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

Peer Response 2:

Collaborative Discussion 1: Project Failures Study

In reply to Anda Ziemele

by Andrius Busilas - Thursday, 8 August 2024, 10:37 PM

Hi Anda,

your post provides a concise and insightful analysis of the common reasons for project failure, supported by relevant examples. You've done a great job linking these factors together, demonstrating how they can compound and lead to project failures. Below are some observations and suggestions to enhance your analysis:

1. **Issues in Requirements Gathering and Engineering:**
   Your identification of requirements gathering as a critical failure point is well-supported by the literature. It might be beneficial to elaborate on the specific challenges in requirements engineering, such as ambiguity, changing requirements, or inadequate stakeholder involvement. Providing an example of how iterative requirements gathering (e.g., using Agile methodologies) can mitigate these risks could further strengthen this section.

2. **Lack of Software Testing:**
   The emphasis on insufficient testing is a crucial point, especially in complex projects like the NHS NPfIT. To deepen your analysis, you could explore the different levels of testing (unit, integration, system, user acceptance) and how neglecting each can lead to different types of failures. Additionally, mentioning modern approaches like continuous integration/continuous deployment (CI/CD) pipelines might illustrate how testing can be more effectively integrated into the software development lifecycle.

3. **Insufficiencies in Project Management and Leadership:**

You've effectively connected poor project management with the other issues. To add more depth, it could be useful to discuss specific project management methodologies (e.g., Waterfall, Agile, PRINCE2) and how their application—or misapplication—can influence project success. For instance, you could consider how Agile's emphasis on adaptability and stakeholder involvement might mitigate some of the risks associated with leadership and management deficiencies.

4. **Interlinked Factors:**
   Your point about the interlinked nature of these factors is a strong aspect of your analysis. To expand on this, you might consider using a real-world case study or hypothetical scenario to demonstrate how these factors can interact dynamically for a project. For example, how might poor requirements gathering lead to insufficient testing, which is then exacerbated by weak project management?

5. **Examples:**
   The examples you've chosen, particularly the NHS NPfIT and Sainsbury's Warehouse Automation projects, are highly relevant. You could enhance these examples by providing a more detailed analysis of the failures. For instance, discussing how the rushed timelines in the NHS project specifically affected requirements gathering and testing, or how leadership failures contributed to the Sainsbury's project's lack of contingency planning, would add depth.

Overall, your post is well-structured and effectively addresses the common causes of project failure with strong examples. Expanding on some of the points and incorporating additional insights could make your analysis even more comprehensive and persuasive.