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The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

016: Keep the Customer/End-User Involved

The Standish Group, in its 1998 **Chaos Report**, identifies user involvement as No. 1 in its Top Ten List of project key success factors. Yet many project managers shy away from this obvious tip, or, at the most, meet the customer at the start of the project to define requirements and will not 'converse' with him/her again until much later in the project, only to find a very uninformed, unpleased, and distressed party (and much to do to regain his/her trust).

User involvement must be more than that. Successful project managers have realized long ago that, in this changing world of us, customers/users also change their mind along the way and must also understand that conditions in the project environment change for all sort of uncontrollable reasons. Both the project manager and his/her customer minds must be 'in sync', preferably in a continuous manner, in order for the former to satisfy the latter. Thus, get and keep your customer involved in your project as much as humanly possible and you will automatically get, time after time, high quality deliverables (and a highly satisfied customer) while keeping the risks of not meeting requirements as low as possible.

Continuous end-user involvement: the obvious road still less traveled!

Project e-Tip provided by reader **Claude Emond**. If you want a graphical illustration of how this might work, Claude suggests you ponder over the two figures presented at www.qualiscope.ca/familiar_vs_new_way.pdf

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