



5 Reasons Your Robotic Process Automation Implementation Will Fail

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Do you have plans to bring [robotic process automation](#) into your organization? You're not alone. RPA is rapidly growing in popularity across many industries, and it's easy to see why. As the technology matures, [RPA success stories](#) are becoming widespread, and jumping on the robotic process automation bandwagon seems like a no-brainer.



But the companies that have gained the strongest competitive edge through RPA didn't just implement the software—they had a strategy. And unfortunately, there are also a lot of organizations that make costly mistakes in the implementation processes.

Are you going to be one of them? Here are five signs your RPA project is headed in the wrong direction.

#1. Key People are Missing from the Team

You've already committed to investing in robotic process automation software—don't forget to invest in the team that will implement and manage it. These people should have an enthusiasm for automation and dedicated time to put into the project.

We strongly recommend that IT is involved in the project. Part of the appeal of robotic process automation software is that it's easy for anyone to use, even if you're a business user with no technical background. However, IT support is still essential to avoid technology siloes in the organization and to ensure high application performance and robust security.

In addition to IT, there are other skillsets needed for a successful [enterprise-wide automation project](#). These skillsets may be found in one person or several people, but none of them should be left off the team.

First is the business analyst. The business analyst is someone with a talent for visualizing process improvements. They will document existing processes and redesign them for optimal automation. This person should also be a respected individual who can lead good discussions with process stakeholders.

The developer is the person who works with the process documentation from the business analyst to build automated workflows. Depending on the needs of your organization and the capabilities of your automation solution, the developer may not have to be an actual programmer.

You should also make sure to have an operations specialist involved. The operations team will be key to managing your automation once it's up and running across the business, so they should be represented on the core team from the start.

Finally, you'll need executive sponsorship. This is covered more extensively in #5.

#2. You're Automating the Wrong Things

Start with a pilot project or proof of concept. This should be a process that's not too complex, but delivers measurable value for the company. The pilot project will be critical to obtaining continued support for the project.

Once you're ready to scale your automation throughout the organization, you'll want to take into consideration a variety of factors when prioritizing processes to automate. Your automation project team can use a [weighted matrix](#) that assesses each automation candidate based on criteria like criticality to the business, potential time savings, effort to automate, and any other factors that may be important to you. The team should also regularly review existing automation to see what's adding the most value to the company.

[The RPA Toolkit Has Resources to Help You Prioritize Projects and Optimize Workflows](#)

Some processes can be automated end to end, while others rely on manual intervention at certain points. The latter is sometimes called assisted automation. While there can be a place for both types of workflows, assisted automation frequently results in more complicated and less efficient processes.

#3. You're Not Optimizing Your Automation

Robotic process automation is capable of following the exact steps that a human operator does, and for your initial proof of concept, that is probably exactly what you want. Automating a process as-is is quick and easy—just what you need to demonstrate the value of the software without putting in too much effort. It's also a good choice for low-volume processes or those that aren't mission-critical.

However, GUI automation isn't the fastest or most reliable method of automating. If you have a process that involves multiple people and is fairly high-frequency, you should consider optimizing your automated workflows. Go through the process steps and make note of where you can automate via the backend; for example, with APIs and web services. You may end up with a combination of as-is and optimized automation, or you may [completely redesign the workflow](#).

Remember that business analyst you have on the team? This is where the documentation from that team member is essential. Automation project leaders often fail to understand how complex their processes are. A lot of the knowledge is tribal and the business analyst will have to talk to a variety of users to make sure that nothing is missed.

#4. You Don't Treat Automation as a Project

Automation isn't just something you set and forget to help you with your important projects—it's a project in its own right. Too often, the automation pilot project is executed with limited resources and no ability to scale. It's not clear who is managing the project, investment in the automation doesn't increase beyond a single process or department, and the right infrastructure isn't in place to support your RPA implementation.

[Learn How to Turn Your Automation Project into an Automation Center of Excellence](#)

#5. You Lose Executive Buy-In

You know that your RPA software implementation will result in great benefits for the company, but the project won't get anywhere without executive approval.

Your executive sponsor is likely to be focused on how your automation solution will help the bottom line. When you initially discuss the potential [ROI of robotic process automation](#), make sure you cover areas of savings, like increased uptime, decreased errors, and fewer hours spent on custom scripting, as well as new costs, including user training and software maintenance. Once you've obtained approval to purchase RPA software, don't get too complacent—you're going to need to maintain that executive support as you implement automation throughout your organization.

A lot of this comes down to your initial selection of a process to automate. While you will eventually want to take on the most frustrating and complex workflows in your enterprise, start with something that you can get into production quickly. At the same time, if the process doesn't demonstrate value, it will also be hard to maintain buy-in. Go for something quick but meaningful. This will establish momentum and enthusiasm for future RPA projects.

As you go forward, it's helpful to have someone on the executive team sitting on the steering committee for your automation project. Make sure that any automation success story from within your company is shared widely—this will generate enthusiasm for robotic process automation from the C-suite down.

Now that you know why robotic process automation projects fail, you're ready to make yours a big success. Still looking for RPA software to power your automation center of excellence? Get a personalized demonstration of Automate from a software expert.

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