



What if you could see into the future?



## Project Management and Expertise; what if this could be developed in weeks instead of years?

Thirty years ago complex projects costing millions or billions failed to deliver the hoped for business benefits of major projects more than 70% of the time. 50% were completed but expectations were lowered. 25% ended up completely abandoned. The cost of this pattern of failure was in the trillions. According to recent studies by the Gartner Group, Callear Consulting and The Standish Group, success rates are only slightly improved.

***However, these statistics don't apply across the board; for some individual project managers projects hardly ever fail even though they are plagued with the same problems and major challenges that sink many projects.***

A number of years ago, WTRI worked with IBM Labs to understand not so much why projects fail as much as why *some never do* for certain "superstar" project managers. There did seem to be some key capabilities that go beyond the technical knowledge of the project management know-how. More interesting, however, is that these capabilities could not be "taught" per se and were not innate, but *rather developed through experience and especially experience with failure*

At WTRI, we have learned to accelerate expertise using our special iterative simulations, called strategic rehearsals. The question IBM had was: can this be done in a scaled up way, using virtual worlds? At the time, Second Life was nearly the only world available and was quite new, without the stability, voice capability, photo-realism and advanced lighting it has today. However, experiments with about 50 project managers from IBM proved that people can advance developmentally in a much quicker time frame by experiencing problematic projects virtually, without the risk to their real clients or employers. However, some technical limitations of virtual worlds at the time prohibited this approach from being a full scale solution.

In the intervening years, WTRI advanced its knowledge of virtual worlds and developed ways of attaching our powerful FutureView™ Event Generator and Metrics Engine to most commercially



Calleam's "Catalogue of Catastrophe"  
Published 2014 Calleam Consulting Ltd.

- Health Care: The Affordable Care Act, Oct 2013, TBD
- Digital Archives: British Broadcasting Corp, Sept 2013, 100 million £
- Merchandise Pricing: J. C. Penny "Fare and Square", Nov 2011, \$1 billion
- Payroll: New Zealand Ministry of Education, May 2013, \$30 million NZD
- Value at Risk: J. P. Morgan Chase, June 2012, \$6 billion
- SAS France: Airbus, Oct 2007, \$6.1 billion
- Payroll & benefits: State of CA., Feb 2013, \$254 million
- Supply Chain: Dept. of Defense, U.S. Air Force, Nov 2012, \$1 billion
- Dreamliner: Boeing Commercial, Jan 2013, \$12 billion
- Banking: Northern Rock Asset Mgt, Dec 2012, 270 million £

available worlds. Most recently, we are building our own worlds and attaching our technology seamlessly. Most of these applications are for clients who wish to rehearse "actual" projects which are capital intensive and where failure is not an option.

With a series of research awards from the National Science Foundation we are returning to the idea of Project Management as a skilled profession and using our accelerated learning approach for products focused on developing the capability to be an "expert". It is a suite of virtual complex projects intended to develop

capabilities in project managers that research shows ensures success.

The product is essentially a virtual world in which there are fully functioning complex companies with complicated projects that will contribute to the companies' success. A complete world economy runs in the background, the companies reside in different parts of a fictional "world" and do business with each other in a fully enrich global context. Each company has its own website (accessible from inside the "world"), internal documents, unfolding news events and automated financial metrics.

People learn through trial and error doing simple to complex projects, all trying to make their companies successful. The companies are rich enough in detail that a nearly unlimited range of projects can be done in each company for years, with learners taking on increasingly complex challenges involving a wide range of dimensions (e.g. finances, global expansion, cultural challenges, acquisitions, etc).

***The challenges are of the kind research has shown develops significant expertise in complex project management***

The projects are significant; the exercises take weeks for teams to complete (working two-three hours a week as a team) and few do well the first time through. However, so far everyone learns from this experience and all do markedly better the second time through, developing key capabilities along the way without having to fail in real life.

The early success of the trials indicates that with learning of this kind, ***project failure may never have to happen again***



*Screenshots from the Agricultural/Pharma Project Management Company*





Period: 2  
Minute: 34  
Group: Dev





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#### PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

- [Orientation Guide](#) (click to download)
- [Project Information](#) (click to download)
- [Project Charter](#) (click to download)
- [Budget, Financial Model](#) (click to download)
- [Country Profiles](#) (click to download)
- [Seven Keys](#) (click to download)

#### MEMOS

- [Agricultural Risks](#) (click to download)
- [Loans and Finances](#) (click to download)
- [Progress and Seven Keys](#) (click to download)
- [Activation Center #4](#) (click to download)

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