

## Project Guiding Principles

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1. Define the problem *before* attempting to solve it.
2. Fix the problem, *not* the blame.
3. Use tools that help solve the problem rather than attempting to force the problem to fit the available tools.
4. Define the data model *before* attempting to develop tools to access the data. Conversely, it is impossible to know what should go into the model without understanding what you want out of it.
5. Data are of no value without metadata.
6. Document! Document! Document! Use common English instead of jargon and acronyms, though that has the disadvantage that others may be able to understand you.
7. Difficult as it may be, try to keep management and the Indians all headed in the same general direction.
8. Deadlines set exclusively by management will *never* be met. Get some feedback from the troops as to what is remotely possible before making blue sky promises.
9. Be prepared for earthquakes and other upheavals. They are a sure indicator of high stress levels and, if unrelieved, make catastrophes inevitable.
10. Integrate *all* the hardware, software, and team responsibilities at the *beginning* of the program.
11. Don't believe any more than 10% of any vendors promises, and be even more skeptical of your own. You are never in so much trouble as when you start to believe in your own infallibility.
12. Poor planning is *never* cause for declaring an emergency. However, it is commonly cause for reviewing project management.
13. Projects that give precedence to appearance over substance don't succeed.
14. My way likely isn't the best way. Your way probably isn't extraordinary either. But some combination of both, plus a lot of factors neither one of us considered, is probably a pretty good solution of the problem. Murphy will have a few things to say as well.

## Database Administration

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1. Database development takes about two years; four if you rush it.
2. No model survives first contact with the data.
3. Data are of no value without metadata but the metadata are seldom of value.
4. You will always need more storage devices than you have.
5. If you get a bunch of storage devices, the sysadmin will always want to configure them in a fashion that makes them unsuitable for use with a database.
6. Vision and common sense are the rarest commodities in a database.
7. Management and database often appear to be antonyms.
8. For every problem, management will have an answer that is obvious, simple, and wrong.
9. GIGO: *DBA* — Garbage In, Garbage Out; *Management* — Garbage In, Gospel Out.
10. Replication — GIGO squared.
11. Data mining contains the implicit assumption that the original data contains something of value. See GIGO.
12. Data warehousing is often used to try and hide the shortcomings of the original design.
13. Referential integrity is for wimps who can't control their users or developers.
14. Write-only backups are not as useful as commonly imagined.
15. Speaking-in-tongues is about as useful a communication tool as any other jargon.
16. The latest tool won't solve the problem either and contains new and different bugs.
17. Six months after a new release management will be looking for two years experience with it.