

Top Pitfalls that Derail Implementation

Workforce Insight, Inc.

Most workforce management technology acquisitions have ROI expectations that are built on the promise of substantial gains and performance improvements. As they should.

In reality, many organizations find themselves knee deep in a sluggish or stalled implementation process, where executive support has waned, user acceptance is poor and marginal gains are limited to enhancements in payroll accuracy and efficiency.

The promise of real-time “dashboard” insight to labor data and performance metrics fades, as does the prospect of truly aligning the workforce with corporate strategic goals.

With so much to gain, why do so many labor technology implementations become easily derailed? A review of the top pitfalls can help organizations avoid common mistakes – any one of which can bring projects to a screeching halt.

Company Profile

Workforce Insight is the leading provider of strategic workforce management consulting and implementation services that enable global companies to transform how they use technology to better manage their workforce.

The company's consultants and industry strategists are recognized leaders and visionaries in the workforce management field. Workforce Insight has been acclaimed for helping large dispersed organizations deploy solutions for time & attendance, labor scheduling, leave management and workforce intelligence that yield optimal performance returns.

Workforce Insight's clients include: Kaiser Permanente, Dean Foods, White Wave, Catholic Health Initiatives, National Public Radio (NPR), US Gypsum, Texas Industries, Archstone-Smith. Further information is available at www.workforceinsight.com

1

No Executive Sponsorship

Workforce management systems impact the entire organization. They cross all functional departments, transform business processes and affect every employee. Executive sponsorship is critical to the success of any labor technology initiative. Not just at the concept phase, but in driving support throughout. Lack of this is the #1 pitfall and the main reason implementations fail. Executive sponsors provide leadership and communicate the vision that drives the agenda. They have the authority to align functional leaders and demand time, resources and support for the project from start to finish.

2

Poorly Defined Goals

Strategic goals and processes should set the agenda, not technology. All too often, front-end business assessments are meager at best. And in many cases the AFPs, purchase orders and business cases are prepared from vendor-driven assessments. Purchasing a workforce management solution before goals, practices and requirements have been accurately defined can quickly turn powerful solutions into expensive time clocks. Poorly defined projects with no clear objective often have timelines and staffing models with no basis. They quickly fall into survival mode or a race to the finish, and the potential for harnessing powerful tools and insight quickly disappears. And when processes aren't clearly defined, testing and validation suffers, leading to a poor product launch and a pile of new hurdles.

3

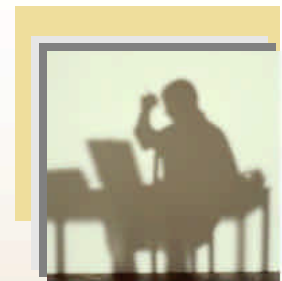
Lack of communication & groundwork for change

Without executive sponsorship and clear definition of goals, the perceived objective becomes “just install it”. All too often this results in education that is limited to end users at the final stage of deployment. Even with optimal circumstances, projects will fail without early communication of goals and expectations of how solutions will impact the organization. Effective communication requires the identification of all stakeholders, sensitivity to cultural backlash and translation of goals into benefits, conveying the “WIFM” for each.

4

Insufficient Training

Even the most carefully executed implementation plans will fail if training is limited to the final stage, restricted to end users or handled with inferior resources. Lack of long-term training is equally detrimental, even when initial training is sufficient. Optimizing workforce management solutions is an iterative process, and performance improvements can only be achieved when user acceptance is high and training is accessible throughout the organization.



5

Scope Creep

Scope creep is often a symptom of poorly defined goals or limited discovery, but worth mentioning as a common pitfall. When the scope or statement of work is defined, the project team is off and running. As new requirements surface and existing ones change, the initial plan and configuration scarcely resembles the end result. When the scope begins to creep, so do expenses, timelines and dissatisfaction.

The Good News: with expertise and insight even derailed projects can get back on track, pitfalls can be avoided and labor technology solutions can yield substantial gains in performance and return on investment. ■