

Conference on ENTERprise Information Systems / International Conference on Project  
MANagement / Conference on Health and Social Care Information Systems and Technologies,  
CENTERIS / ProjMAN / HCist 2016, October 5-7, 2016

## Improving project success: A case study using benefits and project management

Jorge Gomes<sup>a\*</sup>, Mário Romão<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>ISEG- Lisbon School of Economics and Management, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal

---

### Abstract

Organizations have made significant investments in technology, hoping to gain competitive advantages in today's dynamic markets. Traditional organisational structures are rigid and highly bureaucratic. Previous evidence has shown that they cannot quickly or accurately respond to the constant changes of the business environment. Organisations should carry out significant changes and implement new practices more adjusted to reality, including the use of project and benefits management approaches, seeking a better use and control of existing resources and capabilities. As project management became crucial for the development of organizational strategies, by reinforcing professional skills and capabilities, it is of interest to carry out studies aiming to identify which factors contribute to projects success. The framework proposed in this paper assists organizations to identify and monitor the benefits of technological projects, allowing the answer to our main research question: "*How can benefits and project management approaches help organizations to obtain more successful projects?*" The results of the presented case study highlighted that the application of a benefits management process on the pre-identified critical success factors promoted better project management practices and ensured an effective impact on a project success.

© 2016 The Authors. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of CENTERIS 2016

**Keywords:** Project Success; Project Management; Benefits Management; IS/IT Management; Critical Success Factors.

---

---

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [jorge.gomes@phd.iseg.ulisboa.pt](mailto:jorge.gomes@phd.iseg.ulisboa.pt)

## 1. Introduction

Projects are a powerful tool for creating economic value, foster competitive advantage and generate business benefits for the organizations<sup>1,2</sup>. The recognition of the strategic importance of managing projects in the corporate world is rapidly increasing. One important reason for this may arise from the strong belief that the alignment between project management and business strategy can significantly enhance the chances, for organizations, to achieve their strategic objectives as well as improving performance<sup>3</sup>. Project management is fundamental for attaining the final results of a project, manage its contributors and outcomes, as well as drive and assess the alternatives in order to fulfill the different stakeholders' needs<sup>4</sup>. Söderlund<sup>5</sup> points out that project management is an approach that aims to help organizations to solve complex problems. Kerzner<sup>6</sup> draws our attention on the importance of project management in developing a correct planning, organizing and controlling the organizational resources in order to accomplish short-term goals, to complete specific targets or even wider objectives. The benefits from successful project realizations can be delivered directly from the creation of new products and services, or by reducing certain operating expenses, or even through changes to the common working practices, from the redesign of processes and from the update of personal and professional skills<sup>7</sup>.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Project Success

Is the project a success or a failure? Is there any way to determine or measure the success or failure of a project? Success is perceived in different ways by all stakeholders involved. Atkinson<sup>8</sup> notes that, whilst there may exist differences in the project success definition, authors agree on the inclusion of the triple constraint, in an attempt to define the achievement or attainment of project objectives. The project success definition has been studied and developed from the simple attainment of cost, time and quality criteria, also known as the “*iron triangle*”, or “*triple constraint*”. But these criteria are part of a multi-dimensional variable, which includes factors involving not only the project results, but also the customer's satisfaction and, ultimately, the organization<sup>6</sup>. The definition of success is so broad that it's meaning varies across the different communities or cultures. Shenhar et al.<sup>9</sup> claimed that no conclusive evidence or common agreement has been reached so far to determine whether a project is a success or failure. Meredith and Mantel<sup>10</sup> argue that what appears to be realized as failure in a certain project; can be perceived as a success in another. Project success became a relevant project management topic, and is one of the most frequently debated issues. Nevertheless, there is a lack of consensus regarding the criteria by which success is evaluated<sup>11,12,13</sup>.

### 2.2. Project success and stakeholders perception

As project success depends more on the perceptions of the stakeholders, probably there is no “*absolute success*” in project management, but simply a “*perceived success*”<sup>14</sup>. Projects that failed to meet the original goals of the “*iron triangle*” criteria were not necessarily perceived as failed projects<sup>14</sup>. In the literature we found many examples of projects that successfully fulfil the “*iron triangle*” criteria, but turned to be an unsuccessful business experience<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, there are projects that haven't meet the time, cost and quality constraints, but later became successful<sup>16</sup>. Pinto & Slevin<sup>16</sup>, after analyzing a sample of more than 650 project managers' opinions, concluded that achieving project success is undoubtedly more difficult and far more complex than simply meet the “*iron triangle*” criteria. Extending the project performance perspective, several authors state that even a project incorrectly managed can achieve success and, conversely, cannot achieve the expected results, despite being well managed<sup>17,18</sup>. Project management objectives differ from project objectives, the “*iron triangle*” is directly tied to a project management and for this reason is easy to measure, and therefore there is a tendency to evaluate project success by project management success<sup>18</sup>. Project success is evaluated against the overall objectives of the project, whilst project management success is mostly evaluated against the “*iron triangle*”<sup>19</sup>. As project management evolved, however, there was an increased focus on the behavioral aspects of project management and on the management skills of

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/4961756>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/4961756>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)