

Whether you're considering a transition to a new ERP system, moving from one ERP system to another, upgrading your current ERP system, or migrating it to the cloud, the right talent and technology can make a world of difference on your journey.

Yet it's no small feat to hit the ground running with a successful system and a strategy to leverage operational data. It requires careful planning, resource and budget allocation, and infrastructure utilization audits, all handled by assigning explicit ownership of information and processes.

A 2015 Deloitte report cites 10 common barriers to ERP implementation, and the top five all relate to change management:

1. Resistance to change
2. Inadequate sponsorship
3. Unrealistic expectations
4. Poor project management
5. Lack of a compelling case for change

CIOs everywhere have flagged these challenges as requiring leadership buy-in and methodical planning.

As leadership contemplates how to build the case for top-of-the-line ERP offerings, technology continues to evolve. The perks of moving to the cloud have become increasingly apparent as cloud adoption has accelerated. Moving to public cloud or hosted services still seems intimidating to many, as it involves adding to or replacing existing on-premises infrastructure. That means a paradigm shift is in order – cloud is now essential to remaining competitive and lean in a world looking to accommodate outsourced options and leverage cloud agility.

Complicating things further, those now making the move are presented with options that improve the quality of cloud overall but create an initial dilemma. Many leaders are oscillating between service providers and products, debating which areas of their business to migrate, and how.

Meanwhile, more and more applications build upon one another in increasingly complex, intricately interdependent environments. And with [SAP Basis](#), [Oracle E-Business Suite](#) and [PeopleSoft](#) on the human capital side of things, the vendor review process can be rigorous. This requires IT savvy to ensure solutions match specific company needs – now and in the future.

SO, HOW DO YOU GET STARTED?

As you strive to improve operational efficiency, it's helpful to break down the ERP transformation process into knowable, actionable steps. At Rackspace, we recommend a framework with six criteria. Use it to start strong and succeed in the cloud, whether you're working with SAP, Oracle or PeopleSoft.

- **Plan** your strategy and build a strong business case, considering TCO, governance challenges and security needs.
- **Assess** your readiness. Understand the business and technology challenges and relevant best practices. How's your proof of concept?
- **Design** a cloud architecture that is always: resilient, scalable, stable, secure and cost-effective.
- **Migrate** data and apps using proven expertise and methodology, security best practices, and best-in-class tools.
- **Manage** your ERP solution effectively – monitor, automate, secure and proactively troubleshoot.
- **Optimize** your solution continually to modernize apps, improve security, lower costs, drive efficiencies and add business value.

To create buy-in and a long-term roadmap for success, pinpoint processes you'd like to advance, reports and assessments you'd like to improve, and overarching business insights you'd like to tap more consistently. You should be able to paint a rich picture of how the ERP system will improve the work lives of stakeholders across the company – from junior analyst to CEO.

As your company grows, having end-to-end digitization already at the heart of your operations will make scaling up much easier. Not only will a move to the cloud add functionality at your fingertips, it will also help lower costs, freeing up funds for innovative new purposes and optimizing use of your company's assets across the board.

KEEPING THE GOAL IN SIGHT

Investing in your future infrastructure is a wise move, as long as you're smart about your options and the level of flexibility you'll need to make adjustments later. Having trusted advisors on hand to help you manage your IT infrastructure and ERP software will help you avoid being blindsided by future developments. With the right team and expertise at the helm, you'll embrace change rather than fear it.

With these tips in mind, consider yourself one step closer to reaching – and exceeding – your operational goals, all while establishing consensus and creating stakeholder buy-in. That's a major achievement for the future of your business. Want to learn more about your options for ERP? Take a look at our [ERP service offerings](#).

ABOUT RACKSPACE

Rackspace, the #1 managed cloud company, helps businesses tap the power of cloud computing without the complexity and cost of managing it on their own. Rackspace engineers deliver specialized expertise, easy-to-use tools, and Fanatical Support® for leading technologies developed by AWS, Google, Microsoft, OpenStack, VMware and others. The company serves customers in 150 countries, including more than half of the FORTUNE 100. Rackspace is a leader in the 2017 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Managed Service Providers, Worldwide, and has been honored by Fortune, Forbes and others as one of the best companies to work for.

Learn more at www.rackspace.com/enterprise-application-services or call us at **1-844-768-0221**.

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