# Top 12 KPIs Every Project Manager Should Track for Project Success

**Published on 1 May 2025 at 14:03**

**Author: Kimberly Wiethoff**

In project management, success isn’t just about delivering on time and within budget—it’s about measuring progress, performance, and value. That’s where **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** come into play. These metrics offer objective data to help project managers steer projects in the right direction, mitigate risks early, and ensure alignment with strategic goals.

## Why KPI's Matter

* **Drive Clarity** - KPIs provide objective data points to assess progress and performance.
* **Mitigate Risks** - Early identification of issues helps prevent project derailment.
* **Ensure Alignment** - Metrics keeps projects aligned with strategic organizational goals.
* **Enable Decisions** - Data-driven insights lead to better project management decisions.

Below are 12 essential KPIs every project manager should track to drive clarity, accountability, and continuous improvement across projects.

## 1. Schedule Variance (SV)

Measures whether a project is ahead or behind schedule.
**Formula:** SV = Earned Value (EV) – Planned Value (PV)
A negative SV signals delays and requires immediate attention.

Schedule Variance (SV) is a metric for schedule performance on a project. It is used as a measure of the variance analysis that forms an element of the earned value management techniques. SV is the difference between the earned value (EV) and the planned value (PV) of a project. An alternative but less common classification of this technique is earned schedule management or analysis. A positive value is a favorable condition, while a negative value is unfavorable.

## 2. Cost Performance Index (CPI)

Tracks cost efficiency.
**Formula:** CPI = EV / Actual Cost (AC)
A CPI below 1 means the project is over budget.

Cost performance refers to a key indicator that measures how effectively a project or business utilizes its resources to deliver value. It is defined as the ratio of the actual cost of a product or service to its planned or budgeted cost, helping to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of resource management in achieving project objectives.

## 3. Planned vs. Actual Progress

A visual or quantitative comparison of planned milestones versus completed ones helps gauge schedule adherence and forecast future slippage.

Planned Progress: This represents the anticipated progress based on the original project plan. It is calculated using the planned weightage and SI Milestone % assigned to tasks scheduled for a specific period. Actual Progress: This reflects the actual work completed during a given period.

## 4. Scope Changes (Change Requests)

Monitors how often the project scope is altered. Frequent changes can signal poor requirements gathering or stakeholder misalignment.

Tracking scope change requests provides critical insight into project stability and potential risks. Our project experienced significant fluctuation in change requests during the first half of the year.

## 5. Resource Utilization

Tracks how efficiently project resources are being used. Low utilization may indicate overstaffing or poor task distribution.

Resource utilization is a metric that measures the management and optimization of resources over time. Its main objective is to help organizations achieve maximum efficiency and productivity while completing a project.

## 6. On-Time Task Completion Rate

The percentage of tasks completed by their assigned deadline. A low rate can highlight process inefficiencies or unrealistic planning.

Task Completion Rate (TCR) measures the percentage of tasks finished within a set timeframe. It’s a simple way to evaluate productivity and efficiency. For example, completing 40 out of 50 tasks in a sprint means an 80% TCR.

## 7. Budget Variance

Measures the difference between the estimated and actual project costs. Helps monitor financial health throughout the project lifecycle.

Budget variance is the difference between budgeted and actual financial results. It helps organizations assess financial performance, identify overspending or underspending, and improve cost management through variance analysis.

## 8. Risk Mitigation Effectiveness

Tracks how well identified risks are being addressed. This includes the percentage of risks resolved and the impact of unresolved risks.

Risk mitigation is the action you take to reduce threats and ensure resiliency. When you mitigate risk, you are taking steps to reduce adverse effects. It is important to remember that mitigating risk is not just about fixing vulnerabilities—it’s also about reducing the impact of any potential threat.

## 9. Issue Resolution Time

Average time it takes to resolve project issues. Long resolution times can cause bottlenecks and delay delivery.

Time to Resolution encapsulates the total time taken to address and resolve a customer's issue or a system malfunction from the moment it is reported until the problem is completely resolved. This metric is essential in evaluating the performance and efficiency of an IT support team.

## 10. Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT)

Collected via surveys post-delivery, this KPI evaluates whether the project met stakeholder expectations.

CSAT measures client happiness with project delivery and requires regular assessment, prompt response to feedback, and pattern monitoring for continuous improvement.

## 11. Team Velocity (Agile-specific)

Measures how much work a Scrum team completes in a sprint. Helps predict delivery timelines and assess team performance.

Tracking velocity helps teams identify bottlenecks, optimize workflows, and improve sprint planning accuracy. Consistent velocity indicates a stable, well-functioning team, while significant fluctuations may signal underlying process issues requiring attention.

For maximum effectiveness, measure velocity over multiple sprints to establish reliable patterns, rather than focusing on individual sprint performance.

## 12. Return on Investment (ROI)

Assesses the financial value generated by the project relative to its cost.
**Formula:** ROI = (Net Benefit / Project Cost) x 100

ROI quantifies project value by comparing financial benefits to costs, expressed as a percentage to demonstrate business impact.

## Final Thoughts

Project KPIs are more than just numbers—they’re tools for decision-making, early warning indicators, and communication vehicles with stakeholders. By tracking the right KPIs at the right time, project managers can transform chaos into clarity and ensure that every project delivers value, not just deliverables.

#ProjectManagement #KPI #ProjectMetrics #ProjectSuccess #AgileMetrics #PMO #ScheduleVariance #CostPerformance #ProjectTracking #AgileProjectManagement #ProgramManagement #EarnedValueManagement #ProjectDashboard #PowerBI #TeamVelocity #CSAT #ProjectROI #ManagingProjectsTheAgileWay