

Collaborative discussion 1: Project failures study.

What do you believe are the three most common reasons for project failure?

Give two examples of failures that support your choices.

As Lehtinen et al. (2014) states, there is no single root cause for project failures, and it is often the result of several different causes which result in the failures of many projects. While there are many factors which could contribute to project failure, in my opinion the three most common causes would be poor leadership, estimation and analysis related failures and risk related failures.

Leadership is crucial to a successful project, to manage and coordinate teams to complete the project successfully. Without strong leadership, the development team could quickly lose direction leading to the failure of the project. An example of this is the FBI VCF system (Eggen & Witte, 2006).

Accurate estimation is crucial to any project. Many projects must abide by strict timescales and budgets. Any delays can quickly become very expensive and lead to failure to meet contractual obligations or shareholder support for projects being withdrawn. An example of this is the IBM System 360 project.

A thorough risk assessment prior to the project can be crucial in identifying any risks to the project which would allow mitigations to be put in place prior to the beginning of the project. This could reduce the risk of project failure significantly. Failure to identify risks can greatly increase the chances of project failure.

References

Eggen, D. And Witte, G. The FBI's Upgrade That Wasn't. Available from:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/17/AR2006081701485.html>
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Lehtinen, T., Mäntylä, M., 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.