Is Your Development Project a Sinking Ship?

Posted by michael on Tue Jan 04, '05 03:30 PM from the down-down-down-and-the-flames-went-higher dept.

gManZboy writes "Everyone knows that some software development projects succeed and other fail -- the question has always been 'why'? I'm sure we all have our favorite (likely anecdotal) explanations. Well, these guys decided to actually go out there and do a formal survey, and they've got some real data on why projects actually fail (as reported by development project managers -- care to guess where 'changing requirements' ranks?). They've developed a diagnostic formula people can use to gauge the likeliness that the project they're working on right now is (or isn't) going to fail."

(1) | 2

- Project Management Authority

(Score:5, Insightful)
by fembots (753724) on Tuesday January 04, @03:31PM (#11257219)
(http://vinc.iclod.com/)
I used to blame "constant client requirement changes" for failed projects as suggested by my project manager.

Later I realized, as suggested by the senior management, that a good project manager should not let that happen had he properly designed and managed the project.

Recently I started to think that maybe all failed projects are due to the delays inevitably imposed by the senior management who requires many policies/protocols/documents/approvals/discussions before signing off the budget.

These delays introduce deadline pressure to project manager, and allow too much time for client to ponder about other features, and most importantly, give breathing space for competitors to come up with similar products BEFORE we do.

  - Re:Project Management Authority

(Score:4, Interesting)
by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday January 04, @03:36PM (#11257289)
Flexibility to meet changing requirements is a good thing.

All too often, some sales guy will toss in a requirement like "must run on Win98"; and thousands of man hours will be wasted trying to meet something that wasn't even important to the customer.

If the original spec calls for "turn lead into gold", it's a very good thing if the requirements can
evolve as technical issues are identified.

- **Traceability**

(Score:5, Interesting)  
by **persaud** (304710) on Tuesday January 04, @04:20PM (#11257817)  
(http://dotpeople.com/)  
One result of ad-hoc software design and implementation has been government regulation of software in the financial, security and pharmaceutical sectors.

One result of government regulation has been the emergence of **requirements management** tools like Borland's CaliberRM and Telelogic's DOORS.

These tools trace every functional requirement back to a business requirement. They also track the risk (schedule, safety, robustness, performance) of every functional requirement to the rest of the system.

Vague specification, like vague design is an indicator of not understanding the problem. The first step towards understanding the problem is categorization of ignorance, such as unexpected consequences already experienced by the project.

Good requirements management tools incorporate practices that have been proven to flush out vague specifications. Good traceability educates upstream participants so they can produce better specs in the future. Better specs yield better products, including better spec management tools.

- Re:Project Management Authority

(Score:5, Insightful)  
by **jeillah** (147690) on Tuesday January 04, @04:23PM (#11257863)  
Most products specs I've seen lately are what I call CYA specs. They ask for things that are comprehensive enough to keep the blame away from the analyst even if the requirement is for things that are difficult to implement and probably never used by the end user. A prime example of this is requirements for searching and reporting. The spec will call for the ability to search or report on any field or groups of fields, as determined by the user, with multiple search criteria for any field with the data sorted on any field. And it has to be...
simple enough for a non-technical user to use (no fair making them enter SQL). Chances are it will only make sense for the user to view data in a few ways so why not define these ways and put that in the spec? Nope, cause they might miss something and they'd be shamed for life. Better to just put "I want everything I can think of and might think of in the future" in the spec and complain that the project is behind schedule and is too big and runs too damn slow when (if) it is finally delivered.

In case you can't tell, I'm in the process of reviewing just such a spec from our legal department right now. Specs written by lawyers are pretty but wordy without really saying what exactly they want...

[ Parent ]

- Re:Project Management Authority by persaud (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:33PM
  - Re:Project Management Authority by FriedTurkey (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @05:10PM
    - Re:Project Management Authority by persaud (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:12PM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by persaud (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @07:42PM
      - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
    - Re:Project Management Authority by clockwise_music (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:00AM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by StarsAreAlsoFire (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:27AM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by FriedTurkey (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @06:54AM
    - Re:Project Management Authority by QuestorTapes (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @12:58PM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by XMyth (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:42PM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by Tablizer (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @09:04PM
    - Re:Project Management Authority by QuietRiot (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:24PM
      - Re:Project Management Authority by Crash McBang (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @09:39PM
    - Requirements prioritisation and versioning by hughk (Score:3) Wednesday January 05, @04:33AM
  - Re:Project Management Authority by xbrownx (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:38PM
    - Re:Project Management Authority by Fnkmaster (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:46PM
      - Too much PM and not enough sales involvement by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:13PM
        - Re:Too much PM and not enough sales involvement by WaterBreath (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:55PM
          - Re:Too much PM and not enough sales involvement by Thetetus (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:07PM
          - Re:Too much PM and not enough sales involvement by WaterBreath (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @09:44PM
      - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
      - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
Correct, but there is more

(Score:5, Insightful)
by Interfacer (560564) on Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM (#11257398)
Not only do client requirements change, but management is also responsible for fubaring things.

i have been part of a project (past tense) where:
- management delivered a much too low cost estimate in order to get win the bid.
- management then expected the project manager and team to meet the deadlines that were doomed in advance.
- the software design lead designed a behemoth of a framework full of performance and design issues.
- management did not understand that if you have unexplained system behavior, you cannot say when you will have solved the problem.
- hardware design was not reviewed, just like software design. this lead to huge problems just before and during acceptance.
- near the end of the project, more and more people were reassigned to a new project that has the ability to make the department manager look good to the head office. he wants to move up. In effect, succes of the former project became a more and more distant possibility until failure was assured.

and there are probably some other things that i either forgot or purposly left out (trying to repress memories maybe ;)).

Change Transparency a.k.a. Big Visible Charts

(Score:4, Informative)
by persaud (304710) on Tuesday January 04, @03:46PM (#11257424)
(http://dotpeople.com/)
Release managers can track requirement changes and their impact (effort, schedule) on the project. These changes can be reported separately from the primary schedule, so that everyone
can see the impact of scope changes.

Change is not bad. Adapting to environmental changes (competition, customer education by early prototypes, vendor roadmaps) can make the difference between a one-shot failed project and a multi-generation successful product.

Big Visible Charts [xprogramming.com] is a time-tested technique for non-political status reporting that helps everyone (from senior management to QA) take responsibility for the global impact of local changes. Grab a few unused monitors and create a wall-mounted status display with 1-minute project status updates, you'll be amazed at the results.

- Re:Change Transparency a.k.a. Big Visible Charts by jqh1 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:08PM
  - Re:Change Transparency a.k.a. Big Visible Charts by persaud (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:16PM
- Re:Change Transparency a.k.a. Big Visible Charts by Anonymous Coward (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @06:18PM
  - Re:Change Transparency a.k.a. Big Visible Charts by persaud (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:30PM
  - Dashboards by hughk (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @04:10AM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- Re:Project Management Authority by bwalling (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:47PM

- Re:Project Management Authority
  (Score:5, Insightful)
  by Mr_Huber (160160) on Tuesday January 04, @05:13PM (#11258366)
  (http://slashdot.org/)
  The difficulty here is making absolutely sure the client and the mangement know the difference between a working prototype with canned data and a fully functional application capable of handling real world situations. All to often, I've seen really good prototypes either turn into the actual product, or be the source of unrealistic estimates of project status. (After all, if the demo works, how hard can the rest be?)

I remember reading an article by Joel Spolsky where he advised to deliberately make the UI for demos less than polished. Make it look like something that was knocked together. Make it too pretty and the client will think you're almost done. After all, to the client, the UI is the app. If that looks done, the guts of the thing must be near done as well.

- Re:Project Management Authority by Open Council (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:18PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by jeko (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @10:02PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by StarsAreAlsoFire (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:39AM
- Re:Project Management Authority by llefler (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:10PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by j-pimp (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @09:10AM
  - 2 replies beneath your current threshold.
Re:Project Management Authority

(Score:4, Insightful)
by Linker3000 (626634) on Tuesday January 04, @04:12PM (#11257725)
I used to blame "constant client requirement changes" for failed projects as suggested by my project manager.

My experience shows this to be quite valid sometimes regardless of how much project control you attempt - a classic scenario goes like this:

1) The customer is invited to a 'proof of concept' or 'milestone' demo of the proposed system
2) The customer requests new features or amendments to original spec
3) The new features are subjected to a cost/benefit analysis by both parties
4) Customer wants the changes and so the contract clause relating to 'additional or amended requirements' kicks in and a new pricing structure is drawn up.
5) Customer complains that they are being 'forced into a corner' with the new charges - they want everything completed but aren't willing to pay the extra but feel that if they don't agree you'll walk away from the project
6) Developers have to decide whether to make the amendments within existing budget, even though it's additional workload, or insist that the customer covers some or (hopefully) all of the charges.
7) Customer complains and says they won't pay - OR they agree, but you just know that at the end of the contract you'll get a serious amount of grief trying to extract the full and fair cost of the work from the customer.
8) Customer pulls plug and takes your proposal elsewhere for someone else to work on, or you decide to cut your losses and jump ship anyway.

[ Parent ]
Re:Project Management Authority by Jboy_24 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:29PM
- Slips at the beginning of the schedule never count by MerlynEmrys67 (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:21PM
- keep a strong launch focus by clsc (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:11PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:12PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by ricka0 (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:25PM
- Re:Project Management Authority by vatima (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @04:15AM
- 2 replies beneath your current threshold.

So...

(Score:5, Funny)
by Blue-Footed Boobie (799209) on Tuesday January 04, @03:31PM (#11257227)
"They've developed a diagnostic formula people can use to gauge the likeliness that the project they're working on right now is (or isn't) going to fail"

So, if I know it is going to fail, do I still have to try?

- Re:So...

(Score:5, Funny)
by 2A (841921) on Tuesday January 04, @03:42PM (#11257370)
but what will really bake your noodle later, is would the project still have failed, if I hadn't told you it would?
[ Parent ]
- Re:So... by kin_korn_karn (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM
  - Re:So... by SoSueMe (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:42PM
  - Re:So... by budgenator (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:59PM
  - Re:So... by kin_korn_karn (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:33PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- Re:So... by Blue-Footed Boobie (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM

- Re:So...

(Score:5, Funny)
by Neil Blender (555885) <neilblender@gmail.com> on Tuesday January 04, @03:46PM (#11257429)
"but what will really bake your noodle later, is would the project still have failed, if I hadn't told you it would?"

Dude, Oracle jokes are so next week.
[ Parent ]
- Re:So... by 2A (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:21PM
  - Re:So... by Frogbert (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @10:47PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- Well... by abb3w (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:13PM
- Re:So... by sweatyboatman (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:21PM
- Re:So... by tiredwired (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:23PM
- Re:So... by killjoe (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:40PM
"changing requirements" less bad than no change

(Score:4, Insightful)
by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday January 04, @03:33PM (#11257246)
Changing requirements is far less bad than a frozen spec based on overanalysis by MBAs who never spoke to customers.

- never spoke, or spoke too much. by E IS mC(Square) (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:15PM
- Re: "changing requirements" less bad than no chang by tchuladiass (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:07PM
  - Re: "changing requirements" less bad than no chang by llefler (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:28PM
- 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

- Re:Ah, the requirements... by duffbeer703 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:48PM
  - Re:Ah, the requirements... by duffbeer703 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:23PM
- 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

The formula

(Score:5, Funny)
by superpulpsicle (533373) on Tuesday January 04, @03:34PM (#11257266)
Fair management expectations
+ Well allocated budget
- Patch fixing firedrills
- unnecessary marketing spinoffs
+ free donuts
= success

- Answer

(Score:5, Funny)
by bonch (38532) <bonch&slackersguild.com> on Tuesday January 04, @04:44PM (#11258066)
(http://www.slackersguild.com/ | Last Journal: Friday November 11, @09:11PM)
"Is Your Development Project a Sinking Ship?"

Why yes, we make submarines. Hoo-hah!
I blame perfection

(Score:5, Insightful)
by Anonymous Crowhead (577505) on Tuesday January 04, @03:34PM (#11257269)
People who sit around for months or years trying to design the perfect system. It doesn't exist. Compromise gets projects done.

Re:I blame perfection by LazyNerd (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:50PM
Re:I blame perfection by Snaller (Score:2) Thursday January 06, @10:48AM

Do you have evidence of this?

(Score:4, Insightful)
by expro (597113) on Tuesday January 04, @03:53PM (#11257504)
I have lots of evidence of failed projects due to failure to plan.

It can take months or years of thought and discussion to reasonably avoid extreme catastrophies.

While it is silly to try to plan every detail and anyone who claims to do so is lying, a simple elegant, successful general approach is seldom the first one to pop into the head. It takes a lot of thought. Of course, for those incapable of such forethought, why not fail earlier rather than later.

Re:Do you have evidence of this? by scottme (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
Re:Do you have evidence of this? by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:15PM
I did not say perfect it. I said plan and design by expro (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:40PM
Re:I did not say perfect it. I said plan and design by llefler (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:59PM
I only control technology by expro (Score:2) Thursday January 06, @02:18PM
My pior answer was too short by expro (Score:2) Thursday January 06, @02:49PM
Re:Do you have evidence of this? by iabervon (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:33PM
Re:Do you have evidence of this? by expro (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:24PM
Re:Do you have evidence of this? by SoSueMe (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:19PM
Re:Do you have evidence of this? by wrook (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @08:52PM
Re:I blame perfection by EvilTwinSkippy (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:18PM
Re:I blame perfection by bladesjester (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:51PM
Re:I blame perfection by phlIl (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:33PM
Re:I blame perfection by llefler (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @02:08PM
Re:I blame perfection by Evil Poot Cat (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:35PM
1 reply beneath your current threshold.
• **2 replies** beneath your current threshold.
  • **the real question is, using their formula...** by testednegative (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:36PM

**Aggressive scheduling**

(Score:4, Interesting)
by kevin_conaway (585204) on Tuesday January 04, @03:36PM (#11257301)
(http://pyscrabble.sf.net/ | Last Journal: Thursday April 28, @01:48PM)

Our project is currently suffering from aggressive scheduling. We are put on too tight of a timeframe to allow even the most minor setbacks. Changing requirements seems to be the nature of the game, and when we dont allot enough time to accommodate these changes, we get into trouble.

• **Re:Aggressive scheduling** by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:46PM
• **Remove cloud cover** by persaud (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:00PM
  - **HUH? Re:Remove cloud cover** by SMQ (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:15PM
  - **If you wait until the schedule is broken** by persaud (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:23PM
  - **Re:Remove cloud cover** by Bill Dog (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:22PM
  - **Re:Remove cloud cover** by persaud (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:27PM
• **Re:Aggressive scheduling** by mutterc (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @09:23PM

• **Projects fails because no one ever learns**

(Score:5, Insightful)
by Ckwop (707653) * <2WKJb6O@ckwop.me.uk> on Tuesday January 04, @03:37PM (#11257304)
(http://www.ckwop.me.uk/)

It's as simple as that unfortunately - we *never* learn from our mistakes. Over the last thirty years every system we can dream of has been built from nuclear power plant control system to stock market analysis systems.

Yet we keep playing the buzzword bingo with our new systems, e.g. "Extreme programming", we still keep promise a schedule we can't keep to, we still allow the customer to shift requirement much later in the project than should be allowed, management still don't have enough dialog with the programmers on the ground floor, the list goes on..

Wake up! We're not special.. the construction industry has been doing huge projects of equal complexity for centuries. Get past your intellectual snobbery and start working together..

Simon.

• **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by Anonymous Coward (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:46PM

• **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns**

(Score:4, Interesting)
by LWATCDR (28044) on Tuesday January 04, @03:51PM (#11257485)
(Last Journal: Thursday November 03, @11:14AM)

"Wake up! We're not special.. the construction industry has been doing huge projects of equal complexity for centuries. Get past your intellectual snobbery and start working together.."
Umm no they have not. Construction is one of the slowest to change industries on the planet. Take a hotel. It is really just room after room. You design one room and then multiply that out to make a floor. Then you stack the floors and you have a building.

The key is standardized everything. Look at your average home. It is still built out of sticks or concrete blocks. Very little has changed in a very long time. The latest thing is metal studs but it took decades for them to become commonplace in homes. Very little changes and very little in really innovative.

And if you think that building projects are always on time and on budget.... Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha

Projects fails because no one ever learns

by Ansonmont (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:25PM

by LWATCDR (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @05:37PM

by virtual_mps (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @09:26AM

Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by SunFan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:07PM

by LWATCDR (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @11:06PM

by curious.corn (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:25PM

2 replies beneath your current threshold.

Re: 'doghouse' theory of software by Punctuated_Equilibri (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:51PM

1 reply beneath your current threshold.

Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by swimmar132 (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:54PM

Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns

(Score:4, Insightful)

by VeriTea (795384) on Tuesday January 04, @04:16PM (#11257769)

(Last Journal: Saturday July 10, @02:06PM)

I would repeat after you, but what would I gain by repeating something that isn't true?

Ok, there is a lot of truth there, but to dismiss the analogy out of hand is to miss some very important lessons. My dad manages large-scale construction projects so I know a little bit about the industry.

Some lessons that may relate

1. The team that designs a project is always different from the team that constructs the project. They are seldom even from the same company. The client gets to arbitrate between the two when conflicts come up.

2. Many projects are extensively estimated after design, but before construction by the constructor (who has much more experience and motivation to accurately assess project costs then the designing company).

3. Design firms, and construction firms often specialize in very specific types of buildings
(i.e. one company may construct only clean-room facilities, another company designs only bridges, etc.). When companies take on specialized projects that they have no institutional experience with, they often fail spectacularly.

4. The designing company divides the project design documents into known specialties. Metalwork, brickwork, glasswork, electrical work, etc. There are hundreds of categories, and the design documents break out the project into those standard categories. When the construction company builds the project, they hire subcontractors to perform work in each specialty. The company that does the glasswork has lots of experience with glasswork. The company doing roofing has lots of experience with roofing, etc.

5. Changing the design in mid-construction (which always happens) cost big bucks. No exceptions.

There are more, but I'm bored with this post so I'll stop now.

[ Parent ]

- **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by Reziac (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:33PM
  - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by BoomerSooner (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:02PM
    - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by Reziac (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @11:39PM
  - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by HiThere (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:07PM
  - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by Knos (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:09PM
  - **The Construction Analogy is Broken** by under_score (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @07:05PM
  - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by tshak (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @09:46PM

  **1 reply** beneath your current threshold.

- **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by csbruce (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:36PM
  - **Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns** by ColdWetDog (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:50PM

- **Construction Analogy Fundamentally Incorrect** by irritating environme (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:56PM
  - **Visualization Problem** by persaud (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:04PM
  - **Construction Analogy and Project Transparency** by Astreja (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
  - **Re:Construction Analogy Fundamentally Incorrect** by arudloff (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:10PM
  - **Re:Construction Analogy Fundamentally Incorrect** by zulux (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:14PM

  **1 reply** beneath your current threshold.

- "Software Engineering" is not yet "Engineering"

(Score:4, Interesting)
by **fyrie (604735)** on Tuesday January 04, @04:34PM (**#11257974**)
Here is a pretty good paper by Mary Shaw explaining why software is not yet an engineering discipline (IEEE). 
http://www.sce.carleton.ca/faculty/ajila/4106-5006/Prospect%20Eng%20Soft.pdf/ [carleton.ca]

Re:"Software Engineering" is not yet "Engineering" by fyrie (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:57PM
- 10 year old article by tallbill (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @12:12AM
  - Re:10 year old article by fyrie (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:14PM
  - Re:10 year old article by tallbill (Score:1) Thursday January 06, @05:18PM

Re:Construction Analogy Fundamentally Incorrect by 10am-bedtime (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:43PM

1 reply beneath your current threshold.

2 replies beneath your current threshold.
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by dreamt (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:10PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by GeorgeMcBay (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:23PM
- Kidding yourself by alienmole (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:26PM
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by Fulcrum of Evil (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:35PM
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by TiggertheMad (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:36PM
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by mpcooke3 (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:44PM
  - Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by Thuktun (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @11:02AM
  - Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by mpcooke3 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:57PM
  - Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by mpcooke3 (Score:3) Wednesday January 05, @04:32AM
  - 2 replies beneath your current threshold.
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by EvilTwinSkippy (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:29PM
- bingo by clsc (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:36PM
- Re:Projects fails because no one ever learns by Bob9113 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:00PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

- Ratio of Intelligence to Project Complexity

(Score:5, Insightful)
by severoon (536737) on Tuesday January 04, @03:37PM (#11257307)
(Last Journal: Tuesday September 14, @03:59PM)

I've done a lot of thinking about this...I've come to the conclusion that too often, management tries to replace good ol' fashioned thinking with process. It doesn't work. People tend to get focused in on what they're doing to the exclusion of all else, and that means the smart people are cubbyholed and only have
half the story and can't see where other parts of the project are failing, and dumb people have free reign over their little part.

If the ratio of intelligence to complexity is too low, then the project will fail no matter what process is in place or who is managing it. That's all there is to it. There's a lot of cool stuff out there to be done in development...sadly, most of the good ideas will never make it because the people working on them don't use common sense and best practices...they're just not smart enough to see what's important and what isn't.

This isn't one of those self-important diatribes from a holier-than-thou developer, either...true I'm a developer, but I admit when I'm too dumb to handle the particulars of a project; usually, that means the project is too complex for most people, but they press on anyway. Those projects always go down in flames eventually.

You have to know what the strengths and weaknesses of your team and its members are, and exploit those to the fullest. Maybe, then, you can barely accomplish a project if the goal of that project is simple enough.

- Smart People by persaud (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:55PM
  - Re:Smart People by persaud (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:43PM
  - I reply beneath your current threshold.
- I utterly agree by SuperKendall (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:57PM
  - Re:I utterly agree by killjoe (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:45PM
    - Re:I utterly agree by Rich0 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:14PM
    - Re:I utterly agree by killjoe (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @12:07AM
    - Re:I utterly agree by severoon (Score:2) Thursday January 06, @01:01PM
  - I don't think rare people are that fickle... by SuperKendall (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @11:37PM
    - Re:I don't think rare people are that fickle... by killjoe (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @12:12AM
      - Not true at all by SuperKendall (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:56PM
    - Re:I utterly agree by Carewolf (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @06:00AM
    - Re:I utterly agree by EvilTwinSkippy (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:32PM
    - Re:I utterly agree by SunFan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:29PM
    - Re:I utterly agree by Red Pointy Tail (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @12:00AM
      - You would think so but... by SuperKendall (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:53PM
  - I reply beneath your current threshold.
- The point of "Process" by jfw25 (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:01PM
- Re:Ratio of Intelligence to Project Complexity by Gyorg_Lavode (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:15PM
- Correct by sg3000 (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @05:21PM
- Sigh by Benanov (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:38PM
  - Re:Sigh by Neurowiz (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:47PM
  - Re:Sigh by javaxman (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:03PM
    - Re:Sigh by Squid (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:35PM

- Blame the P.M. - usually
Every project, whether it's a development project, implementation or business process engineering, that has failed for us has been because of poor project management. Period.

We've had people who didn't know how to accurately scope business requirements, get buy in from other departments and generally "play nice" enough to keep everything running smoothly. Your P.M. needs to be able to be a hard ass, but also to be a buddy.

It boils down to excellent management skills and excellent people skills and without both you're setting a project up for disaster. A good P.M. needs to know when to tell senior management it's asking for the impossible too, and a good P.M. needs to know he has kung-fu so he can get away will telling senior management their idea won't be implemented.

**Cosmo Quiz**

(Is this simply the nerd version of the ages-old cosmo quiz? I fail to see how "The one-minute risk assessment" is any more comprehensive or meaningful than the "Does he think you are fat"-type quizzes that make their way through women's magazines.)

**Skill sets for Project Management**

One key element that appears to be missing is the qualifications of the manager or management team. Project management is a different skill set from design or development.
It's not to say that a good designer or developer cannot be a good project manager; it's just a different job, like asking a plumber to rewire your house.

- **Re:Skill sets for Project Management** by chochos (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:49PM
- **I reply beneath your current threshold.**

- **Overruled by bean counters** by tjlsmith (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:43PM
- **I blame the If statements** by TheFairElf (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by NoInfo (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:54PM
    - **Re:I blame the If statements** by Fulcrum of Evil (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:59PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by yohan1701 (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:57PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by Greslin (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:07PM
    - **Re:I blame the If statements** by loconet (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:20PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by emidlec (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:23PM
    - **Not to get into it...** by Run4yourlives (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:44PM
      - **Re:Not to get into it...** by emidlec (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:13PM
    - **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by Eneff (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:25PM
    - **Re:I blame the If statements** by Duhavid (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:16PM
  - **Read The Pragmatic Programmer immediately.** by Jerk City Troll (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:33PM
    - **Re:Read The Pragmatic Programmer immediately.** by Duhavid (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:19PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by TiggertheMad (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:48PM
  - **Re:I blame the If statements** by xv4n (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @07:44PM
  - **Re:Poor implementation** by WinterSolstice (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:20PM
  - **2 replies beneath your current threshold.**

- **Care to guess where 'changing requirements' ranks** by Kenja (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:45PM
- **Is Your Development Project a Sinking Ship?** by i 3 joo! (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:48PM
  - **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**

- **It always comes down to people**

  (Score:4, Insightful)
  by Anonymous Coward on Tuesday January 04, @03:50PM (#11257475)
  It ALWAYS comes down to people. This article looks to be a discussion relevant more to a commercial environment than an open source one, but I guess the same fundamental principle is true - without the right people you will not succeed. This means competent and motivated technical people, clueful and skilled management, and customers willing to be reasonable and pay for what they are getting. Take away any one of these elements, and there is no technique in the world which will result in something everybody can define as a success.

These guys break down the problems into useful categories, which will be helpful for good teams who want to know how to be more efficient. But for my money a group of serious, decieded people who honestly want to get the job done and do it well will usually get there, barring external factors beyond their control messing it up. It might take a while, cost $$, etc. but they'll make it, because they WANT to.

Many (I would even say most) successful open source projects succeed because they have one or several individuals willing to put the work in to make something happen. The tools they use or the way they work are less important than determination to get it done and do it well. Those without that wither...
on the vine.

In theory, commercial companies and development teams should be motivated by the $$ they are paid, but that doesn't always translate into doing the job well. There are PHBs, lazy workers, unreasonable customers, and all the other joys of life out there. There is no magical "business formula" which can transmute this combination into a good product.

Don't get me wrong, project management and efficiency techniques are a very good thing, but only when you've got the people to make good use of them.

- **If your project. . .** by smooth wombat (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @03:52PM
  - Re:If your project. . . by igny (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:38PM
  - 2 replies beneath your current threshold.

- **This has already been done**

  (Score:5, Interesting)
  by Neurowiz (18899) on Tuesday January 04, @03:52PM (#11257502)
  (http://www.neurowiz.com)
  ... since 1994, the Standish Group has been publishing the results and reasons of IT projects. Go here for the original report. [standishgroup.com]

  We've gone from about 25% of projects being "successful" (on time, on budget, meeting stated needs) to about 31%. So translated, that means 2/3ds of the time you get into your car or get on an elevator, it'll work as you want.

  Consistently, the top reasons for projects failing, for the past 10 years?
  1. Unclear, poor requirements
  2. Lack of user involvement
  3. Lack of buy-in and support by upper management

  I have to agree with other comments made, this isn't rocket science. We just need some time and maturity as an industry. Civil and mechanical engineering have had thousands of years to work out their kinks. The software engineering science has had to deal with technology and implementation far outpacing our understanding of the basics and principles involved.

  But we're getting better.

  Honestly, if the world at large knew how brittle, fragile and reliant on heroism most of the critical financial and industrial software was, there would be a huge outcry. It's one of the shameful aspects of our industry.
  - Re:This has already been done by slowhand (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:00PM
  - Re:This has already been done by glh (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:07PM
    - Re:This has already been done by Neurowiz (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:11PM
    - Re:This has already been done by glh (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:17PM
      - Re:This has already been done by Neurowiz (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:35PM
      - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
    - Re:This has already been done by YU Nicks NE Way (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:24PM
  - **The Golden Rule of PM** by ip_freely_2000 (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:54PM
It's not magical

Having many years of successful software project management under my belt, I can tell you it boils down to two concepts: professional training and discipline.

There are a million and one books and surveys and they all say the same thing. First, there is a formal process for the development of anything (not just software). This starts with the formal documentation process and meetings to discover functional and non-functional issues. Second, there is a very strong sense by everyone to want to adjust it a little more. From senior managers who allow scope creep to managers who want steps to be cut to make up time to programmers constantly who rewrite the code because they think they can squeeze 5% more time out of a loop that runs for less than a second in a process.

Most people do not realize that in a successful formal process that the actual time in a software project that is used to build the software should amount to only about 30% of the project's development time. The other 70% is time spent on documentation, meetings, and testing to ensure that the 30% of time used on software development is actually what the company is needing. And, it is discipline that keeps people on the project process in the face of the fear of not getting the project done right. The process has to be allowed to work, both to reach a project end point and to have unobstructed process from which to learn.

The part I get a kick out of is that just because people write software or run a company that they somehow think they just ought to know why projects work. If complex systems were just so easy, why would we need formal training? After all, anyone can build a bridge successfully without training, right? I am not being hard on people, though. I had this exact same though years ago and what I figured out is that the vast majority of the software industry is so poorly trained that it doesn't even realize that it poorly trained.

Successful software development books have been around for more than 30 years. Go read! Better than that, get a university degree. The more liberal the better. Honestly, it is worth it. Here is a good place to start: Systems Analysis and Design by Kendall and Kendall (ISBN 0-13-041571-5)

Re:Quilty Software by RManning (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:58PM
  ○ Re:Quilty Software by BullfrogJones (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
    ■ Re:Quilty Software by RManning (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:14PM

Re:Quilty Software by RManning (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:58PM
  ○ Re:Quilty Software by BullfrogJones (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
    ■ Re:Quilty Software by RManning (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:14PM

I question by joeflies (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:59PM

How long by Timesprout (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:59PM

Please check my math by Spackler (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:00PM
  ○ Re:Please check my math by Xoro (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:21PM
  ○ Re:Please check my math by Squid (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:21PM
Interesting survey results... by glh (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:02PM
  ○ Re:Interesting survey results... by glh (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:10PM
  ○ Re:Interesting survey results... by cavemanf16 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:22PM

laziness and negligent behavior

(Score:4, Funny)
by dj42 (765300) * on Tuesday January 04, @04:03PM (#11257616)
(Last Journal: Friday April 29, @11:56AM)
In my experience, it is usually drugs, alcohol, too much sleep, unconcerned management, or a combination thereof that causes projects to fail. Have you ever tried to project-manage after 8 double vodkas, a short nap, and a full rack of ribs?
  ○ Re:laziness and negligent behavior by 2A (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:03PM

I'll RTFA in my next comment but first...

(Score:4, Informative)
by museumpace (735109) on Tuesday January 04, @04:05PM (#11257638)
(Last Journal: Monday July 18, @06:18PM)
I'll suggest everybody who has not yet done so should RTF precedents for such a study...it is as ancient as it is true: Brooks "Mythical Man Month" [yourdon.com] describes the reasons projects blow up pretty well. For all the technology heaped on software development in the 30 years since the book came out, very little has changed: Software projects are complicated beasts attempted by mere humans. Steve McConnel's books [amazon.com] will be more familiar to /. readers and his approach to project management tries to head off the "changed requirements" fiascos with a feedback and correction mechanism of frequent critical project reviews...I wonder if that actually has worked for anyone:-(
  ○ Re:I'll RTFA in my next comment but first... by museumpace (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:12PM
  ○ Re:I'll RTFA in my next comment but first... by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:31PM
  ○ Re:I'll RTFA in my next comment but first... by CharlieG (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @12:45PM
  ○ Re:I'll RTFA in my next comment but first... by cpeterso (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:16PM
    ■ Re:I'll RTFA in my next comment but first... by cranos (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @09:14PM
  ○ 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

Pretty well known by now by HeyLaughingBoy (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:07PM
Responsibility by marko123 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:08PM
From the original, unedited article... by Swamii (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:08PM
We're waaaay beyond sinking... by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
Geeks are too geeky by scottjpearson (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:09PM
  ○ Re:Geeks are too geeky by KagatoLNX (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:59PM
    ■ Re:Geeks are too geeky by scottjpearson (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @09:28AM
Dissimilarity and Some Insights, by Badgerman (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:11PM
  ○ Re:Dissimilarity and Some Insights, by Fulcrum of Evil (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:04PM
Lack of focus by jmichaelg (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:13PM
Recipe for failure by SilverspurG (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:13PM
YES!! by javaxman (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:14PM
neanderthal project management methodologies by kpharmer (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:15PM
This is not new..... by jeffe128ca (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:15PM
   ○ Re:This is not new..... by Inthewire (Score:1) Friday January 14, @11:59PM
Unrealistic expectations by grassy_knoll (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:16PM

death march projects...

(Score:4, Interesting)
by capsteve (4595) on Tuesday January 04, @04:17PM (#11257778)
(http://www.doink.org/)
i actually was "assigned" to supervise a death march project at my last employer. my "new"
manager(6th one in one year) knew the project was going to be canned(didn't confirm the inevitable to
me, even when confronted), and most of the people would be absorbed into other projects or simply
layed off. why was it a doomed project? politics.

someone else in our organization (at another geographical location), happened to be better aligned with
the top management group, and used this to their advantage to eliminate competing projects, or in some
cases eliminate the internal competition and take the projects over as their own.

of course at the time i had no idea what i was getting into(or who my "competition" was). no matter
what our team did to produce a superior product, our project was cancelled for reasons beyond our
control. i ended up stressing out and nearly damaged my health and my relationship...

Impossible" Projects. i soon realized that we were set up as an ugly style project, doomed(in fact
designed) to fail.

it's good to understand why projects fail, i have not yet RTFA, but i'm sure it will compliment some of
the discussions/concepts in the death march book. good read.

Management is just plain stupid... by SurfTheWorld (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:18PM
   ○ Re:Management is just plain stupid... by furball (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:15PM
      ■ Re:Management is just plain stupid... by SurfTheWorld (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:30PM
   ○ Re:Management is just plain stupid... by fishbowl (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:12PM
      ■ Re:Management is just plain stupid... by SurfTheWorld (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:43PM

What is considered a success by fedork (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:18PM
100% of projects that are never released fail by navigator (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:31PM
   ○ Otherwise known as by persaud (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:04PM
Sausage and Software by bulach (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:36PM
Exactly backwards? by raider_red (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:37PM
Not a good study: Too much "after the fact" reason by Systems Curmudgeon (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:45PM
That's one sexy graphic! by woods (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:49PM
   ○ Re:That's one sexy graphic! by fred fleenblat (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:37PM
My Development Project is a Pirate Ship by dexter riley (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:49PM
methodology? by belmolis (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:49PM
It's all about white goods by 91degrees (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:53PM

Bizarre scale by Freddles (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:53PM

Sources of open source project failure

(Score:4, Interesting)
by Bootsy Collins (549938) on Tuesday January 04, @04:54PM ([#11258160](http://developers.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=05/01/04/1955206))

It would be interesting to see such an analysis done with an open source-centric viewpoint: why open source/free software projects fail.

It would be necessary to structure the survey carefully to avoid the obvious results that don't contain useful information. For instance, Sourceforge is littered with old projects that never got past alpha or pre-alpha because no one was interested except for the project initiator (who never created enough of a start to encourage significant involvement from others), and the project initiator eventually lost interest him/herself. That may be the way in which most open source projects fail -- but that knowledge is of little use to someone running a project and looking for tips on management. There are of course books about aspects of this topic; but it would be nice if someone were to do a similar survey of open source projects that did get their legs underneath them, that did produce something that enticed involvement and an interested user community, only to eventually fail.

Re:Sources of open source project failure by FooBarWidget (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:18PM
- Re:Sources of open source project failure by Bootsy Collins (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:18PM
  - Re:Sources of open source project failure by FooBarWidget (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @05:14AM
    - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

Re:Sources of open source project failure by fred fleenblat (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:25PM
- Re:Sources of open source project failure by Bootsy Collins (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:56PM
  - Re:Sources of open source project failure by fred fleenblat (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:46PM

Re:Sources of open source project failure by SunFan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:37PM
- Re:Sources of open source project failure by Bootsy Collins (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:44PM
  - Re:Sources of open source project failure by SunFan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @07:16PM
  - Re:Sources of open source project failure by SunFan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @11:56PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.

Lot's and lot's of project failures

(Score:4, Insightful)
by archilocus (715776) on Tuesday January 04, @04:55PM ([#11258170](http://developers.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=05/01/04/1955206))

(http://www.nickjenkins.net/program/)

I'm working for a large Telco doing roughly 80-120 IT projects every calendar year worth about
$200M. Most of them get through in one way or another, but some fail spectacularly and all of them have ridiculous overheads, delays and frustrations.

Best example of a crash-and-burn is a transaction engine designed to process a simple text file from another company. Should have been 6 months/$500K, project actually folded at 2 years / $3M and now we're going round for a second bite at the cherry (but with a new project name!!!).

Why do they fail? Lot's of reasons.

Sometimes the user's requirements are unclear. Sometimes we're using the wrong spanner for the job. Sometimes the team loses the plot and we get a jumbo jet when we wanted a paper air plane. And we're always under pressure on time, but that's business - if we don't get there first someone else will.

What's the root cause?

Complexity. We let our systems get too complex and now a two line code change can cost >$500K because the down stream effects will hit ten other systems that generate $1M/day of revenue.

The moral - KISS. Use the simplest solution for the job. Don't let the sales guy run away with it, don't let your geek-ego run away with it, don't let the user's get over excited and your project might just come in on time on budget. As someone else said... it isn't rocket science... or shouldn't be...

**After I RTFAed...**

(Score:5, Insightful)
by Eneff (96967) on Tuesday January 04, @04:57PM (#11258191)
(http://ibsulon.cc/)
Thanks mirrordot! [mirrordot.com]

Tiwana and Keil were asking MIS directors what *they* thought, not project managers or developers, leading me to believe that this is more based on client perception than someone with experience working on said projects.

That said, they ranked changing requirements last when talking about risk of failure, and actually said that inappropriate methodology was the top reason of project failure.

Now, while a lack of any sort of methodology is a disaster waiting to happen, I have a difficult time believing that a bad fit for a project creates more risk than project complexity and shifting requirements combined, as they suggest.

*sigh*

Do you really believe that a client is going to place shifting requirements as a risk? After all, they're the ones asking for the changes!

- Re:After I RTFAed... by tanguyr (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:28PM
  - Re:After I RTFAed... by Eneff (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @06:19PM
  - Re:After I RTFAed... by tanguyr (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:01PM
- Re:After I RTFAed... by anonymous_wombat (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:45PM
- methodology... by DrVomact (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @08:05PM
- Re:After I RTFAed... by Bob9113 (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:41AM

- **MS Project & Backwards Planning** by Martin71a (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:02PM
Software Project Survival Guide by Titusdot Groan (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @05:03PM
That is... by hotspur_fan (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:05PM

Out of Control Projects

(Score:4, Interesting)
by Ann Elk (668880) on Tuesday January 04, @05:07PM (#11258301)

Chris Peters (former Microsoft VP) wrote an interesting documented called "Is Your Project Out of Control". It seems to have appeared on the net in various [stanford.edu] formats [brightwork.com].

where does having confusing metrics fit in? by MegaThawt (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:10PM
Universal Elixir and Other Computing Projects Whic by plcurechax (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:14PM
I was going to measure the validity by ndunn (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:16PM
One minute Risk??!!?!?!?!? by DataCannibal (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:21PM
Project Timeline Equation by Morologous (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:22PM
Most of these are known and addressed by Mr_Huber (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:36PM
Would you present that survey to your boss? by angel'o'sphere (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:37PM

The main reasons for failure by angel'o'sphere (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @05:52PM
Bad math in article = Failure? by edge_crumbler (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:55PM
Changing requirements? Hah! by Rorschach1 (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:00PM
As seen by senior IT managers by ClosedSource (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:07PM
Don't forget the humans by Open Council (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:08PM
PM is for the semi-competents by O2dude (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:14PM
my experience by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @06:26PM

Mmm, by mwillems (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @06:30PM
  Re:Mmm, by tshak (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @10:02PM
  Re:Mmm, by ndunn (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @12:18PM
  Re:Mmm, by mwillems (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @05:26PM
Then there's the Road-worker effect by mcrbids (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:30PM
Overlooked by RomulusNR (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @06:56PM
Bias by Bloater (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @06:57PM
  Re:Bias by psykocrime (Score:2) Thursday January 06, @11:47PM
Small teams with a strong vision by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @07:23PM
Bad Idea? by daVinci1980 (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @07:30PM
one reason... by the-build-chicken (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @11:05PM
How I've been successful by fzammett (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @11:53PM
  Re:How I've been successful by Trillan (Score:2) Friday January 07, @10:14PM
  I reply beneath your current threshold.
It's jealousy... by chuckw (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:41AM
This is how its done! by Channing (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:43AM
What a buncha cry-babies! by Anonymous Coward (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @01:49AM
Experience by overlordhab (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @02:11AM
I have a dream... by smokestacklightning (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @02:20AM
Ask John Carmack by HogynCymraeg (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @03:52AM
Easy! by burdalane (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @04:31AM
One flaw with the survey... by SweetImpact (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @02:03PM
Re:A classic one for me by Neil Blender (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM
Re:A classic one for me by MrBandersnatch (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:07PM

- Re:here's a mirror, by rainmayun (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:44PM
  - Re:here's a mirror, by dgatewood (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @04:04PM
    - Re:here's a mirror, by BobPaul (Score:3) Tuesday January 04, @04:27PM
    - Re:here's a mirror, by Bill Dog (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:12PM
    - Re:here's a mirror, by winwar (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:26PM
      - Re:here's a mirror, by BobPaul (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @01:00AM
      - Re:here's a mirror, by mcrbids (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @07:53PM
  - Re:here's a mirror, by clodney (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @05:00PM
  - Re:A classic one for me by stratjakt (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:50PM
    - Re:A classic one for me by wuice (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @11:26PM
      - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
    - Re:here's a mirror, by JaffaKREE (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @03:51PM
      - Re:here's a mirror, by BobPaul (Score:1) Tuesday January 04, @04:19PM
    - Re:here's a mirror, by BobPaul (Score:2) Tuesday January 04, @03:52PM

Re:A classic one for me

(Score:5, Insightful)
by SoTuA (683507) on Tuesday January 04, @04:03PM (#11257622)
When your project manager hands you a project started by a rookie and tells you, "It's 95% done. All you have to do is the final touches."

Aaaah, that one is subject to the 95% rule:

The first 95% of the project takes 95% of the time, and the remaining 5% takes the other 95% of the time"

(loosely quoted from some fortune)

[ Parent ]
- Re:A classic one for me by SixDimensionalArray (Score:2) Wednesday January 05, @12:47AM
  - Re:A classic one for me by danme (Score:1) Wednesday January 05, @12:16PM
  - 1 reply beneath your current threshold.
- 22 replies beneath your current threshold.

(1) 2

Only that in you which is me can hear what I'm saying. -- Baba Ram Dass
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