



**Prosci®**

Your ERP will go live.  
*Will it deliver value?*

Evidence from 1,618 ERP Implementations reveals why the people side of change matters 6x more than technical factors—and what to do about it

Underneath every ERP implementation lies an unspoken tension few implementation leaders want to admit out loud:

“What if people don’t actually use the new ERP system? Will we see the return on investment we promised?”

As teams hit technical milestones, organizational readiness concerns arise and persist. Stakeholder resistance emerges, training programs begin to feel inadequate to the complexity of the changes, and leadership starts asking questions about adoption and value realization, not merely the success of system functionality. These early warning signs aren’t cultural issues or growing pains—they’re indicators of value risk.

These quiet cracks in the surface and unspoken fears leave leaders wondering how to get to the other side of value realization, wondering whether there’s more to do from a technology standpoint, but:

## INTRO SUMMARY

# ERP implementations fail or succeed based on human transformation—not technology.

Today's organizations invest significant time, budget, and technical resources into ERP implementations, but the investment into the human side falls short—creating a gap between deployment and adoption. And yet, while accounting for the technical aspects is essential, Prosci research shows that **human factors matter 6 times more than technical factors in improving ERP benefits.**

This finding fundamentally challenges conventional **ERP implementation approaches, pointing to a different reality:** ERP implementation success hinges on the people side of change. It's a human transformation challenge, not a technological one. Whether your ERP implementation is newly in-flight, mid-way to go-live, or recently deployed, it's unlikely you can revisit your original project scope. The good news is that meaningful improvements to ERP outcomes are still possible—even when change management wasn't included initially.

Technical readiness will get you to go-live, but people readiness protects your investment. 1,618 professionals across leadership, business, and technical roles who recently worked on an ERP implementation learned this the hard way. Prosci asked these professionals, **“What would you do differently knowing what you know now?”** Learn from the hard-won knowledge and experience of professionals who've lived through ERP implementations and seen what works and fails.



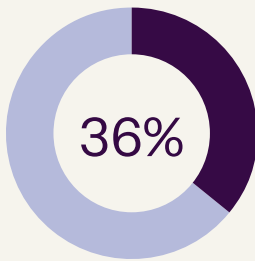
**BEGIN THE RESEARCH**

Five things we'd do differently:  
*Lessons from 1,618 implementation leaders*

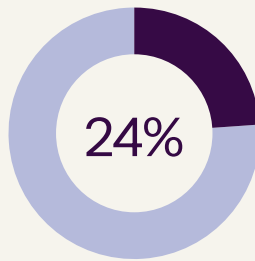
Hindsight is 20/20, which is why Prosci asked 1,618 ERP implementation professionals across executive leadership, team leads, and technical subject matter experts: "What would you do differently knowing what you know now?"

Across 20 countries and eight major ERP platforms, five categories of activities—what we're calling levers—improve ERP outcomes. These lessons and recommendations from leaders who have been there challenge decades of conventional wisdom about where ERP implementations succeed or fail.

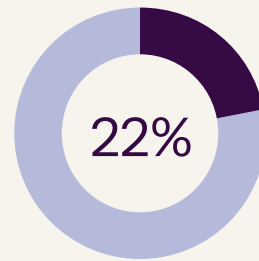
The 5 levers to improve ERP outcomes



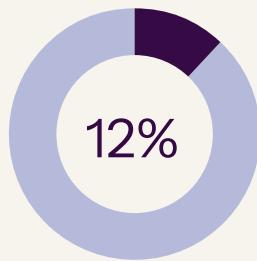
People & change management



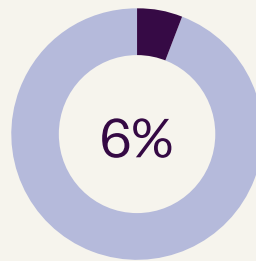
Measurement & continuous improvement



Strategy & process design



Project planning & execution



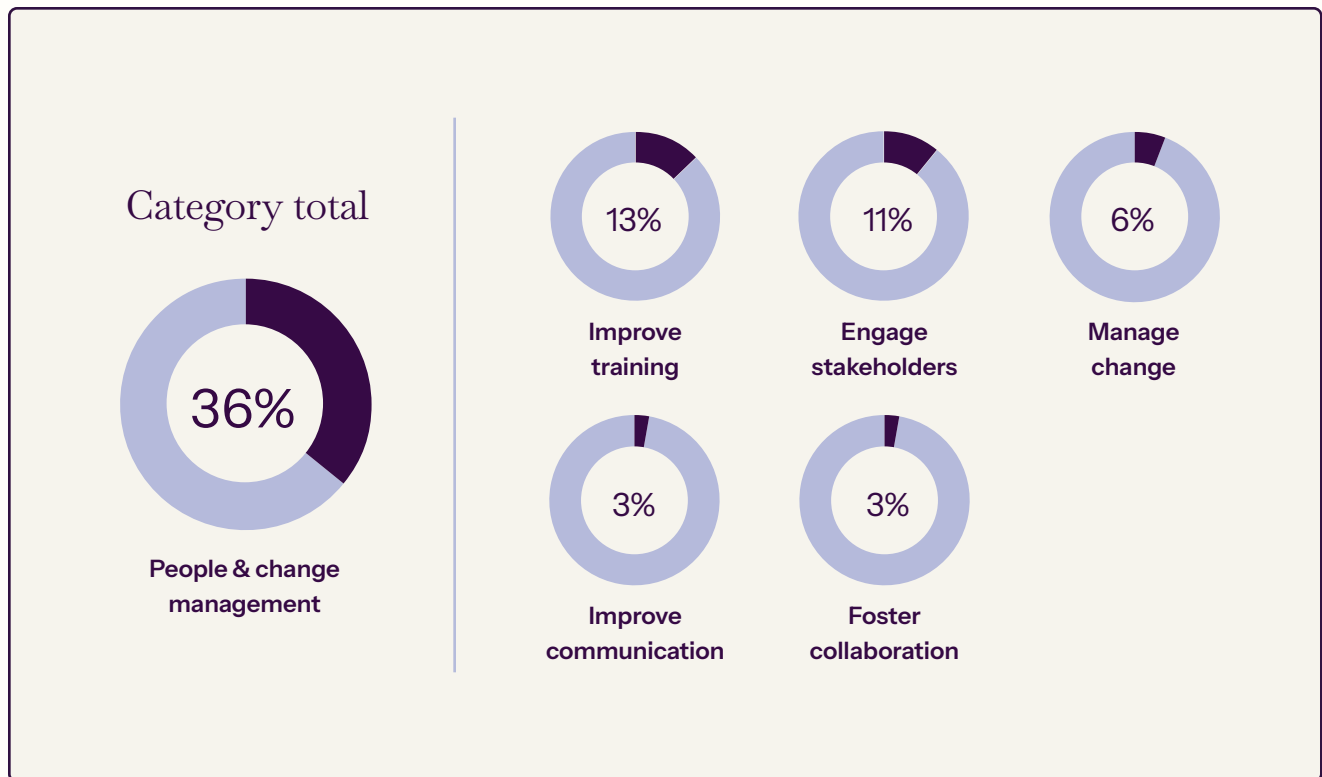
Technology & automation

# Lever 1

## People & change management

Most organizations spend an average of 92% of their ERP implementation budget on technical activities and 8% on change management (Best Practices in Change Management, 12th Edition). Yet, Prosci's analysis of recommendations from 1,618 ERP implementation leaders suggests **ERP success is a human transformation challenge that involves technology, not a technology project requiring optional change management support.**

People and Change Management account for 36% of all recommendations, indicating that **human factors outweigh technical considerations by 6:1** in realizing the sustained value of an ERP implementation. This finding suggests a fundamental misalignment between resource allocation and the actual drivers of success. While technical activities are critical, many organizations treat the people side of change as an add-on, whereas research suggests it must be a key area of investment.



## BEGIN THE RESEARCH

**Five distinct categories within People and Change Management emerged as areas to focus on for better value realization:**

### Training

Training emerged as the single most important improvement area in our research, representing 13% of all recommendations from ERP implementation leaders. Practical ERP training, including comprehensive tailored training programs for all users before go-live, and post-go-live continuous learning opportunities, creates long-term capability in organizations. Sustained investment in skill development determines whether ERP systems are adopted or become costly platforms that employees work around.

### Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement, particularly leadership alignment, was the second-highest individual recommendation from leaders at 11%. Engaging executive stakeholders to define what success means is crucial for implementation teams. Without early stakeholder engagement, teams optimize for technical completion while business leaders expect transformational outcomes, widening the value realization gap.

### Follow a structured change approach

Participants in Prosci's analysis recommended following a structured change management program (6%) to drive value realization, as ad-hoc change efforts create chaos. A comprehensive change plan, including training, stakeholder engagement, and communication, guides the people side of change of the implementation—a non-negotiable for ERP implementation success. Finally, Improve Communication and Foster Collaboration each made up the remaining recommendations under the People and Change Management lever. You can view these recommendations and access the full research study with a Prosci Premier Membership.

## People and change management: *The path forward*

**Human factors drive 36%** of what practitioners would do differently, yet most organizations allocate **just 8% of budget to ERP change management while spending 92% on technical activities**. The misalignment in resource allocation suggests that organizations underestimate the impact their investment in people factors has on successful outcomes. However, the organizations that get this part right achieve far better results than those that overinvest in technical activities without accounting for the people side of change. Is your organization investing in human factors proportionally to the impact they have on the success of this work?

### Don't undermine your ROI

Organizations that treat change management as an add-on consistently underperform those that invest proportionally to its impact. Prosci's ERP consulting services help you address the human factors that determine whether your implementation achieves its business objectives.

[Explore ERP consulting services](#)

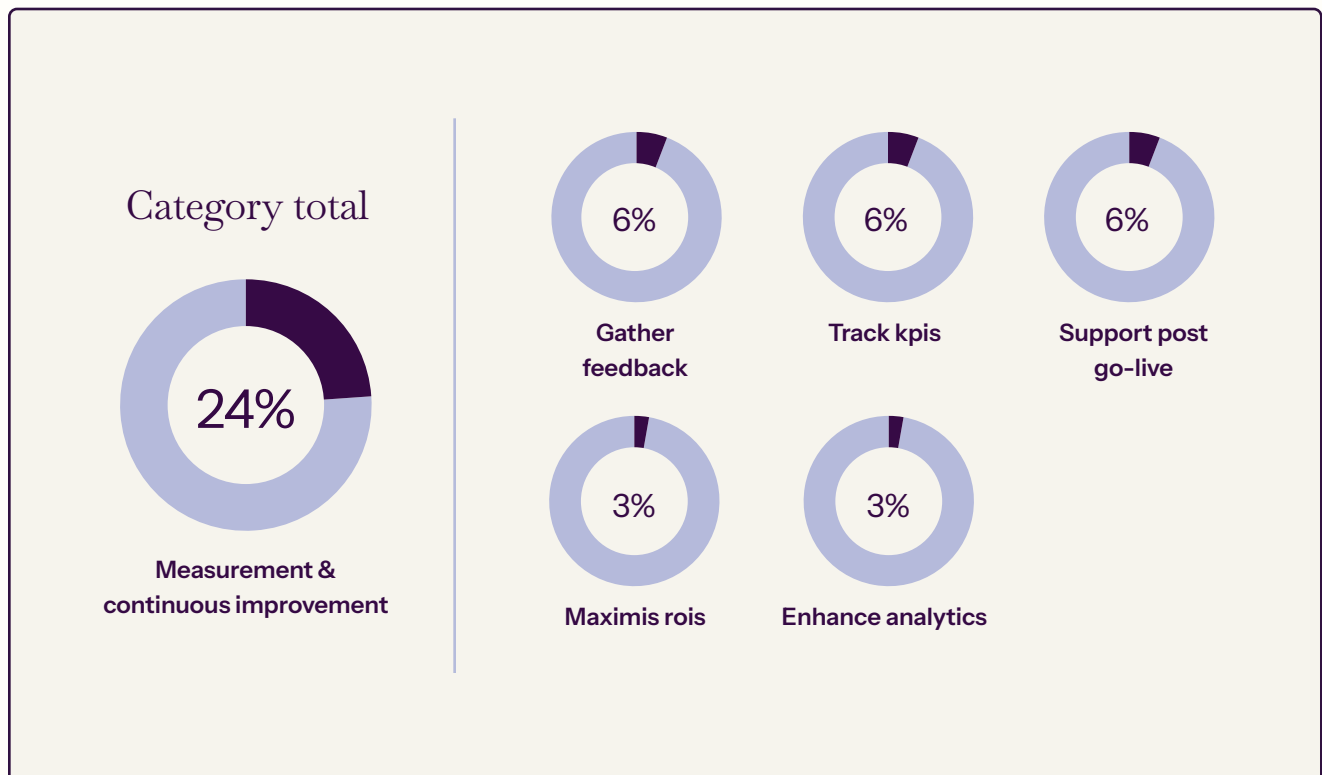
# Lever 2

## Measurement & continuous improvement

### Organizations that treat go-live as the finish line misunderstand when ERP value materializes

24% of recommendations in our analysis addressed Measurement and Continuous Improvement, indicating that organizations shouldn't treat ERP implementations as deployment projects. With equal representation of feedback, KPIs, and post-go-live support at 6% each, executive leadership needs to understand that the finish line extends beyond the deployment date. The success of an ERP implementation depends on an organization's willingness to improve over time.

Metrics and feedback are interdependent: metrics without feedback yield nothing more than static dashboards; whereas feedback without measurement amounts to listening without learning. Without both, post-go-live support lacks direction, directly impacting ERP value realization.



## BEGIN THE RESEARCH

### Gather feedback through systematic channels

Effective ERP adoption doesn't stop at go-live, and neither should the collection of feedback. Systematic feedback channels support continuous improvement and provide an opportunity for all voices, not just the loudest, to be heard. Without formal feedback mechanisms in place, dominant voices may rise and fail to represent the experience of all system users.

Both early and post-implementation feedback are necessary. The former shapes the ERP implementation design, while the latter drives optimization. Post-go-live feedback is often when insights become most valuable, as employees begin navigating the system under operational pressures.

### Track quality metrics and KPIs

Like feedback, ERP metrics are critical to the implementation's success because what organizations measure, they're more likely to manage and improve. Organizations that use comprehensive, actively-tracked metrics achieve exceptional outcomes 28% of the time—four times more often than those using basic, poorly-tracked metrics (7%).

But our research reveals an interesting paradox:

**bad metrics are worse than no metrics at all.**

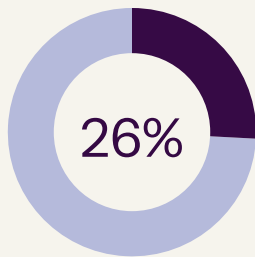
When metrics and KPIs feel confusing, consume resources, and obscure reality, reaching any measurable finish line becomes impossible.

### Provide post-go-live support

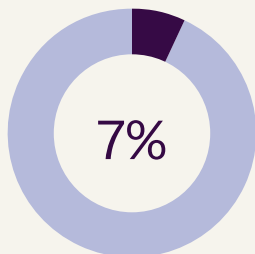
Go-live is a critical milestone in any technology deployment, but post-go-live support facilitates continuous optimization, highlighting that business value emerges after implementation. Deployment enables capability, but process refinements, user feedback, and data-driven insights bring business value to light in the post-implementation environment.

Many organizations view go-live as the destination, dedicating 92% of their budget to technical activities leading up to deployment (Best Practices in Change Management, 12th Edition). But organizations that want to see real value from their investment need to view go-live as a starting point, recognizing that deployment enables capabilities, while optimization is where actual business value lies.

Maximize ROI and Enhance Analytics make up the final two recommendations under the category of Measurement and Continuous Improvement. You can read the full list of recommendations and access the full research study with a Prosci Premier Membership.



Organizations with no formal metrics achieve exceptional outcomes 26% of the time



Organizations with poorly tracked metrics achieve exceptional outcomes 7% of the time

This highlights that the quality of metrics matters more than their mere presence

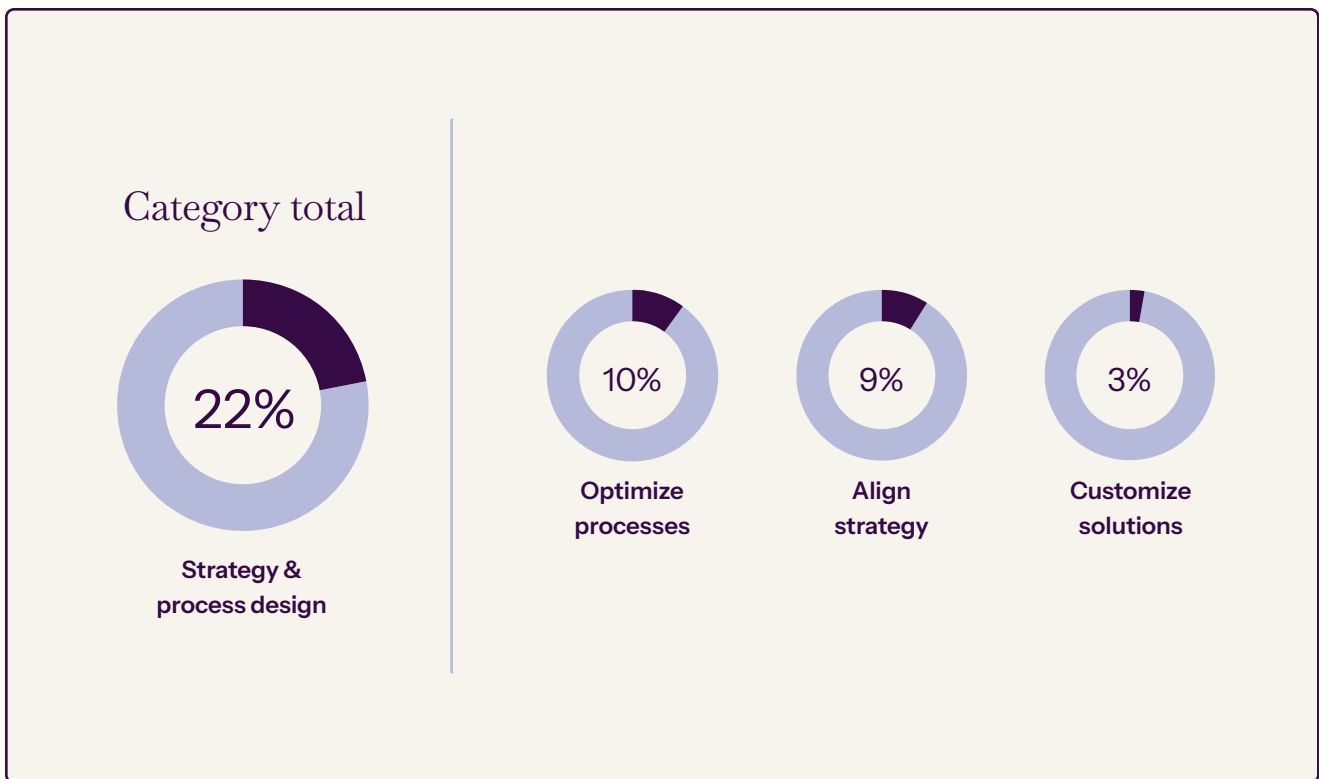
## Measurement & continuous improvement: *The path forward*

The evidence is compelling: organizations that treat ERP as a deployment project consistently underperform those that invest beyond go-live. Is your organization optimizing for deployment—or for value realization?

# Lever 3

## Strategy & process design

More than one-fifth (22%) of leaders with experience in ERP implementations emphasized aligning technology with business needs, ensuring the new technology serves the business strategy rather than becoming the strategy. With a near-equal split between process optimization (10%) and strategic alignment (9%), these elements must work together to enable transformation. Having one without the other isn't enough.



### Optimize processes before technology configuration

Our research shows that sequence matters: process optimization before configuration prevents costly rework; automating broken processes leads to faster failures. New technologies alone rarely deliver benefits without corresponding process evolution that reduces operational friction and pain points.

Configuring the ERP and forcing software to match flawed workflows doesn't address the operational challenges employees experience; it merely automates them. Dedicating time to process optimization before configuration and incorporating opportunities for systematic feedback to support post-go-live process refinement helps organizations ensure processes make sense, regardless of the system.

## BEGIN THE RESEARCH

### Connect features to outcomes to align strategy

When teams connect ERP goals to business objectives, technical capabilities translate into business value. Our analysis suggests that early strategic alignment is critical. Without aligning business goals with ERP features early in the planning process, it's challenging to guide the implementation toward targeted benefits. Generic business cases simply aren't enough.

### Strategy & process design: *The path forward*

Organizations that optimize and then automate outperform those that configure technology first. Avoid automating existing inefficiencies to increase value. And when system selection precedes strategic clarity, your ERP system will solve the wrong problems. **Is your ERP strategy serving your business strategy**, or did it become your business strategy? When technology selection precedes strategic clarity, you get systems solving problems you don't have while ignoring problems you do.

## Strategic alignment means nothing without adoption

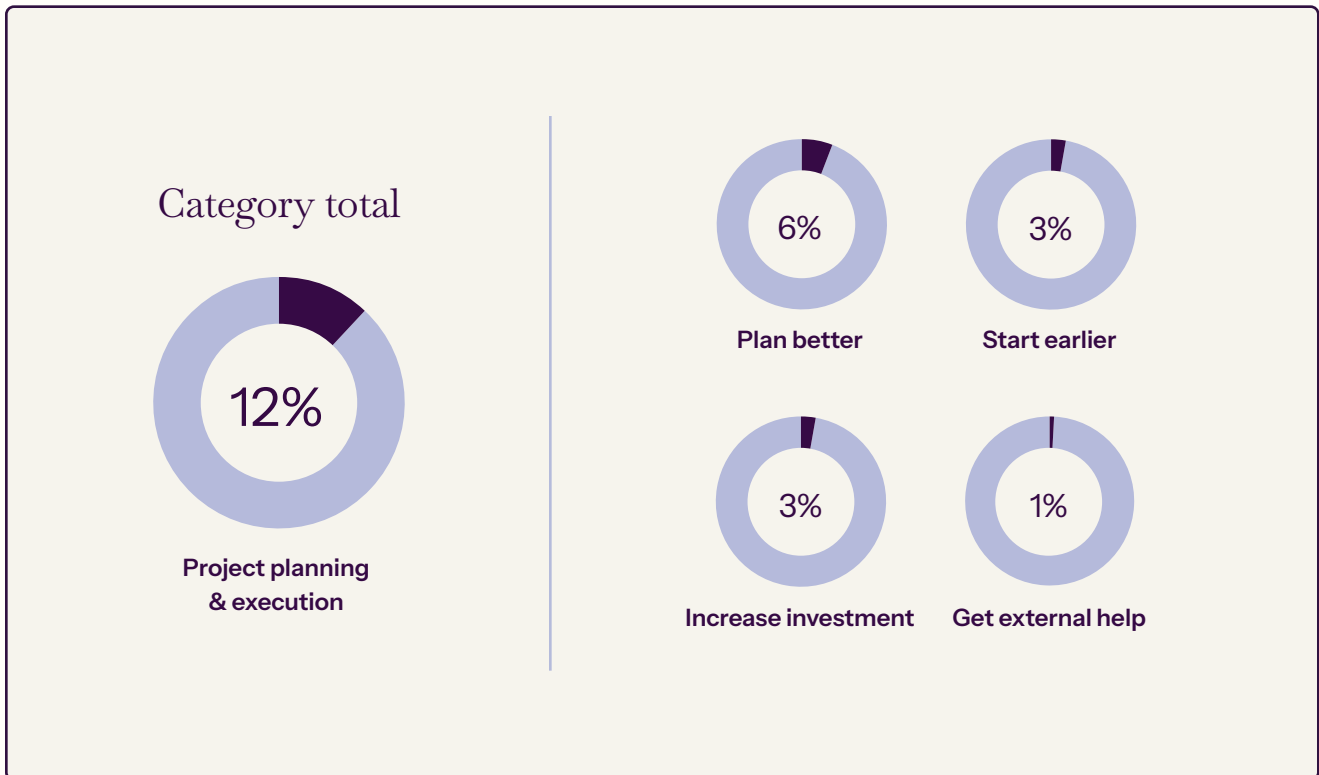
Your team can design perfect processes and align ERP capabilities to business strategy, but value realization depends on whether people actually change how they work. Prosci's change management consulting ensures the human side of your transformation keeps pace with your strategic and process decisions.

[Explore ERP consulting services](#)

# Lever 4

## Project planning & execution

While planning is necessary, at 12% of recommendations, it's no longer the primary differentiator between success and failure. However, the data suggests that planning execution quality matters more than simply planning more.



### Better planning prevents problems

When it comes to ERP implementations, realistic planning can make or break the value the new system creates down the road. Unrealistically aggressive timelines can create cascading problems, lead to unwanted adoption resistance and delay value realization. Conservative, realistic schedules deliver working systems, making ERP implementations a worthwhile investment. Answering these critical questions often differentiates improper plans from effective ones:

- 1 Are budgets realistic or optimistic?
- 2 Does investment allocation (technical vs. people) reflect actual success factors (6:1 human-to-technical ratio)?

## BEGIN THE RESEARCH

### Timing affects outcomes

Organizations recognize that many implementation activities benefit from extended runways, and **success often depends on when they initiate them**. Specific activities, such as communication, benefit from earlier starts because they support the human transformation challenges many organizations experience during ERP implementations.

### Lack of resources reduces value realization

**Underfunded implementations lead to compromises that reduce value realization more than they reduce costs**. Systems that technically work but aren't adopted incur costs without benefits, making them expensive investments with little return. Incorporating human factors and change management into investment decisions leads to better value creation, even when it appears more costly on paper.

### External resources should supplement, not substitute

Bringing in external consultants and specialists for an ERP implementation can validate internal thinking and provide insights that internal teams may not have. But sustainable ERP success depends on developing internal organizational capabilities rather than creating dependency on external expertise.

## Project planning & execution: *The path forward*

ERP implementation failures rarely stem from inadequate planning. The gap between planning and executing the human transformation that planning enables is primarily responsible for the disconnect. **Are your budgets realistic or optimistic? Does investment allocation reflect actual success factors? Are you building internal capability or creating external dependencies?**

External help should supplement, not substitute for, internal capability building.

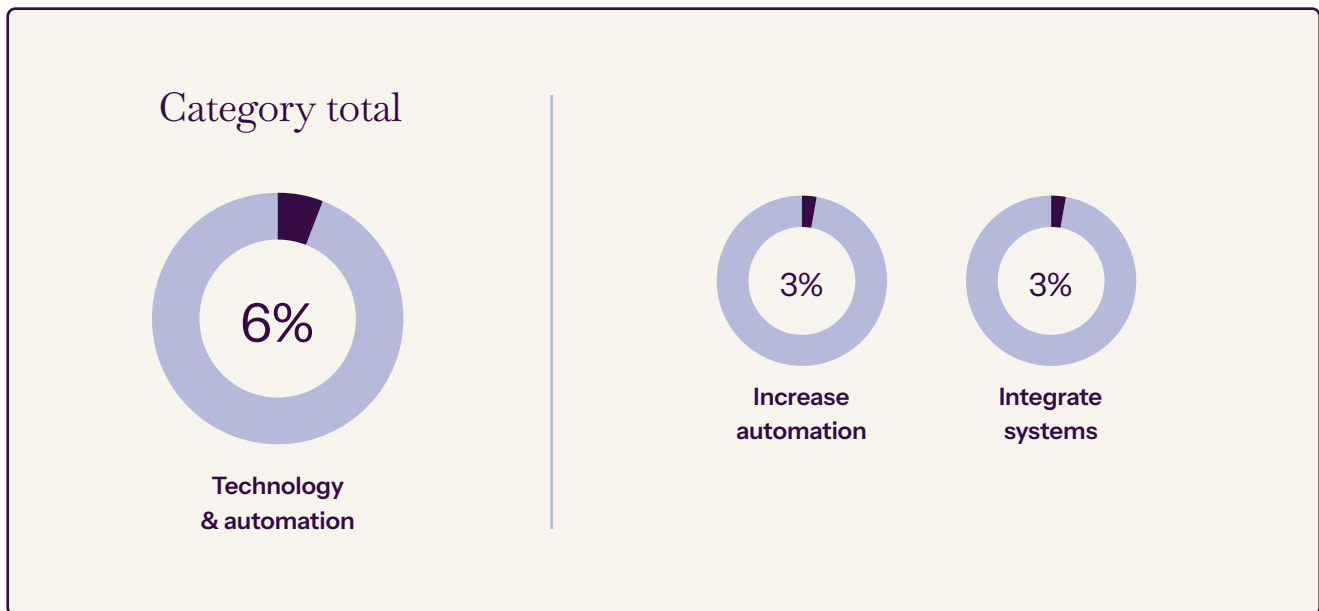


# Lever 5

## Technology & automation

At 6%, the smallest category covering increased automation and system integration underscores an overlooked truth: organizations can handle the technical execution. The 6:1 human-to-technical ratio tells the real story:

**ERP implementation failures result from human and organizational factors that no amount of technical sophistication can overcome.**



When we asked experienced professionals to reflect on what they would do differently, 36% of recommendations highlighted people and change management considerations, while technical considerations accounted for only 6%. Instead of asking, “Will the ERP go live and work technically speaking?” organizations need to ask, “Will our employees adopt, optimize, and realize value from the ERP?”

### Technology & automation: *The path forward*

ERP implementation failures rarely stem from inadequate planning. The gap between planning and executing the human transformation that planning enables is primarily responsible for the disconnect.

**Are your budgets realistic or optimistic? Does investment allocation reflect actual success factors?**

**Are you building internal capability or creating external dependencies?**



## What to do next? *Why Prosci?*

Your technical teams are doing excellent work getting the system ready. The question isn't "Will our ERP function?"— it's "Will our organization adopt it and realize the value leadership expects?"

**That's where Prosci comes in.  
Change done right is all we do.**

Our Change Advisors work alongside your existing project team—we don't add to your workload or create dependency. Instead, we build your team's change capability so it extends beyond this implementation. We're not here to replace your systems integrator; we complement the technical work with structured change management that drives adoption.

Whether you're at project kickoff, mid-implementation, or recovering from a challenging go-live, it's not too late to intervene.

## Ready to discuss your ERP implementation?

Connect with our team to explore how Prosci's research-backed approach can help your organization achieve the outcomes leaders expect.

[Connect with Prosci's ERP solutions team](#)