This week's discussion topic is designed to allow you to better understand risks and methods of controlling risks.  Please respond to the following prompt.  Remember that your initial discussion forum post is due by Day 4 of this module, and your responses to at least two of your classmates' posts are due by 11:59 PM on Day 7 of this module.

* Imagine you are the software project manager for a complex web interface project that must be developed on newly acquired hardware.  Changing policies affect the direction your project can take.  Your fellow project managers in both the hardware and policy sections do not agree with the processes you are following, but you are taking a strong stand that the company has policies and you are following them.  What are the risks and how would you go about mitigating a disastrous result?

Please post your response to the Module 07 Discussion forum by clicking on the "Module 07 Discussion" link above and comment on at least two other students’ responses.

There are several risks associated with the software project as described. The risks associated fall in nicely with Robert Charette’s checklist of common software risks from lecture:

1. Creating a complex web interface – This matches nicely with Robert Charette’s common software risk of building a complex project from scratch. Inherently, any complex infrastructure incites some level of risk in terms of schedule, budget, etc.
2. Development on newly acquired hardware – This matches nicely with Robert Charette’s common software risk of too many new methodologies. Working with newly acquired hardware will often result in new design patterns or syntax, which always incurs some level of risk
3. Disagreement on software policies – This matches nicely with Robert Charette’s common software risk of an inadequate development model. If people are not aligned on a development model then it will be incredibly challenging to build out a coherent system. This needs to be addressed before the project begins to limit downside.

For eacah of these, there are ways to mitigate the risks:

1. The best way to mitigate the risk of a complex project is to publicize the risk. Notifying stakeholders such as upper management, marketing and customers helps to manage expectations throughout the project.
2. One way to mitigate risk of too many new methodologies is to “buy” information about the risk. Spending money and doing research to investigate the new hardware upfront is a good way to establish best practices and keep development moving smoothly after
3. The best way to mitigate the risk of inadequate development models is to eliminate the root cause of the risk. There needs to be a conversation before the project begins on the company policy for development. Often company policies are out of date with current practices and need to be updated, and sometimes the policies are there for a reason. Analyzing both sided and agreeing on a path forward is the easiest way to reduce risk in this case.