Software Engineering Project Management May 2023

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Collaborative Discussion 1: Project Failures Study

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Summary Post

by Michael Botha - Friday, 26 May 2023, 11:54 AM

Summarising the discussion to produce the most prudent points yields:

·   There are no singular isolated causes of project failures (Lehtinen et al., 2014).

·   Failures chained across process areas ultimately produce a project failure (Lehtinen et al., 2014).

·   Common factors attributing to a 'failure chain' have been documented in studies and include: bad requirements analysis, poor design, and a lack of governance (Goatham, 2020).

·   Regular communication and openness from the project manager is crucial (Goatham, 2020).

·   Although the project manager does not need to be a specialist in all the required fields of a project, he/she should at least have a level of technical aptitude which would ensure informed decision making (Stellman & Green, 2006).

Considering the nature of project failures, it seems necessary that a thorough risk management strategy should be put in place for each endeavour (Stellman & Green, 2006). Such a strategy could use a framework like the Operationally Critical Threat, Asset and Vulnerability Evaluation (OCTAVE) to assess a project's risks and put the required controls in place early on in the project's life to prevent project failure (Caralli, 2007).

References:

Caralli, R., Stevens, J., Young, L., Wilson, W. (2007) *Introducing OCTAVE Allegro: Improving the Information Security Risk Assessment Process*. Carnegie Mellon University.

Goatham, R. (2020) Why Projects Fail. Available from: **https://calleam.com/WTPF/?page_id=2213** [Accessed 6 May 2023].

Lehtinen, A., Mäntylä, V., Vanhanen, J., Itkonen, J. & Lassenius, C. (2014) Perceived causes of software project failures – An analysis of their relationships. *Information and Software Technology* 56(6): 623–643

Stellman, A., Greene, J. (2006) Applied Software Project Management. Sebastopol: O'Reilly.

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Re: Summary Post

by Doug Millward - Tuesday, 20 June 2023, 6:23 PM

Hi Michael
you make some excellent points in your summary - I particularly liked your point about including the risk assessment in the overall evaluation of a project's success - would you use qualitative or quantitative assessment methodologies?

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Re: Summary Post

by Michael Botha - Friday, 23 June 2023, 6:28 AM

Hi Doug, thank you for your feedback. The most effective approach would be to use both qualitative and quantitative assessments (University of Essex Online, 2022). Although it is preferred to use objective measurables, not all risks are quantifiable and hence the need to use qualitative methods in these instances (University of Essex Online, 2022). However, qualitative techniques will still provide insight into facets across the various process areas within a project, allowing for better awareness of possible project failures.

References:
University of Essex Online. (2022) Risk and the Risk Management Process [Lecturecast]. ISM_PCOM7E September 2022 Information Security Management 2022. University of Essex Online.

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