Chapter IX
Critical Success Factors for ICT Development

More often than not, development programmes are not properly aligned to the needs of individuals or the business. Organizations are still undertaking far too much in the way of training for its own sake or ad hoc programmes that are not tailored to the long-term goals of the organization or the aspirations of the employees concerned (Chartered Management Institute Survey 2007).

Business continuity needs to be done in advance for the longer term to enable proper planning, implementation and testing of systems (Managing Director, disaster recovery firm, 2007).

INTRODUCTION

If organizations were good at ICT planning there would not be as many information systems failures. There is a definite need for improved **communication** and collaboration between individual employees, i.e. for electronic mail, task and meeting scheduling, group decision support or video-conferencing. The functional departments & business units can collaborate to change the business focus of the

organization, i.e. for just-in-time manufacturing, identifying cross-selling options or standardising the customer interface.

The first stage of ICT planning is referred to as strategic information technology planning (SITP). SITP can refer to a process of searching for strategic information systems (SIS) applications that enable an organization to gain a competitive advantage (Turban et al. 2004). The typical reason a firm might develop a strategic information system is to help the organization enter a new market, gain or maintain market share, or improve the service to customers (Jessup & Valacich, 2006).

PROBLEMS IN ICT PLANNING

There are problems surrounding the classical strategic **ICT planning** methods:

- Weak partners in the business chain, i.e. for tele-marketing and tele-shopping of customers, shared business intelligent systems or integral supply chain management.
- The rigidity & often long throughput time of these kind of planning exercises.
- The basic premise of traditional strategic **planning methodologies** is a corporation-wide, top-down prioritisation of all it applications that are deemed necessary.
- Business reality is often much more dynamic than the planning structure embedded in these methods.
- The relatively reactive nature of these methods, with consequently little attention to innovative, groundbreaking ICT exploitation.
- The exclusive attention to ICT in administrative, supporting processes.
- Traditional planning methodologies pay little attention to ICT in primary processes and in the products and services of modern organizations.
- The focus of data and **application architectures** within autonomous organizations with central data storage and information processing.
- ICT-based infrastructure planning should cover a broader range of issues and take into account the existence of relatively autonomous parts of an organization.
- The lack of sufficient techniques for evaluating **investment proposals** in order to justify the allocation of limited funds.

When you are considering the introduction of a new information system for your organization it is imperative that you have a robust plan in place. It will be impossible to please all the various stakeholders with a new system. The **role of**