

The 80% Solution: “Good Enough” is Better than “The Best”

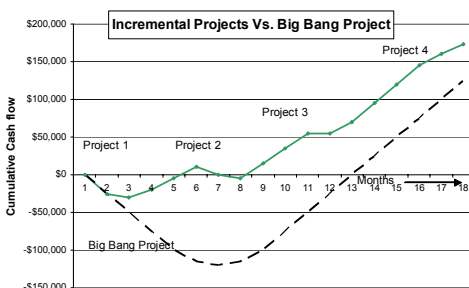
Large, ambitious operations and technology projects often go over budget and over schedule - and fail to meet expectations. Reasons for shortcomings include the following:

- Business requirements & objectives ill-defined leaving too much “room for interpretation”
- The business environment changes during the project
- Project management is inadequate to the task
- “Scope Creep” is allowed to continually change the project
- Resources are diverted to other projects

These projects are initiated because they are believed the “Best” solution to meet the needs of the enterprise. As it turns out, at least 20% of the business environment will probably change during the project and frequently cannot ever be defined adequately.

A “Good Enough” approach identifies a key operational issue and develops a short-term solution to address that issue and improve performance quickly. That change will also change the business environment around it and perhaps show that the next step needs to be in a slightly different direction. Maximum success requires the following steps:

- Identify a critical issue that is impairing achievement of results
- Work with the people involved in the current process and identify key changes that will improve the situation
- Develop an operational and/or technological solution using as much of your current internal resources as possible and gain approval to proceed
- Execute the solution as quickly and effectively as possible
- Examine and document the improvements in operations and performance and report the results to senior management
- Look for the next critical issue to address



This graph indicates that lower costs and less time required in shorter projects lead to results that are gained more quickly as compared to a large “Big Bang” project. Several benefits for Management include:

- Less risk for each project
- It is easier to foresee success on short projects
- If the business environment changes, adjustments can be made in the next project

Each project should be developed with the following characteristics:

- The business unit must be an integral part of the planning and design process and present the project to senior management, with the support of the project development team.
- Internal resources should be used on the project as much as possible including existing applications, tools, technology and staff.
- Data and interface technical standards should be followed so future projects can be easily integrated into the modified operating environment.
- Stay compliant with information access and use policies.

Particularly in times of uncertainty, **shorter, focused projects represent much faster and more predictable “time to results” for your organization.** *Contact Avistas today for a free consultation regarding independent insights and assistance with your mission critical projects.*