

## Can SDA still add value on projects deemed to be 'not risky?'

Are projects ever without risk? Even when the project is perceived by the team to be "not risky", SDA still brings value and insight, even peace of mind, alongside surprising additional opportunity for strategic delivery partners.

***"Make plans and God laughs".*** Whatever your spiritual beliefs, we find that plans deemed to be without risk are often the result of misaligned expectations or experiences. It is natural for project teams, immersed in their planning, to be overly optimistic, or fail to see the wood for the trees. Teams who have put in months of planning can be protective of their work. Where SDA has been used as a supporting or sense-checking methodology, the results have at the very least offered senior management and strategic delivery partners confidence in the plan but usually also bring some insight into areas that benefit from an external view or more robust analysis.

### **WITHOUT SDA, HOW CAN PROJECT LEADERS BE CONFIDENT THERE IS NO RISK?**

*SDA brings peace of mind but as this example shows, it also brings additional value and new project potential to strategic partnerships.*

Recently a strategic partner was looking to balance the confidence the project team were bringing to a project against the doubts of the senior management team – largely caused because they had had their fingers burned several times in the recent past in similar circumstances on other engagements.

Utilising the SDA methodology did identify that the project was ok-ish! Against a critical milestone that was four months away, a delay of several weeks was indicated. While such a delay might be considered acceptable in some cases, there is already an

### **Planning for Unforeseen Risks**

Of course, every project can be affected by events or circumstances that are unseen or out of our direct control. All risks should be considered proactively – here's how to ensure even unlikely scenarios are considered: <https://www.de-risk.com/avoiding-black-swans/>

advantage in knowing this information, As always, early identification of risk is highly beneficial; with time, most risks can be managed but issues emerging just before critical milestones are generally unmanageable. In this particular situation the few weeks delay, while not disastrous, could be very painful. Obviously, there is pain for the end-client, but for the strategic delivery partner, **the insight brought significant value to protect from penalties and delayed payment if the strategic partner was causing the delay.**

## OPENING THE DOOR TO MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRATEGIC ADVISERS

In this case, the risk was being caused by the end-client and not by the strategic delivery partner. This led the strategic partner to be “relaxed” about the outcome. And yet, this is always the wrong response because it misses key opportunities that arise.

We were able to point out that there are both tangible and intangible benefits to be gained by “leaning-in”. The intangible benefit is the strengthening of the relationship by working together to identify and resolve the risk. The tangible benefit is the additional revenue the strategic adviser can earn by helping the client fix the risk that they were unable to fix themselves, due to lack of specific skills and resources.

Time and again this is where SDA methodology delivers additional, often unforeseen benefits. For the very small investment to complete an SDA analysis, even ‘small’ risks are identified and managed at a minimum return. The additional benefit is the potential for further revenue by helping their client to manage the additional risks identified. For more on how SDA brings value to strategic partners click here: <https://www.de-risk.com/strategic-partners/>

It’s worth noting that in approximately 9 out of 10 cases where De-RISK has been asked to look at ‘non-risky’ projects, SDA does in fact show them to be very risky. However, if SDA shows everything to be on track, then least senior management have the peace of mind they were looking for and get to sleep at night!

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**For specific insights into the engagement multiplier aspect of SDA, particularly when working in long-term client relationships, read here:**

<https://www.de-risk.com/multiplying-engagements-in-long-term-client-relationships/>