Collaborative Discussion 1: Project Failures Study

# Initial Posting

As Lehtinen et al. (2014) states, the term software project failure is difficult to navigate, as what constitutes as a failure is vague and not common knowledge. McLeod and MacDonell states that “failure” is related to the outcome of the development process and is subjective to interpretations. From this perspective the over arching decision of what software project failure is difficult to distinguish. To enable a well-rounded and unbiased judgement key failures need to be pinpointed. Three of the main failures to software project management are, a lack of testing and delivery management, Risk related failures such as inadequate risk assessments and Leadership and governance failures.

When developing a software project, good leadership and management is essential to the work ability of the team, without it there is a distinct disconnect between team members and inadequate decision making. This is seen in the FBI VCF system project (Eggen & Witte, 2006) In which the FBI did not do their part in the creation of the VCF (virtual file system), ultimately resulting in its collapse in the development stages. This all stemmed from Director Mueller’s inability to assess and contribute to what the system required.

Eggen, D. And Witte, G. The FBI's Upgrade That Wasn’t. Available from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2006/08/17/AR2006081701485.html> [Accessed 28th May 2023]

Lehtinen, T. O. A. et al. (2014) Perceived causes of software project failures – An analysis of their relationships. Information and software technology. <https://essex.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/view/action/uresolver.do?operation=resolveService&package_service_id=3938909540007346&institutionId=7346&customerId=7345&VE=true> [Accessed 28th May 2023]

McLeod, L. and MacDonell, S.G., 2011. Factors that affect software systems development project outcomes: A survey of research. *ACM Computing Surveys (CSUR)*, *43*(4), pp.1-56.

## Summary Post

The need for suitable management and leadership alongside project planning is essential to the success of projects. This has previously been discussed through the FBI VCF system case (Eggen & Witte, 2006).

Overall, the complexity and size of a project lowers the risk of success as data shows (Humphrey, 2005). However, the implementation of risk assessments within an established project plan could support projects when management is lacking. Although it should be noted that no amount of planning will produce a developed final product without communication and supportive leadership.

Eggen, D. And Witte, G. The FBI's Upgrade That Wasn’t. Available from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2006/08/17/AR2006081701485.html> [Accessed 2nd June 2023]Humphrey, W.S., 2005. Why big software projects fail: The 12 key questions. The Journal of Defense Software Engineering, 18, pp.25-29.