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|  |  | **Readiness Checklist** |

# GFOA ERP Readiness Checklist

GFOA’s approach to ERP requires that organizations sufficiently plan for the project prior to the implementation. This allows for an accurate and relevant scope to be worked out with the vendor and documented in the statement of work (SOW).

To prepare, the Government will need to make many key decisions on the project scope, project governance, project staffing, project goals/expectations, and more. This document is intended to be used along with the GFOA SOW check-list to explain key readiness activities. Key decisions will be part of SOW decisions and many will be documented in the SOW. Others are important steps to take that will mitigate issues during the project.

The following are important areas of focus for readiness activities. This document will explain key readiness steps for each section.

* [Project Goals](#_Toc468434775)
* [Project Scope](#_Toc468434776)
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* [Technology Requirements](#_Toc468434778)
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# Project Goals

Every ERP project needs to identify project goals and clearly articulate a purpose for the project. Without project goals and clear expectations for business process, policy, and organizational change it is impossible for an ERP project to be successful. Additionally, goals must be communicated and well understood so that stakeholders throughout the organization can work together, support the project, and hold each other accountable.

As part of the process to identify goals, the Government should also identify business drivers (or reasons for completing the project now). Often, Governments compare the costs of a project to a “free” status quo. That is never the case and Governments need to understand the implications of the current scenario now and into the future.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Project Goals Documented |  |  |
| Project goals approved |  |  |
| Business Drivers Identified |  |  |
| Business Process Expectations Defined |  |  |
| Project Expectations Communicated |  |  |
| Key Stakeholders Understand Goals |  |  |

# Project Scope

This explains and documents key decisions on the project scope. Prior to finalizing the SOW the Government will need to make many decisions. While some decisions will be made along with the vendor, the Government should have discussed and identified preferences prior to engaging the vendor. Decisions will be documented in the SOW to provide protection for the Government. Key decisions include:

* Module Scope – Vendors have an incentive to sell as many modules as possible and it might be in the Government’s interest to buy modules and receive quantity discounts. However, for the implementation, the Government will need to determine which modules are included in the implementation scope.
* Organizational Scope – If the Government intendeds to make any exceptions for departments and either include or exclude them from a specific functional scope item, that should be documented (for example, inventory for police only or no time entry for fire).
* Data Conversion – The Government will need to identify the scope of data conversion for the project. This includes the data to be converted, the quantity/history, and the location of the existing data. The Government should also assess the quality of that data and how much work will be required to complete conversion.
* Interface Scope – Interfaces included in the project will need to be defined. For each interface, the Government should validate (or develop) functional requirements that define the scope of the interface. Requirements should identify how the business process need will be satisfied by the interface.
* Modification / Enhancement Scope – If any modifications were identified in the vendor’s response to the functional requirements, the Government will want to decide if they are still included in scope.
* Forms – If the Government would like any forms developed as part of the initial scope of the project, it should be defined. Forms included in the Government’s functional requirements should be validated.
* Workflow – For all workflow identified in the functional requirements, the Government should validate that it is still included in the scope of the project. Additional workflows should also be defined (if any). For each workflow, the Government can also start identifying the proposed workflow path.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Scope of Modules Determined |  |  |
| Identify Organizational Exceptions to Scope |  |  |
| Data Conversion Scope |  |  |
| History identified |  |  |
| Current data systems identified |  |  |
| Data clean up strategy |  |  |
| Interface Scope Determined |  |  |
| Interface systems determined |  |  |
| Interface requirements defined |  |  |
| Third party work analyzed  |  |  |
| Modification / Enhancement Scope Set |  |  |
| Requirements developed for mods |  |  |
| Form Scope Identified  |  |  |
| Workflow Scope Identified |  |  |
| Workflow routing/criteria documented |  |  |

# Project Governance

The Government will need a formal (written) description of roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each level of the project governance structure (key project stakeholders).

* Governance Structure - For each level of the governance structure, the Government should determine the individuals that will make up each team. Participation in the project should be confirmed with the individual and the individual’s department to ensure appropriate availability. Especially important is to identify the functional and technical leads/support roles on the project to ensure sufficient coverage.
* Project Roles – For each level (role) in the governance structure, the Government should define specific role responsibilities that identify what tasks on the project the role will perform.
* Project Charter – Once the governance structure and roles are defined, the Government should develop a project charter (written document identifying key governance issues). In addition to documenting the governance structure, the project charter will typically also identify key project policies and processes including frequency of meetings, required communications, issue resolution, and resource commitment. Additionally, one of the most important components of the charter is to define which group makes which decisions (decision matrix).

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Project Governance Structure Defined |  |  |
| Steering Committee / Sponsors |  |  |
| Project Team |  |  |
| Business Process Analysts |  |  |
| SME |  |  |
| Functional Leads |  |  |
| Technical Team |  |  |
| Project Roles Defined |  |  |
| Project Charter Drafted |  |  |
| Decision Matrix Completed  |  |  |

# Technology Requirements

The Government should be working with its finalist vendor on a hardware sizing exercise and overall architecture. Prior to those discussions, the Government should perform a current hardware assessment and begin developing a list of issues that would need to be resolved with the vendor.

For any hardware procurement, the vendor should provide a specifications list that the Government can use in a hardware procurement. Once the procurement is underway, the Government will be working with the vendor to identify a project plan for hardware installation and system installation. As part of the planning for this installation, the Government needs to determine what level of participation it can provide during the system installation of if it needs to be completed by the vendor.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Current Hardware Assessment |  |  |
| Review ERP System Requirements |  |  |
| Sizing Recommendations |  |  |
| Hardware Procurement |  |  |
| Hardware Availability Project Plan |  |  |
| Roles for Hardware/system Set Up |  |  |

# Implementation Approach

The implementation methodology, tasks, and roles will be driven primarily by the vendor’s proposed approach. However, the Government can modify this information to better match tasks/skills with its project team. In addition, the schedule for the project will be documented. If the Government has any concerns about staff availability during certain periods of if there are any blackout dates for key resources, it should be noted.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Project Skills Assessment |  |  |
| Staff Availability Assessment |  |  |
| Identify Blackout Dates |  |  |
| Clearly Defined Tasks |  |  |

# Project Management / Change Management

Working with the vendor, the Government will document key project management and change management requirements and roles for the project. To prepare for these discussions, the Government will want to determine its expectations for project management and what it will require for change management. In addition, the Government should plan a preferred issue resolution process. GFOA recommends that the Government consider both internal issues (government-government) and contract issues (government-vendor) and develop appropriate processes for each. During the project it will be important to be able to make quick decisions.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Document Project Management Expectations |  |  |
| Define Change Management Needs |  |  |
| Identify Change Management Team |  |  |
| Identify Issue Resolution Process (contract) |  |  |
| Identify Issue Resolution Process (internal) |  |  |
| Identify Tool to Store Project Documents (SharePoint, Basecamp, Network Drive) |  |  |

# Training

Similar to the implementation approach, training will be heavily based on the vendor’s proposed approach. However the Government will need to plan for and document its training needs and identify its training resources (especially if it is planned to be different than the project team or others in the governance structure). The Government will want to identify the training resources (people/technology/tools) it has at its disposal.

Also, the Government will want to begin identifying the end users that will need to be trained in each department and on what processes. The vendor will assist with this plan during the implementation, but it helps to get a head start. This is also necessary if the vendor proposal puts any constraints on end user training.

During the implementation, the Government will also want to begin thinking about long-term support. Before starting the project, the Government will want to tentatively identify what that long term support will entail and be ready to use the project to create documentation, training materials, and train appropriate support resources. Waiting until go-live is too late.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Identify Training Resources |  |  |
| Identify Training Participants  |  |  |
| Plan for Training Material Development |  |  |
| Plan for Ongoing Training |  |  |

# Quality Assurance

Vendors often fail to provide a formal quality assurance process and approach for determining and assessing in both the system configurations/decisions and the overall approach to the project. GFOA recommends that Governments take a lead in assuring a formal quality assurance process and identify and empowering appropriate resources to oversee the project. Quality assurance can take many forms, but should include oversight of:

* Project management standards
* Decision making
* Business process recommendations
* Deliverables / project documentation
* Staffing (ensuring appropriate expertise)
* Configuration / System testing
* Training quality
* Formal acceptance testing

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Determine Quality Assurance Process |  |  |
| Determine Who is Responsible |  |  |
| Is Third Party Guidance Necessary? |  |  |
| Develop Sign-Off/Acceptance Process |  |  |

# Ongoing Support

After go-live the Government will need to be able to support the system. Supporting the system will include performing technical tasks to keep the system operating, but it will also include ongoing training for employees, decisions on product upgrades, new features, and future business processes. Vendors will typically provide a set number of days of post-go-live assistance, but this is to deal with short term issues related to implementation. At some point, the Government will need to begin thinking soon about the long-term governance and support model.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Review Current Support Structure |  |  |
| Discuss Post-Live Governance Model |  |  |

# Facility Requirements

The project team (including both the Government and vendor) will need space to perform project tasks. This will include meeting rooms, training rooms, rooms for individual work, etc. The project will also require additional supplies and equipment.

GFOA recommends that in addition to primary locations, the Government also secure alternate meeting locations in the event that meeting rooms are occupied. Having a plan will help reduce unnecessary logistical delays during the project.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Identify and Ready Workstations |  |  |
| Identify and Ready Conference Rooms |  |  |
| Identify Alternate Meeting Locations |  |  |

# Personnel Requirements

More many Government staff working on the project, the project work will include a different set of responsibilities from their normal job. For these employees, the Government may want to consider changing certain aspects of the project team members’ job to better facilitate a successful project. Examples of possible changes could include: changing to (more) flex scheduling, change to leave policies, change in title, change in supervisor, use of certain equipment (phone/tablet), etc.

For the next two plus years, the Government will also welcome approximately 5-20 consultants onto its team (depending on project size). Consultant time onsite will vary, but some consultants will be there full time (or it will seem like it). The Government should identify appropriate processes to interview and select consultants (if possible), what access (both IT and physical) the consultants will need and any “HR” policies the consultants will need to follow.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Identify any Project Team Personnel Requirements |  |  |
| Change to schedule |  |  |
| Change to leave |  |  |
| Change to title |  |  |
| Change to assignment / supervisor |  |  |
| Identify Any Consultant Personnel Requirements |  |  |
| Interview Process |  |  |
| IT Access |  |  |
| Relevant Policies |  |  |
| Building Access |  |  |

# Payment Schedule

During contract negotiations, the vendor and Government should be negotiating a fair payment schedule based on completion of milestones throughout the project. However, if there are any conditions or limitations to the Government’s funding for the project such as cash flow issues or uncertainty over future year budgets, it will be important to know going into negotiations.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Identify Any Cash Flow Limitations |  |  |
| Identify Any Budget Challenges |  |  |

# Project Communications

When done well, ERP projects are an opportunity to streamline operations, standardize essential business processes, enhance use of data to improve decision making, and inject technology (tools) into what is normally a manual process. This requires that stakeholders from across the organization work collaboratively. Many if not all ERP projects will have a wide impact on the organization and process change (or system changes) will likely touch every department. With payroll, the changes will touch every employee.

It is essential that the organization is aware of changes and that the Government has taken necessary steps prior to the project to communicate the impacts of the project. By the time the project starts, Governments should have taken necessary steps to communicate the project and to have a formal plan in place for ongoing communications.

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| Readiness Step  | Status  | Notes  |
| Steps Taken to Communicate Project |  |  |
| Key Executives in the Project Understand Project Goals and Upcoming Changes |  |  |
| Regular Communications Established to Inform About Project |  |  |
| Create a Formal Communication Plan |  |  |
| Process for Feedback Established |  |  |
| Project is Communicated to Impacted Departments |  |  |
| Staff Understand Their Role in Project |  |  |