

OCTOBER 2023



Science + Technology Perspectives

Successful Lab Projects: Effectively Balancing Design, Schedule, and Budgets

Recently, Hixson's Jim Schreyer and Paul Thamann presented "Successful Lab Projects: Effectively Balancing Design, Schedule, and Budget," a one-hour webinar held in conjunction with Xtalks.

Drawing on their collective knowledge and experience gained through years of working with clients in the Science and Technology sector, Jim and Paul shared their thoughts and observations on how project team members can maintain their focus across four critical success factors:

1. Schedule. A high-quality, detailed project schedule is critical to project success. Project schedules should include design, bidding/procurement, construction, and commissioning to form a complete, end-to-end look at the project. At the same time, don't discount early, simplified schedules! With a little knowledge of the scale of the project, a good Project Manager should be able to move from a "napkin-sketches," level 0 schedule to a simplified Gantt chart to provide to the Capital Manager, and add more detail as the project progresses between design phases.

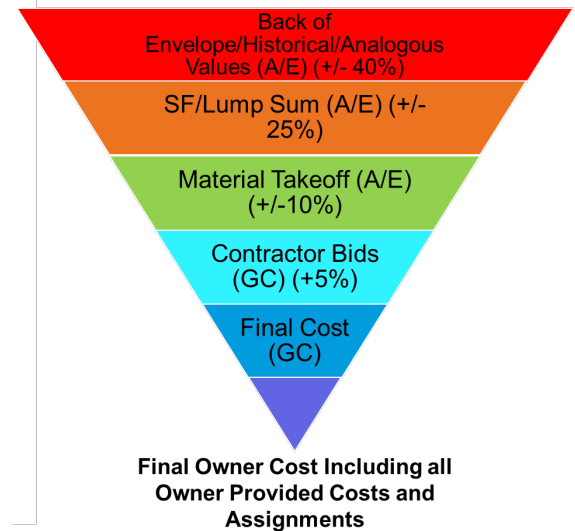
2. Budget. The second component within any successful project is the development of a good capital budget. Creating a well-informed budget means being mindful of all the components necessary to ensure that the project has enough funds through the completion of the job. In a similar vein as with the schedule, budget management is also going to follow a funneling concept, starting with the very high-level picture, and working our way down to a very detailed view that includes key details, such as sizing of the space, key components, etc. (See graphic on the following page.)

3. Stakeholders. Getting the right stakeholders involved in the project and making sure they're kept informed along the way is the next piece

Want to learn more?

In their presentation, Paul and Jim dive into each of these points in greater detail. (If you are interested in viewing it, the webinar is [available on archive here!](#))

of the puzzle. Yet, how do you define that list? Who must be involved? Some stakeholders are obvious: those paying the bills, those running the facility or lab. Others may be harder to define. For instance, who may have technical information required for a particular space? At the same time, including too many cooks in the proverbial kitchen can bog a project down. The key is to accurately identify those with the right level of interest and/or level of influence required for project success.



4. **Scope.** The final critical success factor for a lab design project is to make certain that the project will ultimately address the need, without going overboard. Creating a good scope for the project means answering these three questions:

- What is the work? What do we need to accomplish here in this lab, or in this facility? What equipment will need to be included to reach those goals?
- Who are the people who will do the work? Who will occupy the facility? Who will maintain it?
- How much space is needed? Exactly how big will this need to be?

It is important to note that each of these critical success factors have the potential to derail a project if not performed correctly. A good project delivery system is one component of a project that can help. These systems are not just about assigning work to the various project members: It's also about providing thoughtful key points within the project where stakeholders and team members can pause, assess, and check that all phases and outcomes are aligned, and that warning signs are addressed.

RELATED CONTENT

- [Four Key Ideas from the 2023 Lab Design Conference](#)
- [Hot Topic: Cyclotron Facility Design](#)



CONTACT US

Direct any comments or questions to:

Mike Tragseiler, Director Client Development

mtragseiler@hixson-inc.com

Phone: 513.241.1230

www.hixson-inc.com