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### New Data Identifies Key Challenges to Successful Project Management in the I.T sector; Greater Attention to Skills Assessment and Development Needed

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Managing complex projects is the most pressing issue for project managers in the information technology industry, with 56 per cent of participants choosing this response, according to new data from ESI International.

The figures have been released from the company's Business Challenges and Hot Topics survey<sup>1</sup>, which covered various levels of government as well as several other industries including financial services, aerospace and defence, insurance, manufacturing, pharmaceutical and healthcare. Shortfalls in programme management and business analysis skills highlight many of the survey respondents' concerns. Among the results are:

When managing projects, the most pressing issue is managing complex projects, with 44 per cent of participants choosing this response. Close behind come • adapting to changing requirements' (42 per cent) and • developing proper metrics to effectively track progress and outcomes' (41 per cent).

When managing programmes or project portfolios, the most pressing issue, cited by 53 per cent of participants, is responding to organisational and environmental changes that impact the programme. Next was • prioritising projects within a programme or portfolio' (45 per cent).

When managing business or project requirements, the most pressing issue (38 per cent) is communicating effectively with team members and stakeholders. A similar number (36 per cent) selected both • developing and improving business analysis competencies' and • integrating project management and business analysis roles/functions'.

"The survey findings are important for all organisations because of the essential role projects play in driving organisations forward - from organisational change to new product development. Good project management drives success and, important at this economic juncture, helps organisations do more with less," said J. LeRoy Ward, ESI executive vice president.

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The survey also showed differences in project management challenges between the government and commercial sectors.

Managing global projects or dealing with cultural issues was cited as a greater concern to commercial organisations (17 per cent) than to government entities (five per cent).

Managing risk of high -profile projects is a pressing issue for 36 per cent of government sector respondents, but only for 26 per cent of commercial sector respondents.

When defining requirements, implementing a solution development methodology or determining which one best fits the organisation was cited as a more pressing issue to government sector respondents (33 per cent) than to commercial sector respondents (22 per cent).

Notes to editors:

1

This online survey was conducted in February 2008. Responses were received from 190 US-based senior managers and executives responsible for their organisation's project management, business analysis, IT, programme/portfolio management, contract management/procurement/sourcing management, or learning and development/training, among other key responsibilities. Not all 190 respondents answered every question.

ESI International. ESI, a subsidiary of Informa plc (LSE:INF), helps people around the world improve the way they manage projects, contracts, requirements and vendors. In addition to ESI's more than 100 courses delivered in 18 languages at more than 75 locations worldwide, ESI offers eight certificate programmes through our educational partner, The George Washington University in Washington. Founded in 1981, ESI's worldwide headquarters are in Arlington, Va, USA. To date, ESI's programmes have benefited more than 950,000 professionals worldwide.

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