Chapter 7
ERP Implementation:
A Project Manager's Tips for Success

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Considering the high rate of failures in ERP implementation projects, there is an urgent need to identify the causes of such failures and the preventing actions associated with these causes. ERP practitioners and academics are unanimous that competencies and abilities of the ERP project manager have a direct impact on the project and its well-being. In fact, it is widely accepted that specific project manager's attributes such as oversight, leadership, communication, problem solving, and conflict-resolution are critical to the success of ERP projects. This case highlights some of the important issues and challenges that the author has encountered as a project manager of ERP system implementation in an Oil and Gas company in Kuwait. The focus of the case is on lessons learned and tips that can be handy and useful for people who may resume this important role in implementation projects.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The case is related to an Oil and Gas organization located in Kuwait, which will be referred to in this chapter as OGK. The activities of OGK include exploration, drilling, and production of oil and gas.

OGK manages the production and export of oil and gas from more than twelve developed oil fields in the state of Kuwait. The Company handles and maintains a comprehensive and fully integrated complex of production and export facilities that basically consist of: Oil Wellheads, Oil Flow-Lines, Gathering Centers, Gas Booster Stations, Pipeline Transit Systems, Water Treatment, and Injection Plants.

OGK is one on the leading world oil exporters.

SETTING THE STAGE

The case under examination is related to an OGK business-critical system implementation project that involved the replacement of the legacy systems previously used by the company with a fully integrated e-Business and Enterprise Asset Management System based on IBM Tivoli Maximo 7.1 software, a world leading Asset Management system.

The key project objective was to provide a total asset management initiative, geared towards moving the company from a fragmented situation, where numerous standalone systems were used in silos, to an integrated database solution. IBM Tivoli MAXIMO represents the center point of this configuration to integrate all facets of the business on a single unified platform and enabling effective Enterprise Asset Management, based on single version of asset data with its technical and financial history.

In addition to the basic software components, the scope of the project has also considered implementation of other software industry specific solution such as Transportation, Utility, Oil and Gas, MS Project and Primavera adapters and different mobile and asset specific solutions add-ons. In total, there were nineteen (19) different software components to be implemented.

The implementation project scope also included interfaces and integrations to fourteen (14) different business solutions as well as the design and development of eight (8) specific eBusiness solutions fully integrated with the core product.

The duration of the implementation project was originally planned for twenty four (24) months.

CASE DESCRIPTION

This project was considered one of the biggest (4,500+ users), and it was also regarded as one of the most complex implementation of IBM Tivoli MAXIMO EAM software ever, reflecting the requirements bundled in the scope of work. It was clear that projects of such magnitude required detailed and careful preparation by both

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