



Contemporaneous Documents

A Project Controls Quick Reference



What Are They?

Contemporaneous documents are records created **during** or **immediately after** an event or activity. They provide an accurate and reliable snapshot of what occurred, as it happened, without the distortion of hindsight or faulty memory. In Project Controls, these documents are crucial for tracking progress, managing changes, and resolving disputes.

Why They Matter

- Provide reliable evidence in disputes or audits
- Show the genuine perception of events as they unfolded
- Help reconstruct project timelines in forensic analysis

Common Examples

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|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------|
| • Meeting minutes | • Photographs | • Letters | • Timesheets |
| • Daily diary entries | • Receipts/Invoices | • Emails | • Memos |
| • Spreadsheets | • Inspection reports | | |

Best Practices?

- Record promptly – As soon as possible after the event
- Be accurate – Stick to what actually happened
- Include detail – Capture names, times, locations, actions
- Stay objective – Leave opinions out unless required
- Store securely – Use version control and backups

Don't Forget To Notify

Important: Ensure all relevant parties are notified promptly of any issues or changes documented in contemporaneous documents. This includes project managers, engineers, contractors, and clients.

Key Takeaways

Contemporaneous documents are a powerful tool for clarity, accountability, and ultimately, better project outcomes. Whether you're jotting notes in a diary, updating a schedule, or firing off a project email, you're contributing to the real story of the project.