

**Gary Klein’s Premortem Technique**

**Adapted from Gary Klein’s (2007) Harvard Business Review Article “Performing a Project Premortem”**

**And Sutton and Rao’s (2014) Book Scaling Up Excellence**

1. Divide your contributors (i.e. the people giving you input) into two groups: Group one imagines the initiative, plan of action, or decision a year from now as a huge success. Group two imagines the initiative, plan of action, or decision one year from now as a big failure.

2. People in both groups work INDEPENDENTLY AND AS INDIVIDUALS (no group work, yet) to derive candid reasons for success or failure. Instruct everyone to be as detailed and candid as possible.

3. Each person in the failure group reads their list of reasons for failure out loud to the rest of the failure group (or to the entire group, if your overall number of contributors is small). Collate the reasons for failure among people in the failure group. Do the same process for people in the success group.

4. Share the collated results from each group with everyone in the room.

5. Via group discussion, use the reasons from both groups to adjust your initiative, plan of action, or decision.

6. If your premortem reveals insurmountable roadblocks, go back to the drawing board on your plan or initiative, or rethink your decision.