

Work Breakdown Structures are project management and planning tools used by departments, teams, businesses, and organizations to make an effort in understanding the scope and expectations of the given work. Developing a systematic Work Breakdown Structure is fundamental to guide you and other participants of the project in effective budgeting, scheduling, and resourcing, especially to achieve success in your work.

Work Breakdown Structure Definition & Meaning

A Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is a deliverable-oriented or process-oriented hierarchical diagram of the work that must be completed by the project team.

Work Breakdown Structures are created by subdividing the main project tasks or sub-tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks until they are outlined sufficiently.

What is a Work Breakdown Structure?

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is an efficient planning tool used by many project managers to break down deliverables into manageable work packages. Project management teams utilize this tool to estimate project costs accurately and allocate resources properly. Additionally, WBS is beneficial in managing complex and overwhelming projects, helping the team determine a project timeline, setting the project cost and dependencies, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and detecting possible risks and concerns.

10 Types of Work Breakdown Structures

Work Breakdown Structure Dictionary

Project teams make a WBS dictionary to provide more details on the WBS elements and to ensure the production of quality deliverables. It facilitates a better understanding of the scope of work because of the given context of the WBS hierarchy. Describe each component of the WBS with deliverables, milestones, scope, and tasks while using a standard [Work Breakdown Structure \(WBS\) dictionary template](#).



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Work Breakdown Structure Dictionary

WBS DICTIONARY		
NO.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	WBS Identifier	This is the WBS title, number, or any other identifier.
2	Responsible Team Member	This is the team member responsible for the WBS element.
3	Description	This explains the work package scope and defines boundaries.
4	Deliverable	Identifies deliverables or intermediate deliverables or the product, service, or result.
5	Duration	Duration of the WBS element.
6	Start & End Dates	Start and end dates of the WBS element.
7	Resource Required	Resource requirements for the WBS element.
8	Budget	The cost required to complete the work package.
9	Milestones	Important project milestones.
10	Risk	Mention any risk that can impact the WBS element.

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Staff Work Breakdown Structure

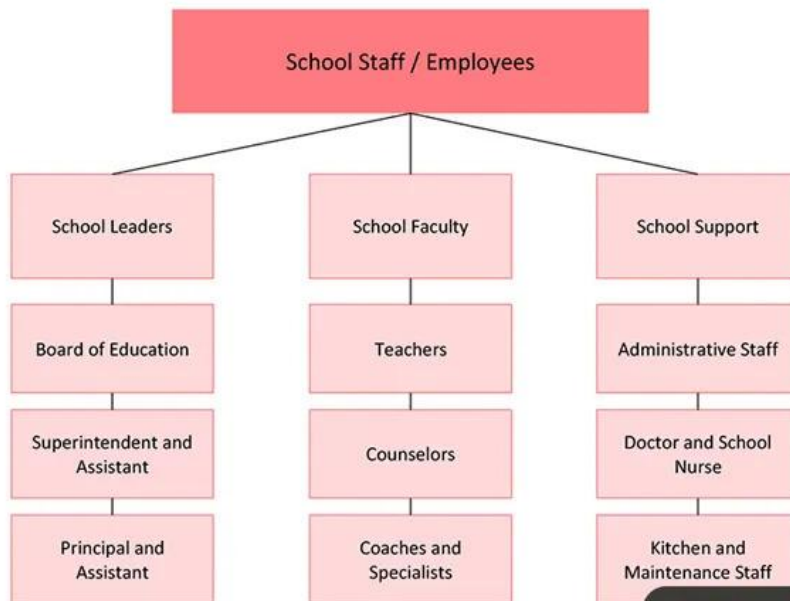
A [staff WBS template](#) is a document used to display the organizational hierarchy of the school staff or employees. Indicate the basic information and icon or logo of the educational institution or company at the header of the WBS document. Then, construct a chart showing the structure of the school organization such as the school leaders, school faculty, and school support.



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Staff Work Breakdown Structure



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Business Acquisition Work Breakdown Structure

Identify the acquired professional services during the business acquisition using a [business acquisition WBS template](#). It contains a hierarchical diagram of major professional services like the migrating of resourcing information, migrating project accounting, and training. Detail other sub-activities related to these business acquisition services.

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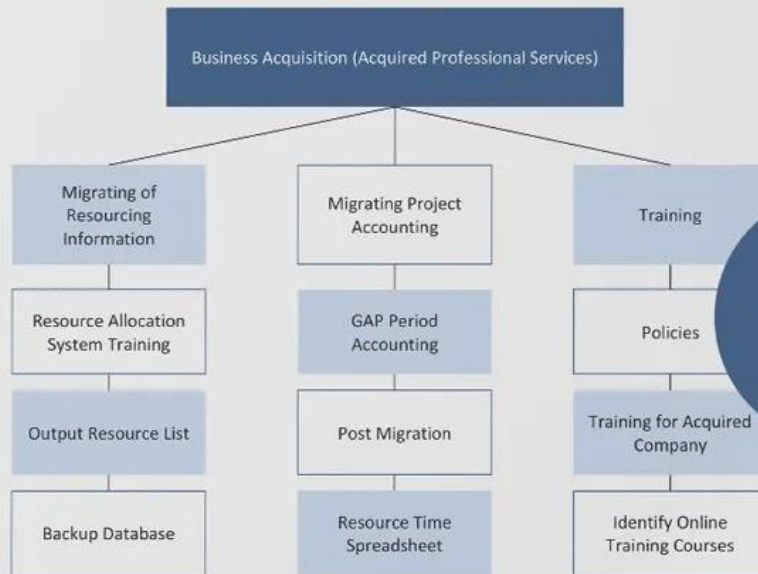
BUSINESS ACQUISITION WBS



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Business Acquisition Work Breakdown Structure



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Engineering Project Work Breakdown Structure

In construction, systems engineering, and building renovation projects, project management teams make an [engineering project WBS](#) to visualize the flow and levels of the given project. They also create a Gantt chart in their WBS to define specific elements in a hierarchical format. It is a beneficial document for disintegrating a specific engineering product into subproducts at lower levels of detail for enhanced project planning, cost estimating, execution, and control.

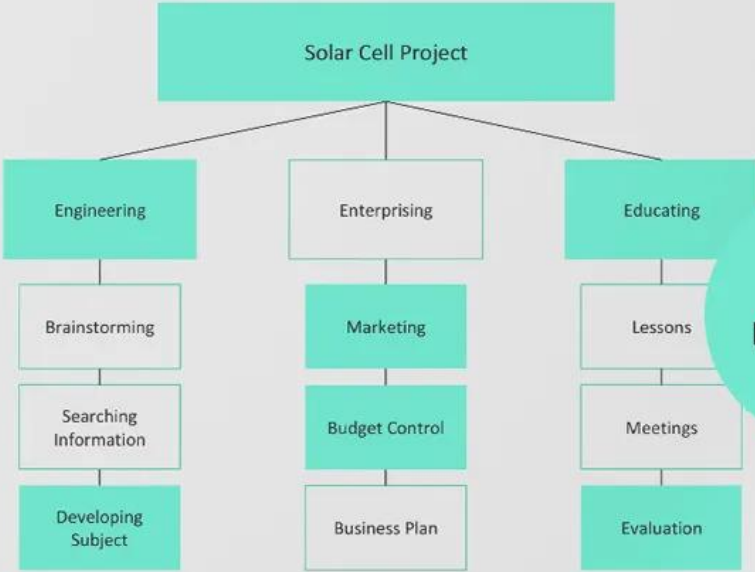
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ENGINEERING PROJECT WBS

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Engineering Project Work Breakdown Structure



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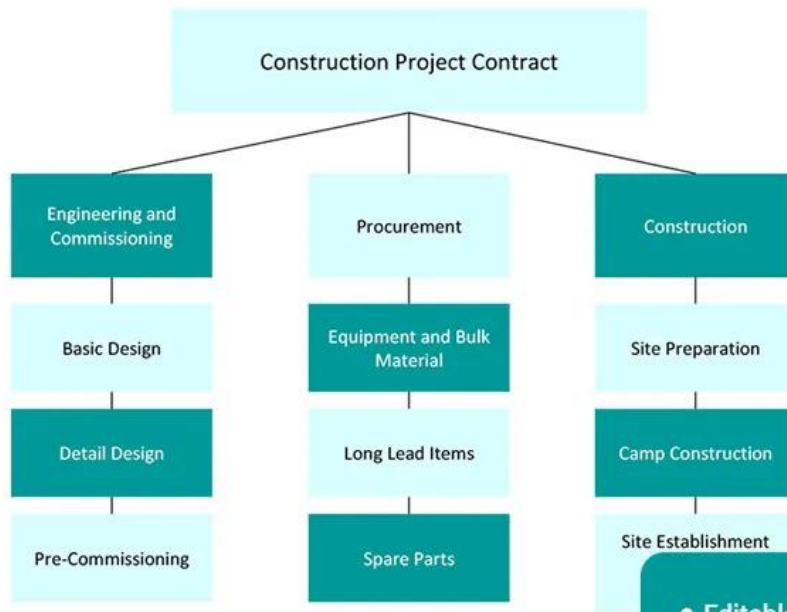


Contract Work Breakdown Structure

Craft a [Contract Work Breakdown Structure template](#) to outline the core elements of your construction project contract. Describe the major outputs or processes during the contract like engineering and commissioning, procurement, and construction. After that, indicate the sub-processes of each major element.



Contract Work Breakdown Structure



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Team Work Breakdown Structure

A simple [Team Work Breakdown Structure template](#) shows a standard organizational structure of the project team management. It displays the key positions within the project team which includes the project manager, project team member, and project sponsor. Specify the responsibilities of each position in a compelling WBS flowchart.

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TEAM WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE

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Team Work Breakdown Structure



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Event Planning Work Breakdown Structure

Make a modern [event planning WBS](#) for various formal events such as wedding ceremonies, anniversaries, corporate conferences, music festivals, and other celebrations. Draw a systematic WBS flowchart presenting the main goals and objectives of the event planning process such as deciding the place, invitation, advertising, and event day. Decompose all the necessary work to create the event into manageable chunks.

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EVENT PLANNING WBS



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Event Planning Work Breakdown Structure



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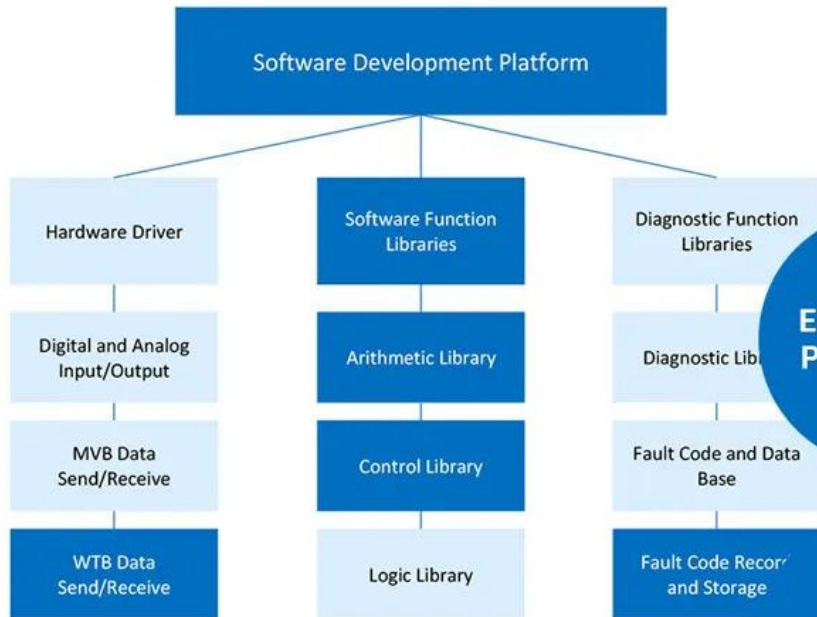
Software Work Breakdown Structure

A [Software Work Breakdown Structure](#) is a data and project visualization tool that outlines the final deliverable of a software development project. It specifies the phases that are integral to attaining the final deliverable. Lay out the major tasks and break them down into smaller tasks to execute your goals and desired outcomes that can lead to the completion of your software development project.



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Software Work Breakdown Structure



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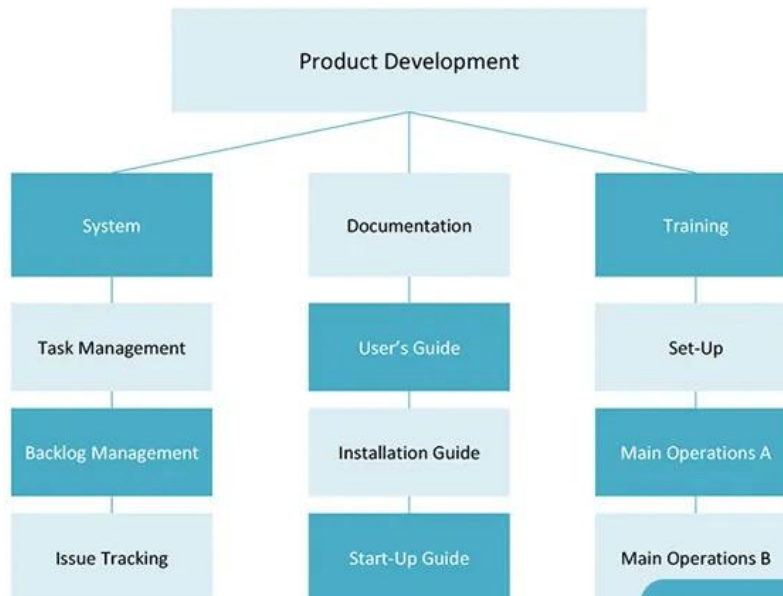


Product Work Breakdown Structure

Design an appealing [Product Work Breakdown Structure](#) to clearly define the specific outcomes of the project. As the to-do list of the project, it deconstructs the main product into its constituent parts in a hierarchical format. Illustrate a product WBS to closely monitor the progress of a product development project while using a basic product WBS template available in our template collection.



Product Work Breakdown Structure



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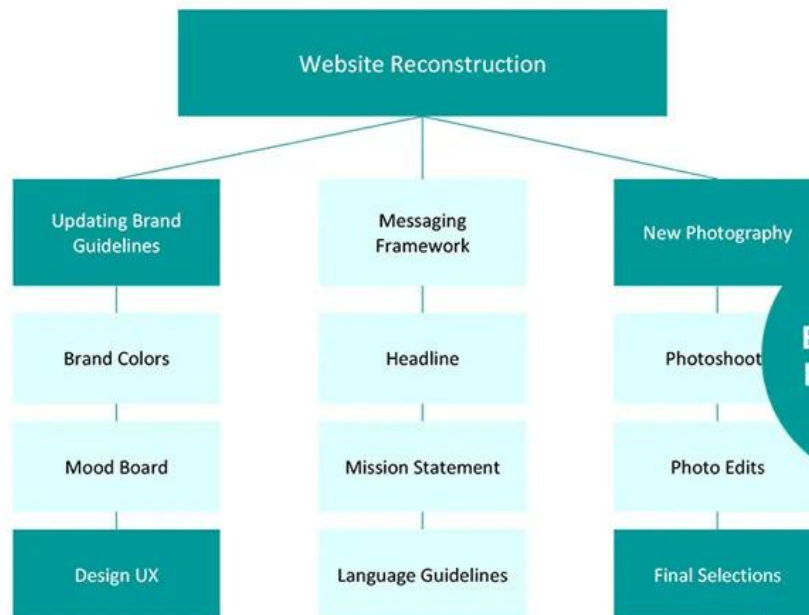
IT Project Work Breakdown Structure

Prepare an [IT Project Work Breakdown Structure](#) to visually organize your IT project deliverables into varying levels according to their dependencies. Indicate the core elements of your IT project such as the IT project baseline or scope statement, IT project stakeholders, IT project schedule, IT project deliverables, and supporting subtasks. Assist your IT project teams to break down complex project scopes and track the task status for quick progress evaluations.

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IT Project Work Breakdown Structure



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Work Breakdown Structure Uses, Purpose, Importance

A Work Breakdown Structure is one of the fundamental project management and planning tools to fulfill the needs of the project. Project managers use this method to get things done faster. What are the common uses, purposes, and importance of Work Breakdown Structures?

Provides Visual Framework of the Scope of Work

Work Breakdown Structure is an essential tool that displays the visual framework of the project's scope of work for project planning and control. It outlines the project objectives and deliverables while validating the consistency and integrity of the scope. Also, it helps the team to understand their responsibilities in completing each task to finish the entire project.

Facilitates Good Communication and Clarity

WBS is important to facilitate good communication and clarity regarding the scope, budget, schedule, risk, and performance tracking of the project, promoting effective discussions and transparency within the team. Without a well-designed WBS of the project scope, it can lead to inaccuracy and poor planning deliverables. Applying WBS in your project is beneficial to address what is in and out of scope and to reduce the complexity of the project.

Increases Time Efficiency and Work Productivity

It is used to increase time efficiency and work productivity by providing a clear and cohesive roadmap for different individuals and teams working on the same project. There are projects that require different teams and professionals to move in sync. So, a WBS acts as a precursor that helps them to use their time wisely and work on specific tasks and deliverables simultaneously.

Tracks the Status of the Project

The advantage of using a WBS in project lifecycle management is that it enables each participant to gain an overview of the current status of the project. It can help each participant to deduce at what certain point their activities and tasks are interpolated. As they work on each task, they can easily track the status and measure the progress of the project.

Achieves Project Management Success

A WBS flowchart, list, or spreadsheet is used to balance the need of the management for control of the work to achieve successful project management and completion. By illustrating the different levels of detail in the project, it specifies the core planning and control details in the most comprehensive manner. Thus, WBS serves as a critical mechanism for attaining project goals and objectives.

What's in a Work Breakdown Structure? Parts?

Major Details of the Tasks

Identify the major information of the tasks such as the number, title, ID, and description of each task assigned to the team. Mention the names of those who are responsible for the completion of the given tasks, as well as the dependencies and predecessors of combined tasks.

Project Timeline

Indicate the estimated start and finish date of the individual tasks and the overall project that will need to be accomplished. Add the duration in days or hours of how long each task or portion of the project will take on the calendar.

Work Estimate

Calculate the estimated hours or days of work required to finish the task. If some of them are working in parallel, combine all the resource hours together.

Task Status

Show the current status of the assigned task. Determine if the task is started, in progress, late or complete.

Gantt Chart

Construct a data visualization or graphical representation of the Work Breakdown Structure over time. Demonstrate the fundamental details of the tasks in the chart with accuracy and precision.

How to Design a Work Breakdown Structure?

1. Choose a [Work Breakdown Structure Size](#)
2. Think about the project scope and purpose of your Work Breakdown Structure
3. Select the [Work Breakdown Structure Template](#)
4. Outline the project phases, control accounts, and project deliverables
5. Divide the project into smaller pieces by project phases, deliverables, or sub-tasks
6. Check, revise, and finalize your Work Breakdown Structure

Work Breakdown Structure vs. Gantt Chart

Work Breakdown Structure or WBS is a hierarchical diagram that graphically represents the different tasks and key deliverables required to complete by dividing large projects into smaller chunks so that different team members can perform tasks simultaneously.

Gantt Chart is a bar chart generally used in project management, house construction, event planning, software development, marketing, research, and other sectors that demonstrate the progress, dependencies, resources, and milestones of a project, allowing the project team to visualize the work plan to track the project development and monitor the task execution.

What's The Difference Between Work Breakdown Structure, Schedule, and Project Plan?

Work Breakdown Structure is an effective project management tool used to break down a complex project into smaller components to easily and quickly wrap up the overall project.

A schedule is a simple list or timetable of activities, tasks, deliverables, resources, due dates, and milestones within a project or program.

A project plan is an organized document that specifies the cost, schedule, and scope of the project and provides step-by-step guides for the implementation of project goals and objectives, tasks, and desired outcomes.

Work Breakdown Structure Sizes

Work Breakdown Structure documents have different standard sizes and formats. The WBS size and format are based on the use and purpose of the business, company, or organization.

Format	Size in Inches	Size in Centimeters	Size in Millimeters
Letter	8.5 x 11	21.59 x 27.94	215.9 x 279.4
Legal	8.5 x 14	21.6 x 35.6	216 x 356
A4	8.26 x 11.69	21 x 29.7	210 x 297

Work Breakdown Structure Ideas & Examples

There is a wide array of fantastic methods that you can do in developing Work Breakdown Structure. Template.net offers eclectic [Work Breakdown Structure ideas](#) and design inspiration that you can easily use for creating this document.

- Cost Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Restaurant Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Quality Assurance Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Agile Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples

- Risk Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Construction Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Work Breakdown Structure Outline and Diagram Ideas and Examples
- Blank Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Process Modeling Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples
- Standard Work Breakdown Structure Ideas and Examples

FAQs

What should be included in the Work Breakdown Structure?

Work Breakdown Structure should include the number, title, and description of each task, names of the task owners, task dependencies and predecessors, start and end date of the task, duration, work estimate, task status, and Gantt chart.

What are the levels of Work Breakdown Structure?

The different levels of Work Breakdown Structure are the top level or the overall scope of the project, controls account level which refers to the major phases and key deliverables of the project, work packages, or smaller tasks, and the activities level which refers to all the tasks that need to be accomplished.

Why should you create a WBS for every project?

It is integral to create a WBS for every project because it describes and organizes the work to be completed and facilitates the quick development of the project.

What is the role of WBS in project management?

The role of WBS in project management is to finish a complex and large project by dividing or breaking down the tasks to accomplish them in a more efficient way.

What does the Work Breakdown Structure focus on?

The Work Breakdown Structure focuses on key project deliverables and divides all of them into sub-deliverables.

What are the two main ways of structuring the WBS?

The two main ways of structuring the WBS are process-oriented WBS and deliverable-oriented WBS.

How do you organize a Work Breakdown Structure?

When organizing a Work Breakdown Structure, you need to define the deliverables, list subtasks, describe task owners, link dependencies, set the cost and resources, establish the start and finish dates, and monitor the status of each level.

What are the outputs of a Work Breakdown Structure process?

The outputs of a Work Breakdown Structure process are the deliverables of the WBS, WBS dictionary, scope baseline, and project document updates.

What forms are common to present a WBS?

Flowcharts or spreadsheets are the forms commonly used in presenting a WBS.

What are the inputs and tools used for creating a WBS?

The scope statement, the document of the stakeholder requirements, and assets of the organizational process are the inputs and tools used for creating a WBS.