

Risk Mitigation Plan Checklist

Type	No.	Source of Risk	Risk Reduction Technique
Customer Risk	1	Meeting customer expectations (no matter how precise the terms of reference, there are typically countless questions of interpretation)	<p>Use customer mapping technique to organize what you know about the customer organization and its key players.</p> <p>Obtain samples of previous work that was considered satisfactory or similar systems and use these as a benchmark to gauge expectations</p> <p>Prepare and present expanded tables of contents and page counts as early as possible.</p> <p>Present samples of similar deliverables produced in accordance with the same standards.</p> <p>Use decision request and change request procedures to maintain a record of all related discussions and control all changes relative to the schedule and cost.</p> <p>Maintain a record of all time spent resolving these factors.</p> <p>Hold regular Steering Committee meetings.</p>
	2	Managing Senior Management perceptions	<p>Ensure active involvement of a Steering Committee, in order to 1) encourage customer management rather than project team to set the direction for the project. 2) continuous, regular involvement customer management generates commitment, and 3) all issues discussed and resolved increase user comfort level with the project.</p>
	3	Political risk	<p>Assess organizational readiness: 1) is senior management committed to the project to ensure that it gets appropriate priority and support? 2) Do the management and staff perceive that this project will improve the organization and/or the environment in which people work? 3) Is there a champion with adequate influence who strongly supports the project, to the extent that he/she is willing to fight to have the project succeed? 4) Are people, computer capacity, money and other resources available to implement the project effectively or are there other competing demands for resources that will receive higher priority? 5) Do the staff members involved in the project have the necessary skills to implement the project?</p> <p>Set up a network to gather intelligence on what the key people are talking about - who speaks to whom, when and why, any issues that may be developing, etc.</p> <p>Use change influences analysis and resistance management techniques to analyze and address driving and opposing forces.</p> <p>Prepare specific commitment strategies and plans to obtain political support.</p> <p>Establish overwhelming commitment to success at the executive level so that thoughts of failure are not permitted.</p> <p>Ensure key opinion leaders are directly involved in the project team.</p> <p>Lobby for votes ahead of time to ensure that you know the outcome of key meetings before you go in.</p>
	4	Changing requirements	<p>Define scope up front in measurable terms. 1) Define functionality, interfaces and manual or automatic processes. 2) Identify limits to be applied to unbounded tasks. 3) Define estimating assumptions 4) Define the acceptance criteria. 4) Estimate cost / tradeoffs. 5. Obtain Steering Committee authorization, if needed.</p> <p>Design for information "hiding" to confine impact of likely changes and minimize their impact on the rest of the system.</p> <p>Plan incremental development, deferring changes to later increments.</p>
	5	Inaccurate or insufficient detail in requirements statement	<p>Build in realistic time for confirmation of requirements.</p> <p>Include limiting assumptions in contract.</p>
	6	Inability of user to define requirements or ever-expanding scope	<p>Build prototype.</p> <p>Limit number of reviews of deliverables.</p> <p>Include provision in contract for replacement of Acceptor if scope undefined by specified milestone.</p> <p>Include provision for termination of contract if scope undefined by specified milestone.</p>

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	7	Gold plating (desire to over automate)	<p>Establish a budget constraint to focus the effort on where there will be most payback and to force decisions that otherwise would be avoided, including early clarification of major scope issues. With reasonable constraints, a system design is apt to be spare and clean whereas without these, functionality that could be handled on an exception basis is likely to be added in to the system design causing the cost and implementation effort to increase dramatically. Typically, even if the system lives through to implementation, only a fraction of such functionality is regularly used.</p> <p>Conduct scope review at start of project.</p> <p>Conduct a cost/benefit analysis.</p> <p>Assign each function a value in an appropriate currency (time, \$, m bytes of memory, n microseconds per invocation, etc.).</p> <p>Scrub requirements and remove unessential.</p>
	8	Cost is too high	<p>Design and develop to cost.</p> <p>Use Steering Committee to negotiate scope reduction.</p> <p>Design/develop to cost.</p> <p>Incremental development (versions).</p> <p>Scrub requirements and remove unessential.</p> <p>Consider software reuse.</p> <p>Consider productivity tools.</p> <p>Minimize formal deliverables and substitute with working papers.</p>
	9	Pressure for an early completion date	<p>More rigorous up-front planning. Use the WBS for time-reduction analysis. Look for "work-ahead" items that can be started early.</p> <p>Design/develop to schedule.</p> <p>Develop incrementally (versions).</p> <p>Scrub requirements and remove unessential.</p> <p>Consider software reuse.</p> <p>Consider productivity tools.</p> <p>Minimize formal deliverables and substitute with working papers.</p> <p>Use a more experienced team.</p> <p>Build an excellent infrastructure and SDE well in advance.</p> <p>Add schedule management to the formal risk management plan to ensure visibility, and pro-actively address schedule variances.</p> <p>Minimize any changes during the project time frame which may impact the project (e.g., changes to project staff, customer policies and procedures).</p>
	10	Lack of user commitment	<p>Collocate team for maximum productivity.</p> <p>Obtain executive commitment to provide adequate end-user participation.</p> <p>Clearly define specific areas of user responsibility.</p> <p>Raise the visibility of customer dependencies at the Steering Committee.</p> <p>Appoint a user coordinator.</p> <p>Set up an Implementation Advisory Group to get a broad range of users involved in acceptance testing, training, user documentation, implementation roll-out, etc.</p> <p>Develop a plan for ensuring user understanding (e.g., user surveys).</p> <p>Ensure user awareness of all issues through regular status reports and sign-offs.</p> <p>Arrange for user involvement in analysis workshops and prototyping.</p> <p>Highlight user responsibility for an Acceptance Test, involving the thorough retesting of all system functions.</p> <p>Highlight user sign-offs which put emphasis on the user confirming that they understand or complaining when they don't.</p>

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	11	Lack of continuity of key players	Implement key personnel agreements and contractual provisions.
	12	Specifying requirements that are difficult or impossible to meet	Staff analysts who are experts in the business area and skilled at negotiating better ways of solving the business problem.
	13	User training and acceptance	Use "flying squads" of credible business, application and technology specialists to resolve areas of conflict. Set up an Implementation Advisory Group to get a broad range of users involved in acceptance testing, training, user documentation, implementation roll-out, etc. Develop a training program and accompanying training plan. Install a training infrastructure (e.g., help desk, toll-free telephone support).
	14	Achievement of customer's projected return on investment	Reduce exposure by breaking large projects into several smaller ones.
Technical Risk	1	Developing the wrong system. (Incorrect or inadequate functionality)	Mission analysis: Study how the organization performs its mission to enable informed judgment on information requirements. (IE, AS-IS and TO BE workflows and process descriptions, analysis of interfaces between processes.) High level of user participation Write user aids early
	2	Shortfalls in component performance, stability, reliability, etc	Benchmarking
	3	Unknown data sizing, dependencies, or complexity	Use risk management techniques, risk tracking and reporting procedures.
Delivery Risk	1	Personnel shortfalls	Staff with top talent. Use overqualified staff in critical situations. Share resources or provide shadow/assistants to minimize demand on key resources that are in demand for other work Provide comprehensive orientation for all staff to include account, proposal, internal and external customer objectives, application, technology, etc Provided additional technical training under the direction of the team lead, or other qualified personnel.
	2	Unrealistic project plan for schedule or budget	Have independent estimators validate task based estimates and apply sanity checks Use metrics from similar programs to validate proposed productivity rates Design / develop to cost Are there requirements which can be implemented in a later phase, or of lower priority?
	3	Project Management	Consider the nature of the customer in estimating project management time required Ensure that resolution of issues and problems are assigned to individuals and documented in Change Requests, Issue Identification documents, etc
	5	Customer Management	Implement Steering Committee of functional users, stakeholders. Raise visibility of customer dependencies at Steering Committee meetings. Identify acceptance delays or decision delays at Steering Committee meetings Implement activity assignment and progress tracking for customer responsibilities as well as project staff. Clearly identify functional approval authorities, and approval hierarchies where functional dependencies exist.
	5	Customer ability to meet its delivery commitments	Clearly identify the effects, conditions, and remedies needed in the event of poor performance. Raise known issues at Steering Committee meetings Plan for early delivery and include contingency plans if delivery is missed.
	6	Uncontrolled meeting times	Establish meeting protocol to include starting and ending on time, advance agenda notice, and published meeting summaries of matters resolved, decisions and action plans resulting from meetings.