# Chapter 59
# Project Management Practices and Project Manager Traits as a Key to Successful Information Systems Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

*Information Technology project management lingers between science and art. Many will not dwell on such a thought, and define the information technology project manager as the one person that gets the information technology project done. This paper introduces 74 best practices and traits for the novice information systems project manager. The 74 personal traits and best practices were collected from 35 project managers and are based on personal experiences on a number of IT projects. This article provides an interactive platform for the information system technology project manager by catering to their needs for practical insights toward efficient and individually tailored project management.*

## INTRODUCTION

Information Technology (IT) Project are not like any project, albeit a project is a finite endeavor with specific start and completion dates, during which set of goals are to be achieved to create a unique product or service thereby bringing beneficial change or added value, while honoring the project constraints composed mainly of *but not limited to* scope, time and budget. This finite characteristic of projects stands in sharp contrast to IT projects, where rarely the end product is tangible, although it may bring added value. Nevertheless, more important distinguishable characteristics lie

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in the focus whereby knowledge management is the foundation, coupled with considerations of the manager of the IT project vis-à-vis relevant experience, interpersonal skills, and competence. Within this context, as (Lewis, 2007) indicated that "project management is not for everyone", however, (Lewis, 2007) went on to cite that "people skills" would be the most important trait when embarking on the task of managing a project.

Accordingly, IT project management deals with a much greater amount of uncertainty, so it tends toward lightweight, adaptive models, based on integrated utilization of cross thematic approaches. Unlike traditional project management, where a heavyweight, predictive methodology could be employed, not only for implementing a successful development model, but also for seeing that each phase of development is successful.

Regardless of the approach employed, careful consideration needs to be given to clarify surrounding project objectives, goals, and importantly, the roles and responsibilities of all participants and stakeholders.

Additionally, today business leaders are under leading pressure to perform and make business commitment. Big part of achieving (or not achieving) commitments rests with an organization's ability to maximize the full potential of its technology project investment. As such, having attained the necessary funding to finance the project; there is a liability on part of the project manager, who should assert credibility to fully deliver on the outcomes of the project efficiently and in a timely manner.

Otherwise, across the globe, project managers could indeed be a leading contributory factor in depriving their endorsers' valuable returns on their project investments. In this context, most are showing good intentions; however, many are experiencing shortcomings particularly around their ability to manage projects through the lifecycle. As a result, organizations are leaving expected benefits on the table.

In light of the aforementioned, this research paper would attempt to shed light on the constructive best practices in terms of knowledge management with respect to IT project management, manifesting in a structured approach ensued in optimal project management within a clearly defined framework. In a manner that would not follow a single prescriptive process, but rather an adaptable process framework, intended to be tailored by the project manager and the project team to select elements of the process that are appropriate catered for their needs. To quote an old saying "coming up with the project idea is the easy part, whereas executing it is the challenge", thereby execution is as much about commitment as it is about capability.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, the cycle of production is getting shorter, particularly since the market has been getting increasingly competitive, which leaves no space for IT project manager to fall behind nor can they afford to follow the method of "trial and error". As (Lewis, 2007) cited that "project management is not for everyone", managing a project cannot be taught, rather acquired through knowledge management. Project manager's duties are multi dimensional; including administrative, technical skills, and personal traits, still, knowledge and expertise can be funneled to novice information systems project manager through some words of wisdom from successful project managers.

Indeed project management is the discipline of planning, organizing and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. As a discipline, Project Management developed from different fields of application including construction, engineering and defense. Within this context, the authors conducted a thorough literature review of the topic at hand, which proved to be both onerous and time-consuming. Nevertheless, the authors observed that literature about this topic continuously indicate improvements in the governance framework organizations have