

## Project Review

### Background

Ask any project manager about the key to their success, and they will say that delivering a project is often more like a “dark art” or by chance, than a predictable science.

They may also say that a project going ‘off the rails’ was one of the most stressful things they have professionally experienced. And unfortunately, it’s all too common.

When well initiated and managed projects end up off course, it is usually because of powerful factors outside of the formal scope, which influence or directly impact upon the healthy execution of the project. ie.

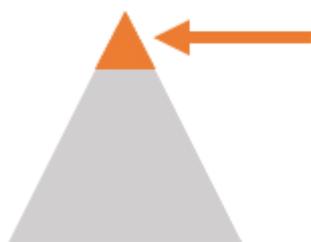
*Company culture, working practices, organisational structures, informal networks, politics and power plays, HR policies, job descriptions, financial rewards and incentives, personal relationships, differences of opinions, regulatory changes, unplanned events...*

### Scope of Service

Our project review is ideal for correcting an in-flight project which has significantly deviated from its intended course.

It is short, quick and time bound so as to provide a summary level “snapshot” to the project sponsors intended as a health check and subsequent decision-making tool.

Major aspects of the operational running of a project will be surfaced rapidly, along with bringing to light any hidden biases and “blind spots” that are limiting success.



*Valuable insights into deeper issues are quickly learnt by shining the torch into the tip of the iceberg*

The project review will identify remedial and preventative changes to make, as well as laying the foundation for more detailed analysis and problem diagnosis if required later.

It is time bound as overall value diminishes past a certain point; and can be applied equally to large programmes, individual projects, new product propositions and customer facing services.

### Approach

Different research methods are used to surface the true picture of what is happening in a project, and why. Our exact approach can vary, but we always seek to include aspects of information gathering, desk-based research, observation and inspection, one-on-one interviews and quantitative analysis.

Each research method will cover one or more of the following areas:

- Historical problems
- Critical risks and dependencies
- Gaps or missing capabilities
- Influencing or bearing factors
- Staffing and resource profiles
- Financial and contract management
- Project structure and governance
- Processes and ways of working
- Readiness, culture and embedding change
- Other areas as deemed relevant to the project

### Interviews

A number of individuals and suppliers who have been involved in the project will be interviewed with painstaking effort made to tailor each interview to the person’s role and their involvement.

Initial information is gathered rapidly across project staff ahead of the interviews using our bespoke tool, located at [www.frankray.net/Risk-Assessment](http://www.frankray.net/Risk-Assessment). Full instructions will be provided.

**Risk Assessment for IT Projects** **FRANK RAY & Associates**  
Business analysis and software development

Quickly diagnose problems and instantly get recommendations to reduce the risk of project failure

In a few minutes from now, you can have a full risk assessment containing recommendations to help you better manage your IT and software development projects. **Completely free of charge.**

**Start Risk Assessment** No proprietary or confidential information is required, fully GDPR compliant, takes a few minutes to complete and results are made available to you right away.

[Example Risk Assessment](#) | [Risk Ratings Explained](#) | [Risk Assessment Insights](#)

By answering a short online questionnaire, our sophisticated assessment model will be able to calculate a risk rating for your project and provide you with a list of recommendations to reduce the risk of project failure. You can perform the assessment before starting a new project, whilst still in the planning stage or while the project is underway (if you have just come across this tool).

Suitable for all types of IT and software development projects, including new product development, general programming and coding, rebuilds of existing systems and solutions, bespoke and custom software, integration with COTS and legacy systems.

Our risk assessment tool is used by Business Analysts, Project Managers, Delivery Managers, Service Managers, Programme Managers and anyone else who has responsibility for IT and software delivery that wants to better understand the risks they are carrying.

**Background to the risk assessment tool**

The online risk assessment tool is a cut-down version of our full **Programme Assessment Service** which we use to correct an in-flight programme that has significantly deviated from its intended course. We built this tool to make the elements of this kind of service available to those who don't have the time or opportunity to use our full programme assessment.

Unlike the litany of 'helpful' advice and whitepapers pushed upon project managers about what they should be doing,

**Risk Assessment Report**

Your project has been calculated as **HIGH RISK** based on the answers you provided.

There are factors at play which can be reasonably expected to significantly increase the likelihood of project failure.

Consider engaging external specialist help to fully assess and manage all project risks, thoroughly review your working practices to ensure you are following standard industry practices, seriously consider implementing the recommendations coming out of our risk assessment (where relevant) and seek specialist help for areas in which your own capabilities are lacking.

We provide specialist help in situations like this through our **Programme Assessment Service**

**Risk Ratings Explained.** [Read more about our risk ratings and what they mean](#)

**Risk Factors** | Breakdown | Recommendations | Questionnaire | Next Steps

Your project risk rating of **HIGH RISK** is broken down as follows:

Risk Factor	Percentage (%)
Programme Management	28
Reputational Risk	18
Stakeholder Management	18
Business Readiness	10
Delivery Management	10
External Dependencies / 3rd Parties	5

Interviewees are carefully chosen and early access sought so as to ensure major project aspects are quickly surfaced, and that these can be cross-checked and validated in the other interviews.

Sometimes multiple interviews per person are required, with their help in between to provide requested documentation, system access etc as needed.

## Outcomes

The project review is completely standalone and will leave project sponsors informed as to the operational problems being experienced.

A summary level model of the project will be developed, with selected overlays to illustrate critical aspects or areas of interest.

Recommendations will be provided covering the immediate and suggested changes to make; in order to get the project back on track and running well.

Previous clients have used the project review to bring risks under control, re-orient work towards value creation, improve financial management and cost control, and improve staff morale.

An ancillary benefit which often occurs is the opportunity for individuals and suppliers to reflect upon their experiences to date, discuss and verbalise these constructively, and to achieve focus and clarity going forward.

## Previous Clients

We enjoy helping clients resolve their project issues, some selected highlights being:



*Uncovered why a national statistics platform had published incorrect statistics*



*Ensured a mental health service was ready to scale out to the general public*



*Diagnosed issues with ways of working within an Agile team*

## Delivery

Every project review follows a general approach but is always tailored to the circumstances of each client.

Depending on the issues being experienced and the level of analysis required, the review takes between 2 to 4 weeks to deliver. We will discuss this in more detail and agree the timetable prior to commencement.

You will receive the following items throughout and upon the completion of the review:

1. Knowledge uncovered during research efforts
2. Analysis of what is happening and why
3. Recommendations for immediate and suggested future changes
4. Comprehensive written report
5. Presentation of findings to project sponsors and/or other management

### Follow-ons

Whilst the project review is completely standalone and will provide you with everything needed to get started on implementing the necessary changes, a number of follow-on services are available should you wish. These include:

1. Ad-hoc support during change implementation and embedding
2. Implementing specific changes as part of the project team
3. Conducting a formal assessment and assurance after changes have been performed
4. Periodic assessments to ensure the changes have remained
5. Running (or overseeing) procurements to source change partners
6. Preparation of budget requests and business cases to enable changes
7. Referral to 3rd parties who have specific expertise if required



### Frank Ray

I'm a professional engineer by education who has worked as a self-employed software developer, business analyst, project manager and management consultant for the past 20 years.

I specialise in quickly making sense of complex situations, diagnosing critical issues and uncovering hidden constraints which are limiting success, and offering practical solutions aligned with key drivers.

Senior management make decisions, initiate projects, develop new propositions, implement systems and assure quality based on my work.

I have worked with many different clients during my professional career and use that wide exposure across sectors and industries to inform my approach.

I will be surprised if you have a problem or issue that I haven't already seen elsewhere.

## Nomenclature

For simplicity's sake, we have chosen the term “project” to refer to any temporary organisation of work with an intended fixed outcome & end point, and the term “project manager” to refer to the individual in charge of this organisation.

Please note the following when reading this document:

**programme** and **project** can be used interchangeably

**programme manager**, **programme director**, **project manager** and **delivery manager** can be used interchangeably

**project** and **service** may possibly be used interchangeably \*

**project manager** and **service manager** may possibly be used interchangeably \*

*\* ask me more about when our Project Review Service can, and cannot, be applied to an already operational service*

## Document Keywords

The following keywords are relevant for document storage and retrieval purposes:

*Project Assessment*  
*Project Review*  
*Project Risk Assessment*  
*Project Risk Management*  
*Project Risk Mitigation*  
*Project Independent Review*  
*Project Operational Assessment*  
*Project Operational Readiness*  
*Project Readiness*  
*Project Assurance*  
*Project Audit*  
*Project Control*  
*Project Governance*

*Project Validation*  
*Project Recovery*  
*Project Rescue*  
*Project Remediation*  
*Project Business Case*  
*Project Investment Case*  
*Project Benefits Realisation*  
*Project Turnaround*  
*Project Scoping*  
*Project Management*  
*Project Improvement*  
*Project Success*