Project Management for Website development process - 2 stages

Stage 1: Initiate Project Process
1. Determine a website or redesign is needed
2. Gather major players to create a development team
3. Discuss broad goals for the site
4. Define a budget
5. Assign a Project Manager
6. Distribute Design Document Questionnaire to appropriate parties
    a. Basic Questionnaire to start the project plan process
    b. Gathers basic information about the project

Stage 2: Site Development process
1. **Site definition & planning**- Design document
    1. **Build a design document** (based on the questionnaire)
        o States major site goals
            ▪ Clearly state the purpose of the website
                • Why do you need the website?
                • What do you want to accomplish with the site?
            ▪ Clearly define the target audience
                • Age
                • Occupation
                • Sex
                • Education
                • Race
                • Computer literacy
                • Technologies they can understand
        o Major team members & their responsibilities
        o Content creators & technology needs
        o Defines production issues including budgets, schedules & delivery dates
        o Determine approximate number of site pages
        o Define & document functionality issues such as target browsers, css, etc.
        o Define site maintenance team, have them involved from the beginning
        o Risk Management
            ▪ Identify & assess risks
        o Define maintenance team responsibilities
            ▪ Keep content fresh
            ▪ Make revisions
            ▪ Add pages
            ▪ Track server logs
            ▪ Regularly backup the site
            ▪ Document & store backups to create a "paper trail & site history
            ▪ Reporting hierarchy for long term maintenance of the site
            ▪ Long-term storage for backups
        o Assign a site editor responsible for the content of each page on the site
            ▪ Duties vary based on the project criteria
            ▪ Makes sure content complies with company standards & branding rules
            ▪ Keeps tabs on copyright issues
    2. **Project Plan**
        ▪ Document the project - documents to be included:
            1. Design document questionnaire
            2. Design document
                ▪ Design style guide
            3. Mind-mapping
            4. Wireframes
            5. Storyboarding

6. Flowcharts
7. Project Requirements
8. Resources
9. Costs
10. Deliverables
11. Timeline
12. Risks
13. Testing
   o Usability testing
- Define the scope of the project
  - Set up a methodology for dealing with scope creep
    o What is the process for submitting additional info for the project
      - Written submittal process
    o Who is responsible for making the final decision about any new items
      - Where is documentation submitted for review?
    o Who needs to be contacted & what documents must be modified if an item is added or subtracted moving forward?
- Determine project mgmt team members
- Define project phases
- Determine roles/responsibilities
- Define resource allocation
  - Graphic needs
  - Text needs
  - Programming needs
  - Additional content needs
    o Flash, video, etc.
- Set up a timeline for project
  - Gantt chart
- Define deliverables
- Identify & assess risks
- Project documentation – who is responsible?
  - Design document questionnaire
  - Design document becomes a part of the project documentation
- Very useful for future redesigns

3. **Project Communications**
   o Communication methods must be defined in the project plan
     - Acrobat.com
     - Acrobat review process
     - Connect meetings
     - Buzzword on Acrobat.com
     - Email

2. **Information architecture**-defines site & navigational layout
   a. Project Requirements
      i. Detail & inventory content
   b. Detail organization of the site
   c. Determine page layout using post-its
      i. Based on design document & questionnaire info
      ii. Rough out navigational issues
      iii. Finalize page count

    iv. Determine templates needed & for which pages
    v. Be sure to include site maintenance team throughout this stage
    vi. Define directory structure & page naming techniques for consistency

3. **Site design**-defines look & feel of site
   a. Confirm content responsibilities & due dates
      i. Graphics & photos
      ii. Text
      iii. Meta tag information
      iv. Programming need
      v. HTML creation
      vi. MultiMedia & Pdf creation
      vii. Search engine for site
      viii. secure a domain name & web host
   b. Define & document site colors & fonts in design document
   c. Define if using css & to what extent
   d. Determine layout grids for homepage & other levels
   e. Define navigation for site
   f. Go over templates & content issues with site maintenance team
   g. Add JavaScript functionality
   h. Drop in META tag info
   i. Develop templates for pages
   j. Check template pages for HTML & Accessibility compliance
4. **Site construction**-create actual pages
   a. Drop in content
   b. Add programming aspects
   c. Finalize database connections
   d. Double check pages for HTML & Accessibility compliance
   e. Edit pages for spelling & content
   f. Testing stage-either offline, application server or testing site
      - Links
      - Navigation
      - Database & JavaScript functionality
      - Forms
      - Customer support sections of the site
      - Search engine features
   g. Upload to a web server for beta testing by development team & others
   h. Can release url to the testing site to employees for additional feedback at this point
   i. Run usability tests by users not on the development team
   j. Refine & correct issues raised in beta & usability tests
   k. Upload to the live site
   l. Backup entire site before launch
   m. Get project signoff on deliverables
5. **Site marketing** – getting the word out
   a. Add website url to **all** company information, letterhead, brochures & biz cards
   b. Distribute press release about new site launch
   c. Inform employees of new site
   d. Submit domain of site to search engines
6. **Tracking, evaluation, & maintenance** – keeping the site fresh & functional
   a. Meet with maintenance team
   b. Define tracking & site evaluation goals
   c. Re-confirm duties as defined in design document portion above

Notes: Ways to avoid scope creep & keep a tight rein on the project
- Specify the maximum number of pages up front
- • Anyone wishing to add pages must justify it
  - o find other pages to delete or re-budget for the additional pages