

Global Project Strategy (011) (603) 862-3374

*After spending \$10 million on a \$57 million movie Sony Pictures pulls the plug.*

## How to Kill a Project Hollywood Style

The list of projects that should have been killed but in fact were not killed is long. How about Merck's Vioxx, Denver Baggage Handling system, or even Hershey's ERP project disaster.

Headed for failure these projects offer many clues about their fate along the way. But those working on the project are often too busy to recognize the significance of the clues.

And ... here comes the incentive or disincentive ... nobody gets promoted for killing a project. So they continue.

Well, last month we got wind of tough decision to put a potentially losing

project out of its misery.

Sony pictures decided to stop production on Moneyball, just days before shooting was scheduled to begin and after it had already spent \$10 million on a movie budgeted for \$57 million.

Moneyball, a baseball story of how the Oakland Athletics general manager figured out how to build a winning team using low cost players, was facing more than its share of trouble.

According to a story in the New York Times, Sony responded to several clues that they were headed in the wrong direction.

There were several different scripts ... one more documentary and the other more artsy. Sony was excited about neither of them.

Obtaining the approval of Major league baseball to authenticate the movie also proved problematical.

Add to this a director that did not work well with others, competition from another baseball movie that Sony was about to shoot, unexciting prospects for attracting overseas theatergoers who are not mad about US baseball movies, and the studio decided to throw in the towel.

*You can confront the boss but focus on the job and the company not on personalities.*

## How to Deal With a Tough Boss

We have all had tough bosses. They rule with an iron fist, do things their own way, bully those who report to them, and force underlings to do more work with fewer resources.

Tough bosses can be very effective in getting the work out, but few staff can put up with this kind of pressure or abuse in the long run.

What then should you do to protect yourself?

First never argue with boss. If you feel angry refrain from saying things you will later regret.

As in all conflict situations, first think about what is going on in the bosses head and the pressures that he or she is under.

If you choose to confront

the boss, do it in very measured way. Plan what you are going to say, and never talk about how you are suffering from the demands of the job. Instead, focus on the work and the company. Make recommendations on how working conditions could improve and how these changes could improve morale and increase productivity.