Unit 2: Study: Why Projects Fail and Gathering Requirements Exercise

Peer Response 1:

Collaborative Discussion 1: Project Failures Study

In reply to Oi Lam Siu

Peer response

by Andrius Busilas - Thursday, 8 August 2024, 10:11 PM

Hi Hellen,

Your post presents a well-structured and thoughtful analysis of the common reasons for project failure, supported by two relevant examples. I appreciate the clarity with which you've identified and explained the issues of risk management, communication, and planning. Below are a few observations and suggestions that could further enhance the depth and rigour of your analysis:

1. **Lack of Proper Risk Management:**
   Your discussion on risk management is spot on, particularly in highlighting the importance of identifying risks and implementing mitigation strategies. It might be beneficial to expand on specific types of risks (e.g., technical, operational, financial) that are often overlooked and how they can be systematically managed throughout the project lifecycle. Additionally, considering frameworks like the Risk Management Framework (RMF) or ISO 31000 could add further depth to your argument.

2. **Poor Communication:**
   The point of miscommunication is well-made and is a common cause of project failure. However, it would be insightful to delve deeper into the communication tools or methodologies that could mitigate this risk. For instance, how could Agile practices like daily stand-ups or sprint reviews foster better communication? You might also consider addressing the role of cultural or language barriers in global teams, which could significantly impact communication effectiveness.

3. **Inadequate Planning and Estimation:**

Your example of the IBM System 360 project effectively illustrates the consequences of poor planning and estimation. To further enhance this section, you could discuss modern project management techniques like Agile, Scrum, or Lean that aim to improve planning and estimation by promoting iterative development and continuous feedback. A brief comparison between traditional Waterfall and Agile methodologies in terms of planning and risk management could also enrich your analysis.

4. **Example of IBM System 360:**
   The IBM System 360 project is indeed a classic case of project failure. However, it might be useful to include more details on how specific misestimating (e.g., in terms of time, budget, or resources) impacted the project. Was there a particular phase (e.g., design, development, or testing) where these failures were most pronounced? Additionally, integrating some insights from primary or secondary sources that provide first-hand accounts or detailed case studies could further substantiate your analysis.

5. **Example of National Grid ERP Failure:**
   Your analysis of the National Grid ERP failure is compelling, especially in underscoring the catastrophic financial and operational consequences of inadequate risk management. To strengthen this point, you could discuss alternative approaches the project could have taken, such as phased implementation or additional testing phases, to mitigate the risks. Furthermore, exploring whether similar ERP failures have occurred in other industries could help highlight common pitfalls in large-scale ERP implementations.

Overall, your post provides a solid foundation for discussing project failures, with clear connections between theoretical concepts and real-world examples. Expanding on some of these points and integrating additional sources could further enrich your analysis and provide a more rounded perspective.