Course Description

Cephas

Course Title

Project Failure and Recovery

Overview

How often have we seen projects fail? When this happens, organisations are often left with wasted expenditure, reduced profit, and tarnished reputation. Although it happens far too often, failure can be avoided and failing projects can be recovered. This course aims to give the student an insight into how and why projects fail, and to provide tools to enable effective project recovery. It is suitable for working project managers who need to recover a project, business personnel seeking to avoid project failure and also support staff (e.g. audit teams) seeking to analyse project performance. If you would like to be able to recover your under-performing projects and reduce the number of projects that fail in your organisation, then this course will be of assistance.

What You Will Learn from This Course:

- They typical causes of project failure
- How to identify a failing, or failed project
- How to decide whether to recover
- How to plan a recovery
- How to execute a recovery
- How to learn the lessons of a project failure

Why Should You Attend this Course?

This course aims to give the student an insight into how and why projects fail, and to provide some techniques to assist effective project recovery. It is suitable both for working project managers who need to recover a project and also audit personnel seeking to analyse project performance.

Statistics repeatedly show that a large proportion of projects fail to meet their stated goals. Whether this be in failing to achieve scope, cost, quality or schedule expectations, many projects suffer. On some occasions, slippage or missing a goal is acceptable. However, there are some projects where failure is so marked that a recovery needs to be considered. How do we make the decision whether to recover, and having made the decision, how do we ensure that the recovery will succeed?

Knowing what makes a project fail can be a useful guide in identifying that a project is failing and pinpointing the root cause. In this course, you will learn a range of typically factors in struggling projects. This in turn helps us to plan how we are going to recover the project and also guide our steps during the execution of this plan.

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Of course, we have to know our project has failed, is failing, or likely will fail, before we can take corrective action. We will see how to do this, and some of the signs to watch out for.

Of course, not all projects are worth recovering, and we will examine a framework for deciding whether to recover, basing the decision on firm foundations. Once we have decided to recover, we need to plan to execute the recovery. As for any project plan, getting this stage right means the best chance of success. Having failed once, there is no room for failure in the recovery, so we will learn some practices to make execution of a successful recovery much more likely.

Finally, whilst recovering a project is commendable, much more value can be gained by not repeating our mistakes. Learning the lessons is key and we will learn how to do that. Coupled with knowing the reasons why project fail, this can be used as a powerful tool for improving an organisation's project effectiveness.

Not only will project teams benefit from this course, but other related disciplines, such as assurance personnel will gain a deeper understanding of all that is involved in projects and project recovery, thus helping them to perform better in their own role.

The course is full of practical techniques and examples, with the intention of turning knowledge into practical benefit and the worked examples, case studies and exercises are intended to make applying the knowledge gained much easier.

Finally, the instructor will include opportunities to discuss the real-world problems and issues and questions that are affecting delegates in their own projects and working lives, so that improvements and solutions can be implemented as soon as delegates return to their desks. Often, helpful advice can be gained from the experience of other delegates, and the course setting provides opportunities to do this.

Who Should Attend This Course?

- Project Managers
- Project Controls Team Members
- Project Management Office Staff
- Project Team Members
- Senior Management
- Project Sponsors
- Project Consultants
- Assurance, quality and governance team members

Outcome of this Course

By the end of this intensive 5-day course, attendees will be able to:

- Know the typical causes of, and routes to, project failure
- Decide when to cancel, rather than recover, a project
- Plan a recovery
- Know how to implement the recovery
- Know how to pass on the learning from failure and the recovery

Course Length

5 days

Course Content

An interactive mix of lecture, case studies, group discussion and activities will be used to illustrate and apply the methods, tools and techniques needed to manage failing projects. The following topics will be covered:

Reasons for and Routes to Project Failure

- Consideration of the effect of the following factors:
- Scope
- Cost
- Change
- Schedule
- Resources
- Communications
- Leadership
- Interfaces
- Governance
- Risk

Project Recovery General

- Introduction to Recovery
- Identifying projects in trouble

The Decision to Recover

- Cost and benefit - estimation
- Parent organisation policies and environment
- Risks and opportunities - assessment

Recovery Planning

- Data gathering
- Creating the team
- Estimating for recovery
- Communication considerations
- Stakeholder involvement

Recovery Implementation

- Project controls
- Risks, issues and opportunities
- Change management
- Reporting and communications
- Stakeholder management
- Management styles
- Team dynamics and needs

Organisational Learning

- A learning mindset
- Learning from other projects
- Capturing and documenting lessons
- Sharing the learning

Case Studies

- Presentation of real-life examples and case studies of recovery of a variety of projects

Practical Exercises

- Worked examples, where delegates participate in groups or teams to manage recovery in fictitious but realistic project settings.

Summary And Next Steps

- Summary
- Things you can do next
- Reference Material