



Building communicating & cooperating teams to achieve successful projects

No matter how unique a project may be, it is always the top concerns for both the software services providers and the clients to have project quality, be on time and within budget. It is a good chance that the customer will be satisfied if these fundamental goals are met. Successful projects are fostered through mutual trust and cooperation between the outsourcer and the client. We believe that the following factors should be in mind for a software outsourcing vendor to achieve a successful project.

- **Proven (formal) methodology** – A mature methodology is the No.1 factor in project success. It provides a realistic picture of the project and resources committed to it. Credible outsourcers should have mature methods that have been adapted to their development culture. In addition, the development methodologies should have sufficient flexibility (Waterfall, RUP, Agile) in order to adequately meet varying project demands.

- **Highly skilled Project Manager (PM)** – In order to ensure that the project goals will be met, project manager selection is critical. The person should have the right skills and experience to allow them to be successful; this is essential to having a successful implementation of the software solution. PMs must be:
 - ✚ dedicated and committed
 - ✚ possess proficient technical knowledge
 - ✚ clearly understand project goals
 - ✚ have relevant business knowledge
 - ✚ have leadership skills for schedule management, cost management, resources management, and communication (internal and external) management
 - ✚ have the ability to generate enthusiasm of the whole team for the project.

The special project management tools like VSTS, EPM and TFS must be made available for PMs to better track and control the project and the performance for the whole team during the development lifecycle.

- **Clearly defined goals** – Now it is time to get the project under way, the first and most important step in this phase is to communicate a clear understanding of the requirement and what the client expected. Except for the PM's rich experience, various *requirement questionnaires* and *Q & A list* are also helpful to get a clear picture of the client's requirements.

- **Thorough analysis & Detailed project planning** - Quickly planned projects may save time and money at beginning, but in the end, the results will be poor, more expensive and time consuming. Adjustments and corrections will become necessary in order to make the software operate

properly. The PM and Software Architect (SA) should use their collective knowledge and experience to come up with durable analysis and estimates that reflect the true effort required. World class service providers provide project planning documents that both the vendor and client use to communicate with and to evaluate project progress each step on the way towards project completion. These documents should include (at minimum) *statement of works or proposal*, *project timeline*, *work amount and project development plan* that describes the human resources plan, communication plan, risk management plan and change management plan .

- **Proper training** – This is an important part for effective team work. It establishes a cohesive team that has the same goals (targets) and has the capability of avoiding unnecessary problems that may arise during the lifecycle. Effective training involve the business knowledge training, requirement training, process methods orientation, goal setting and quality training, programming conventions and speciality areas that are instrumental to project success.
- **Thorough testing** –Service providers should be utilizing appropriate software tools to insure adequate test coverage (and ultimately adequate product proving/error detection capabilities). It is strongly suggested that testware created by the outsourcer become a part of the software delivery in order for the client to understand the adequacy of testing and to serve as a baseline for validation once installed locally.
- **Frequent & honest two-way communication** – Frequent and open communication is essential for successful project implementation. This includes both internal communication amongst the team members (solution approaches, problems detected & settlement ...) and the external communication between the service provider team and the client for clarification/question resolution, artifact transference (client to servicer and servicer to client), status reporting, implementation coordination and schedule status confirmation. The service provider must be fluent in the native language of the client in both written and verbal forms. Communication methods should utilize varies forms, each having a unique way of exposing potential gaps in understanding. These include team meetings, face-to-face meeting, e-mail, phone communication, and instant messenger, and video/text conferencing.

Effective collaboration gets twice the result with half the effort. On the client's side, well prepared requirement and timely feedback to the outsourcer's performance are also critical for project success.

- **Define the software requirement in detail** – Incomplete, inaccurate and unstable requirement is one of the common causes of project failure. Make sure that the requirements are well defined which deliver accurate, clear, concise specifications and corrections are made early in the project's lifespan.
- **Open and timely feedback** – Frequent and timely feedbacks to project progress, deliveries and questions are also helpful to resolve any problems that arise during the project cooperation.

About Shinetech

Shinetech Software Inc. is a professional offshore software development service provider established in Beijing China in Aug, 2001. It has already successfully completed over 100 projects for customers of the overseas market, like US, Canada, Australia, UK, Finland, Ireland and some other European countries. It has reached a collaboration agreement with [Certellus LLC](#) for sales promotion and market penetration in US.

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