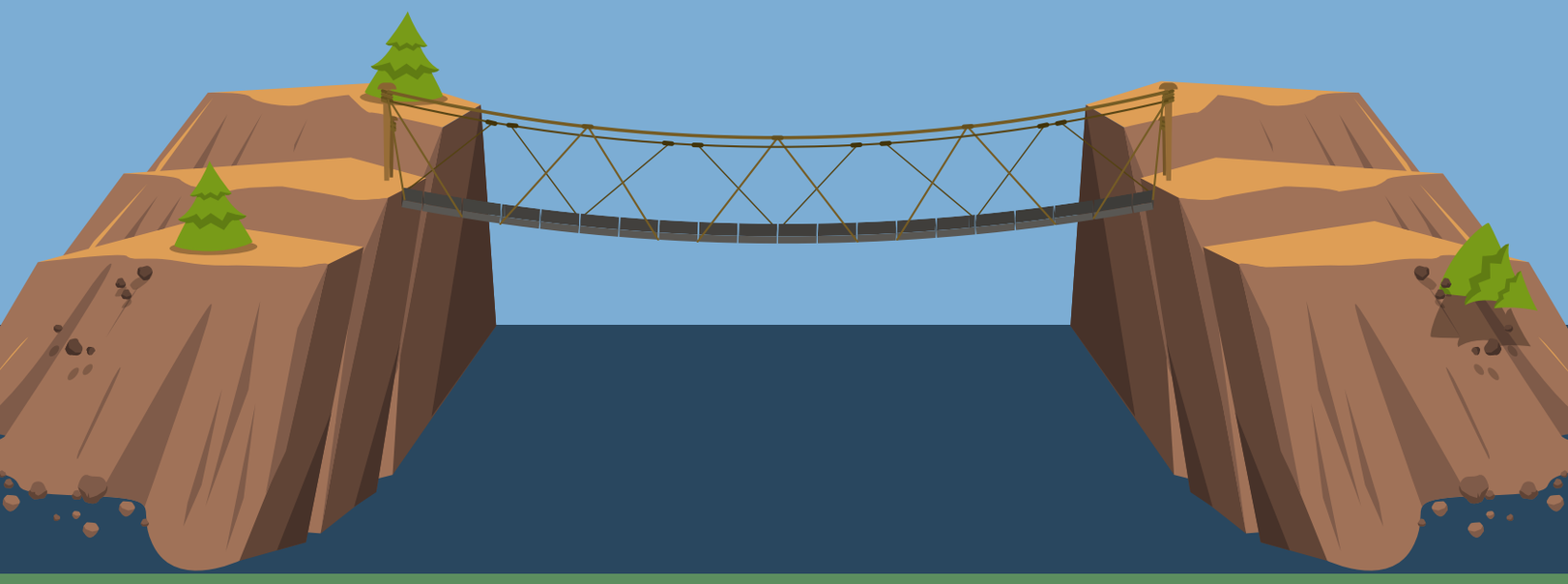
Govern and Manage an Enterprise Software Implementation

Don't outsource your brain: You can't outsource project accountability to the System Integrator.



This research is designed for:

Project Manager

Organizations embarking on a large-scale software implementation project

Head of Applications

Don't outsource your brain.

Plan for risks, and assume greater accountability over your project in order to overcome common software implementation pitfalls.

PROJECT STEPS

STEP 1

PROJECT RATIONALE

Project resolution results from CHAOS research for years 2004 to 2012.

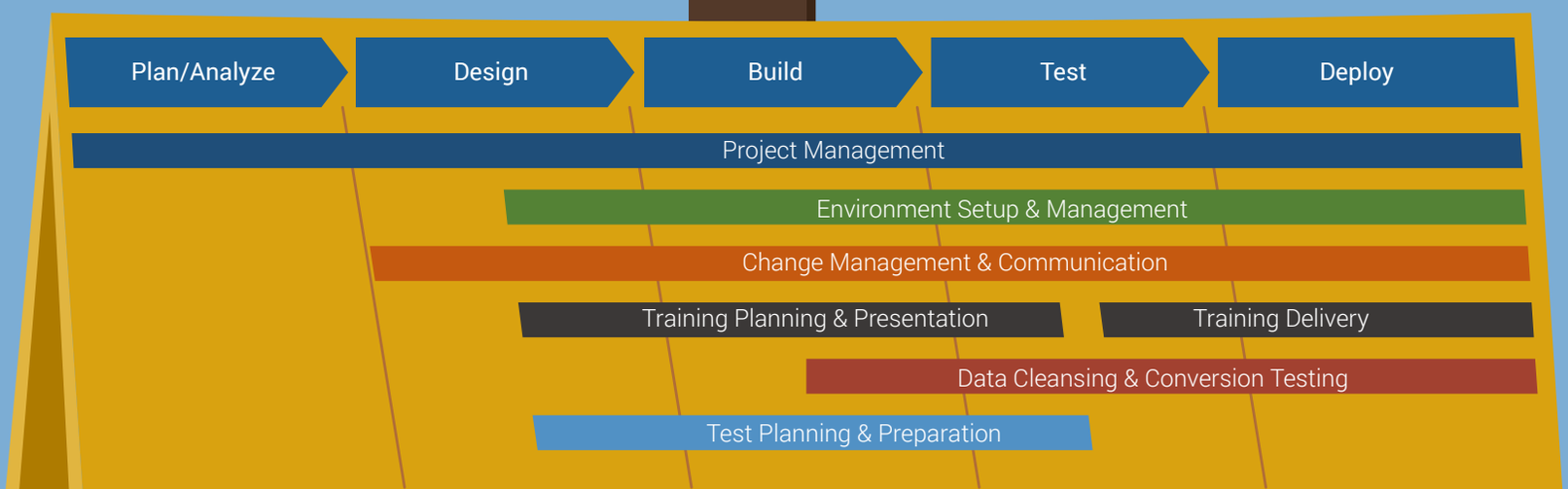
Resolution

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Successful	29%	35%	32%	37%	39%
Failed	18%	19%	24%	21%	18%
Challenged	53%	46%	44%	42%	43%

Overruns and Features

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Time	84%	72%	79%	71%	74%
Cost	56%	47%	54%	46%	59%
Features	64%	68%	67%	74%	69%

Time and cost overruns, plus percentage of features delivered from CHAOS research for years 2004 to 2012.



- Poject estimate and high level project plan
- Business case
- Project charter
- Statement of work
- Finalized requirements
- Gaps identified
- High level solutioning
- Project governance and project management procedures established

- Future state process designs
- Application design
- Technical architecture /infrastructure design
- Environment planning
- Conversion planning
- Test planning
- Change management & communications planning
- Organizational impact assessment

- Application build
- Technical architecture/ infrastructure build
- Deployment and support planning
- Data cleansing
- Conversion testing
- Test preparation
- Security design & build
- Refined organizational impacts

- Application tested
  - -Product
  - Integration
  - Assembly
  - Performance
  - User Acceptance
  - Security
- Data cleansing
- Conversion testing
- Dress rehearsal planning
- Cutover planning
- Training material build

- Training delivery
- Dress rehearsals
- Go-live readiness assessment
- Cutover/development
- Knowledge transfer with sustainment org.

When software projects fail, they can jeopardize an organization's financial standing and reputation, and in some severe cases, can bring the company down altogether.

Rarely do projects fail for a singular reason, but by understanding the pitfalls, developing a risk mitigation plan, closely monitoring risks, and self-evaluating against where you should be during critical milestones, you can increase the probability of delivering the project on time, on budget, and per the intended scope and benefits.

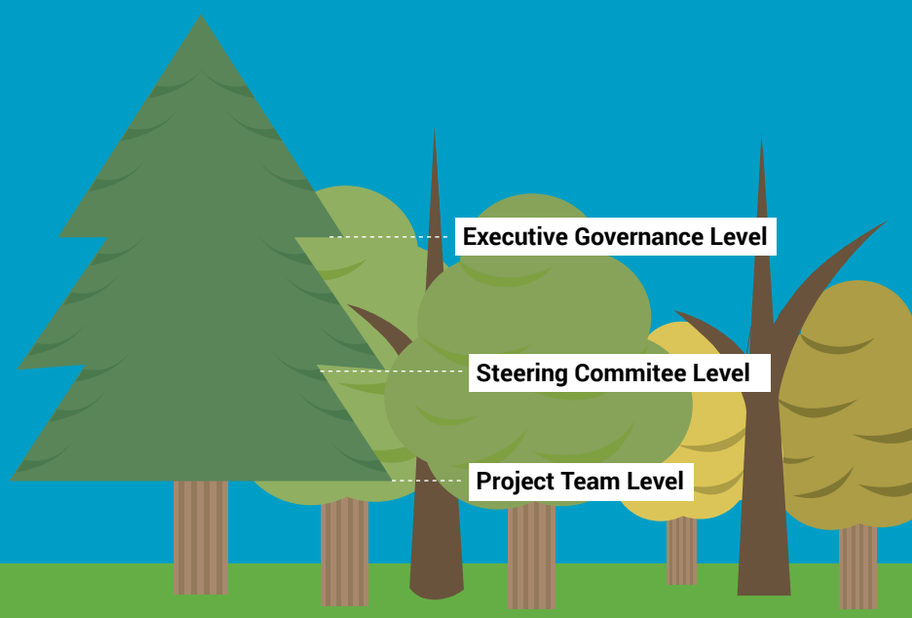
Benefits of Info-Tech's methodology:

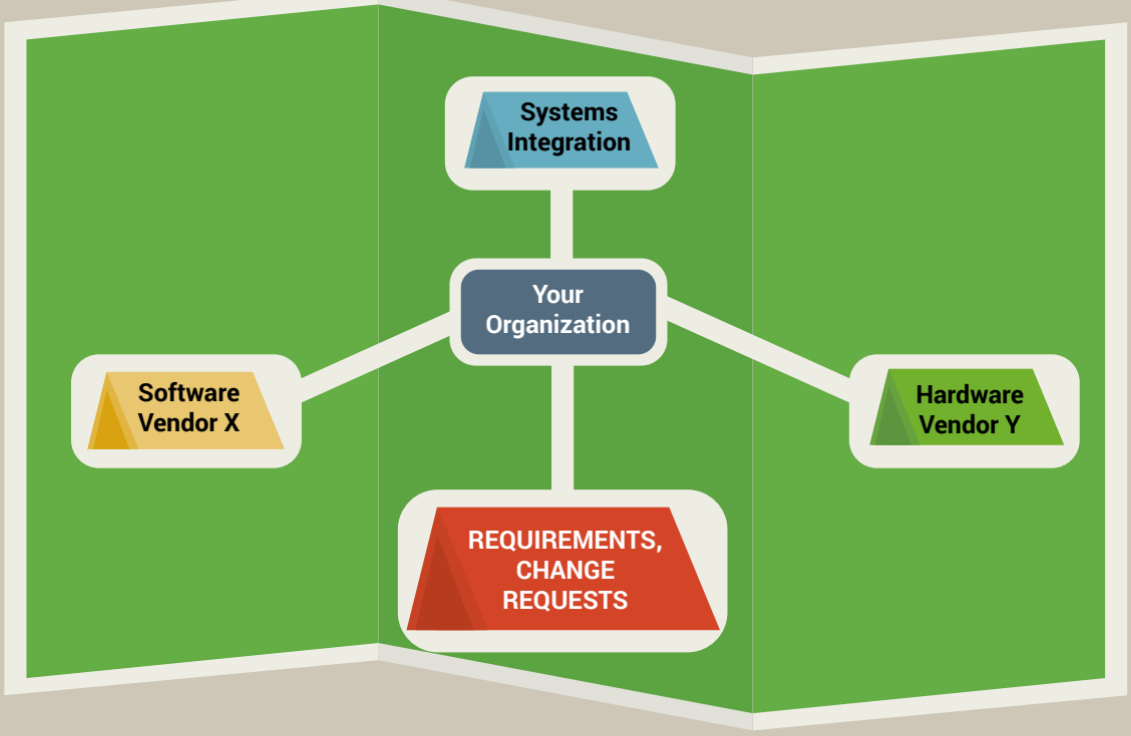
- Take a proactive approach to risk management – anticipate occurrence and magnitude of risks per phase and set up a comprehensive mitigation strategy.
- Develop a robust and holistic governance approach to software implementation.
- Set up baselines of phase and project success measures to keep key project team members accountable.
- Learn on the go – take lessons learned from each phase of the project in order to improve on execution or prevent recurrence of risks.

STEP 2

PROJECT PREPARATION

- Define your project governance levels
- Set up project guiding principles (no thought model)
- Enforce change request management governance and procedures
- Lay the ground rules for communications





INSIGHTS:

You won't get engagement unless there is a sense of accountability. Do not leave this vague. Specific individuals in your organization need to be assigned accountability to ensure system development will achieve what was intended by your organization and not what your SI (system integrator) intended.

Guiding principles will most definitely be challenged through a variety of decisions that are made along your journey toward deployment. Challenges may come from your SI, or they may come from your internal project staff. Regardless, it is imperative that any deviations from your principles should have a robust business case to justify doing so.

STEP 3
ENTER PLAN/ANALYZE

Steps and thought models:

- Prepare for Plan/Analyze kick-off
- Identify and evaluate risks, and develop risk mitigation plans
- Assess Plan/Analyze entry readiness

MAJOR PITFALLS

- Failure to properly plan
- Failure to engage the right people
- Premature commitment
- Failure to plan ahead for post-implementation support, sustainability, and continuous improvement
- Underestimating resources required from the business

INSIGHTS:

Do not underestimate the importance of user input. User input is the most critical factor in developing the right capabilities and meeting business objectives. Also, end users' ultimate acceptance and usage of the software strongly governs whether the project is a success.

The SI has their own agenda. They somewhat welcome continuous and unmanaged change in the project, especially if they are on a time and materials contract. Identifying potential risks, planning for mitigation, and monitoring risk levels are not your SI's responsibility. YOU must meticulously manage and keep your SI in the loop at all times.

STEP 4
EXIT PLAN/ANALYZE

- Review completed Plan/Analyze activities
- Record phase success measures and lessons learned
- Assess Plan/Analyze exit readiness

STEP 5
ENTER DESIGN

Steps and thought models:

- Prepare for Design kick-off
- Identify and evaluate risks, and develop risk mitigation plans
- Assess Design entry readiness

MAJOR PITFALLS

- Deviation from guiding principles
- Failure to involve all impacted parties in design
- Lack of integration meetings in design between the various functional teams
- Failing to design for long-term scalability
- Lack of design documentation/poor quality of design documentation

INSIGHTS:

You are working on the conceptual level in the Design phase where the blueprint for the application is built. Most critical changes and decisions should happen in this phase before the rubber hits the road (development). A mistake in design can be very difficult to address further down your implementation.

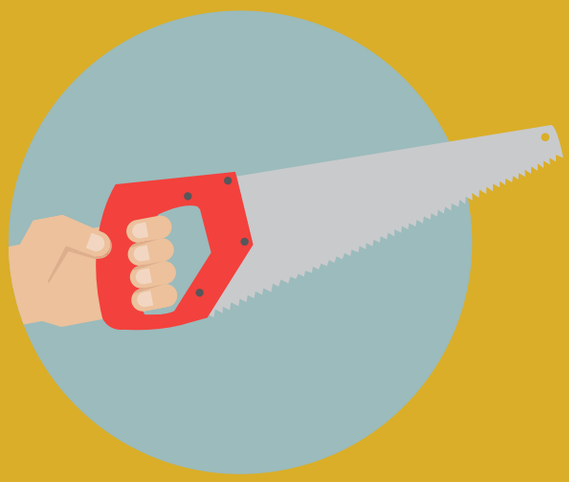
STEP 6
EXIT DESIGN

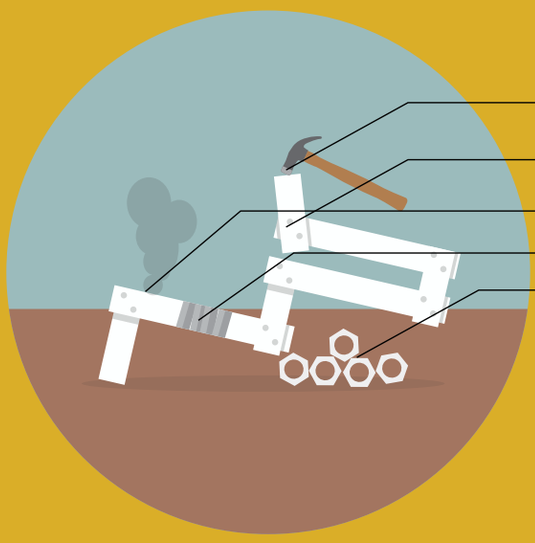
- Review completed Design activities
- Record phase success measures and lessons learned
- Assess Design exit readiness

STEP 7
ENTER BUILD

Steps and thought models:

- Prepare for Build kick-off
- Identify and evaluate risks, and develop risk mitigation plans
- Assess Build entry readiness





MAJOR PITFALLS:

- Failure to manage scope creep
- Failure to manage data quality and integrity
- Lack of engagement and communication during build
- Losing sight of objectives and strategic motives
- Lack of involvement in test preparation activities

INSIGHTS:

Change requests are inevitable and sometimes necessary. Be flexible enough to accommodate changes, yet make sure to heavily scrutinize the implications and criticality of the change request.

Remember to host regular risk and issue meetings with your internal project team and maintain a detailed risk log. Enough due diligence and analysis into the risks and their respective mitigation plans should be made for presentation to your Steering Committee and the SI at all times.

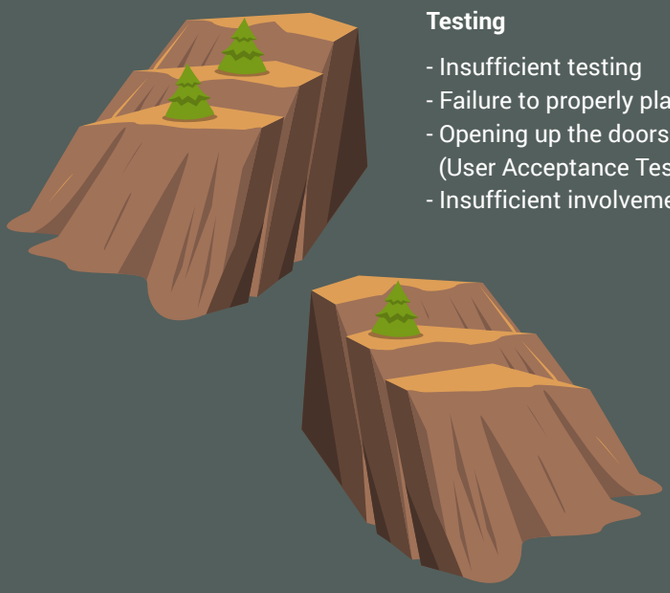
STEP 8
EXIT BUILD

- Review completed Build activities
- Record phase success measures and lessons learned
- Assess Build exit readiness

STEP 9
ENTER TEST/DEPLOY

Steps and thought models:

- Prepare for Test/Deploy kick-off
- Identify and evaluate risks, and develop risk mitigation plans
- Assess Test entry readiness



MAJOR PITFALLS:

Testing

- Insufficient testing
- Failure to properly plan for cutover
- Opening up the doors for change requests in UAT (User Acceptance Testing)
- Insufficient involvement from business users during testing

Deploy

- Deploying with unresolved defects or without a plan for workaround and disposition
- Underestimating or shortchanging the change management effort
- Failing to properly transfer knowledge and increase accountability on the sustainment/support of the organization
- Failing to effectively transition from implementation to operation

INSIGHTS:

Decide in advance what YOUR criteria for go or no-go (deployment) will be and revisit your contingency plans. Without proper contingency planning and/or a clear idea of what condition must be met by the application and your users, you face a risky, unstable go-live and significant rework.

STEP 10
EXIT TEST/DEPLOY

- Review completed Test activities
- Record phase success measures and lessons learned
- Assess Deploy readiness