ERP Implementation

Obvious premise: if not going to do it right, then don't do it.

Reality: many companies, even those who think they are doing it right, fail.

Implementation...

Two ends of spectrum—ERP worthwhile, valuable; ERP total disaster. Very little middle ground.
Achieving Success in ERP implementation

Success is not...

a foregone conclusion.

Success is...

dependent on top management "buy in" and resource allocation.

Championing ERP implementation

Full-time project leader

Veteran from within company (outsider will take longer to learn company; have less credibility).

Best available person

"If it doesn't hurt to free up the person who will be your project leader, you probably have the wrong person. Further, if you select the person you can least afford to free up, then you can be sure you've got the right person. This is an early and important test of true management commitment." (Wallace and Kremzar)

Good people skills, communication skills, respect and trust of peers, good track record
"[ERP] systems are flexible in the same way that concrete is flexible when it is poured. However once it hardens it takes a jack hammer to change it."

Be deliberate, but make haste in planning and implementation.

Just because it can take forever doesn't mean it should.

Select the best package for your needs and undertake as little customization as possible.

Implementation dictated by company processes. Requires blending of business and technical knowledge.

Make sure data loaded into the system is accurate—to the degree it needs to be.

__________—can be less precise. (Lead times on orders, order quantities, forecasts, etc. Refined over time.)

__________—must be precise. (Actual inventory balances, production orders, purchase orders, accounting records, bills of materials, etc.)
Challenges of Implementing ERP

"Getting there from here"
Migrating existing technology infrastructure to enterprise-wide system.

Managing high cost
Standardizing/defining business processes—time, cost, contention
Disruption to existing business workflow
Human factors—challenge of change
Employing sufficient technical expertise (task oriented and ongoing)
Risk of undertaking effort and failing, or achieving insufficient benefit given investment

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