

Project Evaluation Checklist for Managing IT Projects

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Item	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Explanations
Do information technology projects align with and support business directions and priorities?				
Is the project consistent and compatible with the department's mission, goals and priorities as described in the annual Business Plan?				
Is the project consistent and compatible with ongoing or planned re-engineering initiatives designed to change fundamental business processes?				
Is the project consistent with the department's long-term capital plan?				
If the department has produced an information management plan within the past year, is the project consistent with this plan?				
Is the project consistent and compatible with the department's IT direction, strategies, architectures and infrastructures?				
Is the project consistent and compatible with government regulations (if applicable) for the delivery of services?				
Does the project conform to industry-common IT standards, infrastructures and architectures?				
Is approval for the project based on a business case analysis that relates the investment directly to the business function and demonstrates the benefits of the investment?				
Is the business case based on the full cost of the system from initiation through development, implementation and the estimated annual cost of operation?				
Will the business case be reviewed and revalidated at each scheduled milestone and whenever there is a significant change to the project or the business function?				
If the business case changes, does the project need to be reapproved by the department?				
Has the project manager ensured that clients are represented in the project so that each client group can influence requirements definition, system design and implementation?				
Have clients been given a clear picture of what the system will do for them and how it will interact with them while there is opportunity to recommend improvements?				
Will clients formally sign off on the reviews at the project's milestones and be involved in decisions on the project's future?				

Has the project leader ensured that representatives of client groups have formally committed to the level of effort required to meet their defined responsibilities?				
Have client names and explicit responsibilities been included in the project charter?				
Are clients seen as full team members who take part in all requirements definition, design and implementation decisions of the project, rather than just as sounding boards for bouncing ideas off of or to lend ceremonial approval to project team decisions?				
Are clients involved in the decision to release funds and continue the project at milestone reviews?				
Are clear accountabilities established?				
Are overall departmental accountabilities for the project defined in a project charter?				
Is senior management taking an active role in overseeing and monitoring the project?				
Is there a project sponsor responsible for ensuring that the department understands the value and importance of the project and, ultimately, for realizing the benefits predicted for the project? (The project sponsor is typically a senior official in the organization responsible for the business function that the project will support.)				
Is there a project leader who has overall responsibility for the project and is accountable for all external and internal aspects of it? (The project leader is typically a senior departmental official.)				
Is there a project manager who has specific accountability for achieving all of the defined project objectives within the time and resources allocated? (The project manager performs the day-to-day management of the project. Without diluting the responsibility of the overall project manager, s/he may be supported by one or more deputy or assistant project managers who have similar responsibilities over specific portions or sub-portions of the overall project.)				
Have the specific responsibilities and obligations of those three key project officials, as well as others who may share responsibility for the successful delivery of the project, been documented in a formal project charter?				

Has the project manager ensured that the project team has all the necessary competencies required by the project?				
Does a deputy or assistant project manager directly manage each sub-project?				
Are all core project responsibilities and functions under the complete control of departmental management?				
If it was necessary to outsource any management functions, were they acquired from a supplier other than that involved in the primary development contract?				
Where there are several departments involved in the delivery of a project...				
Do all departments involved understand and agree with all of the other departments' objectives, roles and levels of participation?				
Do senior officials of each department sign the above documented in memoranda of understanding or a project charter?				
Has each department established a project management structure for its part of the project?				
Has the designated lead department established an overall project office, separate from its project team, with an overall project sponsor, project leader and project manager staffed at a sufficiently senior level to be able to intercede at the appropriate level in the participating departments?				
For projects to which another department has attached requirements, such as regional economic benefits...				
Have both departments reached a formal consensus on the degree to which these requirements are achievable without compromising the successful completion of the project?				
Is there a process whereby a department can be relieved of its obligations if it is proven they cannot be met without compromising the success of the project?				
Has the department setting the requirements committed to help meet those requirements?				
Are project managers developed, and do they work within a corporate discipline?				
Did the department perform a preliminary assessment of the project's scope, complexity and risk before finding and assigning a project manager?				
Does the assigned project manager have the knowledge, skills and experience required to manage the project's scope, size, complexity and risk profile?				

Does the department use an apprenticeship program whereby beginner project managers obtain experience on existing projects before being appointed as managers of new projects?				
Are there other project managers in the organization with relevant knowledge, skills and experience from whom project managers can get advice and support?				
Are project management decisions based on risk management?				
Have you evaluated the feasibility of adapting a packaged solution that performs similar functions and services rather than developing a custom system from scratch?				
Is the overall project being delivered via a set of sub-projects, each of which is less than twelve (12) months in duration and costs less than \$1 (one) million?				
Does each sub-project team consist of ten (10) or fewer people?				
Does the management approach ensure the coordination of all individual sub-projects, ensure communication among the different sub-project teams and address shared issues?				
Does the project have scheduled review checkpoints when management will decide on its future and, if necessary, take appropriate corrective action?				
Have only the funds needed to reach the next milestone been allocated to the project?				
Have the project and any related contracting been structured to avoid incurring litigation?				
Is the contractor required to provide complete information on project performance and progress?				
Are scheduled reviews specified in the contract?				
Is an option to cancel the project at scheduled checkpoints specified in the contract?				
Have contingency plans for potential problems discovered at these checkpoints been developed in advance?				
Has a project risk assessment been used to identify and quantify risks?				
Are plans in place to manage the known risks?				

Are plans in place to review and update the risk assessment over the course of the project, either when there is significant change or at predefined times during a long project?				
Are risk management processes, methods and tools being used to systematically manage risks in software-dependent development aspects of the project?				
Has the SEI Capability Maturity Model (CMM) evaluation been applied to the organization(s) involved in system development?				
Has project complexity been determined at the initiation of the project using Function Point Analysis (FPA)?				
Is the complexity of changes also being determined by using FPA?				
Has the project been structured such that each sub-project in the project is less than 1,500 function points?				
Have project risks been mitigated with a project implementation strategy (such as RAD) that produces results in smaller implementable pieces, i.e., less than 1,500 function points, with each piece designed to be completed in a relatively short time while providing immediate benefit to the business process?				
Is there a change management process in place to ensure that changes are analyzed quickly to determine their impact (risk, cost and time) and that this information is brought to the attention of the appropriate level of management as soon as possible?				
Do existing contracts bind contractors to the department's change management process and provide for third-party intervention to resolve any disputes over the cost to implement changes?				
Is a performance measurement tool based on a national standard used to provide data to the project manager on the time and cost expended and on the work completed at frequent intervals?				
Have procurement officers been involved early in project planning to develop a procurement process that reduces delays and to design a procurement plan that best aligns the contracting plan with the project plan?				
Are there oversight reviews by a senior steering committee planned at each checkpoint?				

Is a management and technical review by an independent party or an outside consultant planned at a key checkpoint or milestone to identify any environmental changes, overrun of cost and time targets, or other problems?				
Has funding been set aside for undertaking any unscheduled independent reviews?				
Are internal peer views (with other project and sub-project managers and others in the system development, maintenance and operations groups) regularly scheduled to allow the project manager to present performance and progress data, to discuss upcoming challenges, and to identify any horizontal issues?				
Are external peer reviews (with other departments/organizations) planned to provide different perspectives and bring a wide range of expertise to bear on project strategies, plans and issues?				
Are regular sessions held whereby project team members can review the continued relevance of the project, project performance and concerns about problems in a non-incriminating way?				
Does the department's internal audit group have plans to review the performance of the project within the next year?				