

# Large-Scale Transformation Program Oversight: A Sample Checklist

According to Standish Group, successful projects are delivered less than 30% of the time, with close to 20% cancelled outright.<sup>[i]</sup> As scope and costs grow, the likelihood of success falls, with the largest projects having only a 2% chance of success.<sup>[ii]</sup> Anyone familiar with large-scale IT transformation programs will likely recognize these statistics. Risk mitigation is required on every project, but large, complex multi-project programs require even more formal oversight. What should executives consider when performing program oversight? The following sample questions highlight just a few of the factors to be incorporated into a formal oversight effort.

- Is the program driven by a set of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-oriented business objectives?
- Do these business objectives target clearly defined customer and related stakeholder value perspectives, capabilities, information, business units, and products?
- Is there a defined transformation strategy, plan, and phased roadmap that outlines how the organization will incrementally achieve its business objectives?
- Does the program leverage strategy execution frameworks and best practices to reduce risks and increase the likelihood of success?
- Are individual projects within a larger program segregated and coordinated from a business AND an IT perspective?
- Is the transformation program synchronized across business units and IT solution teams?
- Is the transformation program viable from a business and IT resource, timing, and cost perspective?
- Has the organization formally defined target state application, data, and technical architectures that can serve as the basis for achieving strategic business objectives?
- Does the target state data architecture reflect the cross-section of business information required to serve as a foundation for the future state business vision?
- Is there a current state application architecture transition roadmap defining when and how application systems will be upgraded, transformed, integrated, replaced, and/or retired?
- Is there a current state data architecture transition roadmap that enables current state and target state data coexistence, while ensuring data integrity and continuity at every stage?

- Does the target state software design align to and leverage highly rationalized, formally decomposed business capabilities?
- Is a methodology in use to ensure that process definitions are strategically integrated into target state data and application architectures to deliver highly optimized, event-driven, rules-based software solutions?
- Do agile deployment methodologies leverage formal architecture disciplines to ensure that end-to-end strategy execution is synchronized across teams?
- Is there a clearly defined transformation (i.e., interim) architecture that enables current state and target state application and data architectures to coexist for the life of the program?

Organizations should consider adopting these and other considerations as appropriate to avoiding becoming another statistic in a long line of failed program investments. Large-sale program success is elusive and should never be assumed.

**TSG's Oversight Services:**

*Independent, large-scale program oversight services are available from Tactical Strategy Group, Inc. The offering can be structured on a short-term or an ongoing basis. Independent oversight ensures that executives receive an objective assessment of program progress that is unbiased in its perspective and focused on the client first.*

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*The discussion can begin with an introductory phone call. For more information please email [info@tacticalstrategygroup.com](mailto:info@tacticalstrategygroup.com) or [wmmulrich@tsqconsultinginc.com](mailto:wmmulrich@tsqconsultinginc.com)*

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[i] [A Look at 25 Years of Software Projects](#), Speed & Function

[ii] Standish Group 2015 Chaos Report - Q&A with Jennifer Lynch, <https://www.infoq.com/articles/standish-chaos-2015/>