

Independence and Objectivity

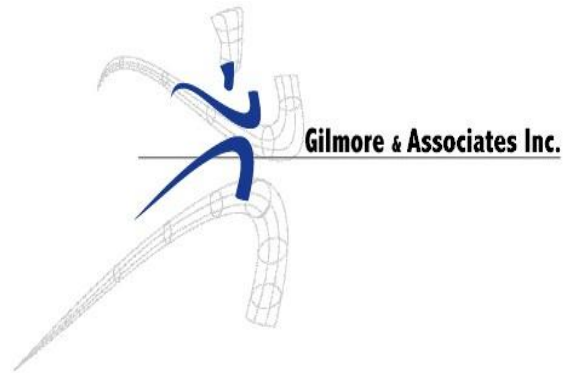
If you are currently concerned about:

- + *The project that cannot afford to fail*
- + *Mega-project risks*
- + *Suspect vendor performance*
- + *Rumours that refuse to go away*
- + *Key personnel burnout*
- + *Constant project conflicts*
- + *Never ending surprises.*

Get out from behind the 8-ball!



We can help!



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Gilmore & Associates Inc.

*Quality Assurance
Support Information*

*How to approach the
complex and acronym laden
world of Information
Technology projects? How
to separate the project
truths from the rumour?
How to assess the project
performance objectively?
How to assure predictable
outcomes?*



Quality Assurance

Who We Are

Independent Calgary-based senior consultancy whose principals bring over 200 years of experience in solving significant IT problems applying best practices in quality assurance, project management, outsourcing, ERP effectiveness, information architecture and IT management.

What QA Means

Quality Assurance support includes the following:

- Feasibility assessments, business cases
- Project plan reviews
- Project reviews
- Post Implementation reviews
- Project rescues
- Interventions.

Leaning heavily on years of proven project experiences and our library of intellectual capital, our seasoned QA practitioners deliver fast, effective results.

CASE STUDY #1 – “THE FOREVER PROJECT”

The company had long committed to the new order entry system for clients as well as the board of directors. Massive amounts of cash and labour had been committed. Now, in the second year of development, it appeared that the project director would need to be replaced. Staff appeared to be working hard but real, tangible progress was elusive. Criticisms of the work, the approach, the style, and the choices were rampant. Yet, finding the real truth was also elusive. Positive, upbeat reports continued streaming into an increasingly dispirited steering committee. What to do?

CASE STUDY #2 – “STAGNATION”

The government had set what seemed to be a reasonable deadline for compliance to new regulations. The IT project was kicked off internally with all manner of pomp, ceremony and a quirky naming contest. The project team was assigned and left to develop and approach, a plan, a budget. After the first six months, the project charter was still in draft form and funding had yet to be approved. How to electrify the apparent morbidity?

CASE STUDY #3 – “HIGH BUSINESS RISK”

Everyone had been banking on the new reservation system. The old system had been cobbled together from several sources and only managed to survive due the extraordinary efforts of the front line staff. Outages were commonplace, frequent and fearsome. New requested features were usually met with “that’s impossible” responses from the IT group and even those that were attempted consistently produced even worse complications when the deployments surfaced ugly inconsistencies and more outages. Betting the company on the new system suggested that the mistakes of the past could not be tolerated. How to ensure predictable results and tangible success?

KILLING PEOPLE AND MUTILATING CAREERS

Of course, there is an almost endless list of IT project failures. Some have appeared in ugly headlines in the popular press. More often, the sad experiences are buried along with the ruined careers of the innocent. A recent study of major IT projects conducted by the Gartner Group estimated that less than 1% of large projects could be considered “successful” (i.e., delivered on time, on budget with a quality outcome). Failed IT projects have produced systems that have actually killed people. For example, the Therac 25 radiation machine sold to hospitals actually delivered lethal doses of radiation to patients resulting in their deaths. The software used for ballast balancing managed to sink the good ship Zenobia. Computer systems can kill more than just a career. The HMS Sheffield was sunk in the Falklands war by a French-made Exocet missile that the British software identified as “friendly”.

THE ANSWERS

The answers to the questions posed by each of the above case studies can often be resolved by applying the Best Practices processes and structures that the IT sector has developed over the past fifty years. The best attack has been through applying Quality Assurance reviews. These mechanisms have long been used in other professional disciplines (e.g., engineering, medicine, etc.) and work!

The easiest way to increase the chance of success for an IT project is to apply a regular calendar-driven series of QA reviews of the work. These reviews, conducted by senior, highly experienced IT practitioners will be able to provide the following: Early warning on flaws --- Models for best practices to correct flaws, deficiencies -- - Positive assurances on the functions that are working well --- Practical steps to correct deficiencies while sustaining progress --- Insurance input against initial plans and estimates.

Most of all, these reviews provide a comparison of your project against the proven successes of the past. Independence and objectivity are essential and when conducted in a constructive manner is most effective.

OUR APPROACH

We understand and agree with the need for a regular “check-up” - for systems plans and project work. When large expenditures, major change and broad impact are involved, early diagnosis of corrective measures is invaluable. This is especially critical when measured against the backdrop of a sector that is plagued with consistent failure. These evaluations call for special skills, experience and approaches.

CLUES

Few folks intend to fail. Most project team members work hard. This suggests we look far beyond the obvious and that is exactly what we do.