How can Companies Assure Operational Success of an Enterprise-Wide Software Solution?

Knowledge Transfer Basics - Part 1

by Nate Buyon

Enterprise software solutions, especially those that solve innovation and product development challenges, are difficult to implement and even more challenging to sustain. When companies transition from developing a new system to daily operations and maintenance, they must pay careful attention to the transfer of knowledge. The end users and support teams must understand why they are being asked to change the way they work, how the solution addresses a need, and why it is required in the first place.

All too often, companies focus on completing tasks versus helping their employees understand the reasoning behind business decisions. It is incredibly empowering for employees to be able to connect the job they are doing to an overarching corporate strategy.

The following tactics will help to ensure that an enterprise-wide innovation transformation solution is sustained in the organization.

- Train users with a focus on helping them understand why a change is happening
- Clearly define metrics that support realization of the business drivers
- Set rewards and recognition for operational excellence and continuous improvement

Peter Drucker said, “That which cannot be measured cannot be managed.” It is impossible to capture the value of an enterprise-wide software solution without capturing metrics. Clearly defined metrics will provide insight into what is working well, what should be improved, and what needs to be eliminated. In order to make data-based decisions, a company must have project metrics, process metrics, and metrics that directly impact the profit and loss statement.

It is not enough to tell employees that they have to change the way they do work. In order to create advocates for change, the company needs to build incentives to drive continuous improvement. Without positive reinforcement for individuals and teams, an enterprise-wide software solution will not get the necessary adoption and will fall flat. The collective knowledge of the team needs to be greater than any individual’s knowledge of the system.

More Reading

Video - How to Invest Users in an Enterprise System: The Basics of Knowledge Transfer

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