

The GOPP Method

What is GOPP?

GOPP (Goal-Oriented Project Planning) is an innovative tool for project management in which interactive workshops involving all stakeholders in a project together with an external moderator are held at different points in the project lifecycle.

The GOPP method can be freely used: it is not copyrighted or patented. It has been used in a wide variety of situations since the 1980s and has proved to be robust and effective in helping groups defining clear objectives and designing related action plans. It is an excellent method for improving team effectiveness.

GOPP aims:

- to improve the quality of the analysis made by the group of partners in the design phase of a project;
- to make the project more coherent and transparent by clarifying the responsibilities of each partner;
- to provide trust and self-confidence to project partners so to reduce the risk of lack of commitment or failure during the implementation of the intervention;
- to improve the capacity of the group of partners to achieve more results in a limited time.

How does it work?

A successful GOPP session needs a skilled and independent workshop *facilitator* or *moderator*. He ensures that the discussion is always focused and makes sure that all the participants are involved in reaching decisions on an equal basis.

Ahead of time, he agrees with the client what is blocking the participants from making the desired progress and determines which concrete workshop products can be delivered in the time available.

The moderator prepares a planning procedure which will lead the group through all the steps needed to solve the issue or problem that blocks their progress and deliver the products. To assist the group, the moderator also uses visualisation techniques.

A GOPP workshop is normally attended by a maximum of 20 participants and it may vary a lot in duration, from 1 to 5 days. However, a 2-days workshop is normally enough for reaching significant results with a group.

Who can benefit from GOPP?

Recent applications GOPP may be useful whenever an analysis and decision-making process is at play within a partnership or an organisation. Up to now, the situations in which it has been mostly used are the following:

- projects funded or co-funded by the **European Commission**; especially in the case where a transnational partnership has to co-operate, the use of an external facilitator may be very useful for overcoming language or cultural problems in meetings that are necessarily short;
- **local development processes**; GOPP may ensure more transparent results to spontaneous development processes initiated by key-actors at a local level;
- changing **processes within organisations**: the commitment and the participation of stakeholders and workforce may be a success factor in enabling organisations to face changing environment and establish higher development goals;
- **social and economic research**: new ways of interactive meetings or interviews with stakeholders or clients may be conducted within a GOPP-like environment;
- **meetings, conferences, workshops**: the use of more interactive group-work sessions for involving conference participants in the discussion (round tables, small groups, thematic workshops, etc.) is increasing now also in large conference or meetings.