# Critical Thinking Assignment: The Unhappy Stakeholder

The objective of this project is to upgrade laptop systems for end users while updating each site’s network infrastructure with one router and 2–3 switches. Multiple facilities, particularly along the northern and southern borders, increase logistical complexity and make stakeholder alignment critical. A phased project management approach ensures timely delivery while mitigating risks such as equipment delays and limited on-site technical support.

## Project Phases and Deliverables

### 1. Assessment

- Conduct inventory management of current laptops, routers, and switches.  
- Identify user requirements, business needs, and facility-specific constraints.  
- Deliverable: Assessment report with prioritized user requirement spec.

### 2. Configuration

- Select laptops with strong security features and standardized configurations that adhere to organization security and compliance  
- Choose enterprise-grade routers (e.g., Cisco ISR) and switches for scalability.  
- Deliverable: Preconfigured devices staged for shipping.

### 3. Deployment and Field Delivery

- Ship laptops directly to employees with clear setup instructions.  
- Utilize technicians at each site to rack and configure routers/switches.  
- Remote IT support finalizes setup using secure VPN access.  
- Deliverable: Fully functional network and end-user devices at each location.

### 4. Testing

- Conduct network testing for connectivity and to identify any bugs.  
- Verify laptops for proper security patching and application readiness.  
- Deliverable: Sign-off checklist for each site.

### 5. Training

- Provide virtual training sessions and documentation for employees and helpdesk.  
- Establish helpdesk escalation paths for post-deployment issues.  
- Deliverable: Trained end users and support-ready IT team.

## Cost and Interdependencies

Costs must balance hardware performance with organizational budgets and its goals. For example, the organization is looking to upgrade its switches to ensure the switch can make the routing function efficient. Layer 2 switches are more affordable but may lack routing functions while layer 3 switches reduce network bottlenecks but increase costs. Interdependencies include:  
- Configuration must precede deployment.  
- technicians availability affects scheduling and installing.  
- Laptop refreshes depend on network readiness at each site.

## Risks and Mitigation

- Shipping Issues: Mitigate by ordering in advance and staging backups at regional locations.  
- Limited on-site expertise: Use vendor-certified technicians for installation.  
- Stakeholder dissatisfaction: Maintain transparent communication through progress reports and proactive escalation handling, gather feedback/identify bugs/updates after deployment.   
- Compatibility issues: Test a pilot site (current site) before shipping and scaling nationwide.

## Conclusion

This process requires a structured approach to test and deliver new laptops and upgraded networking equipment across 48 states. By breaking the effort into phased steps: assessment, configuration, deployment, testing, and training. The organization ensures consistent delivery while controlling costs and risks. Effective communication with the stakeholders and the technicians who will be responsible for scheduling and installing the devices on time are key to ensuring seamless nationwide implementation.

## References

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