# 10 Steps to ERP Implementation Success

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# Planning an Implementation?

Has your company has decided to implement enterprise resource planning software? You may have concerns around creating organizational disruption, budget overruns, project delays, or worse – a break in business performance, resulting in lost revenue or customers.

All these concerns are valid to a certain degree. The horror stories of improperly implemented ERP solutions are all too familiar, and a failed ERP implementation can take months of backtracking and fixes before you start to see any return on investment.

The good news is that you will undoubtedly see success if you approach your ERP implementation with a well-designed strategy and a realistic plan. If you are looking for ERP implementation success, we've included a checklist with 10 critical best practices you need to follow to make sure your ERP deployment runs smoothly and that you get the most out of your new system.

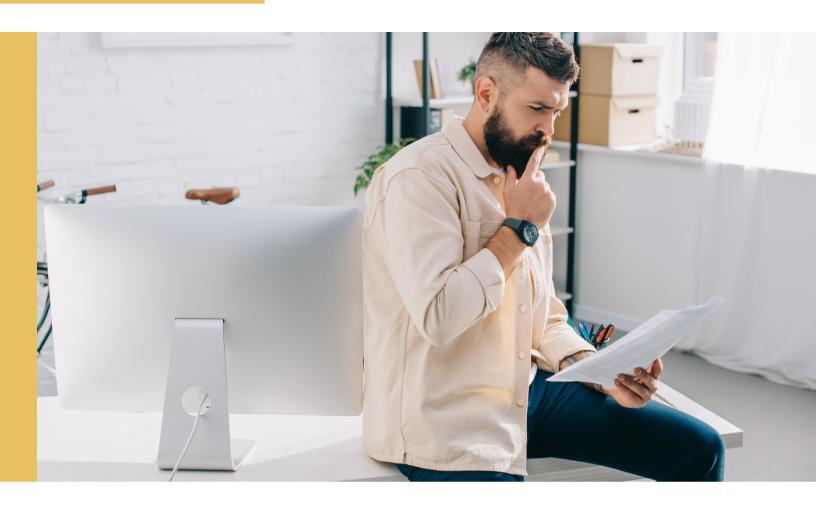**Kwixand**
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# Benefits of ERP

An enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution is the backbone of your organization as it manages and integrates all your critical business processes. An ERP system can make your organization's day-to-day operations and long-term planning more efficient if properly implemented.

The business benefits of an ERP system include:

- **Reduced Operating Costs**
- **Increase in Efficiency**
- **Ability to Scale Easily**
- **Improved Financial Visibility**
- **Simplified Reporting**
- **Optimized Supply Chains**

In a nutshell, ERP systems are vital for helping businesses of all sizes and industries operate more efficiently, improve collaboration, and advance business productivity. But the effectiveness of any ERP solution can be significantly impacted by its implementation. This means you need to get it right the first time.

# Common ERP Implementation Challenges

Most people are aware of at least one ERP implementation horror story. There are a lot of them out there, and it's said that around 50% of ERP implementations can fail the first time around. We've rounded up some of the top common challenges companies face during the ERP implementation process.

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# Challenge #1 - Going Over Schedule

It's extremely common for an ERP implementation project to take longer than expected. A lot of times this occurs because of unrealistic expectations, lack of resources, or scope creep.

# Challenge #2 - Going Over Budget

Many ERP implementations are completed over budget, which can occur due to an unrealistic expectation for a project plan or cost estimates, hidden costs that may arise, or when the project's complexity is underestimated. Scope creep is another contributing factor here.

# Challenge #3 - Failure to Deliver ROI

Sometimes companies don't achieve their expected business benefits after an ERP project. This usually occurs when there is a mismatch between the business software and business processes and inadequate definition of functional requirements or unrealistic ROI expectations.

# 10 Steps to Ensure a Successful ERP Implementation

○ **Have you defined your ERP needs?**

Do you know why your organization needs an ERP system? Understanding the reasons behind why you need an ERP is crucial. You should evaluate the issues your organization faces and how an ERP system will help address those.

○ **Have you defined your processes & requirements?**

You need to know your specific business processes, their strengths and weaknesses, and what you want them to look like going forward to establish precise requirements that are tied to your business goals. Quantify the importance of each issue in terms of monetary impact. Defining your ERP project's requirements and operational needs as early as possible helps prevent hidden costs or project overruns.

○ **Have you set clear KPIs for your project?**

After you have a solid understanding of key requirements, identify specific key performance indicators (KPIs), along with baselines and targets, to help track and measure the success of your ERP implementation after go-live.

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## Do you have the right ERP project team?

Establish a strong project team for ERP implementation success. Typically, these are representatives of key business groups who understand business processes, work well with others, and are respected by executive management. Your team should also include a skilled project manager and an executive sponsor, who can help adjust business priorities, get more buy-in, and pull in more resources if required.

## Do you have executive buy-in?

You'll need support from the top management to address potential issues and problems that may arise during your ERP implementation project. Regular reviews with executive members can help managers address issues are they arise and keep the project from slowing down.

## Do you have a skilled ERP implementation partner?

Research and choose an ERP partner that not only has the expertise and experience in your industry but also aligns with your company's overall goals and values. When you're picking a partner, research and interview their customer references, and confirm that they understand how your ERP system will support your business processes.

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## ○ Is your master data clean?

It's best to begin assessing your data's accuracy early on, as it is an essential factor of project success. The master data must be complete and accurate since it affects all ERP implementation phases, including testing and training your end-users. Before a data migration, establish consistent data definitions and formats and make sure you have consistent data practices across the board.

## ○ Is there a change management plan in place?

An effective change management plan will help your employees adapt to the new ERP system faster, with a higher success rate. A company should set expectations early in the process. Begin by identifying who will be affected by the change, creating a communications plan for stakeholders, and communicating what changes are coming coupled with compelling business reasons. Provide frequent project updates and explain the expectations of each employee for the project to succeed.

## ○ Is there a support and training program in place?

There should be a solid training program for employees, based on their roles—for instance, project team training, IT team training, business user training, etc. You should also have an ongoing training program in place for when new employees join the company. After the go-live date, having proper support is also critical, as your employees come across issues and have questions.

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### Are you gathering end-user feedback throughout the project?

Collect feedback from your end-users throughout the entire implementation process for a smoother deployment. This will help you understand how employees work and interact with others and their daily obstacles in the earlier stages. Feedback will also help guide the implementation so that the system can address real user needs. After the go-live, end-user feedback can help identify the problems and give ideas for future improvements.

# An ERP implementation can be the best decision your company makes.

Implementing an enterprise resource planning system takes time, careful planning, and solid project management. However, when done correctly, the process is well worth the effort and cost as it will drastically transform your business, streamline your operations, boost productivity, along with a host of other business benefits. One of the most significant factors towards the success of your ERP project is choosing the right ERP partner who understands your business needs and challenges and knows how to solve them with the right solution.

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# Checklist: 10 Steps to Ensure a Successful ERP Implementation

- ○ Define your ERP needs

- ○ Define your business requirements early on

- ○ Set clear KPIs

- ○ Pick the right ERP project team

- ○ Secure executive buy-in

- ○ Hire an ERP implementation partner

- ○ Clean up your master data

- ○ Create a change management plan

- ○ Gather end-user feedback throughout

- ○ Establish a support and training program

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# About Kwixand Solutions

Kwixand Solutions provides small and mid-sized businesses with the strategies and solutions they need for successful digital transformation. As a trusted Microsoft Dynamics Partner, we work with clients across various industries to help achieve their business goals and scale with ease. With decades of experience in ERP and cloud technologies, our team of seasoned experts dive deep into the nitty-gritty of your business processes and values and work with you to develop a plan that is designed specifically for your business. We guarantee results - that is our commitment to success.

**Have questions?** Book a free consultation with an ERP implementation specialist >>>

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To learn more about how Kwixand Solutions can help you, drop us a line at info@kwixand.com or give us a call at 1-604-256-5800

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