**The German University in Cairo**

**IT Project Management Spring Semester 2018**

Failure Story:

The best documented IT project failures are the ones involving public money. The most recent example is the Virtual Case File project for the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

The FBI had admitted the Virtual Case File Technology had failed to meet the bureau’s requirements and that 5 years of development and $US 170 million in cost had been lost.

The Virtual Case File had been delivered by Science Application International and it was aimed at facilitating case file management by integrating data from older system, including the Automated Case support system, and eventually replacing them.

The National Research Council (2004) saw no evidence that backup and contingency plans had been formalized. The transition plan did not include the availability of the Automated Case Support system after the cutover to the Virtual Case File.

Science Application International Corporation said it delivered the first phase of the project ahead of schedule and under budget, but the requirements for the software changed more than one time after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the USA. The office of the inspector general found that FBI was still defining the requirements after two years since the start of the project (Fine, Glenn, 2002). Science Application International Corporation also said that the communication with FBI was difficult because of the high turn over of top IT managers.

National Research Council (2004) also found that the requirements for the FBI mission were not included in the Virtual Case File design.

The example of Virtual Case File gives a high level overview of the difficulties to successful completion of complex IT projects. The example has shown that the difficulties are related more to the people than the technology itself, even though technology may increase complexity.