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# How Stakeholder Engagement Affects IT Projects

Sourav Mukherjee

Senior Database Administrator & PhD Student, University of the Cumberlands, Chicago, United States

**ABSTRACT:** An information system (IS) is a gathering of people, processes, data and information technology that cooperate to collect, store, process, and deliver an output that the information is desired to support an organization. Stakeholders deeply influence project success, especially for complex projects where heterogeneous stakeholders are involved. Therefore, understanding the participation of stakeholders to influence the projects is very crucial for the business. This paper argues that it is the organization, its behavior, and management issues such as stakeholder's management which plays a very key role in the improvement of the situation. As the degree of stakeholder involvement increases, it also increases the gravity of the problems. Skilled stakeholders always knew what they wanted and always prepared prior to the meetings about the details of the requirements. A good amount of effort was provided to manage the stakeholders. Project Managers always do believe that managing stakeholders are important for project success. Project Managers always share expectation when they find that the project is not running based on expectation. It is always important that stakeholders do understand how the software will function even though they may not understand the technical challenges.

**KEYWORDS:** stakeholder, management, role, improvement, software, project manager, engagement

## I. LITERATURE REVIEW OR BACKGROUND

IT Project management is different than the other arm of the project management practice. Most generally the IT projects are unique in nature as it is specially designed to meet a specific target audience's requirement in mind. Thus, the IT projects are intangible and are often innovative by its nature. Most of the time IT projects are assumed to improve, progress or solve any specific business problems and therefore it just lasts for a couple of years (not throughout the lifetime). These issues create a lot of uncertainty while developing any project as it requires a lot of expertise while integrating the business and objective of the projects. Due to that consideration the planning, designing and estimating the project or deliverable is undertaken in iterative fashion.

In a standard IT assignment or project, multiple parties are involved who take part in the development life cycle such as stakeholders, sponsors, design and implementation team and the end users. It is found that the more the project managers to interact with the different teams the better. On the other hand, the traditional project management, do focus on the project content, tech deliverables, tools and techniques and other methodologies which are involved as part of the project. Many organizations do focus on the project deliverables rather focusing on all the components. Many senior leaders do consider IT as a cost center and very often do not show required interest to support the IT projects.

## II. DISCUSSION

Many projects do occur in such circumstances where the stakeholders to perform a major role in the achievement of the tasks. Per different sources, thousands of problems associated with the IT projects are not associated with technical in nature rather lesser focused on management or organizational or behavioral issues. Stakeholders do have the power to control information and resources. It is found that stakeholders always to intervene in the project execution resulting in more chaos. For effective project management determining the right stakeholders play a vital role as they understand the interest and priorities. Some of the possible involvement of various stakeholder groups are:

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- Customers: They are the group of resources who may present the change with maximum benefits. They may follow certain expertise areas such as business and information systems and industry trends.
- Users: They prefer to introduce certain changes with the least disruption. The specific expertise groups they fall under our – business processes, operating procedure, etc.
- Analysts: They specify any amount of requirement ontime and within budget and they follow certain tools.
- Developer: They produce excellent system and they use modern and latest technologies. They use modern technologies, design methods, programming models and languages for use.
- Project Managers: This entity takes charge in successfully rolling out the projects with the required budgets and the resources.
- Quality Control, Assurance: This entity ensures that the compliance to process and products are maintained to the highest standards. There are different tools and techniques available to implement and assess the quality assurance.

### III. STAKEHOLDER PROBLEMS

**Commitment:** Generally, the stakeholders do not provide enough time for any project. This creates a huge bottleneck to the project. It is observed that end users never allow time to spend on the project and that costs a lot to the project.

**Skill:** Another issue is that the stakeholders never possess the required skills to participate in the business to gather all the requirements and they also describe only the solution not the requirement and often change the mind.

**Discovery:** It is very hard to find which stakeholder is involved to find all the required process of discovering, inventing or specifying the requirements. Based on the collective feedback based on different people it is found that discovery is another major roadblock and challenge.

**Maintaining:** Often the stakeholders lose interest and resulting in the project is defocused till the end. It is noticed that if the prospective outcome is not tangible the stakeholders lose interest.

**Involvement:** If more stakeholders are engaged the project may achieve more certainty.

It is noticed that

- Greater involvement of project managers leads to a more successful project.
- More involvement of project managers leads to fewer differences of opinion and result in successful project delivery.

Some of the benefits of stakeholder engagements include:

- Establishment of credibility
- Forecasting disagreement
- Ensuring accountability, credibility, and transparency
- Improving significance
- Increasing the quality
- Increasing distribution
- Accepting findings

On the other hand, some of the challenges include:

- Time
- Resource
- Training
- Money
- Right people and resources
- Identifying and balancing multiple inputs
- Matching the right type of stakeholders at the right time.
- Fearing for the failure

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Discussion: These factors are important towards the first step while trying to develop a good mechanism for measuring the efficiency of stakeholder engagement in a suitable manner.

Managing stakeholders can be an important aspect of the overall achievement of any business as intelligently handling its assets. Proactively involving stakeholders can stop difficulties before they happen.

## IV. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE STUDY

Stakeholder management is integrally a hard task considering the imperceptible nature of the constraints and variables which are engaged. The nature and type of the project may also meaningfully impact the number and type of stakeholders engaged, making decisive project management methods impossible to recommend. For large project work, the stakeholders may flip over the SDLC, forcing the PM's task even more problematic. Moreover, while PMs may accept a method to effect or succeed stakeholders, these stakeholders may hold the final power of believing to deliver a project effective upon its completion. It is therefore suggested that any future research should also explore the participation, involvement, and effect of discrete stakeholders or a collection of stakeholders thought to be extra powerful.

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## BIOGRAPHY

Sourav Mukherjee is a Senior Database Administrator and Data Architect based out of Chicago. He has more than 12 years of experience working with Microsoft SQL Server Database Platform. His work focusses in Microsoft SQL Server started with SQL Server 2000. Being a consultant architect, he has worked with different Chicago based clients. He has helped many companies in designing and maintaining their high availability solutions, developing and designing appropriate security models and providing query tuning guidelines to improve the overall SQL Server health, performance and simplifying the automation needs. He is passionate about SQL Server Database and the related community and contributing to articles in different SQL Server Public sites and Forums helping the community members. He holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Science & Engineering followed by a master's degree in Project Management. Currently pursuing Ph.D. in Information Technology from the University of the Cumberland. His areas of research interest include RDBMS, distributed database, Cloud Security, AI and Machine Learning. He is an MCT (Microsoft Certified Trainer) since 2017 and holds other premier certifications such as MCP, MCTS, MCDBA, MCITP, TOGAF, Prince2, Certified Scrum Master and ITIL.