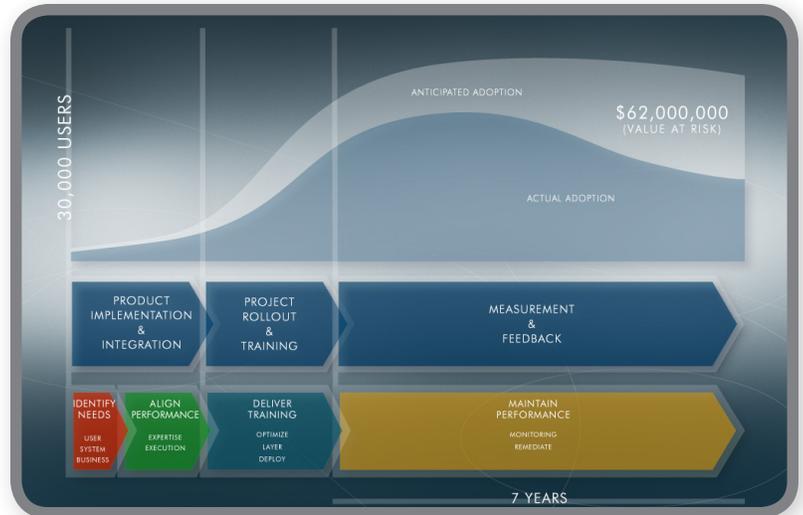# ASSURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR ERP IMPLEMENTATION

According to analysts, some 50% of ERP projects fail to produce even half of the anticipated business impact, largely as a result of the inability to effectively assure end-user performance. Even well-organized ERP software implementations experience gaps in business process change and training that leave the very new—and very expensive—system under utilized. The result: higher risk to the project's desired return on investment (ROI), dissatisfied members of the executive team, and legal action against system integrators and major software firms. This white paper offers insights into best practices used by leading firms to avoid these risks and to better assure achievement of business expectations.

A holistic approach to training as part of the an ERP implementation reduces risk and improves performance.

BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE ERP ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

Effective organizational change management and training are two key differentiators between best-in-class ERP implementations and those that fail or under-deliver. The list below captures some of the specific change management and training best practices that successful firms use to assure implementation success:

- **DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT PLAN.** Organizational readiness assessments, organizational impact assessments, training materials tailored to specific client business processes, and employee communications are all essential to any successful ERP implementation. In addition, an effective organizational change management plan should focus on the quantitative aspects of benefit realization.

- **BENCHMARK SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE BEFORE LAUNCHING AN UPGRADE OR SYSTEM MIGRATION.** Companies often confuse ERP system shortcomings with issues that relate to business process or organizational breakdowns. Organizations must understand the real root causes of under-performance and lack of business benefits. Common root causes include lack of end-user training, poorly defined business processes, and inadequately defined job roles and responsibilities in the new system.

- **CREATE METRICS THAT TIE DIRECTLY TO THE BOTTOM LINE.** Establish measurable metrics that are tied directly to end-user performance and business impact rather than simply milestones in bringing the system live. Companies that do not conduct post-implementation audits simply do not realize the expected business benefits.

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- **HELP EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND HOW "TO-BE" BUSINESS PROCESSES RELATE TO EXISTING PROCESSES.** Training is ineffective if it doesn't help employees understand the specific ways their jobs will change in the new environment. For example, a change as simple as naming a field "work order" in the new system when employees are used to the term "service order" can create confusion and inefficiencies if employees are not fully trained on the change.

- **FOCUS ON CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINED END-USER PERFORMANCE.** Develop goals that extend beyond the completion project and map through the entire life-cycle of the system. It's important to understand the key roles these elements play in the success of the initiative and to plan, budget and execute for them at every phase of the project.

- **FOSTER THE PERCEPTION OF SUCCESS.** Major ERP implementations are not simply technology initiatives or changes to business processes that enable a firm to achieve its objectives. In fact, business success comes only when every employee who touches the system performs their role and, in turn, assure the system's success. Executive sponsors from every division should be viewed as stakeholders and should understand the goals and responsibilities of the new system. The perception of success drives further success.
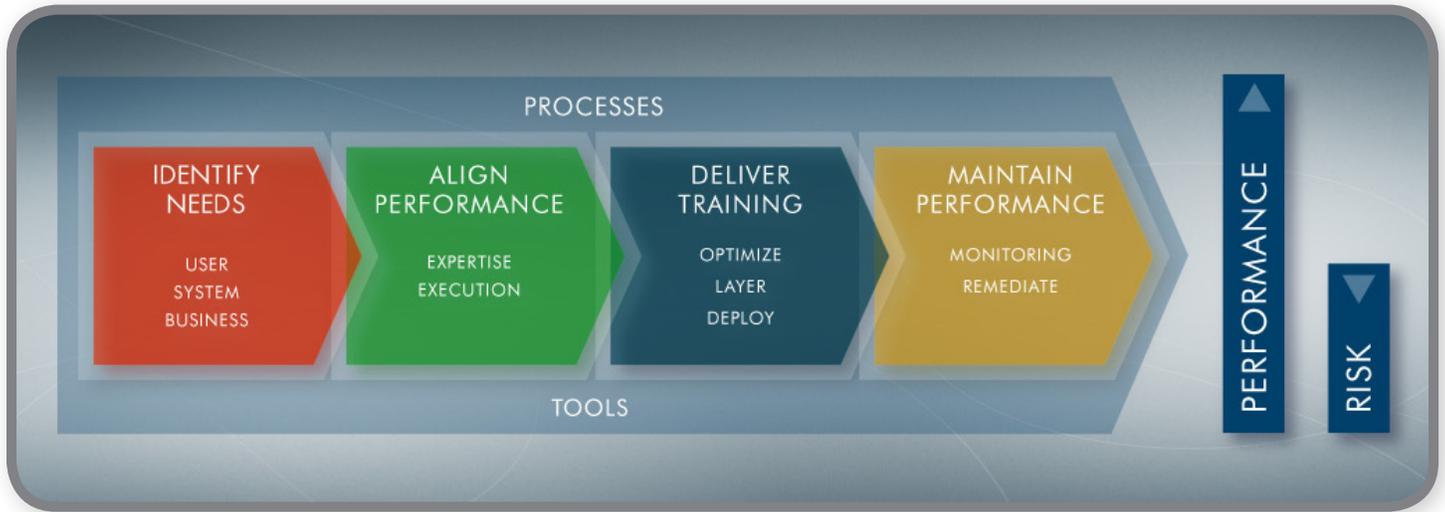
SYSTEMS ASSURE BY ALLEN

Few major developers would consider starting construction of a building without first securing a performance bond for their work. Virtually all major firms insure to protect against business risk, including IT system damages, business interruption, etc. However, most companies don't properly prepare to address the potential problems associated with slow adoption of global IT systems or ineffective usage by suppliers, customers and employees.

The ROI of a large scale system implementation can be heavily impacted by effective end-user adoption. Even incremental improvements in user adoption and productivity can have a dramatic impact in the overall performance of a new system. Training can extend the lifespan of a system through improved usage and on-boarding of new employees and that improved usage can extend the lifespan of a system for years, saving the company millions of dollars. A scalable, holistic approach is essential for effective end-user usage, achieving targeted business objectives and ROI-over the life of the system.

> *"Systems Assure by Allen reduces the risk of project failure and improves return on investment (ROI) failure."*

Developed through Allen's 30 years of experience with global clients, **SYSTEMS ASSURE** is designed specifically to **IMPROVE END-USER PERFORMANCE** and **LOWER THE RISK OF PROJECT FAILURE AND UNACHIEVED ROI**. This service focuses on the gap that exists between the ERP software provider, the software integrator, and the customer. It incorporates best practices in change management, end-user training, compliance and performance monitoring, and assessment and remediation in order to help clients and their systems integrators accelerate deployment, sustain effective usage, and lower the risk of project failure.

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KEY FEATURES OF SYSTEMS ASSURE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

IDENTIFY NEEDS: Systems Assure aligns the most qualified resources with the appropriate tools and infrastructure to best assure accelerated go-live implementations. In addition, we start by defining the performance metrics and behaviors needed to achieve the goals outlined by the CFO, CIO, and change leaders, and then work backwards to build an aligned training and change management program that hits the mark.

ALIGN PERFORMANCE: We recognize that properly trained end users are better able to perform in their work environments because they understand new business processes and can implement these new processes in their actual work environment. As a result, we focus on providing end users with the training and support they need to assure long-term, sustained performance improvement.

DELIVER TRAINING: We work in concert with our clients and their implementation consultants to accomplish key implementation tasks. Our goal is to identify potential issues that can derail an implementation before they occur, and to mitigate those issues as they happen. This cohesive approach builds a stronger, more long-term relationship between the software vendor, the integrator, and the customer, assuring mutual success and positive perception through the initial implementation.

MAINTAIN PERFORMANCE: However, our work doesn't stop with the initial implementation. Instead, the service provides clients with a process to ensure performance is assessed through the life of the system. We remediate end-user problems to ensure that performance is sustained and value is realized—without placing any additional burden on the client's learning or IT organizations. The outcomes are improved client satisfaction and sustained impact on business performance.

To learn more about how Systems Assure by Allen Communication can help make your ERP software implementation a success, visit **www.allencomm.com/consulting-services/systems-assure.aspx**.