

## Track the risks of your project

Risk management is an important part of any project. It is essential for a project manager to anticipate things that could go wrong and then try to make plans for both how to avoid them (mitigation plans) and also what to do if they do happen (contingency plans). This Excel template is a good tool to use for gathering risks and managing them throughout your project.

The first sheet shows a number of fields for gathering information about your risks:

- **Risk ID** is some unique value that identifies the risk.
- **Risk Name** is a short description of the risk.
- **Date** is when you identified the risk.
- **Rank** is a subjective measure of where you and the team place this risk. Rank is generally reevaluated on a weekly basis.
- **Rel** (Release) is an optional field that you can use to capture the release or phase that a risk might occur.
- **Prob** (Probability) is the percentage chance that the risk will actually occur.
- **Impact** is the 1–10 rating of how bad it would be if the risk occurred (1 being not very bad and 10 being very bad).
- **Exp** (Exposure) is the product of Prob and Impact. This gives you a relative number to assess how much time and effort to give to the mitigation of a risk. For example, a risk might be a 90 percent Probability but only a 1 for Impact, so its Exposure would only be a .90.
- **Effect** is a description of what would happen if the risk occurred. This can be a quick sentence or a detailed set of effects.
- **Mitigation** is a description of what steps can be taken to avoid having the risk occur. This is what you will do to try and stop the risk from happening.
- **Trigger Event** is a description of how you will know if the risk has occurred.
- **Contingency** is the description of what you plan to do if the risk happens. This is how you will try to limit the Impact of the actual occurrence of the risk.

Also included is a sheet in the workbook called Risk Matrix. This section gives a graphical view of where your risks fall. It graphs Impact against Probability and puts a color code on the various combinations.

A few things to remember about this template include the following:

- The sheet called Criteria Sheet is locked because it provides the formulas that drive the graph on the Risk Matrix sheet. If you edit this sheet, the Matrix may no longer work.
- The Matrix and List sheets are also locked, but only a few cells are protected. On the List sheet, the Exposure cells are protected because they contain a formula. The same goes for the Matrix sheet. The colored matrix itself is protected, but the other cells are not.