

Talking Business
from
SFRD Services

Your **big** project

Avoid the **mistakes** of others

Part 1

Should you do it –
the A to Z of things to ask yourself

A is for Ability

- Do you have the resources to properly carry out the project?
- Do you have staff capable of delivering what you need?

A is also for Acquiescence

- Will your staff do what is right for the company rather than trying to look for the 'easy' option?

B is for Best Practice

- Do **you** understand the concept of best practice?
- Do you know what is 'Best Practice' in your Industry?
- Have you a 'Best Practice' programme in your company?
- Will the project support and reinforce 'Best Practice'?

Now we come to the **C** word

C is for Customer

- Will your project improve Customer experience?

C is also for Commitment

- Are you committed to the success of the project?
- Is your senior management team committed to the success of the project?
- Are all your staff committed to the success of the project?

Even though there will be difficult moments during the project.

D is for Damage

- Have you considered the damage that will arise if your project isn't a success?
- Make a list of all the things that could happen if there is a problem and **ensure** that you have proper plans to mitigate the issues.
- Bad projects have resulted in the loss of customers, loss of sales, loss of reputation, sale of the company and closure. Do you want to join the list?

D is also for Data

- **How good is your data?** Be honest.....
- Most organisations have **significant errors and gaps** in their data
- Bad data can **kill** your project - dead
- Bad data results in **mistakes, customer annoyance, lost opportunities** **additional** costs which can lead to the loss of customers, loss of sales, loss of reputation, sale of the company and closure. Do you want to join the list?

E is for Elasticity

- How good are you at controlling scope creep?
- Consultants make large profits from scope creep!

F is for Focus

- Everybody from the top to the bottom of the company has to have a clear focus on the project and their role in ensuring success.

G is for Grim

- The outlook for your business if your project isn't a success.

G is also for Grin

- The fixed, false, grin on your face when you have to make announcements about the amazing project progress, being delivered by a stunning team, on time and under budget – even though the reality is the opposite.

H is for Harmonisation

- Often used as an excuse for a costly project
.....'because once we do this we'll reduce maintenance costs'
- And once you've spent far more than you expected and the costs aren't going to be less
.....'because of all the extra functionality you've now got'

I is for IT

- It's essential to stop us getting caught by the XYZ bug.
- It's time we had a new system because this one is obsolete.
- IT has lots of people with nothing to do – lets build a new system!

J is for Journey

- Do you understand the size of the journey for your company?
- Is there a map of the journey?

J is also for JFDI

- The utterance of a project manager in despair, one who knows it's all going very wrong but doesn't understand why.
- JFDI is used when the project manager is unable to explain why something should be done – management rather than leadership.

K is for Kerfuffle

- The commotion, disruption, disturbance, hoo-ha, turmoil, upheaval and uproar caused by the project.
- Can you manage through it or will you be Kaput?

L is for Legal

- ‘Once we have this super new system we’ll be able to do business legally’
Are you really telling me that your operation is illegal today?
- Have you challenged everything that you are told needs to be in the system in order to be legal?

Go on – challenge them – ultimately you’ll save time and money.

M is for Money

- Can you afford it?
 - If everything goes to plan?
 - If there is a slight cost overrun?
 - If things go wrong?

N is for No

- Not said often enough.
- If you don't keep saying **No** you'll have an unbelievably elastic scope and possibly never complete the project.

O is for Overtime

- A big project generates lots of it – are your staff willing to work the long hours needed to deliver?

O is also for Ownership

- Who will own the project?
- Those who own delivery of the project **MUST** be from your company.
- Do they have 'street cred' in the company – are they respected?
.... you need leaders **NOT** managers if you are to succeed....

P is for Project partner

- Cheapest is **NOT** the best!
- What experience do they have?
- The wrong partner will cost you a lot of money.

P is for Project Management

- OK so they've got a string of degrees..... but how good are they in reality?

Q is for Question

- Ask lots of questions and listen to the advice you get.
- Question everything that people want to add to the system.

R is for Reliability

- How reliable is your system today?
- How often does it fail?
- How much more reliable will the new system be? Be honest

S is for SAP

- I'm not advertising but this is an example of a frequently used solution that may or may not be suitable for your company.
- Whatever solution you choose please listen carefully to those with experience.
- Some SAP implementations have brought companies to their knees - not because there was something wrong with SAP but because the company implementing the system ignored their advisors....

S is also for Statutory

- Like Legal – used as an excuse to try to force you to do the project; and during the project to add endless extra elasticity.

T is for Tax

- Like Legal and Statutory – used as an excuse to try to force you to do the project; and during the project to add endless extra elasticity.

Go on – challenge them – ultimately you'll save time and money.

T is also for Team

- Does your organisation have the quality of people needed for the project team?
- Are you willing to support the team through thick and thin?
- Will you give them the independence and authority to deliver?

T is also for Training

- Are you prepared to carry out the training that will be needed?
 - New processes
 - New systems
 - Explanation of why – not just key strokes.

U is for Unique

- Will your project make your company unique in the market and enable you to offer something that your competitors can't offer?

V is for Vanity

- So many projects are Vanity projects –
 - They cost lots of Money
 - They tie up the business
 - They're a distraction
 - No positive gain for you, your competitors however

Be honest – if your's is a Vanity project - **Kill it!**

W is for Weariness

- Make sure your team doesn't burn out – your project will take longer, cost more and deliver less!

X is for Xceptions

- A driver of elastic scope – stamp on them.

Y is for Years and years

- Are you prepared for the length of time it will take to deliver a proper solution?

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