THE CEO'S IT PROJECT APPROVAL CHECKLIST

15 Essential Questions to Ask Before Committing Company Funds

Project Information

Organization: _____

Project Name: _____

Proposed Software / Technology: _____

Proposed Vendor: _____

Estimated Total Investment: ₦_____

Executive Project Sponsor: _____

Assessment Date: _____

Completed By: _____

How to Use This Checklist

Review each question and select one response based on the available evidence.

- **Yes:** Adequately addressed and documented.
- **Partially:** Some preparation exists, but improvements are needed.
- **No:** Not yet addressed.
- **Unknown:** Further clarification or evidence is required.

Important: Select *Yes* only when satisfactory evidence exists. Verbal assurances, assumptions, and unverified vendor promises are not sufficient.

The 15-Question Checklist

PART ONE - BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
1	**What specific business problem are we trying to solve?** Have we documented the problem and why the investment is necessary?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	**How will we know whether the project has succeeded?** Have we defined measurable business benefits and success indicators?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	**Have we considered other ways to solve this problem?** Have we compared reasonable alternatives before selecting the proposed solution?	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART TWO - PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND PREPARATION

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
4	**Do we clearly understand and document what the new system must do?** Have essential requirements, scope, and deliverables been defined and approved?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	**Have the people who will use the system been involved?** Have affected departments and employees participated in requirements and implementation planning?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	**Have we planned how the new system will work with our existing systems and data?** Have integration, data quality, migration, and verification requirements been assessed?	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART THREE - BUDGET AND FINANCIAL READINESS

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
7	**Do we know the full cost of this project?** Have we considered software, implementation, migration, training, support, and recurring expenses?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	**Does the expected business value justify the investment?** Have we evaluated financial returns, operational benefits, and the assumptions supporting them?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	**What happens if the project costs more or takes longer than planned?** Have we established contingency funding, expenditure controls, and intervention procedures?	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART FOUR - SOFTWARE AND VENDOR SELECTION

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
10	**Have we verified that the proposed vendor can deliver?** Have we checked relevant experience, client references, implementation personnel, and support capability?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	**Does the contract clearly protect our business interests?** Are deliverables, milestones, testing, payments, support, data rights, and exit arrangements clearly defined?	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART FIVE - DATA SECURITY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
12	**How will our business and customer information be protected?** Have we addressed access controls, security, privacy, and applicable compliance requirements?	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	**What happens if the new system fails or becomes unavailable?** Do we have credible continuity, backup, recovery, and vendor response arrangements?	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART SIX - PROJECT OWNERSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION READINESS

No.	CEO's Approval Question	Yes	Partially	No	Unknown
14	**Who is personally accountable for delivering the expected business results?** Have we appointed a business sponsor and defined project management, reporting, and decision authority?	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	**Are our employees and organization truly ready for implementation?** Are training, change management, rollout plans, departmental readiness, and final approval conditions addressed?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Assessment Summary

Response	Number of Questions
Yes	_____ / 15
Partially	_____ / 15
No	_____ / 15
Unknown	_____ / 15

Total	**15**

How to Interpret the Results

Mostly Yes - Potentially Ready for Approval

The project may be ready to proceed to the next approval stage, provided all critical requirements are satisfied and supporting documentation has been reviewed.

One or More Partially - Conditional Approval May Be Appropriate

Identify the gaps, assign responsible officers, and establish deadlines. Limit commitments until material conditions have been satisfied.

Important No or Unknown - Further Review Required

Do not grant unconditional approval where essential requirements, costs, vendor capability, contractual protections, security, business continuity, or project accountability remain unresolved.

There is no automatic passing score. A project with 14 Yes responses and one unresolved critical security issue may present greater risk than a project with several minor gaps. Management must evaluate the significance of each finding.

Outstanding Issues and Corrective Actions

Question No.	Issue or Missing Evidence	Responsible Officer	Resolution Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Attach additional corrective-action records where necessary.

CEO's Investment Approval Decision

Based on the completed checklist and supporting evidence:

☐ **PROCEED - Approve the Project**

The proposed investment is sufficiently justified and prepared, with material risks and approval requirements adequately addressed.

☐ **APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

Authorize only the activities or commitments specified below. Outstanding conditions must be completed and verified by authorized management before further commitments.

☐ **POSTPONE APPROVAL**

The project requires additional preparation, clarification, or corrective action before substantial company resources are committed.

Conditions, Restrictions, or Reasons for Decision

_____

_____

_____

Next Review Date: _____

Management Sign-Off

Executive Project Sponsor: _____

Finance Director: _____

IT / Technical Lead: _____

CEO / Approving Executive: _____

Date: _____

Important Executive Reminder

This checklist is designed primarily for investment and implementation approval.

It does not replace detailed requirements analysis, financial due diligence, vendor evaluation, legal review, cybersecurity assessment, or operational acceptance testing.

A separate go-live authorization should confirm that essential training, testing, data migration, security, recovery, and departmental readiness conditions have actually been satisfied before the system is used in normal business operations.

Final Principle

Do not approve an IT project because the software looks impressive, the vendor sounds convincing, or the company has money available.

Approve it only when management can demonstrate that the investment is justified, the risks are understood, responsibilities are clear, and the organization is adequately prepared.

Plan Better. Invest Wisely. Implement Confidently.

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