Good project management is key

The Copy Collective

The basic stages of managing a project

0.1 Initiate

- Get the right people together
- Ensure there is an executive sponsor
- Appoint a project director and project manager
- Empower a steering committee to make decisions, especially about external relations of the project

0.2 Plan

- Agree on the scope and deliverables
- Ensure the resources match
- Assess risks and know how to deal with the unplanned
- Build in milestones and progress measures
- Know when to stop planning

0.3 Execute

- Schedule the resources to be where they're needed when they're needed
- Communicate clearly to everyone involved
- Ensure responsibilities are well-defined
- Keep the ball rolling

0.4 Control

- The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
- The Project Manager tracks every deliverable through every stage and avoids scope creep
- The Project Director regularly assesses project health
- The Steering Committee keeps the project on the critical path by adjusting the plan and resources

0.5 Close

- Sign-off on completion and hand over the finished product
- Evaluate the project for quality of outcome
- Evaluate the project for efficiency of the process
- If it's worked, do it again: don't reinvent the wheel

Some lessons from well-managed projects

Balance quality

- The famed "project triangle" is real: there's cheap, fast and good
- But you can only have two of those in any project
- Choosing the balance is good project governance: the steering committee makes the call
- Keeping the chosen balance is good project management: the project director and project manager stay on the ball.
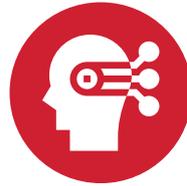
Learn for next time

- Every project teaches lessons
- Evaluating a project needs to feed in to corporate memory
- It's up to us to learn: an evaluation unused is an evaluation wasted.

Minimise rework

- Rework is the enemy of efficiency, keep to the norm
- It increases complexity and risk
- Getting it right should be the norm, not the exception
- But handling exceptions well helps us keep to the norm.

Reduce costs

- A well-managed project delivers cost effective outcomes
- Hidden costs include contributions made by others that are not part of the project budget
- If the project is well- managed these will be minimised and stakeholders will cheer!

If the **quality** balance is good then **rework** is minimised, **costs** are reduced, and we **learn** to refine the quality balance for next time.