



Dar Al Riyadh Insight #13 Foundations for Success –

Inadequate valuation of time; Lack of startup granularity; and Incomplete Basis of Design

Dar Al Riyadh Insights reflect the knowledge and experience of our Board, executives and staff in leading and providing PMC, design and construction management services. Dar Al Riyadh believes in the importance of broadly sharing knowledge with our clients and staff to improve project outcomes for the benefit of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Large complex projects require strong foundations if they are to be successful. Arguably, these are the same foundations any project would require but experience suggests otherwise. When we look at recurrent weaknesses in foundations for success of large complex projects we see several recurring themes.

This Insight looks at a final three additional areas of weaknesses.

Inadequate valuation of time

Understand the value of time (literally) on the project.

Time is not your friend. A large complex project manager must understand the value of time. How does a day of time impact project cost and schedule? What about even an hour or a minute?

Know the value of a day's worth of time and drive actions and decisions with this in mind. Recognize and be prepared for the agile execution that large complex projects demand by developing "contingent execution" strategies, plans and capabilities. Lost productivity is seldom recovered.

Lack of startup granularity

Program initiation schedules are not sufficiently granular

Deploy a project startup team on day one with a 90 day by day schedule. Focus on getting the project processes, procedures and infrastructure set up while the project team focuses on delivery.

Start well. Ensure designer led permitting and right-of-way activity schedules are very granular and tied out to individual construction work packages. This is a recurring problem. Ensure sequencing of related design activities support the construction sequence.

Incomplete Basis of Design

Much more is required to develop effective designs that reflect construction and maintenance as fundamental project requirements. In this sense, construction and maintenance considerations are not items to be reviewed but rather fundamental requirements to be satisfied together with other project requirements established by the owner. The change suggested here is about a shift in mindset and perspective as well as in our design work processes.

Recap

In this series of Insights, we have looked at a range of foundational weaknesses including:

- Weaknesses in Strategic Business Objectives (SBOs)
- Incomplete overall project scope
- Inadequate owner readiness
- Optimism bias in estimates
- Poorly founded risk assessment and modeling
- Unconsidered risk classes – Black Swans; “White Space” risk; Black Elephants
- Assumption migration
- Inadequate understanding of complexity
- Constraint coupling
- Inadequate decision frameworks
- Inadequate valuation of time
- Lack of startup granularity
- Incomplete Basis of Design