Chapter V

Learning from Practice

Introduction

This section of the book offers in-depth interviews with leading-edge chief information officers from various public and private organizations. These interviews allow the reader more insight into the nature of the critical success factors, as well as offer practical application of such factors relative to successful projects. Each of the CIOs has provided comprehensive answers to a series of questions about IT projects, successes, failures, and the roles of the critical success factors. There is also information about the nature of each CIO’s organization, its size, and the size of the IT departments, so that comparisons to reader interests can quickly be discerned.

(For the list of panel members and their profiles, please refer to Appendix A.)
Q: In your opinion, what are the top five critical success factors currently used in your organization?

Bakolia:

There are a variety of critical success factors currently employed in our organization, including: end user involvement, stakeholder involvement, adequate financial resources, communication, and use of highly qualified technology staff.

Foss:

The most important critical success factor for IT project success is top management support. In addition, the location of the CIO within the organization is also central to project success. Other important success factors include end user involvement, stakeholder involvement, and the deployment of cross-functional team, composed of individuals from various departments within the organization.

Gillispie:

The most important critical success factor is governance for Information Technology. In the public sector, you face natural barriers to strategic planning for IT, such as the annual budget and elected leader turnover. Having a proper governance structure in place ensures continuity of the strategic technology plan because it is grounded in the middle management layer. Use of defined, achievable project milestones, highly qualified technology staff, stakeholder involvement, top management support, and end user involvement are also important critical success factors for IT projects.
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