



Choosing the Right ERP System by the Sage ERP Team

When choosing an enterprise resource planning system, you can't go into the process blind. There's research to be done, and questions to ask, long before decisions can be made. And one of the first places to start asking questions is within your own company.

How can you know what you need if you don't understand your own business? The more you know about how your business processes work, the more you'll know about the ways they can be streamlined, eliminated, improved and altered to make you more productive with ERP software.

To help you get started on all that question-asking, TechRepublic offers the following seven tips for choosing the right ERP system:

1. Conduct a process review. Understand your own business before you can understand how to help it grow and become more profitable. Define and document your business processes, pain points, and strengths. Include what your processes should look like – future state – and the corresponding business requirements
2. Evaluate the fit in terms of technology. Do you have the infrastructure needed to support this particular ERP system? If not, are you willing to invest in it?
3. Understand the total cost of ownership. Hint: It's more than the sticker price. There are upgrades, training costs and other expenses that come along with being the proud owner of an ERP system. You don't want to get stuck with an unexpectedly large bill at the end of the implementation and find yourself running way over budget.
4. Devise and stick to a realistic ERP implementation plan—prior to your final decision on your ERP software. A successful ERP implementation is all about planning.
5. Measure the benefits of the system. If you're not paying attention to what you are (or aren't) getting out of your ERP system, you won't be able to understand how you could potentially alter it to offer great returns. If you want to successfully measure your ROI, you'll need a meaningful metric by which to measure your progress.
6. Consider all your options. An open mind is a key ingredient when choosing the right system – it may come in an unexpected form.
7. Don't be afraid to ask for advice! Many of your colleagues, friends and associates have been through an ERP implementation before, and they'll be happy to help.

Don't be intimidated by the enormous selection of ERP products on the market – celebrate the opportunity to choose the one that will be right for you and your company.