Understanding Precedence Diagramming Method:

Precedence Diagramming Method (PDM) is a technique used for constructing a schedule model where activities are represented by nodes and are graphically linked by one more logical relationship (normally depicted by arrows or lines). The linkages exhibit the sequence in which the activities are to be performed. This technique is also known as Activity on Node (AON), and is used by most project management software.

What does PDM include?

PDM includes predecessors, successors, and four types of dependencies or logical relationships. A predecessor is an activity that logically comes before a dependent activity in a schedule. A successor is a dependent activity that logically comes after another activity in the schedule.

Three of the four logical relationships were briefly mentioned earlier when describing the Sequence Activities process. A description of each one follows:

- FS is a logical relationship in which the successor activity cannot start until the predecessor has finished
- FF is a logical relationship in which the successor activity cannot finish until the predecessor activity has finished
- SS is a logical relationship in which a successor activity cannot start until the predecessor activity has started
- SF (start to finish) is a logical relationship in which a successor activity cannot finish until the predecessor activity has started

Note:

It is often difficult for newcomers to project management to fully grasp the meaning of these relationships, because the term predecessor that is used in the logical relationships is assumed to mean “forerunner” or “comes first”. This way of thinking may cause confusion. So, think of the logical relationships in this way: “The predecessor has precedence in the relationship.” Therefore, the work that is being done by the predecessor drives the work in the successor activity.