



# Implementation 101

Ok, so you are implementing a project. Maybe a big, complex, multi-layered project, or maybe it is a simple, short-term, manageable implementation. Either way, the following advice applies. Most implementations fail based on lack of resources, late or limited stakeholder engagement and unclear objectives (scope creep).

### The Team (WHO)

Engage, define, and communicate the roles of the team. Some maybe working on the project together with their full-time role. Review how realistic that is and consider some of the following questions.

- **Do you have a Project Sponsor?** A project sponsor is usually a senior leader in the business that can be relied upon for counselling, clearing of roadblocks, access to senior meeting time slots and general advice. They can champion your project and provide valuable feedback.
- **Is your team cross-functional?** Often IT projects are run by IT, but a great, cross-functional team ensures you are viewing the implementation from every angle.
- **Have you engaged SME's and 'vocal opponents'?** The best way to manage opposition is to get them involved in the team as Subject Matter Experts. Often, they just need to be heard and often they have valid things to say. Engage them and do it early. Include SME's wherever possible, they are usually passionate and willing contributors.
- **Keep an eye out for influencers.** Every team, every site, every company has them. The people who can influence those around them, in a positive or negative way. Keep an eye out for them and engage them for good, helping to spread the news about a new thing in town.

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## The Responsibilities (WHAT)

It is critical that the 'team' and include your Project Sponsor if you have one, define and agree on the scope of the implementation. Being clear on the objectives makes it easy to assess and define benefits of expansion of scope if needed, or the tougher decision of scope narrowing should the objectives become increasingly hard to achieve.

- **Is everyone clear on their role in the team?** And this is a big one. Project implementation resources are usually rather thin, add to that everyone crossing over each other and focusing on the same thing, you will certainly be stretched. Provide clarity and often.
- **Have you outlined your Scope?** Super important is a clear goal which you can revisit every time things seem to be slipping. Use the scope as a filter for all your decision making 'will this decision move us closer to our objective or further away?'
- **Does everyone understand and agree on the Scope?** Especially your Sponsor. Are you all on the same page? A cohesive Project Unit heading it the same direction is powerful.

## The Timeline (WHEN)

Meeting timeline expectations can be tough, especially at the start of projects as scope is being determined. Here are our top tips.

- **Chunk it down.** Break your project into important stages. What needs to be finished by when?
- **Look for dependencies.** Keep an eye out for any items on your to do list which can only be successfully completed AFTER other items. It helps to keep action deadlines clear and upfront for all items.
- **Outside of your control.** Ensure you have good visibility of those to do items which you cannot control. For example, those items which another department or external provider are responsible for. If these items are lagging keep up the communication including the impact on the project. Use your Project Sponsor if needed to get things moving.
- **Celebrate the wins.** Take time to communicate and celebrate the milestone wins because every single step is important in the scheme of a project.

## Share Drive? (WHERE)

Providing a mutually accessible location for project documentation may seem trivial but it is critical to keeping the team informed, empowered and up to date with a single source of truth. It does not need to be complex; it does not need to be over engineered, but it does need to be easy to navigate, traceable and logical.

## GET MORE ADVICE FROM OUR IMPLEMENTATION TEAM