

Checklist: Warning Signs & Actions to Resolve

Problem	Action
Cost overruns on the implementation side	Be prepared to counter training budget cuts with statistics on ROI and failed projects. See Garner Group and SAP sources cited in this presentation.
Weak or MIA project management office	Either step up to coordinate with the project team, or identify a corporate sponsor who can advocate for your team.
Changes to project schedule Changes to objectives Other changes to underlying factors that affect your ability to deliver	Assuming you have done your planning beforehand, you can demonstrate the effect of these changes on your schedule, deliverables, resources, and budget. Summarize the impact in a project change memorandum (or other formal project document) and get signoff from key sponsors.
Personnel changes	Have a checklist for and supervise detailed project turnover, inform stakeholders, and adjust schedule if necessary.
Lack of executive support	This is a serious problem that you must escalate to the highest level to which you have access. Build strong cross-functional relationships, and cite research on failed projects (Gartner Group) and do your best to identify the highest level executive sponsor you can enlist. Develop an ongoing communication plan with relevant updates to keep the project at "top of mind" for the enterprise.
Lack of IT support	IT requirements should be addressed in your initial plan and agreements. If problem persists, meet with key stakeholders and negotiate agreements with least impact on IT and greatest benefit to your team. Lack of adequate support affects project schedule, deliverables, resources, and budget. Summarize the impact in a project change memorandum (or other formal project document) and get signoff from key sponsors.



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Lack of adequate requirements	You can't develop a realistic plan without detailed requirements. Address this by meeting with key stakeholders. Provide sample requirements from other projects. (ASUG is a great resource for this if you don't have samples already.) Work with stakeholders to develop realistic requirements based on their current business processes. Requirements are the cornerstone of your planning and success. If you cannot make progress, escalate this problem until it is resolved.
Absence of standards & metrics	As above, starting with defined criteria for success is essential to a well managed project. Meet with key stakeholders, show samples, recommend standards, and agree on metrics for success.
Poor communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No review comments or signoffs on deliverables • Key people missing meetings • Not being included in communication loop • Hearing information from second-hand sources (rumor mill) • Conflicting directives (lack of focus) 	Provide written, weekly status of potential and existing problems and suggested actions. Don't let unresolved action items or areas of concern persist week after week. Meet with the stakeholders responsible for these areas. If you are in the same geographic location, arrange a lunch meeting, bring donuts, or use other incentives to get stakeholders to meet and discuss issues. If necessary, meet one-on-one with stakeholders to determine reasons behind lack of communication. Address the root cause.
Refusal to acknowledge or address concerns	As above, document the problem and investigate root cause. Escalate if necessary.
Inability to adhere to review cycles	Potential for this should be addressed in your initial agreements, if problem persists, meet with key stakeholders and explain impact on project. Come to agreement on how to manage this.
Conflicting demands of multiple projects	Map demands, determine what you can delegate, and inform stakeholders when conflicts have direct impact on delivery.



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Unanticipated demands on time	In your initial planning, anticipate at least one-day per week for unanticipated demands on your time and team-members' time. Schedule your deliverables to allow for this. Should demands exceed this estimate, document and submit impact to stakeholders.
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For all issues, remember:

- Confront problems early – show your added value.
- Listen to all sides – develop a strategy for success. Remember, it's better to be successful than to be right!
- Develop a strong network of listeners and stakeholders.
- Manage up as well as down.
- Offer alternatives – be seen as a team player and problem solver.
- Be willing to negotiate, but remember you are the expert in training and stand your ground.
- Know your limits.



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