

PM-Partners group
10-Point
Project Health Checklist



Now Is Not the Time to Deliver Unsuccessful Projects

"Now is not the time to deliver unsuccessful projects," says Pete Swan, Managing Director, PM-Partners group. "The projects you deliver have to be effective and deliver value. To leverage the emerging growth opportunities, the projects you run need a solid justification, effective execution and solid returns."

If the questions on the following page ring warning bells Swan advises putting a plan of action in place.

Problems with project execution are clearly evident. According to a global report by the highly respected Standish Group, "CHAOS Summary 2009", there has been a marked decrease in project success rates, with only 32% of all projects succeeding. That is, delivered on time and on budget. These figures also show a substantial increase in both cost and time overruns.

Explaining the results, Swan says, "The results of the CHAOS report are disturbing. During periods of recovery, corners are often cut, planning times reduced, available people used instead of the right people and there is a lack of adherence to good practice. In our experience this always leads to cost blowouts over the medium term. This is the third downturn we have been through and, as always, we are now seeing a significant influx of project rescue requests."

"Demand for project health checks is booming," says Swan. "Organisations spend a lot of money on projects, but many don't have visibility into what is really going on. For a minimal percentage of the project budget, a health check provides that assurance."

"You can't assume projects you are running at the moment are OK," he says. "For example, organisations undergoing changes such as restructures or employing more project staff and contractors should seriously consider a health check before moving the project to the next stage. Some of our clients also use a health check as assurance when a project is managed by staff that may not have all the required experience. It doesn't have to be an intrusive process because at the end of the day we all want the project to succeed, so it often leads to some simple guidance to help save everyone time, money and stress."



10-Point Project Health Checklist

1	Strategic Alignment: Is it clear where the project contributes to your strategy (do you need to review this) and is the priority well understood and communicated?
2	Business Case: Is the project justified via a solid business case? Is it still current, are business requirements still appropriate, are agreed critical success factors clear, is there significant user involvement?
3	Accountability: Has clear ownership for the project outcome been established? Is there an experienced project manager accountable for execution? Is an active senior sponsor ensuring that organisational challenges are dealt with? Is there a clear structure ensuring all parties understand their accountability?
4	Active Governance: Is active governance in place that not only establishes corporate controls but also harnesses management support, steers the project, removes obstacles and remediates project or benefit-realisation shortfalls? Are support structures in place for defining problems and solution options for clear and swift decision making?
5	Planning: Has a <u>useful</u> plan been agreed with the necessary stakeholders? Is it broken down into manageable pieces allowing the organisation to commit to one stage at a time? Is it realistic in relation to current organisational constraints (people/time/budget/feasibility)? Does it align with the business case and current requirements? Have key risks been identified that may impact the success of the project?
6	Control: Is the project being executed in manageable stages with periodic reviews and progress updates? Is there a simple and effective method for escalating problems? Are effective change, issues and risk management strategies in place to safeguard your investment? Have the key risks that may impact the success of the project been mitigated? Are you looking to reduce complexity at every opportunity?
7	Impact & Benefits: Are plans in place for how the organisation will accommodate transition changes that the project will introduce, and how benefits will be embedded and measured? Is any significant organisational resistance being managed with the executive team?
8	Resourcing: Are the right people working on the project or just the available people? Have adequate resources been allocated and does the organisation understand the importance of their prioritisation and commitments? Is internal and external resource performance monitored proactively?
9	Communication: Are key stakeholders kept informed? Do you trust the information being reported and is it effective? Does communication identify risks, clearly defined problems and resolutions agreed rather than share information? Does communication promote realistic expectations? Is adequate notice provided? Are communications events planned or do they occur in reaction to complaints?
10	Executive View: Is there a high level map of all major initiatives, how they benefit the organisation and impact each other? Are major initiatives reviewed when the strategy changes? Are the organisation's project and program skills evolving into a mature core capability?



Assurance & Health Check Services

PM-Partners group Assurance and Health Check services are designed to provide an impartial view on how a project or program is performing against stated objectives and in accordance with relevant processes and standards.

Our services include:

- ⇒ Online project health check
- ⇒ Consultant facilitated project and program health checks
- ⇒ Post Implementation Reviews
- ⇒ Project Governance Review
- ⇒ Project Assurance (formal/regular scheduled health checks and briefings with a sponsor)
- ⇒ Set up for success (a facilitated service to ensure the project is established correctly)

Benefits

- ⇒ A major factor in ensuring that more projects are successful
- ⇒ Review alignment between project/program objectives and organisational strategy
- ⇒ Identification of challenges so that action can be taken
- ⇒ Clarity from people that aren't too close to the project, organisation or vendor
- ⇒ Unbiased and confidential insight to help you make informed decisions
- ⇒ Service tailored to your needs
- ⇒ Compliance, Risk reduction , Cost avoidance
- ⇒ Staff development and learning

To arrange a presentation on PM-Partners group Health Check services please call us on 1300 701 314 or contact us via our website, www.pm-partners.com.au.