

Implementation to suit you

- ▶ Shape project with business objectives
- ▶ Configure and map Answer applications to suit
- ▶ Focused training
- ▶ ‘Train the trainer’ principle
- ▶ Conference room pilot to ensure client satisfaction before going live

Answer Solutions Ltd (ASL) has defined a formal project planning and review procedure to ensure implementation runs smoothly. This will normally include the following:

- ▶ Clear definition of Business Objectives
- ▶ Business Analysis/Flow
- ▶ Project Planning
- ▶ Configuration of Answer
- ▶ Definition of Training Requirements (based upon Business Objectives)
- ▶ Initial Training
- ▶ Business Process Review
- ▶ Definition of Data Take On Requirements
- ▶ Document Review & Design
- ▶ Conference Room Pilot
- ▶ Resolution of Issues (highlighted in the conference room pilot)
- ▶ End User Training
- ▶ Live Implementation

Clear definition of Business Objectives

This is one of the most important steps in any implementation. These objectives are usually determined at the initial project meeting between ASL and the client. Objectives should be stated in a reasonable degree of detail.

For example, “*We want to run an ERP solution*” is too vague, but “*We need good control of raw materials through WIP through to finished goods from a quantity and cost point of view*” contains enough detail to be a good business objective.

Identification of business objectives will help to shape the project and will focus on the Answer application areas required to meet those objectives.

Business Analysis/Flow

This helps ASL to improve existing knowledge of the client’s business to aid the project planning process.

This will also help to configure and map Answer applications to meet the business objective defined at the outset of the project.

Training Requirements

Training will be developed and focused based on the business objectives decided and the business analysis/flow exercise. This allows training to be provided only for the areas and options that are required and will deliver maximum business benefits.

The anticipated levels of training are:

- ▶ Application appreciation/integration
- ▶ Answer Business Objectives requirements
- ▶ Daily Operation processes
- ▶ Data take-on procedures
- ▶ Back up and Security
- ▶ Operating and print procedures

Detailed on-the-job training in the functional areas will be carried out as the implementation progresses. This will be detailed within the functional mapping in the implementation plan, to ensure that training is given at the most appropriate point.

'Train the trainer'

The education and training schedule needs to be developed in conjunction with the client. The basic principal of our education and training courses is one of 'train the trainer.' In this way, the client will build up an internal training expertise, which will be able to train end users on the specific operational aspects of the system as it is implemented within the company and across the operational sites.

'Train the trainer' allows the client to build up a team of 'user champions' to roll out the implementation of Answer applications across the operation. A client would typically need around 3-5 user champions, subject to final confirmation.

Users with common roles can work together to improve understanding of Answer products, this should enable them to define and operate common business processes/procedures to run the business.

Business Process Review

The increased understanding of Answer applications and the benefits it can bring to a business can often trigger an exercise to review the current business practises to deliver maximum business benefit.

The Business Process Review focuses on changing company working practises to maximise the use of Answer and to streamline business practises, removing any redundant processes.

Definition of Data Take On Requirements

During the training process it should be possible to begin to determine the data that will need to be transferred from existing systems.

The decision to manually enter the data into Answer or to create scripts to automatically take the data on is typically dependent on the volume of data (e.g. less than 250 records then key-in).

The quality of the existing data and whether or not the structure of key identifiers e.g. Vendor Number, Customer Number, G/L Account Code, etc is going to be changed will also be a factor.

Whatever the decision, manual, automatic or a mixture of both, this data must be loaded and checked prior to the Conference Room Pilot (CRP) in order that the CRP can simulate true business operations with factual data.

Answer applications will usually hold more information in it's structures than is available in the existing system and an exercise is normally undertaken to provide additional information required and that the client would like to take advantage of e.g. Analysis Codes and structures.

This is normally provided in spreadsheet format when loading the data electronically.

Documentation Review and Design

Answer applications provide standard versions of all output documents e.g. Invoice, Purchase Order, Statement, Delivery Note, and so on.

Each customer will usually wish to use existing company designs and pre-printed stationary for their documents which means that a set of requirement and design specifications need to be developed in order to provide the required data mapping and layouts for external stationary. Occasionally this exercise can trigger a review and re-design of current documents once potential for what Answer can provide is understood.

Conference Room Pilot (CRP)

This is typically run once user champions are training and the business processes and procedures are defined.

The CRP is used to prove the method of operation of the software, the business processes and procedures, to ensure that day to day issues can be addressed and that the information the client needs to run the business is available.

Any issues highlighted as part of the CRP will be addresses and a secondary mini CRP scheduled to prove the resolution of those issues. This will also highlight the confidence and competence of the user champions in the use of Answer applications.

End User Training

Once all CRP issues are resolved, the training of end users by the user champions is scheduled.

This will usually be in the weeks prior to the 'Go Live' date to keep the time between training and go live to a minimum so that end users retain as much training as possible.

The client should always make time available once training has taken place for end users to consolidate what they have learned to increase their confidence and competence using the Answer application.

What ASL will need from the client

The implementation of any system is a partnership.

It is expected that the client provide a well defined document covering the scope, objectives and timescales of the project.

A designated full time project manager should be appointed, along with user champions from each business department (50% of their time) and a reasonable amount of time for training staff should be allocated on prearranged days set and agreed in the project plan.

Any newly trained staff should be provided with the time to consolidate what they have learned after the formal Answer training.

The client must be clear about their responsibilities, staff assigned to the project should not be expected to fulfil 100% of their existing work role as inevitably timescales will slip, milestones will be missed and costs will rise.

The following quote sums up implementation of an ERP project:

"An ERP project is an excellent opportunity to reshape and streamline your business. You will probably only get one chance to get it right. We would therefore recommend that you allocate the BEST people from the organisation to the project. If their involvement in the project doesn't hurt the organisation in some way, then you've probably chosen the wrong people for the project team"

- from a leading consultancy house regarding the 6 deadly sins in implementing ERP systems.

Purchasing Options

ASL provides a structured package of education, training and implementation services, based on the anticipated number of users, which will provide services to a predetermined level at a discount from the standard service fee rates.

All ASL services can also be purchased on an ad-hoc basis.

For more information visit the Answer Solutions website or contact us.

Answer Solutions Ltd

The Innovation Centre
Festival Drive
Ebbw Vale
NP23 8XA

w: www.answersolutions.com

e: info@answersolutions.com

t: 01495 356771

f: 01495 356774