Information Systems Analysis & Design (M8748)

Tutorial 2 Answer

1. Why do users, clients and developers disagree on the nature and causes of the problems in information systems development?

   They differ in their view of the problems because their view of the meaning and purpose of Information System development also differs.

2. What are the main underlying causes of problems in information systems development?

   Flynn gives these as the main reasons:
   - The wrong problem is addressed
   - Wider issues are ignored
   - Incorrect analysis
   - The project is started for the wrong reason
   - Users change their minds
   - Changes in the environment
   - The implementation is not feasible
   - Poor control by managers.

3. Define quality.

   The simplest definition is 'fitness for purpose'. Since it can be hard to identify the purpose, a better alternative is 'meeting all user requirements, both stated and implied'.

4. What are the main differences between quality problems and productivity problems?

   Quality problems affect the nature of what is achieved. Productivity problems determine when, and whether, anything at all will be achieved.

5. Why do the requirements drift once a project is underway?

   For a number of reasons, some worse than others:
   - Circumstances and needs may change over time
   - Users may ask for more when they see what can be done
   - Managers may fail to keep control of the project scope

6. What can be the results of ignoring the organizational context of an information system?

   The system may address irrelevant problems. It may not fit the way that people work. It may be unsuitable for its environment. It may be out of date before delivery. Political difficulties may lead to delay or cancellation.

7. Define Stakeholder.

A stakeholder has an interest in a project because they are (or will be) affected by its progress or by its results.

8. What ethical issues might be involved in setting up online shopping system that has links to an organization's management information systems?

One obvious issue here is the privacy of the customer — in what ways will their purchases and shopping behavior be stored, analyzed and reported? Who will use this information, and how? On-line shopping in itself raises other questions, some of which are at least partly ethical in scope. For example: what is the nature of the community in which shoppers will engage, and how does this affect social relationships in the wider world? What is the effect on levels of employment within the organization? How is the working environment changed? What are the effects on career possibilities for employees?