



PROJECT MANAGEMENT
CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

A.J. CLARK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Civil & Environmental Engineering Department



ADDRESSING ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

Marc Tkach PE PMP

2020 Project Management Symposium



MILLENNIUM
CHALLENGE CORPORATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Policy Sectors:

- Agriculture
- Education
- Health
- Land and Property Rights

Learn More at: www.mcc.gov
(but not right now!)

Infrastructure Sectors:

- Energy
- Transportation
- Buildings
- Water and Sanitation
- Irrigation





Observation: Hidden Risks Are Hidden For Good Reasons

- Fear of Appearing Incompetent
- Loudest Person in the Room is Right
- Withholding Information As Power
- Management/Decision-makers Will Blame You



Observation: Risks and Issues are Perceived as Confusing and Complex

Information Asymmetry: What is your perspective?



The Risk Workshop a.k.a. Safe Place for Open Dialogue

- Use anonymity to bring out the elephants
- Set a solutions-oriented tone
- Leave with actionable plans; reportable; accountable

The Risk Workshop – Outline



Opener

- What Do You Do?
- Introduction to Schedule
- Construct Rules of Behavior



Risk

- Ideas Generation
- Anonymous Input
- Clear Formatting
- Remove duplicates



Risk Scoring

- Numerical
- Clear
- Concise



Risk Response

- Revise the Risk/Issue
- Discuss short term/ long term steps
- Assign responsibilities
- Assign check-in date

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- Ice breakers that demonstrate information sharing and communication.
- Keep schedule focused on impact and relevance to the work.
- Collaborate with participants to list the best behaviors for the workshop.

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Risk Name:

Description:

Output Impact:

Outcome Impact:





Risk Name:

Description:

Output Impact:

Outcome Impact:



Technical Risks

Organizational Risks

External Risks

Project Management Risks



Technical Risks



Organizational Risks



External Risks



Project Management Risks





Risk Name: City Tank 2 Pipeline

Description: The pipeline from the water treatment plant to city tank 2 may not be servicable or sufficient. It has had two major breaks in the last 18 months and there are indications of leaking.

Output Impact: The expansion will not be effective. If the expanded plant is in use then capacity of the exisiting plant needs to be reduced to not over stress the pipe.

Outcome Impact: There will be no increase in clean water to the utility's customers. The return on investment will not be realized.

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ISO 31000 – Qualitative Ranking Chart

Risk Matrix

Probability

5	Very High (Highly Probable)	5 Moderate	10 Major	15 Major	20 Severe	25 Severe
4	High (Probable)	4 Moderate	8 Moderate	12 Major	16 Major	20 Severe
3	Medium (Possible)	3 Minor	6 Moderate	9 Moderate	12 Major	15 Major
2	Low (Unlikely)	2 Minor	4 Moderate	6 Moderate	8 Moderate	10 Major
1	Very Low (Rare)	1 Minor	2 Minor	3 Minor	4 Moderate	5 Moderate
		Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
		1	2	3	4	5

Impact

ISO 31000 – Qualitative Ranking Chart

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				Impact			



Technical Risks



Organizational Risks



External Risks



Project Management Risks



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Impact:

Probability:

Score:

Back of Card



Impact: 5

Probability: 5

Score: 25 (Severe)

Back of Card

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Example Risk Register

Risk	Description of Risk	Description of Impact	Probability Rating	Impact Rating	Priority Rating	Preventative Actions	Owner	Date
Unknown village and land parcel selection	5	5	25	MCA to communicate urgency to MCA on release of methodology and stress for grant of village greater than 24 MCA. CT to expedite review process for village selection methodology was received.	MCA (methodology)	6/24/2019
Capacity of local firms or consultants in San Pedro and Bouake.	5	5	25	Develop Plan. Inform CT members to meet with FA and Proc Director at MCA. Conduct outreach early on including identifying environmental opportunities with local firms. Assess scope or requirements in order to match market capacity and willingness.	Proc Dir (MCA) and MCA Proc Dir	6/24/2019
Lack of teachers available	5	5	25	International teacher training committee review existing curriculum in agreement for review before coming to MCA for TR.	Proc Dir	6/24/2019
Budget shortfall	5	5	25	Step 1. Search to work within an budget work CT to review. MCA to conduct budget work. Review as well to build capacity. Step 2. Budget breakdown and cost build with the MCA team.	Proc Dir and Proc Dir	6/24/2019



Response Hierarchy

Step 1: Anticipate and avoid risks where possible.

Step 2: When risks cannot be avoided, minimize impact.

Step 3: Once risks are minimized, mitigate.

Step 4: Where significant residual impacts remain, compensate for or offset them, where technically and financially feasible.

Feedback

- 7 Workshops; 176 people; 2 years
- 88% gave 4s or 5s on a 5-point scale
- Risk Management was most valuable sessions
- Most significant complaint: Needed more time

Enabling Environment for Workshop

- Preparation Period; Be Responsive to Need
- Off-site location; Dedicated Time (limit distractions)
- External yet Knowledgeable Facilitation (limit bias)
- Senior Leadership Sponsorship (provides credibility)
- Broad Attendance (err on going wide)
- Share Project Charter (grounds common understanding)



Can It Sustain?

- Establish Early in the project initiation period
- Incorporate into the project execution plan
- Keep to a couple of hours a month or quarter
- Driven by top-down demand
- Avoid a compliance mentality



Take-Aways

- Risk Workshop are valuable and save time later.
- They can be prepared with limited level of effort.
- Participants eagerly engage (preparing them is key).
- Follow up can be difficult (get a schedule commitment).
- All MCC's workshop materials and tools available at link.



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