

# 5 Reasons



## Why So Many IT Projects Fail

**By Dr. Emad Rahim**

PMP, CSM, Kotouc Family Endowed Chair and Associate Professor  
Bellevue University

Despite the importance of information management in business operations, many companies experience difficulty in executing IT projects within the pre-determined time or budget constraints. Many IT designs are cancelled before completion and never implemented. Researchers have indicated that most IT projects fail because of poor project management skills. In these failed projects, estimation mistakes, lack of clarity, and unstable goal and objectives were cited as core problem areas. Below are additional areas of concern as described in the article, *Why Web Projects Fail*.

### **1. Poor Planning**

IT managers often lack the time to appropriately plan because of the pressure from senior management, and as a result, the project is performed before the plan is appropriately defined. If the plan is prematurely executed on by the team, items like resources, scheduling, budgeting, risk management and even scope will often have information gaps and inconsistencies.

### **2. Unclear Goals and Objectives**

Well-designed project objectives are clear, meaningful, measurable, and are aligned with organizational goals and mission. Projects must have clearly defined requirements, the absence of which can create timing delays and communication bottlenecks. If a project manager lacks the experience to describe the type and the extent of resources he or she really needs, the project is at risk.

[more >](#)

### 3. Misalignment

Information systems need to be aligned with the organization's business objectives. When discussing alignment, it is important to address market share, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, corporate citizenship and innovation. To begin, companies must properly assess everything, and then align its findings with information systems. It is also essential for executive leadership to be actively involved in the alignment process to ensure strategic goals are met.

### 4. Quality of Interaction

The quality of the interaction between the Information System (IS) project team and the end-users in a development project are not always clearly linked to the success of projects in terms of meeting budgets and product goals. This is due to the lack of collaboration across business units that prevent proper program status updates that optimize operational reviews. Another issue relates to internal and external team conflicts that affect communication, and this reflects negatively on the project as a whole. Attention to both internal and external conflict is necessary to accomplish project goals successfully.

### 5. Changing Objectives During Project

Change can be good, but not if it blindsides everyone on the project team. Inside the realm of project management, judgment must be made as to whether to remain loyal to the initial requirements and objectives or to make changes. Sometimes project managers cannot handle trade-off decisions and make decisions without the basis of rational insights.

### Conclusion

Continued interest in project management is expected to increase yearly throughout different industries, partly due to rapidly developing globalization and growing awareness of knowledge management. Companies must manage a wider range of coverage, increasingly complex information system architecture, and the rapidly changing environment. In order to face such challenges, chief information officers (CIOs) must create an IT portfolio management model that is aligned with business goals. It will help the CIO to maintain control over corporate IT assets and IT processes. Furthermore, the CIO and IT project manager should be aware of the common mistakes that destroy IT projects and learn from the identified mistakes. These learning experiences should be captured in a repository so the successors do not make the same mistakes.



REAL LEARNING FOR REAL LIFE