



The Role of the Project Sponsor

There are many different sources for project management statistics: our Federal Government, the Project Management Institute (PMI®), and the host of Project Management Training Companies that have no problem displaying any statistic that "drives" the potential utilization of their services.

There is one statistic out there that is troublesome however, and that is the approximate percentage of projects that "fail". The statistic is displayed anywhere between 40% and up to 70% of projects that fail!

Those are horrible statistics! Consider that when efforts are categorized as "projects" they typically are supplemented with project management resources that cost the corporation money. Corporations apply a project management program and spend money and resources on a project management program simply to "mitigate" corporate risk. Mitigating "corporate risk" means reducing the probability or impact of adverse conditions (unhappy customers, product not meeting its original intent, over budget, behind schedule, etc.). So the companies are spending additional dollars for failure! Based on that, it doesn't appear to be money well spent.



SSI believes that corporations in general do not do an adequate job in developing success or failure criteria to begin with; and if sponsors don't identify the criteria or have the "yardstick", how can you accurately measure? Therefore those statistics can be construed as misleading or quite ambiguous. However, SSI strongly believes that most industries have an extremely difficult time in "applying" the knowledge, skills, tools and techniques of project management to the specific project condition. SSI also believes that too many projects fail, and an unacceptable percentage of that total can be attributed to poor or no "project sponsorship".

SSI completely endorses and supports PMI's® "Project Management Body of Knowledge", or PMBOK®. An extremely tough read, PMBOK® lays out a basic framework to successfully conduct project management. However, a critical success factor for a project rests with the engagement and performance of the project "sponsor", and PMBOK® is a silent standard for roles and responsibilities of the project sponsor.



10 Critical Success Factors or Topics of Discussion for the Project Sponsor could include the following:

1. What/Who is the Successful Project Sponsor?
2. The Organizational Construction that dictates the type of Project Sponsorship
3. Alignment of the Project to the Corporate Strategic Plan: Continuous Project Prioritization (CPP)
4. Project Goals, Deliverables and Objective Planning (Project Success and Failure)
5. The Sponsor Accountabilities for the Project Plan
6. The Sponsor Interfaces with the Project Manager
7. The Sponsor for the External Contract
8. Sponsor Risk Management: Opportunities and Threats
9. Critical Stakeholder Management: CSM
10. Sponsor Involvement in Change Management

These topics can be modified, supplemented and treated with specific emphasis depending upon the client's needs. The time allocations for these topics are assumed within a 3 hour opportunity and would be proportional to the final time allocation.

Duration: 1 or 2 days

PDU Credits: 14