peers.

Question Seven: For the purposes of future planning and execution, do you ever document learning experiences from a performance?

\textit{James Nalley}: Absolutely, whatever happens, I make a note of what happened: a memory slip, more practice needed for security in a certain section. What to focus on mentally, how much rest, relaxation to combat performance anxiety. It is a good idea to always learn from experience, whether they are good or bad memories.\textsuperscript{87}

\textit{Tomoko Kanamaru}: I do not in particular. There seems to be too many performances and I would rather spend the time at the piano keyboard for the next coming up performance instead of the computer keyboard.

\textit{Nitza Kats}: I have documented some of my frustrations with the stage crew and with recording programs that I have encountered in many of my recitals.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{86} Tomoko Kanamaru, interview by author, 6 August 2007, via email.

\textsuperscript{87} James Nalley, interview by author, 18 June 2007, via email.

\textsuperscript{88} Nitza Kats, interview by author, 4 August 2007, via email.