

Four Keys to a Successful Implementation

A robust and useful HR/Payroll system (also called HRIS or HCM) can quickly elevate the effectiveness and success of both HR and Payroll. However, even the highest-rated system can create headaches or bottlenecks if poorly implemented or not fully adopted throughout the organization. Implementing a new system is a major undertaking. You can achieve a successful implementation and avoid potential pitfalls with the right plan in place.

Here are the four keys to a successful implementation process plan.

1. Review Your Requirements

An initial, deep dive assessment is the starting place for a successful implementation. What specifically do you want and need to get out of the system—not just today, but also in the future? Building a solution with the flexibility to handle growth or other currently unknown organizational changes means your investment will pay off for many years.

2. Evaluate and Lock Down Your Resources

During an HR/Payroll system implementation, you will need individuals from Finance and IT to participate in the project. Having managers or employees from a few “end user” departments also helps ensure the system is well tested and each department’s unique perspective is considered. It is very important that each of these individuals feels their time is valued and that their participation is well-planned and streamlined.

Establish clear guidelines regarding the duties of each member of the team. When the project begins, the vendor team will outline the tasks and responsibilities of “the client.” Don’t be put off or caught off guard by this. Active participation during the implementation results in much deeper knowledge transfer, and ultimately, a better system.

Some items on the project timeline may need to be done by multiple people, so a clear understanding of who is best for the job is imperative. Every member of the internal team should know what their responsibilities are as well as which tasks the vendor will complete. A clear and detailed plan helps to ensure that every task—both internal and through the vendor—is completed within the expected timeframe.

3. Determine Priorities and Deadlines

Implementations are a lot of work—some of it is “high level” and strategic, while the rest of it is full of tedious, time-consuming, and exacting tasks. All of it is critical. Successful internal resources will wear many hats during the process. Each person involved in the implementation team will have their regular job as well as implementation responsibilities.

To avoid burnout, executive and senior management must realize that those assigned to the project need additional support. This will require all members of the team to have set deadlines for each deliverable and activity to which they are assigned, and an understanding of the level of effort each one requires. Ensuring that every task is matched with a team member who has time to complete the work helps the entire team meet all of its deadlines.

4. Take a Moderate Approach

Make sure you aren't implementing too much at one time. When you see a great new product, you want everything. You need it! But it pays to take a step back and look at what you can realistically do today, within the set deadline and with the assigned team. You can (and must) continue to test and implement additional features or modules to ensure your company is getting a full return on investment.

Without these steps in place, deadlines will be missed, implementation budgets can swell beyond expectations, and your new system may not give you what you need. Implementing a new HR/Payroll system impacts everyone! But there is help out there if you need it.

Whether you take the task on internally using these tips, or hire a partner who can bring their implementation knowledge and experience to the project, your company will benefit through enhanced productivity now and in the future.



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