

9 Best Practices for IT Project Management



Companies and organisations struggle to keep an IT project within schedule and budget. According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers study of 10,000 projects from 200 companies in 30 countries, only 2.5 percent of companies succeeded in completing their IT projects and the Journal of the Medical Informatics Association says that healthcare's track record is even worse than that of other sectors.

Cost of failure is significant with the Harvard Business Review finding an average cost overrun of 27 percent from a study of 1,500 projects. IT projects are complex so good management of both IT, human and financial resources is essential for success. Read on for nine recommendations for proper IT project management:

Solid IT governance

1. Proper IT governance is key for organisations to successfully implement an IT project. Organisations with superior IT governance have 25 percent higher profits than those with poor IT governance.

2. Connect IT and Admin

Leading organisations must align their executive and IT leadership. A typical IT project is not solely technical but multifaceted affecting a range of personnel.

3. Connect IT with Business Strategy

Ensure that your business strategy integrates the IT strategy. Not doing so is like a business plan without revenue projections. A good start is a simple multi-year IT roadmap that connects with your organisation's business strategy or goals.

4. Develop a Standard Open Planning Process

Start with well-defined project objectives, scope, roles of personnel and baseline standards. Identifying timing of each stage of the project and keep measuring progress.

5. Supplement Planning Process

Make sure from the start that all team members can access proper tools like those that centralise tracking and project-related information. You may need to secure sufficient workspace or allow staff to work from home on occasion.

Setting up a centralised management system will lower the chance of team members accessing outdated information.

6. Maintain Effective communications

Creating an environment where all staff involved the project feel they can voice their views and concerns is important for effective implementation. It is necessary for staff to feel they can speak up about unrealistic deadlines or demands in order to avoid a derailment of the project.

7. Have the Right IT Skills

As well as possessing baseline technical skills IT personnel should be adept in time management, liaising with colleagues and planning. If you lack these skills, you may want to examine outsourcing for help in some parts of the project.

8. Expect the Unexpected

In spite of stringent planning, an IT project – as with any project – will likely hit unexpected roadblocks. Establish a contingency plan to address potential changes in technology, infrastructure and interoperability issues.

9. Document Project Closures

Document the project upon acceptance by clinical users and your organisation once it has been completed. Identifying lessons learned and what improvements to make next time round are valuable take-aways from the project.

Source: [Healthcare Executive](#)

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