

ELEMENTS OF A CHARTER

1. Group name

2. Purpose. *What is the need or issue the group is to address?*

- **Expected results.** How will you know the group was successful? What are the measures of success or progress? Are specific deliverable(s) expected? If so, when?
- **Current state.** What is the current problem or situation? What is the scope and impact of the problem?
- **Desired state.** What is the ideal, future state the team is to achieve?
- **Goals.** What goals or milestones is the group expected to meet as it proceeds?

3. Boundaries. *What are its responsibilities and where do they begin and end?*

- **Relationships to other groups.** Which other groups or people does this group need to coordinate with? When and how? What is the role of this group vis-à-vis other groups? Does this group assign work to other groups?
- **Decision-making authority.** What decisions can this group make? What decisions may it not make?
- **Membership.** Who is needed for (a) technical skills, (b) project management or social skills, and (c) balanced representation?
- **Sunset date.** When, if at all, does the group's authorization expire?

4. Operating principles. *How will the group conduct itself?*

- **Formal roles.** Who serves as chair, staff, resource people, and facilitator (if any).
- **Expectations of individual group members.** What are expectations around attendance at meetings, responsiveness to requests, commitments of time and resources, and active support for the project?
- **Working principles.** How the group will make decisions (including impasses), level of interaction (quality and quantity), create agendas and track issues, define work plans, handle conflicts or disputes, ensure accountability, and maintain confidentiality.
- **Meeting structure.** What will be the format and frequency of group meetings?

5. Authorization. *Who authorizes this group to do its work?*

- **Executive sponsor.** Who will protect the group so that it can do its work?
- **Authorizing body** (if different from executive sponsor). Who does this group report to?
- **Stakeholders.** Who are the key stakeholders whose interests must be taken into account? Who must be kept apprised of the group's work?
- **Date of charter approval**

