

SCENARIOS AND VOCABULARY

1. Tech Startup: "Connectify" App Launch

It's today. Your team has just secured seed funding and is finalizing the beta build of "Connectify," a social networking app aimed at fostering deep, meaningful connections. The app has a minimalistic interface and a sophisticated algorithm. Your boss says: "Let's imagine it's six months from now. The app was a complete flop and has been delisted from app stores. Why did it fail?"

- Details: The team is small but highly skilled. The marketing plan focuses on social media influencers. The app's monetization strategy is to sell premium features for specific groups.
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2. Construction & Urban Development: "Veridian Heights" Eco-Complex

Your urban development firm has secured a prime piece of land in a new urban growth corridor. The plan is to build "Veridian Heights," a model of sustainable, eco-friendly living. Construction is set to begin next month. Your boss says: "Fast forward one year. The complex is finished, but not a single unit has sold, and it's a public relations nightmare. What were the critical missteps?"

- Details: The project utilizes cutting-edge green technology, including a self-sustaining water recycling system and rooftop solar arrays. All construction materials are sourced from certified sustainable suppliers. The architectural design won a preliminary award.
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3. Social Advocacy Campaign: "Project Empathy"

Your non-profit organization is in the final planning stages for "Project Empathy," a major national campaign to foster understanding and support for a marginalized community. The campaign is well-funded and has secured celebrity endorsements. The launch is scheduled for next week. Your boss says: "Picture this: a year from now, the campaign has not only failed to achieve its goals but has also exacerbated negative stereotypes. What could possibly go wrong?"

- Details: The campaign's messaging was developed by a leading PR firm. The content includes emotionally powerful video testimonials and is set to be distributed across all major media channels. The call-to-action is to sign an online pledge and donate.
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4. University R&D Project: "TutorBot" AI

Your university research team is about to deploy a new AI tutor, "TutorBot," for introductory physics to a pilot group of 500 students. The project has passed all internal tests. Your boss says: "In three months, the pilot will have failed, and we'll have to scrap the project. What reasons could have led to this failure?"

- Details: The AI uses a novel machine learning model to adapt its teaching style to each student's learning patterns. It is designed to provide instant, personalized feedback on homework problems. The team is composed of top PhD candidates.
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5. Wedding Management Company: Destination Wedding

Your boutique wedding planning firm, "Ever After Events," is a month away from executing a high-profile, luxury destination wedding. All vendors are booked, and the plan is meticulously laid out. Your boss says: "Let's assume the wedding will be a total disaster for our company, even though it appears perfect to the outside world. The client gives us a damning review, and our business collapses. What could go wrong?"

- Details: All vendors, from catering to floral design, are world-renowned. The event schedule is planned in minute-by-minute detail. The client is a busy CEO who has had minimal direct involvement in the planning process.
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6. E-commerce Platform Launch: "The Artisan Market"

You are a week away from the soft launch of "The Artisan Market," an e-commerce platform specializing in artisanal goods. The site is aesthetically pleasing and has a wide selection of unique items. Your boss says: "Six months from now, our platform will have

failed to gain any traction and will have to shut down. What are the key reasons for this failure?"

- Details: The platform's initial marketing was focused on aesthetic appeal and the unique stories behind each artisan. The pricing strategy is based on a small commission fee from sellers. The target audience is affluent individuals interested in handcrafted, bespoke products.
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7. Corporate Training Initiative: "Innovate Forward"

Your company is about to launch an ambitious new professional development program, "Innovate Forward," for its mid-level managers. The curriculum is designed to foster creative problem-solving and leadership skills. Your boss says: "Imagine a year from now, the program has been discontinued because it showed no discernible improvement in our managers' performance. How could this happen?"

- Details: The program is a blend of online modules, live virtual workshops, and group projects. The content was developed by a team of experienced corporate trainers. Participants are given time away from their regular duties to complete the training.
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Vocabulary & Phrases for Discussion

Students should aim to integrate these terms and phrases into their discussion to add a layer of professionalism and analytical depth.

Root cause analysis: Getting to the core issue.

Systemic deficiencies: Problems within the overall system or process.

A cascade of errors: A chain reaction of small mistakes leading to a big failure.

Prospective hindsight: Imagining a project has failed to find potential problems now.

To elucidate the key vulnerabilities: To make the main weak points of a plan clear.

Mitigation strategies: Plans to lessen the negative impact of a risk.

To preemptively address a challenge: To solve a problem before it happens.

Threat vectors: The different ways a project could be attacked or fail.

Suboptimal resource allocation: Not using people, money, or time in the best way.

Erosion of trust: When confidence in the team or leadership gradually disappears.