

**▼ Introduction to IT and Project Management Minitrack
as part of
OS, Organizational Systems and Technology Track**

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Project-based work is a major component of information technology (IT) activity in most companies, especially with regard to design and implementation of new IT systems. Yet evidence suggests that many IT projects do not meet cost, schedule and functionality targets. This has significant negative implications for individual companies and for national economies. For example, Johnson [1] estimated that \$81 billion was spent in the USA on IT projects that were abandoned before they were completed. Moreover, IT tools and techniques are seen to be central to the management of projects of all types across the diverse range of industrial sectors.

With the evolution of technology and its penetration into almost every sector of organizational activity, projects have become more complex and demanding regarding cost, schedule, and technical performance. Professionals managing these projects must understand the organizational concepts and the methods, tools, and techniques, which support modern project management. A new breed of project managers sees themselves differently from traditional, conventional managers. They perceive themselves as being in a more demanding role, requiring more sophisticated people and organizational skills as well as specific technical job knowledge and IT competency. This applies to service-oriented industries as well as more traditional manufacturing industries. Many service-oriented projects today are as technology-based, capital intensive, and complex as are their manufacturing and R & D counterparts. This includes projects in transportation, communications, finance, advertising, health care, consulting, education and software development.

Knowledge of modern project and technology management provides the foundation for effective role performance in a project-driven business and is often crucial to personal advancement in today's

demanding organizational environment. Leading and managing stakeholders across organizational boundaries and national borders is also an emerging competency for project managers as well as business managers. In fact, project management has become one of the most important tools for successfully implementing technology-based systems. Decision-makers in organizations today require the managerial skills and perspectives necessary to enhance the innovation process and to bring technological advances to the marketplace. They must acquire substantial knowledge, not only in managing and directing the technological and market developments themselves, but also in utilizing and directing the professionals involved in these developmental efforts. They must be able to understand, inspire, and guide professional and technical employees and integrate them with the marketing, manufacturing, and financial functions of the organization. Moreover, this must be done without limiting the creative potential of projects and the technical employees involved – command and control type management and rigid project management systems are not viable options. Therefore, it is not surprising to find a strong interest among managers in technology-based firms for information and skill training in this area.

Given this context, this minitrack will provide a forum for discussing advanced concepts, tools and techniques for managing projects (both IT and non-IT projects) in today's dynamic business environments. More specifically, the three papers selected for this minitrack will explore factors that affect the implementation success of IS, the role of social actors with political skills in enterprise system implementation, building trust and cooperation through technology adaptation in virtual teams, vendor issues in two multi-organization pilot test projects, and the evaluation of a 360-degree assessment in university department team.