

## Premortem: Prospective Hindsight

1. **Preparation:** include brainstorming materials and any necessary “tools”.
2. **Imagine a Fiasco:** “Oh, no, oh, it’s a failure! Not just any failure, but a complete, total, *embarrassing* disaster. It is *so* bad; no one is talking to each other! Things have gone as wrong as they can go! But this cheap crystal ball keeps buffering and won’t reveal the reason(s) for the failure. The question of the hour is “What could have caused this?”
3. **Generate Reasons for Failure:** Ask each person write down all the reasons they think the failure occurred, giving them just three minutes of quiet time to generate a full list. This is where the differing intuitions of the team members come out. “Each has a unique set of experiences, scars, and mental models they bring. The collective knowledge in the room is far greater than that of any one person.” (Gary Klein)
4. **Affinity Diagram:** Each person shares one item on their list. A facilitator records them on a whiteboard or flipchart paper. After each person has shared one item, continue to go around the room, sharing one item each time, until everyone has exhausted their lists and group them by themes. By the end of this step, the list should include everyone’s concerns. This process liberates people who might otherwise be afraid of looking like they’re not a team player.
5. **Revisit the Plan and Prioritize Risks:** Multi-voting hot dot (or some other method)
6. **Generate Solutions/Interventions:** Solutions and/or interventions should be both proactive as well as present possible back-up plans (any final solutions will include a Responsibility Matrix)
7. **Periodically Review the List**

### Key for Coding Level of Concern:

H = The number of respondents who selected a 6-10 as the level of concern

L = The number of respondents who selected a 1-5 as the level of concern

\_\_\_ #10s = The number of respondents who selected 10 (certain flatline) as the level of concern

Reasons for Failure “What might have caused this?”	Level of Concern	Action Steps to Prevent Failure “What might I/we do differently?”
	<p>Ex) H8 (7 #10s)</p> <p><b>This code means 8 people selected between a 6 and a 10 as the level of concern and 7 of those 8 rated the risk as a 10.</b></p>	