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Tips and Techniques for Successful IT Projects

Debi van Flymen

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Successful
IT Projects are
NOT
an impossibility

How do we Measure Success?

- Budget
- Deadlines
- Performance
- Customer Satisfaction

Types of IT projects

- Implementation of hardware or software

- New component for an existing system

- Redesign of an existing system

- New application that integrates into existing environment

- New application that stands-alone

The Top 5 Reasons
IT Projects Fail

- Project Scope

- Needs and expectations

- Planning

- Objectives

- Human Issues

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Generic Tips Regardless of Project Type

- Solid understanding of business case
- Good project management skills
- Strong strategic relationships – vendors, developers, partners, customers
- Be prepared…
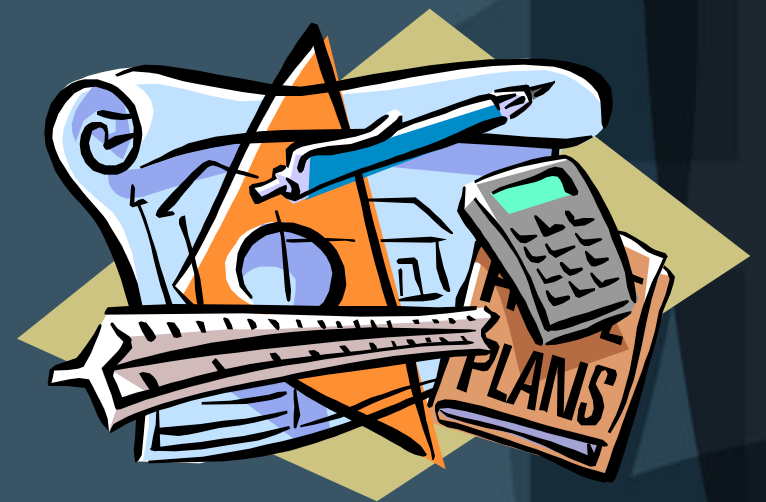
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Solid Understanding of Business Case

- Why is this project being tackled?
- What is the value proposition? (WIIFM)
- What is the impact? Who is affected?
- Budget?

Good Project Management Skills

- Don't rely on partner's project management

- Define your project team

- Define the scope of the project clearly

- Develop a roadmap and project plan

- Have a solid change management structure in place
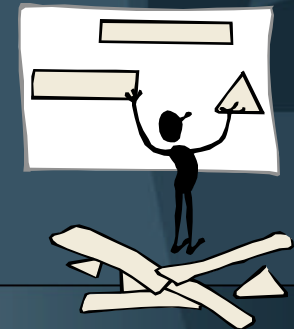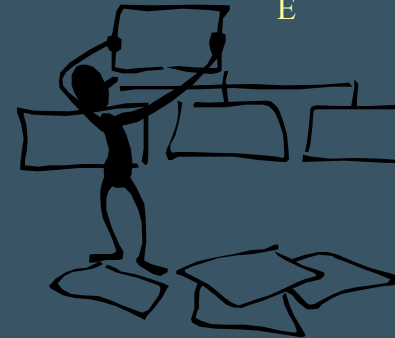
Change Management

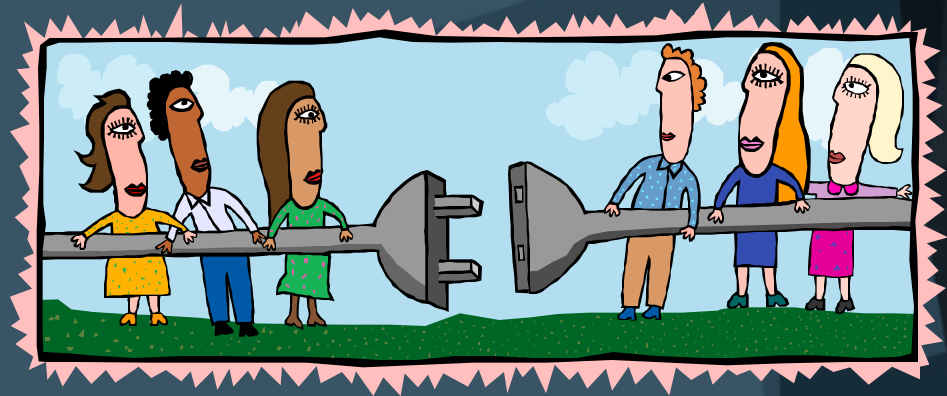| E	I	P	-	S	C	D
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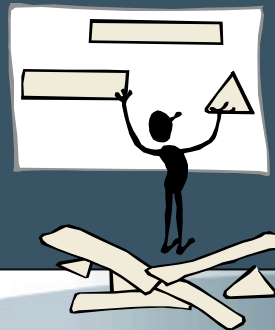
Strong Strategic Relationships

- How to choose partners
- How to grow partnerships
- Look to the future

Strong Strategic Relationships

- How to choose partners
  - Outlook
  - Reputation
  - Experience
  - References

Strong Strategic Relationships

- How to grow partnerships
  - Communication
  - Honesty
  - Trust
  - Evolution

Strong Strategic Relationships

- **Look to the future**
  - Where are you going?
  - How are you going to get there?
  - What advantage will it bring?

Be prepared…

- An ounce of prevention…
- Be informed
- Have a backup plan
- Have a disaster recovery plan

HOT TIPS

Use a statement of scope (sometimes referred to as a Statement of Work) to remind yourselves of the original assumptions on which the project was based.

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HOT TIPS

Statement of Scope/Work:

- What business problem is the project designed to solve?

- What is the desired outcome(s) of the project?

- Make sure that each objective is measurable (How will you know when the objective has been met?)

- Determine how important the project is and assign priority to each objective

- What characteristics define the project? (Think in terms of size, complexity, delivery requirements, number of users, etc.)

- Detail, detail, detail

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HOT TIPS

- A   - Assignable

- M   - Manageable

- M   - Measurable

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HOT TIPS

Assess Project Risk:

- Project Scope
- Business Impact
- Technology
- Schedule
- Links or dependencies
- Resources
- Quality
- Stakeholder/User involvement

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HOT TIPS

Risk Assessment Checklist:

Risk Category	Probability	Impact	Severity
Project Scope			
Business Impact			
Technology			
Schedule			
Dependencies			
Resources			
Quality			
Involvement			

HOT TIPS

Estimate project costs at various phases of the project life cycle. Track costs carefully and keep project sponsors informed of cost status. Empower team members to track costs for their part of the work.

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HOT TIPS

Plan carefully to make sure you have allocated your resources optimally. Make sure the team members and the project stakeholders agree to the plan. Share it and update it daily so that progress is current.

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HOT TIPS

Define your performance criteria and make sure everyone understands them – designers, architects, senior management and the users. Allow time for sufficient testing.

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HOT TIPS

Involve customers and users in your project – early and often! Communicate with sponsors, users and customers about their expectations. Provide opportunities for sharing this information at each project status meeting.

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HOT TIPS

Gain the commitment of key stakeholders for your projects.

- Who's funding the project?

- How will the project improve business performance?

- What low-risk deliverables can be scheduled in the early phases of the project?

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HOT TIPS

Characteristics that distinguish effective project teams:

- Team members' personal objectives for the project are aligned with team objectives
- Each team member respects and supports the expertise of other team members
- Team members think in terms of "we" instead of "I"
- Each team member has clearly defined roles, responsibilities and expectations

Specific Tips for Different Types of IT projects

- Implementation of hardware or software

- New component for an existing system

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- New application that stands-alone

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Implementation of Hardware or Software

- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Resources
- Testing
- Performance
- Timing
- Training

New Component for an Existing System

- Impact

- Impact

- Impact

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New Application that Integrates into Existing Environment

- Impact
- DRP
- Plan
- Test
- Stabilize
- Deploy

TIP

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New Application that Stands-alone

- Stand-alone?
- Evaluate
- Plan
- Test
- Stabilize
- Deploy
- Market

#1 Tip for Success

Keep the team informed!

- Everyone needs to know:
  - Project scope,including mission, complexity and schedule
  - Project status including changes and delays
  - Project successes
- How to do it?
  - Frequent, short status meetings
  - Set up a team intranet site
  - Set up a central project room

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Questions

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