

# Top 10 Main Causes of Project Failure

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Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it, Charles R. Swindoll. You agree? When you want to step up your game in project management, there're a lot of tips, resources, and guidelines. There's an endless selection of how to lead better, communicate better or simply just be better.

However, when examining the flip-side, failure, we sometimes cringe at the fact that it could happen to us. Perhaps this is why it seems to be one of the least discussed topics. Who wants to admit to their failure – certainly not to your boss or company head. Yet failure still happens. We could even say that it's rampant especially when it comes to ill-defined projects. That's why it's so important to evaluate your project at the start. Closely examine all, road-blocks, hurdles, hills, detours, potholes, manholes or even an angry flock of birds. I think you get the point. Before starting your project, knowing exactly what lays ahead lets the project manager, team, and client mitigate associated risks.

In this article, we'll identify 10 causes of project failure. Knowing about these will help you prepare for your next PM job:

## 1. Poor Preparation

You need to have a clear picture of what you're going to do, in advance – as much as possible. Otherwise, you may find yourself up stream without a paddle. You need to know what project success looks like at the beginning and don't lose focus of it. Hence, if you don't have a clear focus at the earliest stage of the process, you are making things harder on yourself. Have a meeting, even if it is lengthy, with stakeholders to discuss their expectations on cost, time and product quality. Know how you will execute your tasks in order to meet everyone's expectations.

## 2. Inadequate Documentation and Tracking

This is the responsibility of the project manager. Tracking milestones is how you are going to know whether you are meeting expectations. Proper recording and monitoring lets the PM identify where more resources are needed to complete a project on time.

## 3. Bad Leadership

When we see this word, leader, we usually think, the project manager. However, the people at each management-level have a responsibility to ensure that the project is successful. Management should not micromanage but

provide support to ensure that the PM can follow through with the expectations placed upon them.

#### **4. Failure to Define Parameters and Enforce Them**

When you're a leader, PM, it's imperative that you're able to work well with your team. If and when tasks or goals are not met to standard, there should be ramifications. Rank tasks by priority and assign them to the most proficient individual.

#### **5. Inexperienced Project Managers**

A project manager has a lot of responsibility. You need to assign people to management roles who have matching education and experience. In some cases, and perhaps more often than not, inexperienced managers are given projects. They may be very capable of managing projects, but the key is to keep them at a level where they can succeed. Otherwise, you will set them up for failure. On the other hand, there's nothing wrong with a challenge, just don't make it beyond their reach.

#### **6. Inaccurate Cost Estimations**

There may be times when your cost estimates are completely off. As you know, when resources run-out, the project stops. Prevent this by identifying the lack of resources early on.

#### **7. Little Communication at Every Level of Management**

Whether it's between upper management, middle or with the team, it's disastrous to have poor communication. Everyone should feel free to come forward to express their concern or give suggestions. When everyone is on the same page and there's transparency, workflow is at an optimum level.

#### **8. Culture or Ethical Misalignment**

Company culture must be comprised of competence, pro-activeness, and professionalism. If it isn't, team members will not be motivated to do their best. Basically, everyone involved must be invested in their part of the project to successfully complete it.

#### **9. Competing Priorities**

When there're not enough resources, there's bound to be competition between personnel resources and funding. Having good cost estimations at the start will eliminate this problem.

#### **10. Disregarding Project Warning Signs**

When a project is on the verge of failing, there will have always been warning signs. Taking action immediately can save the project. Otherwise, the whole endeavor goes down the drain.

Well there you have it, reasons for project failure. This is the time when you should consider ways to prevent this failure. Adequate employee training, project management software and management transparency will lead you to project success. Finding the right project management software is one of the easiest steps to take so that you're on right track – the successful project track. A tool such as these eliminates project failure. They serve to easily manage tasks like time tracking, cost tracking, cost estimations and more. Here are a few that can set your project on the road to success.

### **How about looking for a tool to eliminate project failure?**

The points made above all demonstrate different aspects to how project failure can occur, including lack of communication and poor tracking. There exist many tools/apps that can help in many of these and should be considered. Here are two apps that might set your projects on a successful path.