

# Scope Creep: Identifying and Reducing this HUGE Project Management Pitfall

Presented for:



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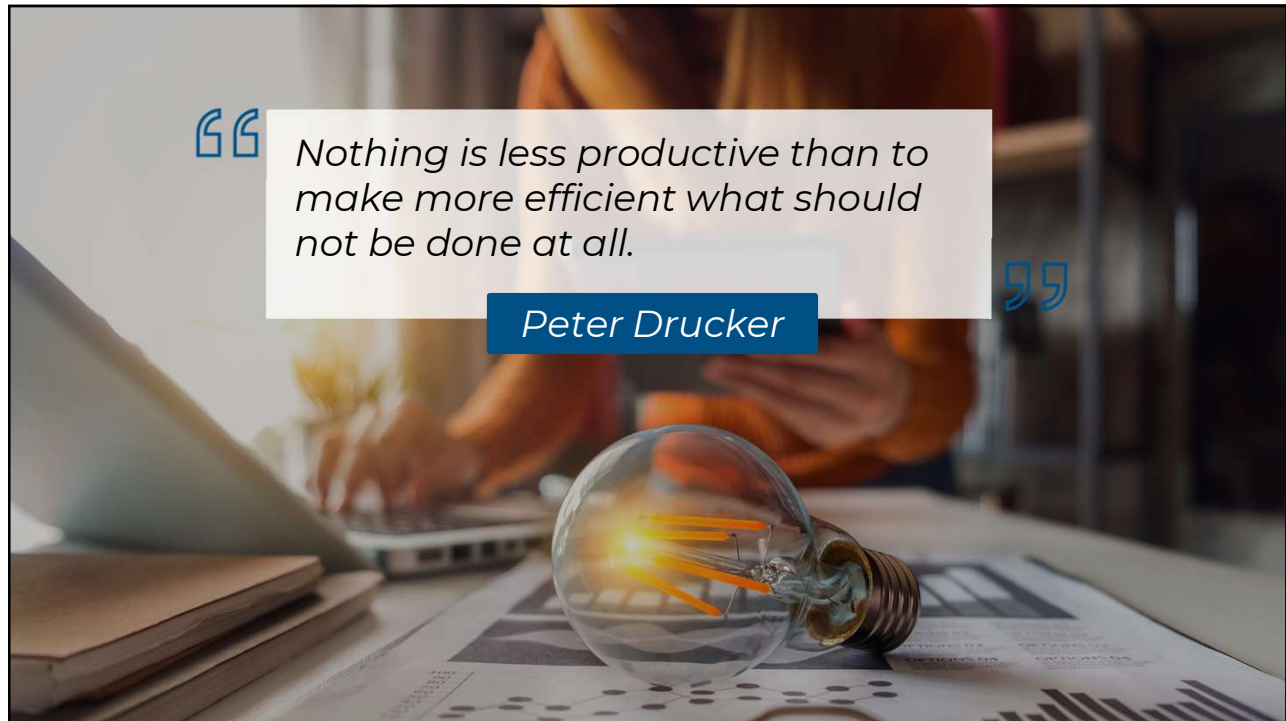
## Purpose and Learning Objectives

**Purpose:** To provide you with strategies to avoid or minimize scope creep in your projects.

In this session, you will learn how to:

- Ensure the project scope is clearly communicated to all team members
- Identify scope creep as early as possible
- Create a work breakdown structure to ensure work stays within scope
- Run an effective kickoff meeting to minimize scope creep

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## Introduction – Anthony Fasano, PE, AEC PM

- B.S. & M.S. in Civil Engineering
- Licensed Professional Engineer
- Found success at a reputable firm at a very young age
- Attended iPEC – the top ranked executive coaching school in the world
- Wrote the best-selling book ***Engineer Your Own Success*** and started providing career coaching and speaking services to engineers



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## Poll Question:



**How many years of experience do you have as a Project Manager?**

- a. 0-2 years
- b. 3-5 years
- c. 6-10 years
- d. 11+ years

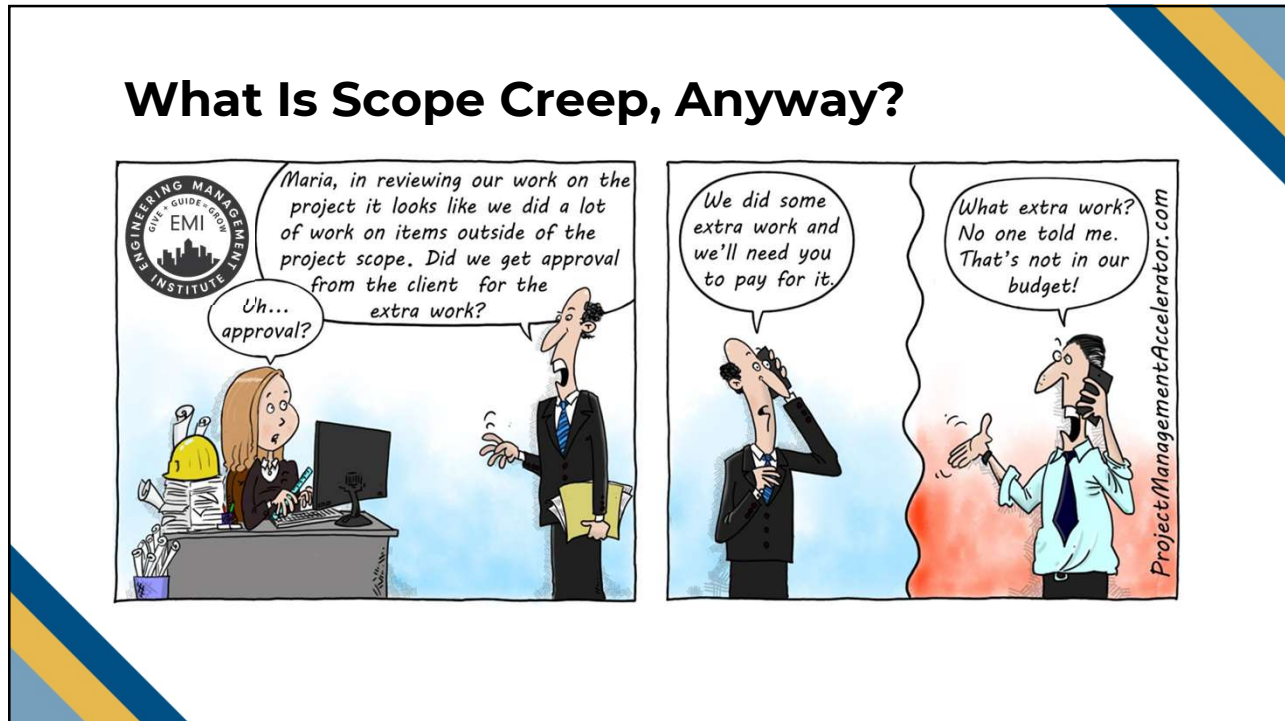
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## Scope Creep: What & Why?

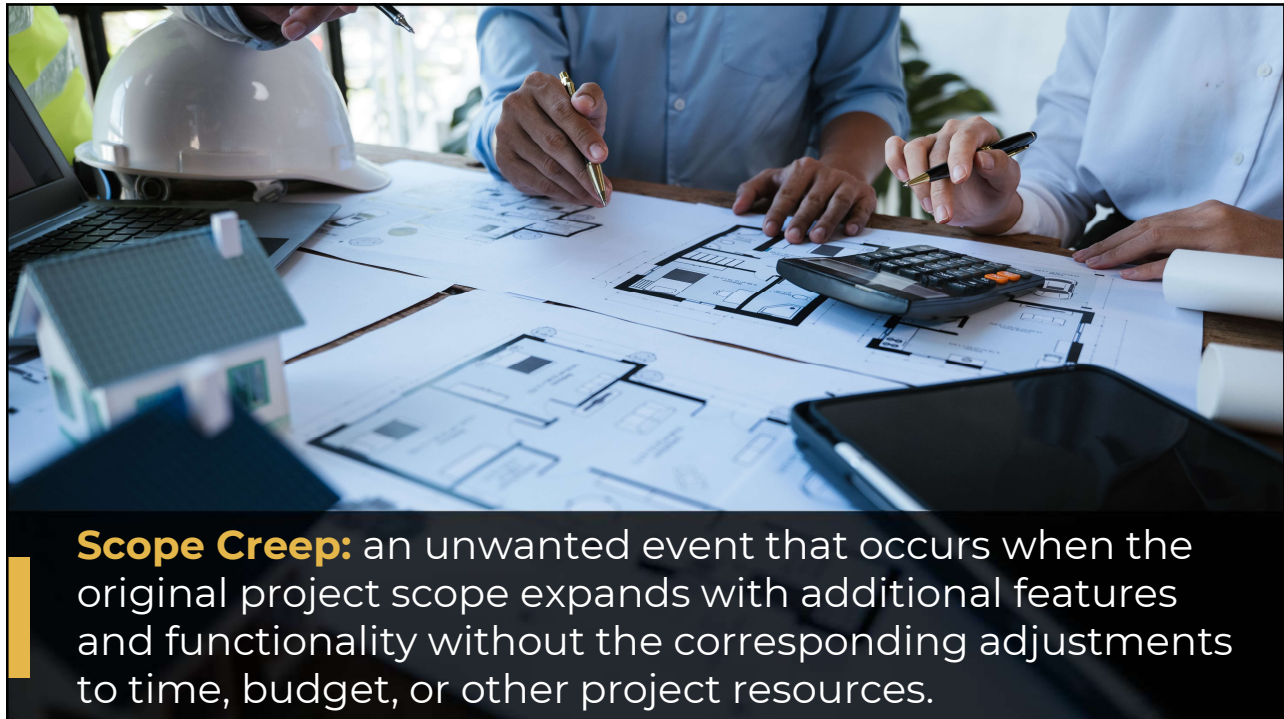


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## What Is Scope Creep, Anyway?



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**Scope Creep:** an unwanted event that occurs when the original project scope expands with additional features and functionality without the corresponding adjustments to time, budget, or other project resources.

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## Defining Scope Creep and Scope Change

**Scope Creep**

Adding features and functionality (project scope) without addressing the effects on time, costs, and resources, or without customer approval.

**Scope Change**

A project management decision made by the parties involved in a project to change a feature, reduce or increase functionality, or adjust an overall project.

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## Discussion:



# Why does Scope Creep happen?

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## Causes of Scope Creep

1. Scope isn't as clear as it needs to be.
2. Team members aren't clear on scope and their part - AND their personal budget.
3. PM doesn't hold a kickoff meeting. Kickoff meeting topics: project scope, schedule, budget, client expectations, how to identify and handle out-of-scope work.
4. If new team members come onboard, PM doesn't make sure new members are fully briefed.
5. PM doesn't consider all the players who can cause or impact scope creep.

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## Causes of Scope Creep

6. Team members don't notify the PM that the client has asked them directly to execute a change.
7. Team members don't record time correctly: wrong task, wait until Friday and try to remember, etc.
8. PM doesn't keep tabs on charges.
9. PM or team member overpromises.
10. We've allowed the client to fall into the habit of getting extra work "for free."

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**What is the toll of scope creep?**

- 1 Financial Impact
- 2 Schedule Delays
- 3 Resource Strain
- 4 Quality and Risk
- 5 Client Relationships

The image shows two construction workers in white hard hats and high-visibility yellow safety vests. They are looking at a large set of blueprints held by one of the workers. The background is a construction site with concrete structures.

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## 1

## Financial Impact

- Extra work outside of the original scope erodes profit margins
- Consumes unbudgeted time & resources
- Over 50% of projects face scope creep (PMI study)
- Millions of dollars lost annually due to unapproved extra work



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## 2

## Schedule Delays

- Added tasks extend project timelines
- “Small” changes ripple across design iterations, permitting, procurement, and construction schedules
- Resulting in missed deadlines & liquidated damages



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3

Resource Strain



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4

Quality and Risk



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## 5

## Client Relationships

Poor scope management = tension & mistrust

- Clients expect “free work”
- Undermines long-term profitability



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## What is the toll of scope creep?

- 1 Financial Impact
- 2 Schedule Delays
- 3 Resource Strain
- 4 Quality and Risk
- 5 Client Relationships



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Type in Chat...



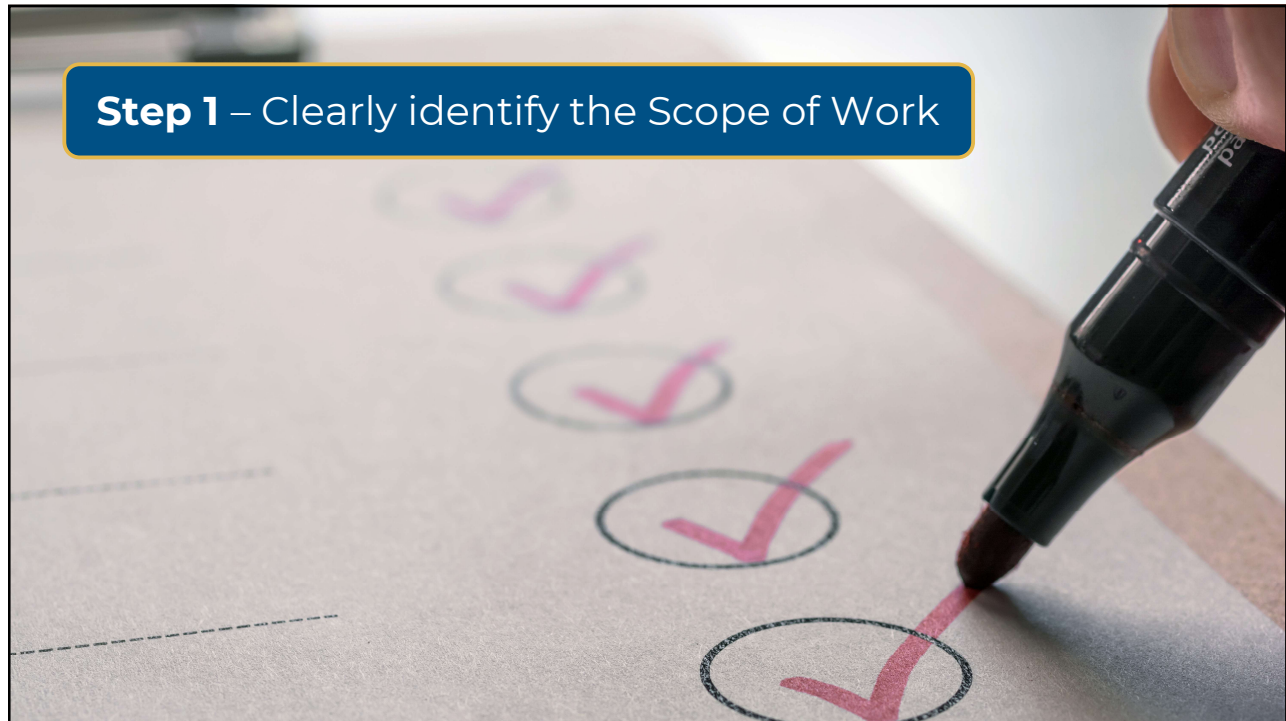
**How can we minimize or avoid Scope Creep?**

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## **Four Steps to Reducing Scope Creep**



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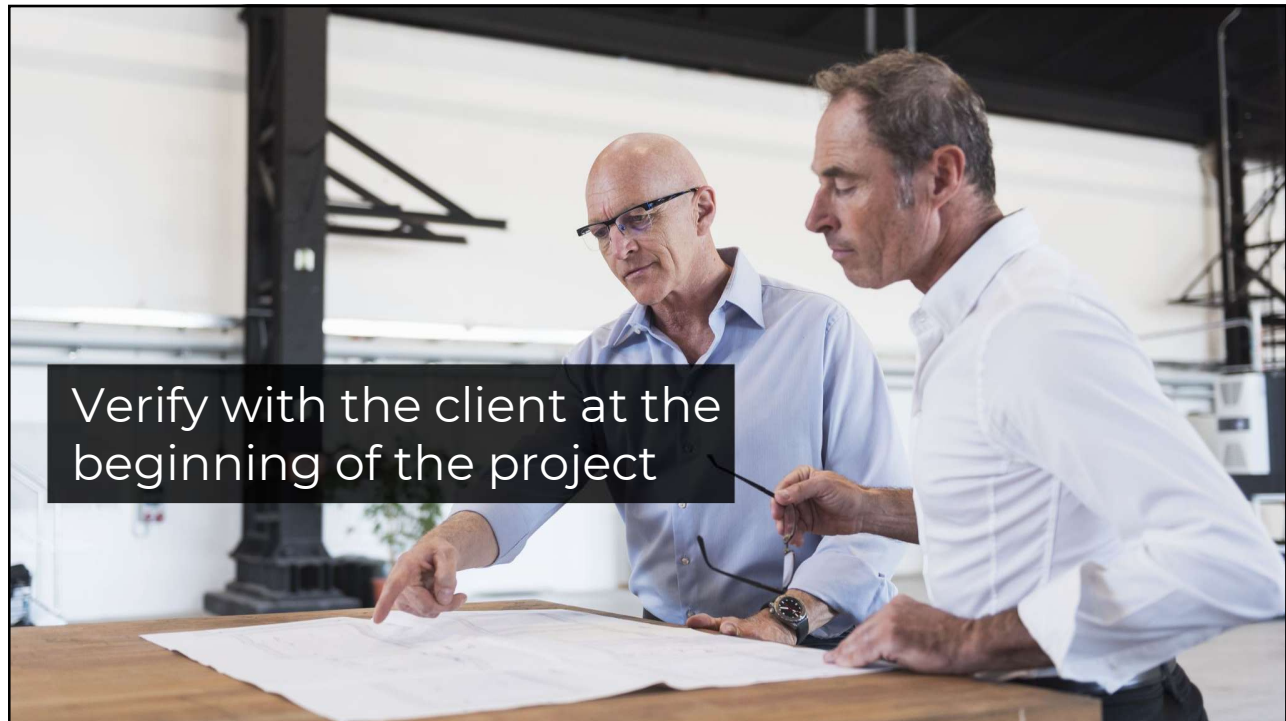
**Step 1** – Clearly identify the Scope of Work

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**Scope:**  
The Fence Around Our Project

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## Confirming Project Understanding: **The 13 Questions**

1	2	3	4
History, background - Why?	What is the final deliverable?	What is in scope? Out of scope?	Interim deliverables? Approvals?

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## Confirming Project Understanding: The 13 Questions

5

Acceptance  
criteria?

6

Sub-  
consultants?  
Stakeholders?

7

Timeline?  
Flexibility?

8

Inter-  
dependencies?

9

Budget?  
Flexibility?  
Other funding  
resources?

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## Confirming Project Understanding: The 13 Questions

10

Known  
obstacles?  
How to help?

11

Risk of NOT  
doing the  
project?

12

Constraints?

13

What keeps  
you up at  
night?

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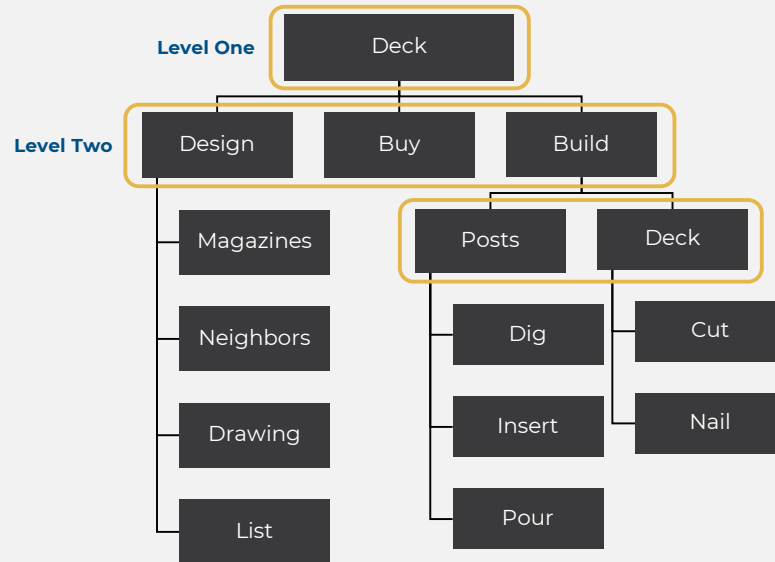
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## List Format

### Deck

1. Design
  - a. Magazines
  - b. Neighbors
  - c. Drawing
  - d. List
2. Buy
3. Build
  - a. Posts
    - i. Dig
    - ii. Insert
    - iii. Pour
  - b. Deck
    - i. Cut
    - ii. Nail

## Graphic Format



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**Step 2** – Communicate the Scope of Work to the Project Team

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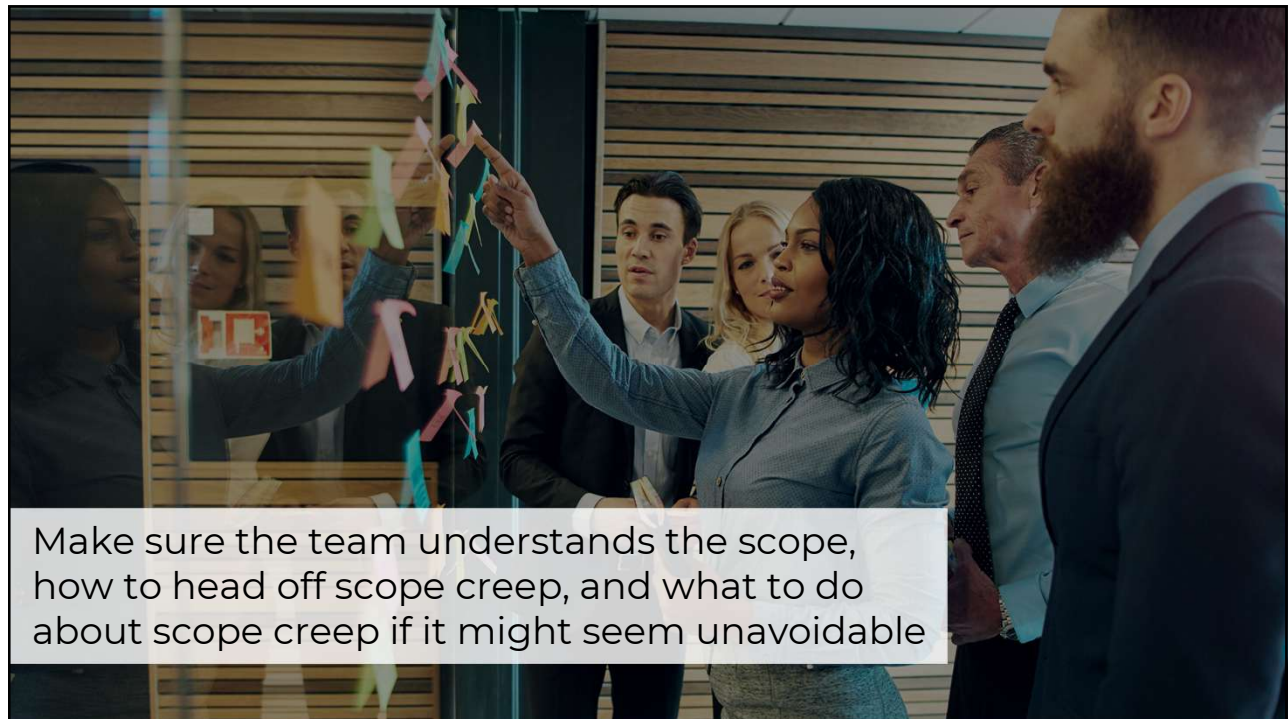
Use a common project platform where team members can see the allocations for the project



Deltek



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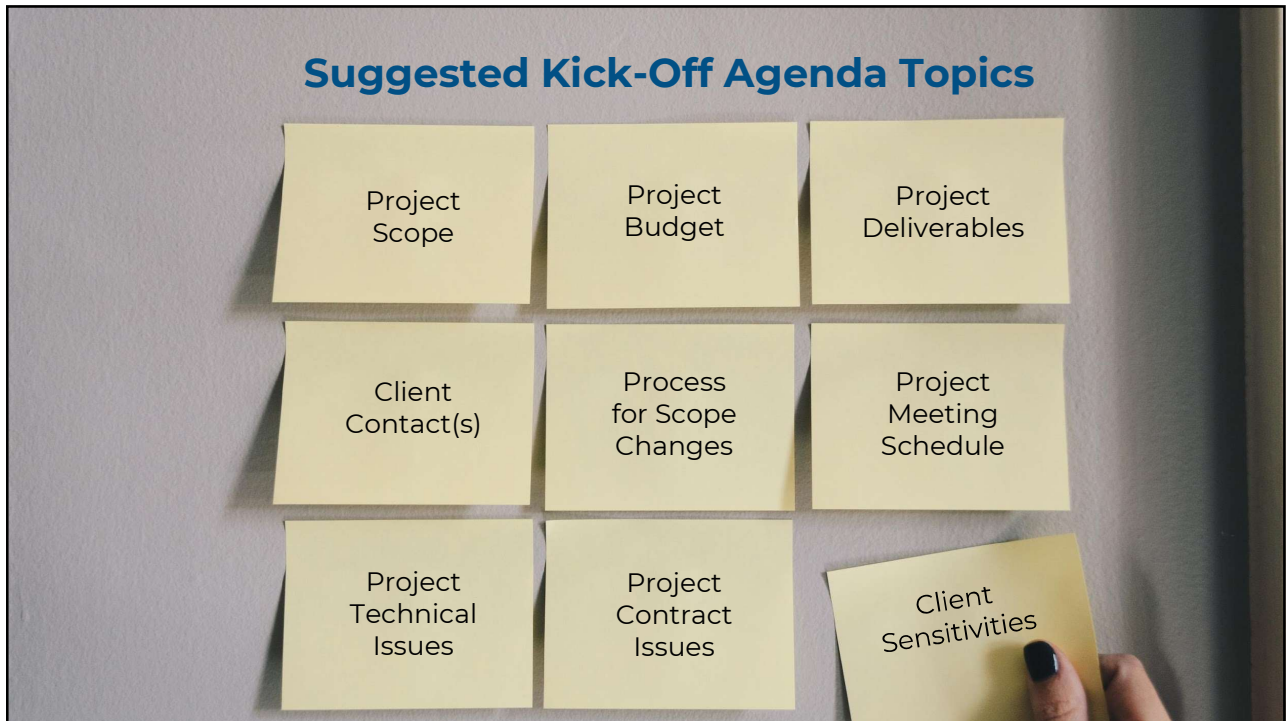


Make sure the team understands the scope, how to head off scope creep, and what to do about scope creep if it might seem unavoidable

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### Example Kick-off Meeting Agenda

[Date]  
[Time]  
[Location]

**CALL-IN NUMBER IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND IN PERSON:** \_\_\_\_\_

Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Note taker: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Timekeeper: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please bring: \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENDA ITEMS**

Topic	Presenter	Time allotted
Project scope and proposal		
Project budget; hours budgeted for each team member		
Project deliverables; schedule for completion		
Client contact(s); procedures for communicating with client		
Process for identifying and analyzing scope changes		
Project meeting schedule		
Project technical issues		
Project contract issues (e.g., allowable charges)		
Client sensitivities		
Project quality assurance procedures		
Confidentiality requirements		
Interfacing with prime		
Interfacing with subcontractors (if applicable)		
Health and safety plan and procedures		
Action items		
Date of next meeting		

## Kick-off Meeting Agenda Template Example

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**Step 3** – Create a Regular Scope of Work Review Action Item

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## Develop a Bar (Gantt) Chart...

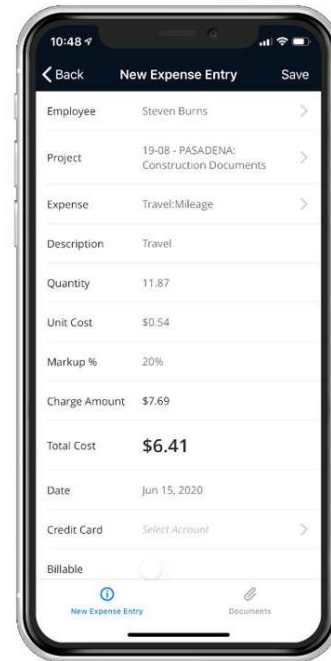
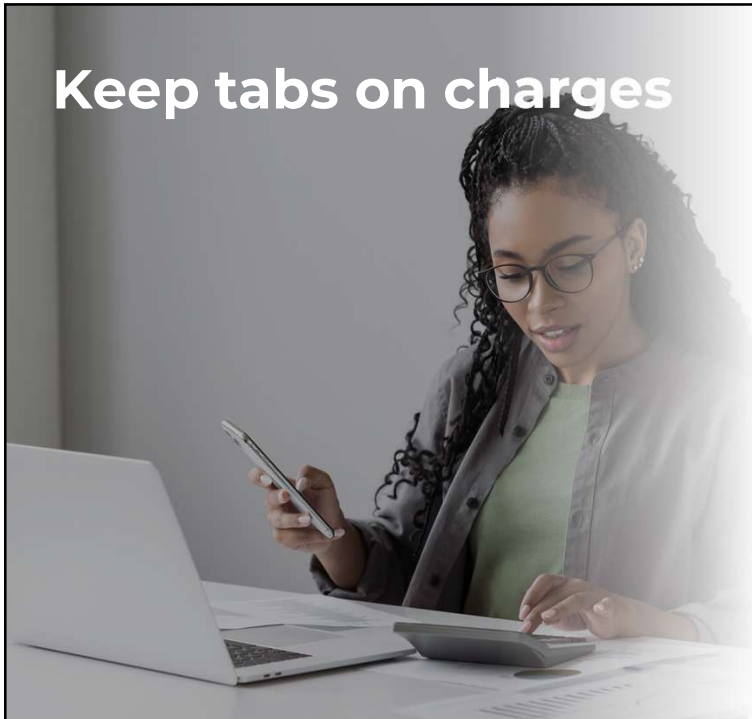
### The Best Darn Project

#### Project Schedule

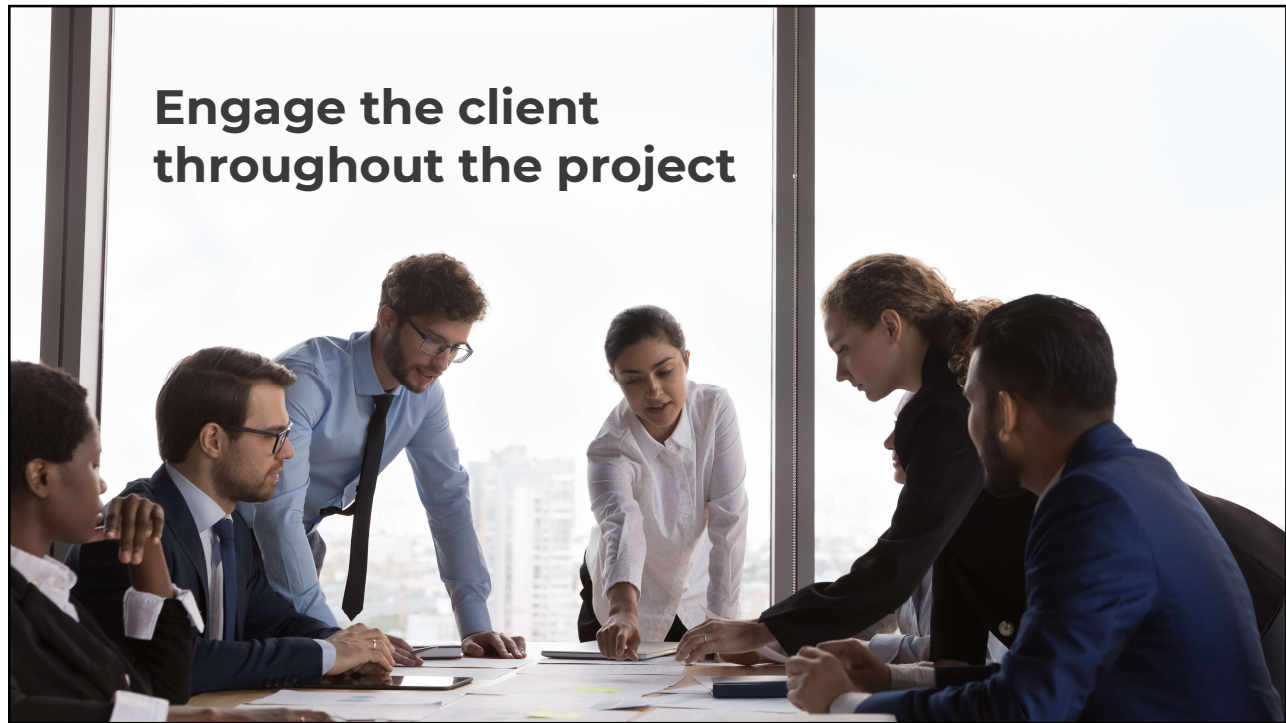
Description	Duration	Start	Finish	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23
Gather Field Data	10 days	2/12/23	2/25/23	█							
Preliminary Design	45 days	2/26/23	4/28/23	█	█	█					
Preliminary Cost Estimate	5 days	4/29/23	5/5/23				█				
QA/QC Review	6 days	5/6/23	5/13/23				█				
Client Review	10 days	5/14/23	5/27/23				█				
Final Design	30 days	5/28/23	7/8/23				█	█			
Specifications	30 days	5/28/23	7/8/23				█	█			
Final Cost Estimate	6 days	7/9/23	7/16/23						█		
QA/QC Review	6 days	7/19/23	7/26/23						█		
Client Review	10 days	7/27/23	8/9/23						█		
State Submittal	1 day	8/10/23	8/10/23						█		
Bidding	30 days	8/11/23	9/21/23						█	█	█
Project Management	159 days	2/12/23	9/21/23	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Project Meetings	159 days	2/12/23	9/21/23	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

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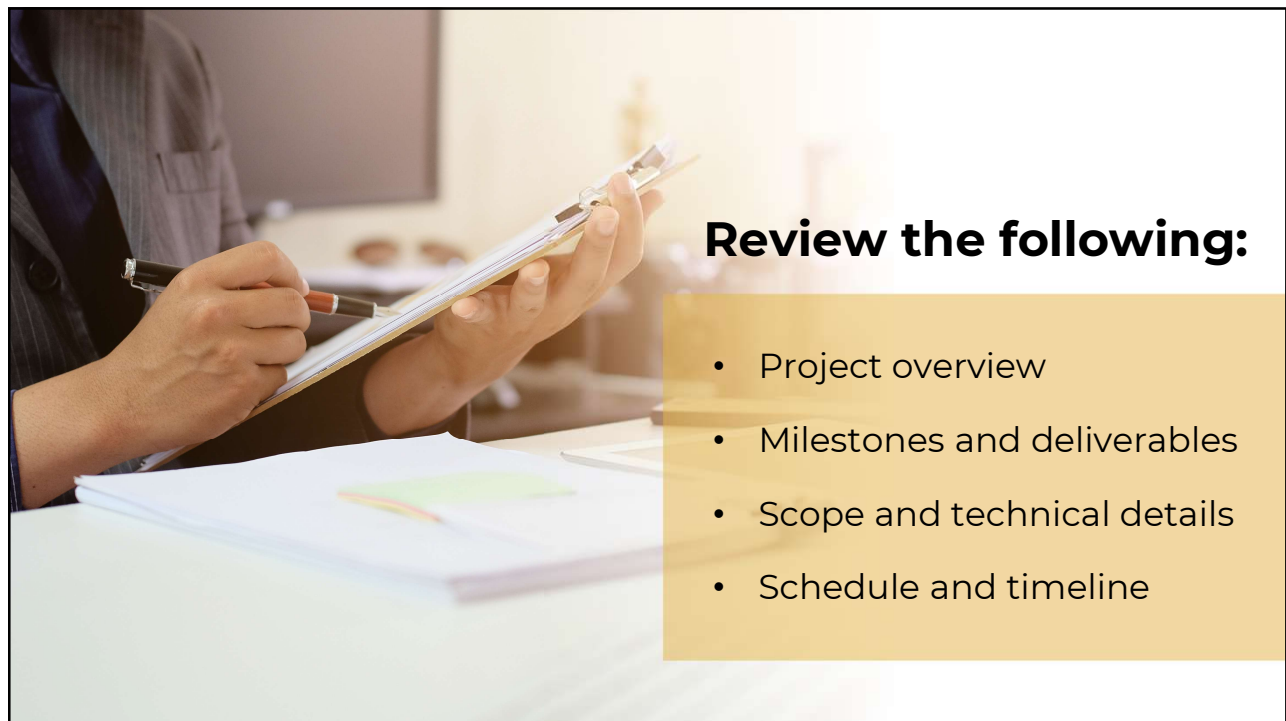
## Keep tabs on charges



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**Type in Chat...**



## How often are you holding project meetings with your clients?

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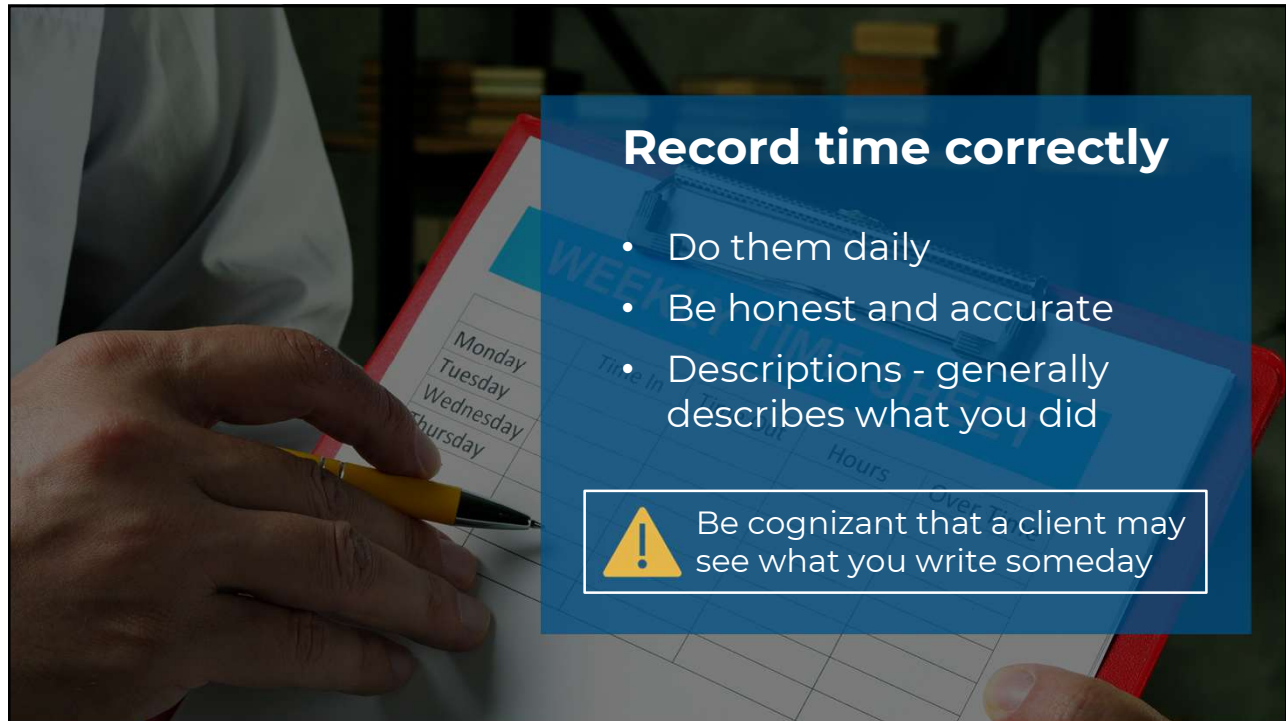
**Set Start Date ONLY!**  
(1<sup>st</sup> task below summary task)

**Do Not Touch!**  
Hide Finish Column!

Task Name	Predecessors	Duration	Start	Finish	Gantt Chart											
					Feb 27	Mar 6	Mar 13	Mar 20	Mar 27	Apr 3	Apr 10	Apr 17	Apr 24	May 1	May 8	May 15
<b>Pughtown Project</b>		170d	03/01/22	10/24/22												
Contract Award		0	03/01/22	03/01/22												
Project Kick-Off Meeting		0	03/15/22	03/15/22												
<b>Deliverable 1—Structure Selection Rept</b>	2FS +2w	35d	03/15/22	05/02/22												
Update exist. utility info	3	2w	03/15/22	03/28/22												
Create = 2 structure alt	5	4w	03/29/22	04/25/22												
Assist w public mtg	6	1w	04/26/22	05/02/22												
Deliverable 1 Complete	7	0	05/02/22	05/02/22												
<b>Deliverable 2—Public Outreach</b>		15d	05/03/22	05/23/22												
Depict bridge alts for public	8	2w	05/03/22	05/16/22												
Articulate antilop. sched.	10	1w	05/17/22	05/23/22												
Deliverable 2 Complete	11	0	05/23/22	05/23/22												
<b>Deliverable 3—Hydraulics &amp; FP Mapping</b>		50d	03/15/22	05/23/22												
Prepare hydraulics rept		50d	03/15/22	05/23/22												
Take field msmts	3	2w	03/15/22	03/28/22												
Complete calcs	15	1w	03/29/22	04/04/22												
Prep dwgs	16	3w	04/05/22	04/25/22												
Prep map	17	4w	04/26/22	05/23/22												
<b>Floodplain mapping</b>		20d	03/15/22	04/11/22												
Review FEMA info	3	2w	03/15/22	03/28/22												
Review aerial photos	20	1w	03/29/22	04/04/22												
Create FP map layers	21	1w	04/05/22	04/11/22												
Deliverable 3 Complete	22	0	04/11/22	04/11/22												
<b>Deliverable 4—Prelim Design Set</b>		65d	05/24/22	08/22/22												
Prep d																
Cres																


**Step 4 – Leverage Technology to Increase Visibility and Streamline Workflows**

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## Record time correctly

- Do them daily
- Be honest and accurate
- Descriptions - generally describes what you did

 Be cognizant that a client may see what you write someday

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## Summary

- Discussed the need to ensure the project scope is clearly communicated to all team members.
- Addressed the importance of identifying scope creep as early as possible.
- Highlighted the creation of a work breakdown structure to ensure work stays within scope.
- Emphasized running an effective kickoff meeting to minimize scope creep.

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The screenshot displays the EMI website's content area. At the top left is the EMI logo. The navigation menu includes: About, AEC PM Certification, Career Advice, Live Events, Insights, Careers, Contact, and Corporate Training. Social media icons for LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, X, Facebook, and Spotify are also present. The main heading reads "Over 5 Million Downloads and Counting...". Below this, a paragraph states: "We have been developing content for engineering professionals for years, which started when our company was known as The Engineering Career Coach. We have a wide array of media channels that have been praised by major media outlets. **Recently, Forbes cited The Engineering Career Coach Podcast as one of the 15 most inspiring for professionals.**" A second paragraph says: "Below is some information about our channels. You can access the channels themselves them by clicking on the icons." Three buttons labeled "Podcasts", "Articles", and "Videos" are shown. The "Podcasts" section is highlighted, featuring the title "The AEC Leadership Podcast". To the left is a podcast cover image with the text "THE AEC LEADERSHIP PODCAST". To the right of the image, it says "9,000+ Downloads per Month" and "Over 2.6 Million Downloads to Date". A descriptive paragraph follows: "The AEC Leadership Podcast (AECLP) provides advice to aspiring and existing architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) leaders. Our host for the show, Anthony Fasano, P.E., AEC PM, interviews top AEC leaders to share their insights, strategies, and experiences, helping you navigate your leadership journey."

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The slide features a large blue heading "Questions/Discussion" at the top center. On the left side, there is a large QR code. To the right of the QR code is a graphic of three blue arrows pointing left, followed by the text "Post Evaluation". In the bottom right corner, there is the EMI logo, which is circular and contains the text "ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE" around the perimeter and "GIVE + GUIDE = GROW EMI" in the center.

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