

Unlocking digital HR success — the power of collaborating with the right SI

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Embarking on an HR technology deployment can be a highly intricate endeavor, requiring careful consideration of four crucial areas: the organization looking to transform how it operates and/or optimize its platform, the HR technology vendor, the systems integrator (SI), and, depending on the size of the organization, a firm to help with strategy development, design, change and program management. By exploring these key highlights, we hope to help you perpetuate the low expectations [and realities] of HR tech investments.

Figure 1: Room for Improvement When It Comes to HR Tech ROI

6 in 10 of organizations are either **dissatisfied or very dissatisfied** with their ROI from HR technology spending.

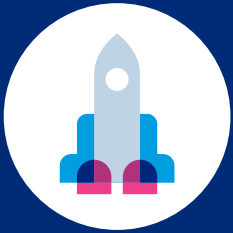


49% of organizations rate their adoption of HR technology as **below expectations**.

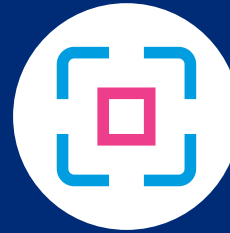


Source: Mercer HR Tech Confidence Survey

As you begin your deployment journey, let's help cover the basics:



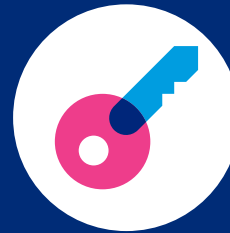
What does "deployment" mean?



What are the four essential partnerships that contribute to a successful implementation process?



What is the role and function of SI's in the technology landscape?



What are the key considerations involved in selecting an SI?

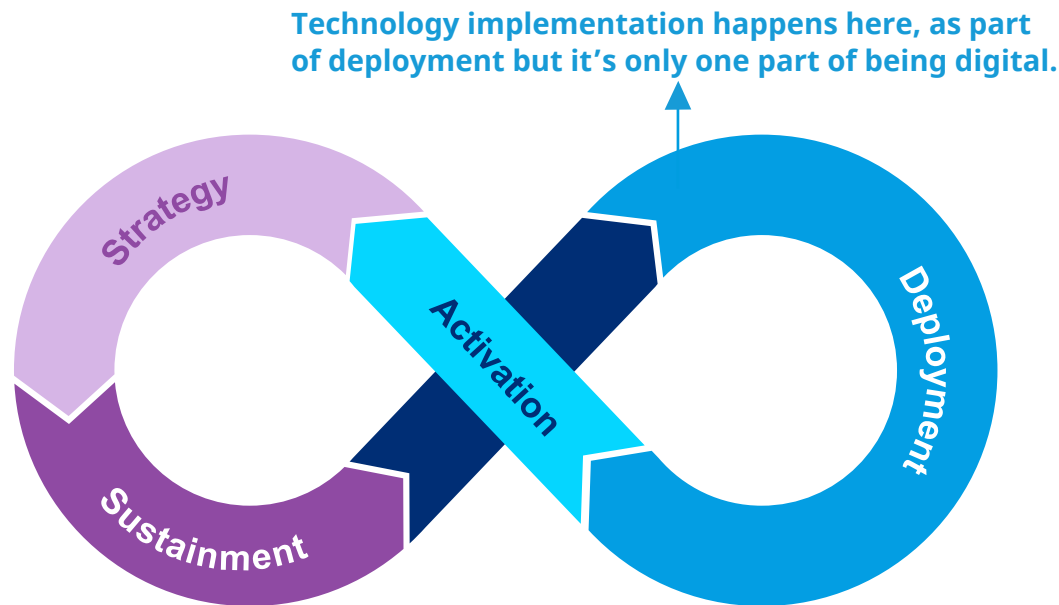
Let's break this down.



1. What does deployment mean?

This is a simple enough question. However, the answer is not so simple. **Deployment** often gets confused with software **implementation**, which means taking applications and tools from planning and development to the production stage where it is operational and ready for use. It involves installing, configuring and testing the software, integrating it with other systems if needed, and ensuring that it functions correctly. This is different that digital deployment, which also involves strategic planning, establishment of program governance, redesign of roles and processes, change management and a continually improving operating structure.

Figure 2: Digital is a way of operating, not just technology



Mercer, a company specializing in HR, including digital advisory and technology implementation services, plays a crucial role in this process. We focus on building **digital-first cultures** within organizations, fostering an environment encouraging innovation, and empowering employees to leverage technology for meaningful change. We also support change management, adoption, and training to ease clients into their new environment or to derive more value from the one in which they've already invested. Mercer's expertise helps organizations effectively deploy digital capabilities and integrate new technologies while driving transformation and growth through a culture of innovation.



2. What are the four essential partnerships that contribute to a successful implementation process?

Successful implementation of HR technology requires four key partnerships: the organization itself, the HR technology vendor, and if needed, a systems integrator and a strategic consulting partner.

The organization seeking to transition or optimize their platform is crucial for driving the project forward and aligning it with their goals. The HR technology vendor brings expertise and tailored solutions to meet the organization's specific needs. The SI plays a critical role in configuring the software and integrating it with existing systems, ensuring a seamless implementation.

When going through the process of software deployment, it is important for organizations to partner with companies that are not only a good fit from a business perspective, but also from a cultural perspective. This means finding companies that align with the organization's values, beliefs, and ways of working. By partnering with companies that share a similar culture, organizations can ensure a smoother and more successful deployment process. This is because cultural alignment promotes better collaboration, communication, and understanding between the organization and its partners, leading to more effective implementation and integration of software systems.



3. What are SI's and what do they do?

SI's are professionals who specialize in bringing together different technologies, software, and hardware components to create a unified and efficient system. They ensure that all the different parts of a system work together seamlessly, allowing businesses to streamline their operations and improve productivity. SI's are like the architects who design and build the bridge between various systems, enabling them to communicate and collaborate effectively. Their role is crucial in integrating diverse technologies and ensuring they function harmoniously to meet the specific needs of an organization.



4. What are the key considerations involved in selecting an SI?



1. Assess your organization's needs:

Before embarking on the search for an SI, it is essential to assess your organization's specific needs and goals. Identify the pain points and challenges you aim to address through the implementation of HR technology. This will help you define the scope of the project and determine the expertise required from an SI.



2. Define selection criteria:

Establishing clear selection criteria will streamline the process of finding the right SI. Consider factors such as experience, industry knowledge, technical expertise, project management capabilities, and the ability to understand your organization's unique requirements. Additionally, evaluate their track record of successful HR technology implementations. Lastly, if as part of your operating model, you need to contract for access to skill sets to continually release capabilities and conduct other activities (e.g., bug fixes, security patches), then you should include criteria evaluate whether the SI would make a good application managed service (AMS) provider.



3. Conduct thorough research:

Once you have defined your selection criteria, conduct thorough research to identify potential SI's. Seek recommendations from industry peers, attend conferences, and explore online resources. Look for integrators with a proven track record in implementing HR technology solutions and a deep understanding of your industry.



4. Request proposals:

After shortlisting potential SI's, request detailed proposals from each of them. The proposals should outline their approach, methodology, timeline, and cost estimates tailored to satisfy your needs. Evaluate the proposals based on how well they align with your organization's needs and goals.



5. Evaluate expertise and experience:

During the evaluation process, pay close attention to the SI's expertise and experience. Consider their knowledge of HR technology platforms, their ability to integrate with existing systems, and their understanding of industry best practices. Look for integrators who have successfully implemented similar scopes in the past.



6. Check references:

To gain insights into the SI's performance and client satisfaction, reach out to their references. Ask about their experience working with the integrator, the quality of their work, adherence to timelines and budgets, and their impact on ROI. This step will provide valuable feedback and help you make an informed decision.



7. Assess communication and collaboration:

Effective communication and collaboration are vital for a successful HR technology implementation. Evaluate the SI's communication skills, responsiveness, and willingness to work closely with your team. A strong partnership built on open and transparent communication will ensure a smooth implementation process.



8. Consider long-term support:

Implementing HR technology is not a one-time event; it requires ongoing support and maintenance. Evaluate the SIs' ability to provide long-term support, including application managed services (AMS) for client support teams across multiple systems and locations. AMS can provide enhanced scalability across products and geographies, contribute to quicker resolution times, ensure any technical problems or glitches are addressed properly, and minimize disruptions to business operations.



Summary

In summary, embarking on an HR technology deployment requires careful consideration of various factors, including the organization's goals, the expertise of HR technology vendors, the role of SI's and the potential need for change and project management support. By understanding the importance of these partnerships and following a systematic approach in selecting the right SI, organizations can ensure a smooth and successful implementation process. With the right team in place, organizations can leverage HR technology to drive innovation, improve efficiency, and achieve their desired outcomes.

Interested in learning more about the HR technology ecosystem or contributing to the HR tech community? Then sign up for [Mercer's HR Tech Forum](#) where we can carry on this discussion!



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