

The Ultimate Project Management Checklist for New Founders

To solve the burning issue of new founders while executing their idea of start-up with limited resources, we have researched and found that project management techniques are effective for sustainability. Here's our ultimate project management checklist for new founders. We have covered:

- *Illustration of why most start-ups fail in their execution level*
- *Why project management is crucial for start-up enterprises*
- *Mistakes new founders often make while managing their projects*
- *Ultimate project management checklist with 10 inevitable must-dos for new founders*

Behind every startup in business, there are a lot of dreams, visions and courageous decision of ambitious individuals. They always bring excitement to the market and creates a possibility of a legendary brand. But let's be honest, how many startups achieve a fraction of success startups like Facebook or Apple have?

So, coming to reality, we have all the chaos and helpless situation a new venture falls in right when they try to execute their idea. Yes, for some startups it can be because of a flaw in the idea or lack of market research. But for execution level failures, a major reason is poor management of operations. The question is, how to make a startup sustain and grow with its operations?

If you take all the steps of a startup as a big project, the solution is effective project management. To everyone's surprise, optimized project management does not require hiring a separate project manager. The founders can easily meet success of project management by following the checklist and using the right method and tool for themselves.

Why startups fail in the execution level of their project?

More often than not, new founder has to become the 'one and only' of their dream business for all the functionalities there can possibly be. Imagine the situation of fresh graduate turned entrepreneur Faiyaz. With all the hopes and crazy ambitions like those in the movies, Faiyaz and his best friend Afnan starts their own digital marketing agency. With a very little principal both of them saved from their part-time jobs back in undergraduate years, it is hard to increase employees other than two college students as part-timers.

At the beginning, their venture was having small orders from known people. Suddenly, a big organization recognizes their quality and boom! Endless orders beyond the capacity of the two buddies could be barely finished even after continuous sleepless nights. At this point of the story, if we analyze their situation, we will find that they had an amazing idea of startup and impressive skills to offer. Yet, what they lacked was a proper planning of growth, financial management and project management.

Even after this, if the two friends somehow the grasp the tactics, they might survive. But, one day, Afnan suddenly falls ill and gets hospitalized and everything crashes on Faiyaz's shoulder. What will A do now? Will their dream of becoming a big service agency come true?

Why project management is crucial to startups or new founders?

For the above story, obviously, more money and more aspirant people instead of two friends might have turned the story around. But, with all the given resources, the best and optimized way out could be following the best practices of project management. If you are a new founder, your obvious statement at this point would be, “The CEO, the salesperson, the IT genius, the budget planner; I’m everything! You’re adding another to the list?”

But the thing is, a startup does not add burden to the existing workers. Project management is a summation of planning ahead, delivering timely. Observing progress and deciding future moves based on that. If you read the last sentence again, you will realize, that it actually solves a big chunk of problems new founders face.

Overall, Project management optimizes everything you have, ensures less wastage and brings everything in front of your eyes which helps you tackle unwanted situations and avoid risks.

The ultimate project management checklist for new founders

Technically, project management practices are crucial to startups of all kind, especially the ones with more risk. Good thing is, you can follow the checklist despite you hire a project manager or maintain it on your own.

So, here is our ultimate project management checklist specially for new founders and startup owners that will significantly help startups to survive:

1. Choose a particular methodology

Startups at their beginning phase do not follow in structure of any sort. Initially, they operate based on sales and all the process rotate around it. At the beginning, this may work fine but just after a couple of sales, everything will seem all over the place and losing tract at this point is very easy.

For this, choosing a project management methodology is very important. The popular ones are *Agile* method which is a flexible and continuous element adding method, Scrum method which is a structured method that requires a separate planner and finally, the popular Kanban method which uses visible checklist and sorting board for everyone.

You can choose any of these that fit you or make a hybrid method. However, for all kind of startups, Kanban method fits well with all its visual work list and progresses, readily changeable interface and suitability, even for rigorous operations like just-in-time manufacturing. Now, how to set up the methodology for application? The answer is in the next point.

2. Choose a tool for project management

As per Wrike Statistics, 87% of high-performing companies use project management software.

Surely, you can create the infrastructure of your chosen methodology, let’s say Kanban method on your own portal or something, but having a project management software solves it all.

Not just for the methodology, a software aids all other tools needed for project management. A thing to consider while choosing a project management software is that software like [Basecamp](#), [ProofHub](#), or [Asana](#) can be a bit intimidating to use at first.

In that case, the best suggestion would be to go for Onethread. It is a very user-friendly platform that does not require high-end skills to operate. Additionally, it has a dashboard with Kanban method, email integration options, video and voice calling options which sounds just right for newbie enterprises! Not to mention, Onethread aids many of the following points of this checklist as well.

3. Plan the incoming and existing projects

Oftentimes new entrepreneurs give everything they have on their current client or project, which is great of course, but the problem arises when another project knocks the door. That's right! Your startup is not about giving the best to one project. In fact, the consistency of serving top-notch is what sets a business apart.

So, to achieve that, you need to plan each project individually, then organize an inventory for later, plan and decide how the transition of work will be from one project to other and finally, plan and allocate resources wisely for simultaneous process.

Sounds like a lot on a plate? The solution is, make the plate bigger! Bring everything sorted in sections, every plan in one dashboard. By doing this, even when you are engaged with something, you have an idea of your overall company and this way you do not lose focus from your current work.

Remember the Kanban board? You can effectively use it for multiple planning and Onethread gives you the scope to plan and sort your Kanban board, make it visible to others while you are in call with them in that very platform.

4. Budgeting is one of the most crucial things

The Harvard Business Review points out that, most projects go over budget by 27% of their planned cost.

This point is an obvious one. This is to remind you that do not plan your budget on estimations of the future. Yes, you certainly can hope for 30 sales next month but do not operate keeping that 30 sales on your obvious list. Always move with what you have now and never forget the liabilities.

For startups, often the budget is very low at the beginning. Make sure you recognize that and make it open to all your team members. Create an easy-to-use listed infrastructure with your expenses, liabilities, revenues and inventory so that you can readily update it without much effort. Because critical budget infrastructure makes you run away from it. So, the motto is, keep it easy but keep it exact.

5. Keep a timeline to follow and update

Time! If we had more of it, seems like we would have achieved a lot more than we did in real. If you are a new founder, time management is sometimes more important for you than money management.

Keep track of every minute you spend, keep room for spare times to avoid accidents in projects and make sure you build this habit of time management in your team members. A Gantt Chart is a beautiful tool that brings your entire timeline in a chart so you do not have to go through the calendar and look for reminders. Make sure you use easy to

go methods to keep more time in your treasure. For example, Onethread gives you 3x output in half the time with its intuitive UX and clutter free workflow.

6. Assign specific roles, bring the team together

In management, there is something called ‘synergy’ which means two plus two makes five. You will know your team is nailing when you get more output when the members of the startup work as a team than working individually.

Keep room for constant communication within the team members. Going through group chats, missed calls or emails is very hectic and you need to turn your eyes away from work. So, you can get something that has your work and communication together with filtering options for important ones (Do not want to overwhelm you but Onethread has it!).

7. Documentation of plans, deals and timelines

Even if you are working with your best friend or family, always remember to write down or keep a record of every decision or change in plan. Let’s be honest, you do not need anyone else, you can even forget the idea or emergency message you thought of 15 minutes ago!

Keep your policies and deals clean with every stakeholder from the initial phase, set your timelines and deliverables prior to execution to avoid any kind of dispute.

8. Keep plans and objectives visible for everyone

It is a classic scenario that in many businesses, only the owners know about the actual goals, objectives and planning of an organization and the rest of the people only carries out the task. But this only demotivates everyone and it takes more time to apply the changes. Another thing is, in case of emergency, if everyone does not know about the details of the current projects carrying out the work becomes impossible.

So, in this current business world, keeping all the goals and progresses in front of all the employees speeds up the overall operations. Use a platform that has an open dashboard for everyone. Here, Onethread can help you make your objectives visible to your stakeholders because it allows non team members to view certain things.

9. Set up communication channels and decide on norms

Not communicating or over-communicating both can cause different tension within the organization. In this era of social media, if everyone in company has different groups in different platforms, it is hard to differentiate important texts from informal ones.

For this, there should be a communication guideline and open channel associated with work. It is best if you get chatting, video and voice calling option together within your project management dashboard the way it is in Onethread. Frequent meetings do not help much, rather communication chain yields better and time saving communication.

10. Analyze outcomes and feedbacks

Quality control is a key factor in sustaining in the market. That is why, only rushing to releasing a new product or completing client’s projects can drive you away from sustainability. Competitive market research, quality testing and working on feedbacks are must.

Because a startup may not get the opportunity to impress everyone second time. And it needs to put more effort than existing brands to make a place in clients’ or customers’ minds.

Here's to successful execution of incredible ideas!

To wrap up, if your startup idea is unconventional or solves a significant problem or even offers something different from the existing companies, you should give it a shot and stick to your dreams. Just make sure that you do not forget to proceed strategically and choose things that help you move forward to sustainability (Just saying, Onethread can be that startup buddy for you!)

Integrate your ideas with your resources with project management to make a seamless operation system for your company and you will be able to grow from a startup to a sustainable organization.