

TABLE 1.1

Issues Addressed by Specific Steps

Issue	Step	General Advice
You want to learn how to start a project well	2, 3, 4	Investing energy and effort at the beginning of a project pays off at the end.
You want to learn how to plan a project well	5, 6	It helps to build a project plan based on the business constraints.
You want to learn how to manage a project that is under way	7, 8	Practice <i>flexible structure</i> : at all times, have a plan but be ready to bend it when project conditions dictate.
You want to learn how to end a project	9	Communicate clearly when a project is done.
You want to grow your own project management competency	10	Conducting a post-project review will jump-start your competency—even if you do the review alone.
You're overwhelmed with work and don't feel that you're making any progress	1	You may be managing <i>tasks</i> rather than projects. Organizing and prioritizing your work by project will improve your ability to deliver more work.
You've been assigned a project, but have not been told why this project suddenly is funded	2	Most project managers are not very aware of the financial impact of their projects. It's important that the company clearly defines the anticipated return-on-investment for each project; it's equally important that the project manager be aware of this expectation.
You feel that the project boundaries are shifting continually, and that the size of the project is increasing without an equal increase in time and budget	3	The primary killer of project success is <i>scope creep</i> . Even if it's late in the project, it's never too late to stop and define the scope with the stakeholders. Negotiating more time and money requires a joint

Table I.1, continued

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		agreement on the scope of the project.
A nervous little voice in your head is asking if this project can be done successfully	4	Your little voice is always right. It's critical that you take time to brainstorm possible risks that may challenge project success because it gives you the opportunity to build a mitigation plan to avoid or react to those risks. You won't guess all of them, but you'll be ready for most.
Members of the project team spend all their time fighting among themselves or avoiding each other	5	Companies are organized to compete across functional areas for resources. These dynamics can paralyze a project, so the project manager must nurture collaboration—it's the only way to success.
It's difficult to coordinate the array of things that different people are doing on this project, and sometimes a late activity slows down someone else	6	Creating a project plan informs everyone on the project about exactly what's expected of them, when it's due, and how it affects others. Without a solid plan, individuals either will get distracted by other work or will repeatedly interrupt the project manager for information or direction.
You just got a major change to the project requirements, and you're afraid you won't complete the project on time	7	Project managers must learn to think in contingency terms. Contingency planning is an in-the-moment type of risk management. When change occurs in a project, the project manager must have two or three alternatives to keep the project on track.
The stakeholders keep changing their minds about what they want, and the project is stalled by all the chaos	8	Chaos is the norm in project management, not the exception. Businesses must react at the speed of the Internet to market trends, and this makes the requirements of many projects

Table I.1, continued

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		unstable at best. Flexible structure is an important key to accepting chaos and managing through it.
You finished your project a month ago, but the stakeholders keep coming in with small changes.	9	It seems like a simple concept, but "done" is a tough thing to define for projects. Learn to establish a project's completion criteria and to communicate and reinforce them effectively.
It seems as if the same mistakes are repeated on every project	10	Learning how best to invest the time in a post-project review will increase your project management competency and that of the business.