

# 4 HCM Implementation Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them





## You've completed the challenging process of selecting a human capital management (HCM) solution. Congratulations!

Now, it's time to face the realities of implementation. If yours is like most organizations, the implementation process can be more difficult than expected. If not handled expertly, your project will suffer from delays and increased costs while your team works more hours than they should.

To ensure success, it's helpful to understand the implementation process from an experienced project manager's perspective. Here are four common pitfalls and how to avoid them.

### 1. Lack of buy-in from team members

Most implementation projects follow the same scenario. Someone at the C-level decides that the organization needs a new HCM solution. They're convinced that the new system will improve efficiency and have a positive impact on the bottom line. The contract is signed, and now it's up to members of the HR staff to implement the solution.

Because staff may have had little to no input during the planning and selection process, they tend to have a low level of buy-in. Besides, their workday is full. They're already busy, or even overworked. As far as they're concerned, the last thing they need is another project to oversee or participate in. It's hard for them to care. And, some team members may be more than a bit upset about it.

#### Avoiding this pitfall

Remember that HR team members are stakeholders. And, a stakeholder can be a resource or a roadblock along the path to completing a project. Stakeholders that aren't fully on board with a project are roadblocks. Roadblocks lead to poor implementation, delayed implementation, and failed projects.

It takes unique expertise to tailor an implementation process and communicate that process to a team of stakeholders in a way that helps them balance the new project with their existing workload. If you've assigned a staff member to manage the project, they probably don't know what strategies to use to get the buy-in they need from their implementation team. The right project management consultant has the knowledge and experience necessary to get a team fully prepared and willing to work on a project.



## I 2. Lack of preparation

It may not seem obvious, but there are lots of things your implementation team can be doing before the project even starts. Unfortunately, most project leaders wait until the kickoff meeting with the HCM vendor to begin taking action. This reactive approach can have the effect of delaying the project at critical stages. And, any delays due to lack of preparation adds costs to any project.

### Avoiding this pitfall

By taking a proactive approach to preparation you'll find that the project can be more easily managed going forward. Prior to the kickoff meeting, your team should already be evaluating relevant business processes to ensure that their requirements are valid and that the team understands them.

Also, there is a data-collection component that can be started on immediately. It's essential that the employee data is clean, accurate, and ready to be loaded into the new system.

Additionally, training can already be taking place. Not only does training at this stage give the project a head start, but training also helps achieve buy-in from stakeholders because they can see and feel the new system in action.

## I 3. Poor prioritization

Prioritization at a strategic level is crucial. This particularly true when an organization has two or more independent or dependent projects that are being performed in parallel. Poor prioritization decreases success rates of projects, decreases the alignment of strategic goals, creates doubts when the project's leadership is faced with decisions, and undermines the creation of an execution mindset and culture.

### Avoiding this pitfall

Prioritization must be managed from the outset. A well-communicated message surrounding priorities helps align projects in an organization to its strategic objectives. When this alignment is clear, corporate and project leadership are on the same page and project decisions are easier to make.

Having a structured project plan helps with prioritization. This plan sets clear expectations regarding the resources that must be dedicated to the implementation project and how those resources will be spent. This plan must be constructed with a holistic approach that takes into consideration the project's timeline and the existing workload.

## I 4. Insufficient issue resolution

There are always issues to be dealt with when a new software system is deployed. What typically happens is that, because of the way they are reported, those issues fall through the cracks and are never satisfactorily resolved. The reporter may or may not get a response. If they do get a response, that response may not be adequate. This is particularly true when issues are reported through email or some other informal system.

### Avoiding this pitfall

The success of any project requires a reliable system for reporting and resolving issues. The system must clearly document each issue in one location. The issue log must be reviewed daily and communicated to the vendor. And, there must be a mechanism for issue follow-up and escalation as needed. There must also be an understanding with the vendor regarding the expected turnaround time for getting issues resolved.

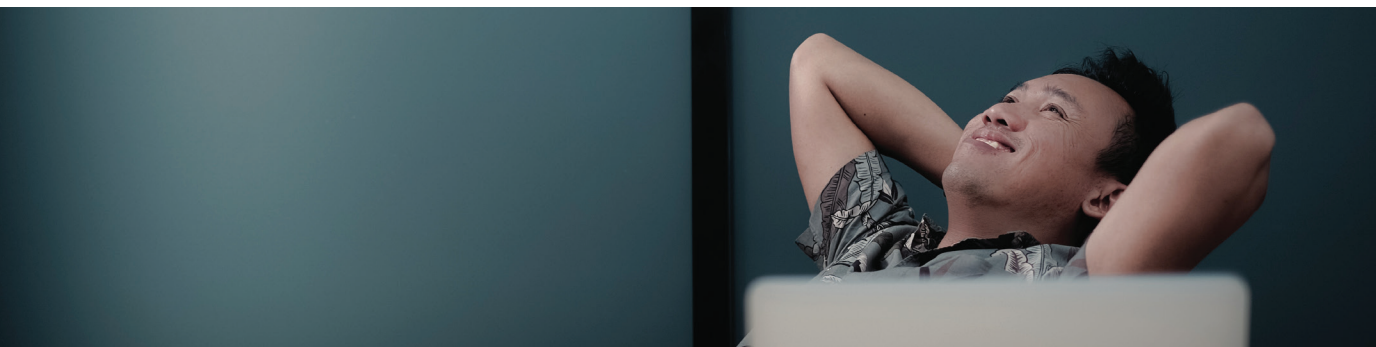


## The true cost of poor project management

Organizations that don't avoid the pitfalls discussed above experience weaker project outcomes. Their projects may not meet the original goals and business intent. Or, their projects may be delayed or fail altogether, creating a substantial monetary loss.

On the other hand, according to the Project Management Institute, organizations that effectively use formal project management practices are 2.5 times more successful with implementation and waste 13 times less money than organizations that don't.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, it pays to have effective project management in place.

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## Seequelle is your HCM project management partner

As your HCM project management partner, Seequelle's role is to keep your project on track towards success. We specialize in supporting our clients with effective stakeholder management, proactive preparation, procrastination limitation, and efficient issue management.

Not only are our project managers PMP certified, they also have deep consulting experience. This means that they do more than just manage your project with a customized, holistic approach. They also have the technical knowledge they need to get "hands-on" with your HCM system to make it work for you.

To learn more about how Seequelle can help you avoid the pitfalls of HCM implementation, [contact us](#) through our website or call 877-878-3983. **Our team is here to help.**

1. Project Management Institute. [The Pulse of the Profession: The High Cost of Low Performance](#), 2016.

