

## **Project Management Paper** **100 Points.**

### **Background**

Unlike other fields in management, there are just a few "classic" texts in the area of Project Management. One is the "Mythical Man Month," by Fred Brooks, which looks at the issues of man-power, communications, and schedule impact in very large software projects. Despite the fact that it was published in 1975, it still sells about 10,000 copies a year and I would highly recommend it to those of you who end up working with projects in large organizations.

Another classic text is a paper entitled "How to Fail in Project Management (Without Really Trying)" by Jeffrey Pinto and Om Kharbanda. This paper looks at the common issues surrounding project failures. This was the first paper that really looked at the reasons why projects fail on a broad-scale. Since the publication of this paper, the post-mortem review of failed projects has become a common practice. In fact, the International Project Leadership Academy has made a blog and catalog devoted to failed projects:

- Blog: <http://calleam.com/WTPF/>
- Catalogue of Catastrophe: [http://calleam.com/WTPF/?page\\_id=3](http://calleam.com/WTPF/?page_id=3)

### **Assignment**

Your assignment is to first read How to Fail in Project Management (Without Really Trying); This is contained in your course packet. Then focus on a failed project to study (you can pick from the Catalogue of Catastrophe or use other sources). Try to pick a project that is in the industry in which you want to work or to which you can relate. Based on this project will write a short paper that:

- Introduces us to the particular project and the reasons why it failed.
- Examine any contributing factors to the failure.
- Discuss what could have been done to prevent this failure and what could be done with future projects to avoid such a failure again (this will require some research and thinking on your part).
- Examine similar projects that failed or were successful.
- Conclude with actionable items for project managers faced with managing such a project in the future.

### **Format**

This should be uploaded in msword or .pdf format to canvas. Your goal is to be concise, which will take effort. I would estimate that such a paper would take 4-6 pages. You should provide references (I don't care on the style, but you must be consistent and provide valid references). Consider this to be more like a report to your supervisor than an academic paper (for example, use of bullet points, bolding to emphasis key points, etc. is fine.).

## Grading Rubric

|   | Weight     | Percent | Grade    |
|---|------------|---------|----------|
| <b>CONTENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major points are fully supported</li> <li>Writing is free of contradictions</li> <li>Reader understands the project, lessons learned and context of this type of work</li> <li>Key concepts accurately and completely explained</li> <li>Good, clear examples used to illuminate concepts and issues</li> </ul> | 70         |         | 0        |
| <b>BUSINESS STYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business-writing formatting</li> <li>Related information grouped together</li> <li>Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence and focuses on one topic</li> <li>Concise, clear, convincing, and professional</li> <li>Flows from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph</li> </ul>             | 10         |         | 0        |
| <b>BUSINESS FORMAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passive voice is less than 10% of the paper (Use readability function in proofing)</li> <li>Formatting (bullets, style changes) properly utilized so that writing is easy to read</li> <li>Bullets are used appropriately</li> <li>Headings are meaningful and used correctly</li> </ul>                | 10         |         | 0        |
| <b>GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used Spell Check - If not, automatic 10 point deduction.</li> <li>Grammar, mechanical, punctuation, and typographical errors missing</li> <li>Words are used correctly</li> </ul>   | 10         |         | 0        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>100</b> |         | <b>0</b> |
| <b>COMMENTS</b>   |            |         |          |

- 91-100 percent.: Exceeds Expectations: Nearly Perfect. I can't find any information that was missed.
- 81-90 points: Meets Expectations: Needs Some Improvement, some information gaps or questions unanswered.
- 0-80 points: Below Expectations: Needs Significant Improvement (multiple errors), lots of unanswered questions