The Challenge of Egypt

A project management simulation by GamingWorks

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE CHALLENGES?

» **Improving project performance**

» **Improving team working in projects**

» **Translating project management theory into practice**

About project management

What is the current situation?
Still a large percentage of projects fail to realize the required results. Some reports suggest between 70 – 80%, some put it alarmingly higher! All this despite the enormous investment in project management training such as PMI or Prince2. This is generally not because of the lack of education or theory, but lack of understanding of how to translate theory into practice, or the lack of the right behaviors within the project team.

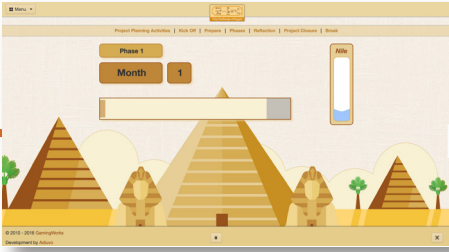Why do projects continually fail? What are some of the key reasons? Our global surveys reveal top issues being: 'the sponsor role in governing the project', 'end-user engagement and involvement', 'poor requirements specification and planning', 'poor project management discipline, roles and management of scope changes', 'lack of project leadership and soft skills'.

An additional strain is put on project management by the drive towards 'Agile' practices, giving rise to Agile project management and Prince2 Agile.

This business simulation can be used to help address the common failures mentioned above, or it can be used to teach people more about Agile project management disciplines.

The Challenge of Egypt

About the simulation

The scenario takes place 4000 years ago in ancient Egypt. Zoser's pyramid has just been completed; work on the Cheops pyramid has yet to be started. Egypt was one of the most important civilizations of that time, and structures were being built alongside the Nile that would continue to astonish people for millennia to come. How could the Egyptians do this?
This cannot be done without proper project management. How are you going to excavate, transport and construct millions of stones and ensure that tens of thousands of people work as efficiently as possible? Obviously that didn't just happen all by itself. Furthermore, the process was continually subject to the changing demands of the Pharaoh, the weather, diseases, wars etc. project management practices, skills and instruments were required to deal with all of these issues.

The mighty Pharaoh is fighting wars to protect his country. There is a risk he could be fatally wounded at any moment. Just like every Pharaoh he wants to secure his afterlife, and to take his treasures and weapons with him.

His good friend, the priest, will take care of the Pharaoh's requirements and will ensure that a project is set up to construct this magnificent pyramid close to the river Nile.

Teams of administrators and quality experts will support the project and guarantee that the Pyramid will secure the Pharaoh's afterlife. The best project manager in the country will make it all happen.
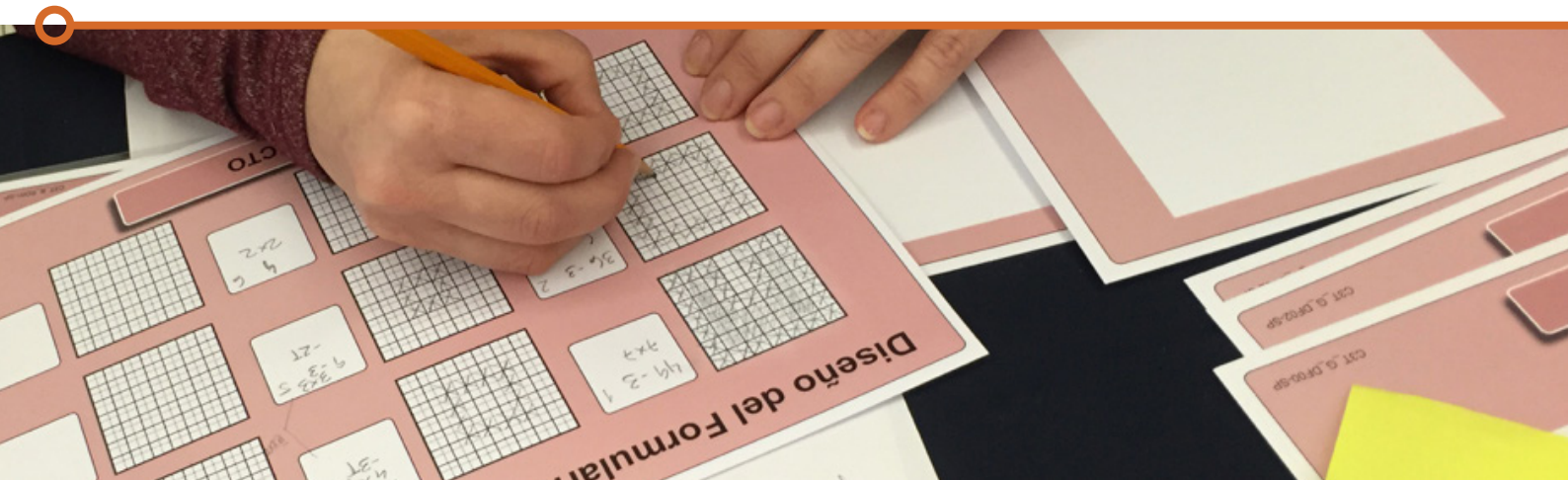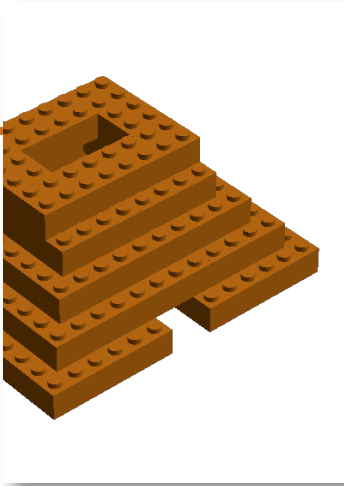
Do you dare to take the challenge?

This one day interactive project management workshop lets participants experience how to apply project management theory in a realistic challenging environment.

The simulation

The simulation starts with the Pharaoh (played by the game facilitator) who wants to secure his afterlife. He talks to the priest and explains his idea. The priest knows what the Pharaoh wants and will discuss this with the architects in the team. Together they will design a pyramid to meet the needs of the Pharaoh. The priest will show it to the Pharaoh and will indicate the expected costs and when it will be ready.

If the Pharaoh is happy, the project manager will then start the detailed planning stage. He will work together with the Quarry team, the Nile team and the Construction team. The Nile team is a supplier and is happy to offer his boats to ship the stones from the Quarry to the Construction area.

Based on the specific knowledge of the teams and the amount of workers and boats they have, they can calculate a realistic pricing and timing. The project administration will also prepare the tools to manage and monitor the project.

In parallel to this, the Risk manager will perform a risk analysis to determine the risks and define counter measures to avoid or minimize them.

The project manager is able to show the project plan to the Pharaoh. If he agrees, there is a go and the team will start the project.

After a well-organized kick off, the team will execute 3 project stages. In each stage they will have to execute the work and deal with all kinds of realistic issues:
» events;
» incidents;
» requests for changes;
» new requirements and scope changes;
» Set-backs;
» meetings with the customer;
» escalations.

Between the stages, the team will reflect on how well the project is going. How effective are their project management practices? They will identify and agree improvements. After implementing these improvements, the team will start the next stage.

At the end of the project the team will execute a lessons learned session to capture all learning outcomes and define a take-away-action-plan.

Celebration needle
(high priest)

This needle will support the inauguration ceremony. As a high priest you need a needle like this to secure the Pharaoh's way to the afterlife.

The height of the needle is 6 stones and it consists of high quality stones only.
Location: 4 knots from the pyramid and 6 knots from the back side of the building area.

In order to start preparations in time, this has to be finished in month 13.

© GamingWorks BV　Ⓣ　C3T_B_ER01-UK

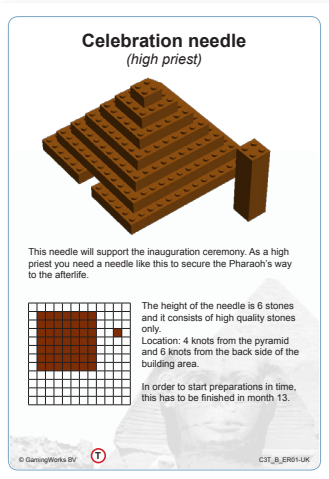> *If we take away and apply what we discovered about risk management to even 10% of our projects, we could potentially save millions of dollars.*
>
> **Program manager, EMEA Government organization**

Who should attend this simulation?

1. Students who followed project management training and want to learn how to apply the theory before going into their projects.

2. Teams who want to assess and improve the current way of working in projects. By playing this simulation they can experience possible improvement suggestions for their own projects.

3. Teams during kickoff sessions. A perfect way of bringing the team together, including sponsors and users, and experience how we are going to work together in the project.

4. For team building.

5. To support your project management approach.
Spread the message within the organization by using this simulation. It is fun, exciting and people will remember.

6. You can use the simulation as part of soft skills development to focus on communication and collaboration.

7. There is also an 'Agile' variant of the game that can be used to support Agile PM training or Prince2 Agile.

Project Document

The Pharaoh wants to secure his afterlife. Therefore, he wants the High Priest to build a special series of objects close to the river Nile. Since the war is coming and the till is empty, the pharaoh has a limited budget and the project must be finished within 15 months.

To secure his treasures, he wants to have a Large Pyramid to store his 7 treasures and to have his body prepared for the afterlife ceremony. He wants to achieve that thousands of years later, the country still can make money out of tourists that come to see the Pyramid.

To protect the treasures, the Pharaoh also wants a large Sphinx in front of his Pyramid.

The Pharaoh's wife is jealous and wants her own Statue in front of the Pyramid.

The Pharaoh wants to celebrate his journey, therefore the High Priest must think about a celebration needle.

The Pharaoh loves his dogs and it would be nice if they have their own little pyramid to join their boss during his journey.

PHARAOH

© GamingWorks BV　Ⓐ　C3A_B_PD01_1-UK

Some other features of this simulation

Duration This simulation will take about 7 hours
Participants From minimum 8 up to 12 participants per team

This simulation can also be used for large group events of
8 – 50+ participants.

7 hours

The Agile variant

In the Agile variant the team will face the same challenge. The Pharaoh wants all of his products, but has fixed budget and fixed time. The team will start with interviewing the Pharaoh in order to identity his user stories and to create a product backlog. Then in 3 sprints the team will execute all the work. Between the sprints, a sprint review and retrospective will be held to accept the products and initiate a learning process. Participants can apply their Agile skills in this interactive simulation.

Learning objectives

» How to translate project management theory into practice.
» Setting up a project organisation with the associated roles, tasks and responsibilities.
» Analysing the project risks and agreeing countermeasures.
» Carrying out work packages in the role of team leader and monitoring progress.
» Monitoring the tolerances (budget, time, scope and quality) of a project or subproject.
» Resolving project issues.
» Managing the project in the role of project manager.
» Dealing with changes within the project.
» Dealing with the project board.
» Evaluating a project.
» Insight in the knowledge, skills and behaviour to manage successful projects.

Do you recognize these issues or would you like more information?
Please contact our partner:

www.gamingworks.nl