



**Common causes of  
software deployment  
failure**

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# Common causes of Software Deployment failure

A brief look at industry trends from the viewpoint of the implementation partner by James Collett SVP Marketing and Strategic Alliances and Nadio Granata Head of Content at makepositive

## So what are the most frequent causes of failure within software deployment?

How many times have you come across a CTO or IT manager who decided on deploying some technology or other, that was meant to revolutionise their business, make the working day shorter and more productive and to make their customers and employees happier?

I once heard Mark Benioff say, "I've never met anyone who goes into IT to simply keep the lights on and systems running."

From a technology perspective we know that most CTO's, managers and their staff in the majority of organisations spend huge amounts of time doing this, rather than on what they aspired to do all those years ago in college which was all about driving innovation, excellence in design, driving change and making life better.....

So why try to drive change? What does 'success' actually look like? Why do some deployments fail and what are the common causes? Is it just a case of getting the end user to adopt the system? Commenting on how some organisations help drive adoption, an experienced Salesforce Account executive once said, and some companies live by the motto, "If it's not in Salesforce it didn't happen." There's a hint of carrot and stick to that statement but, what does it mean to get the best from a solution that is innovative, that can transform an organisation and make lives better in a relatively short period of time?

Most companies that start small, spend their infant years using pretty much any technology as long as it is better than the random spreadsheet approach or even worse, "back of a cigarette packet!" The effects of this culture remain long after expansion and as the company grows, the needs of the employees and customers sparks a desire to move to the world of solution software. So, how to avoid the mistakes of the past? How to at least get line of sight to what success should, could and would look like allowing you to become more innovative and less like a technological caretaker?

In the world of the Salesforce consultancy, as with pretty much any deployment, to get the best from your solution there are some key points that must be addressed. Here's a list of the most commonly identified points of failure for an opportunity/ investment lost:

1. **Lack Of Strategic Vision**
2. **No project team or under-qualified project management**
3. **Not knowing how to measure success**
4. **No clear business process**
5. **No change management process**
6. **Inadequate training**





# Software deployment failure

Every successful project starts with a clear vision of what you want to accomplish. That vision will drive your strategies and decisions at every step of your implementation. What are your business goals? To build long-term relationships, create customer loyalty, increase sales? Your goals should be clear to everyone in your organisation.

**To achieve your vision, it helps to have a project team or steering committee that includes major stakeholders.**

It's a common mistake to assign a single project owner and expect that person to deliver a finished product. To be successful, you need the buy-in and participation of people with various perspectives and skills, including stakeholders from all business units. That way, you can avoid many communication and adoption problems before they start.

As you work to define your process, be aware of too much complexity. You'll want to make it work the way you do. To do that, it's critical to define your business process so you can prioritise what you want, what you don't want and what is a 'nice to have' for further down the line.

**“To be successful, you need the buy-in and participation of people with various perspectives and skills, including stakeholders from all business units”**

What should you measure? How do you know you're on track—and that you're staying on track? That's where key performance indicators (KPIs) come in. KPIs will show the areas in which the project is meeting your goals. They'll also help to identify whether you need to change course. A common mistake here is often to simply stipulate the KPI but neglect the percentage of completion of each KPI along every step of the journey. This can often lead to panic and disruption as the KPI escalates in importance nearer to completion date.

Change is a given. You may find that 6 months after you go live, your solution no longer meets some business needs. For example, territories are realigned, an account has too many unused fields, or you might want to add a great new feature. Having the dexterity within the organisation to be able to adapt to change is a critical success factor. Too much rigidity in an organisation can lead to inconsistency with adoption and therefore reduced impact.

Training is one of the most important things necessary to improve adoption and enforce your business process. Be sure to train users initially and reinforce that training periodically. It's also a good idea to create training resources to support your specific implementation schedule.

One should also consider the quality of the data employed and make steps to ensure it is clean, appropriate and of the highest possible calibre.

Finally, a cardinal sin is not asking for help, not asking for it early, or not knowing who to ask, with over 1000 implementations and thousands of transformational discussions **makepositive** has amazing insight and knowledge that is available to you.

**And of course “if it's not in Salesforce it didn't happen”**





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