

Defining the project clearly

If the project is not clearly defined, in writing, two things will happen:

1. The client will move the goal posts
2. You will never have done enough

Therefore: define all outcomes and restraints

e.g. when client decisions are required by,
when staff are required and promised to be available,
when equipment is due to be available
Define the reporting procedure: how often, how formal, how much detail,
e.g. monthly written summary, or 'only if there's a problem'.

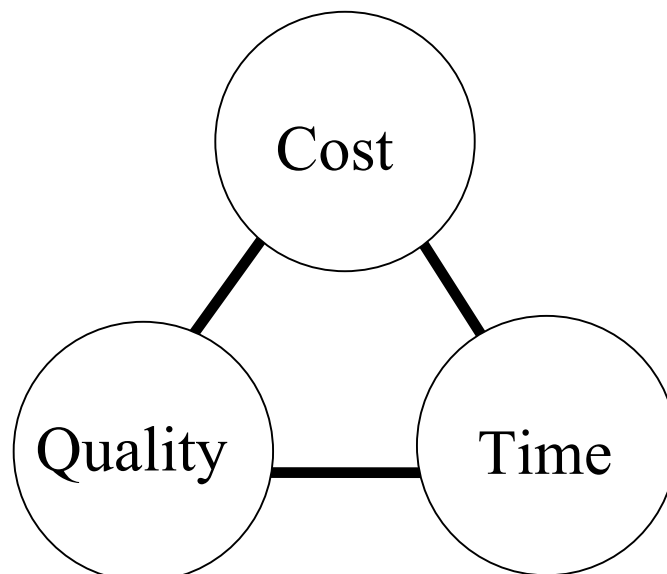
Be assertive! The time to be strong is at the start of the project!

Planning makes you stronger – use Gantt charts etc to argue your case with facts

Negotiate – get them to open first, then ask for a little bit more than you need

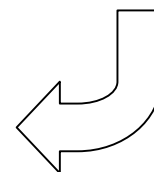
Beware of unrealistic objectives, e.g. "I know the plan says 6 weeks, but if we're to get the contract we'll just have to find a way to do it in three, and I reckon with a bit of luck we can get the first part through quicker than usual...".

Identify the key project driver (Cost, Quality or Time)



by asking probing questions:

- **why**
is it required by that date?
- **what if**
it goes over budget by £1000?
- **offer to trade**
(see examples below)



We could do it a bit more quickly if you reduced the specification...

Would you reduce the spec if it meant saving 2 weeks on delivery?

If we could have a bit longer we could add some extra features...

We could add some extra features and still deliver on time, but this would add a little to the cost....

We could save you some money if we could take out one or two of the features...

