



Dragon1 IT Project Auditing Checklist

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Introduction

This checklist is about IT Project Auditing. It is a heavy quality instrument that can be used by an organization to measure the chance of success and increase the quality of a project, especially IT projects. The target audience for this checklist is owner/clients, steering committees, managers, project workers and other stakeholders of projects. This checklist shows that carrying out projects is a craft or specialism. Running a project should not be take that easily and sometimes it is very hard to end the project successfully with a result that is added value to the business.

Even if you won't or can't audit a project, still this checklist is of added as source of inspiration for running and managing projects and also to create awareness in the field of project management.

1. What is IT Project auditing according to Dragon1?

IT Project auditing is a continuous process. It starts at the beginning of a project and goes on until the end of the project. IT Project auditing aims to check the project against success criteria and will confirm that this project remains effective and successful in the end, following documented quality standards and requirements. IT Project auditing as process helps to complete a project on time, on budget, on quality, fulfilling all approved of stakeholder requirements.

Dragon1 defines an IT Project Audit as follows: An IT Project Audit is systematically and iteratively observing, measuring, examining and analyzing an IT project in order to identify and determine possible issues, concerns, challenges, potential risks and opportunities and their rationales (reasons), and also to develop interpretations, recommendations and suggested measures about how to remove or manage the problems having a successful project in the end.

The goal of the Dragon1 IT Project Auditing Checklist is to ensure that every IT project carried out is or will be successful. For this we need to realize the following three objectives:

- To ensure that project decisions are made in an effective way. This means that every decision that is made does produce a desired outcome.
- To ensure project activities are adequately performed and managed.
- To ensure project governance and risk management meet business requirements.

Below you find a checklist that helps you to realize the three objectives.



2. IT Project Auditing Checklist

First we provide you with a shortlist of 10 items out of the full 24 items. All these 10 items must be answered with Yes in order, under normal circumstances, to proceed with the project. In all other cases it is advised to pause the project.

#	Question	Answer
1	Is the project result clear to everyone (i.e. key stakeholders)?	
2	Is the project result a best or proven solution for the problem?	
3	Is an approved description of the solution and project available?	
4	Is there a known single primary owner of the solution and project?	
5	Is an approved assignment to startup up the project available?	
6	Is a valid and approved financial business case available?	
7	Is a context model and decomposition of the solution available?	
8	Is a monthly updated organogram of the project available?	
9	Is a valid and approved program of requirements available?	
10	Is a valid and approved project plan available?	

Now follows the full list of 24 items with one or more questions per item. Be sure to schedule a session with key stakeholders every month and at every phase end to go through this list of questions and to answer them again and again. A whole session to answer all of the questions should not take more than 3 hours (interviewing key stakeholders and searching, retrieving and scanning documents). The first 10 items should be even answered YES before starting up a project.

1. Is the project result, concept, module, system, solution or structure that this project will design or realize clear to everyone (the stakeholders) in and around the project? Can it be linked to the strategy (strategy map / balanced score card)? Is the scope (the boundary of the project) well defined? And it is known what problem it directly or indirectly solves for the business of the organization?
2. Is this result of this project (still) the best, realistic and working solution for the problem it is meant to solve? And is the result of the project a (current) best practice for solving the



- problem or is it a new (experimental) solution? Does the problem go away over time or can a different solution be bought (of the shelf) to solve the problem? Do other equal organizations have used the same solution for the problem and was it successfully?
3. What is the name and definition of the project and is there a document with a brief description and visualization (design sketch or drawing) of this concept, module, system, solution or structure?
 4. Is an owner / client or one mandated business owner for this project known? And what is his or her name and function?
 5. Is an assignment or statement of work to create a business case or to start up a project available? And what is its name, version and archive location?
 6. Is a valid and approved financial business case available? And what is its name, version and archive location? Is it known to which business objective or goal this project, as only project, can be linked with its result. (A project normally has only one goal: producing a result that is of added value to the business because it can be linked to a business objective or business goal.)
 7. Is a valid, updated and approved context model and stakeholder onion diagram available that is your starting point for requirements engineering?
 8. Is a monthly updated organogram for the temporary organization (the project) available for any stakeholder and project member.
 9. Is a valid and approved Program of Requirements (POR) and terms of reference (TOR) available? And what is its name, version and archive location?
 10. Is this project an architecture project, design project and or a realization project? Is it possible to separate these three different activities in three different projects? If not why not, who has taken that decision, what and how was it weighed and where is the decision documented, considering these activities have confliction interests? It is important to first have your architecture and design ready before starting up a (realization) project. Because only then you really know what you are realizing.
 11. Is a valid and approved architecture document and separate design document available? (not created by the implementation partner)
 12. Are the architecture and the design fully compliant with quality standards and requirements? Is this fact well documented and if there were exceptions, did that lead to removing requirements from the list.
 13. Is an A0 sized architecture visualization available (a complete solution overview, modules overview, requirements-function overview, landscape, blueprint or roadmap) in the design?
 14. Is understandable documentation available (like meeting minutes) about when, who and how project team meetings, stakeholder interviews for requirements and steering groups take place? Is there clear documentation of the issues, actions and decisions list and questions, answers and assumptions list? Is it clear that actions, decisions and answers are used in the activities and deliverables of the project? Are the desired outcomes produced?
 15. Is a valid and approved project charter, project document (PRODOC) or plan of approach for the realization (apart from the design) of the solution or structure available? And what is its name, version and archive location? Is the project split up into phases and does every phase end with a milestone (often a defined set of deliverables)?
 16. Is a test plan and implementation plan available including user acceptance criteria, and was a method used to create these plans? And what are their names, versions and archive location?
 17. Are changes in plans and document contents, versions and history well managed for the business case, architecture / design, program of requirements and plan of approach?
 18. Are the business case, architecture / design, program of requirements, plan of approach and other documents visually aligned in a project landscape map or other visualizations? Can or is every stakeholder requirement linked to a feature or functionality of the system or solution as defined in question #1? Is every requirement traceable? And what are the names, versions and archive locations of these documents or visualizations?



19. Is a visualization of the product breakdown structure, including a financial sheet and planning sheet, aligned to the solution architecture, available? And what is its name, version and archive location?
20. Is a visualization of the working breakdown structure, including a financial sheet and planning sheet, aligned to the solution architecture, available? And what is its name, version and archive location?
21. Are tests planned / scheduled or are test executed / carried out and are the test results satisfying?
22. Are the previously executed audits for this IT Project documented and available as advised here? Is the project audited every month and at every end of phase?
23. Is the age of the project, being a temporary organization, younger than 9 months? Projects running longer than 9 months will face that the world or the environment has changed so much the project will have a high risk of failing. So always pause or stop projects running longer than 9 months. If a project is bound to run for several years always split it up in projects with lengths of 9 months and place them in a program.
24. Is the main deliverable of the project (still) of added value to the business of the parent organization? (check this with the business case and a strategy document)

3. What is an IT Project? - A definition.

According to Dragon1, an IT Project is a project with a major recognizable IT component. A project is a temporary organization with a defined scope and set of resources, as part of one or more other organizations, aimed to produce a result that is of (business) value for the parent organization or organizations, not doing routine operations.

4. Criteria to Startup, Stop or Pause an IT Project

To prevent an IT Project from failing (not realizing the project result) make sure that at any time all questions can be answered with YES. If one of the questions can be answered with NO, stop or pause the IT Project and fix the issue. Put your efforts in being able answer a question with yes instead of no.

For a safe start of the project the following questions should be answered YES before the project is started : #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10

If the questions answered with NO can be repaired within a month and the project is younger than 6 months, consider to pause the project instead of stopping the project immediately.

Be sure that you can answer the questions "How do you know?" and "How can you prove it?" for the questions you have answered with YES on this checklist. That is why in most of the questions the storage location of a document is asked for.

5. Feedback

If you have any suggestions, remarks or experiences in using this checklist, please feel free to contact us and share them with us by sending an email to info@dragon1.com.



About Dragon1

Dragon1 is a Collaboration Platform for Working with Enterprise Architecture.
And is often used for project management.

<https://www.dragon1.com/solutions/project-management>

On the Dragon1 Platform, individuals and teams create interactive and integral content, like strategy maps, business models, enterprise architecture diagrams and blueprints, project landscape maps, etc. Next they publish them in channels publicly on Dragon1 to spread knowledge and educate people. Or they publish content privately and use the content internally in the organization to support strategic decision making.

The Dragon1 software provides you with the Dragon1 open Enterprise Architecture method focused on principles and concepts, so you have a sound and solid basis to start working from.

Dragon1 is changing the way we acquire knowledge & take decisions in organizations today.

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