

# Documenting ERPs for Non-Technical Users of Software

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by  
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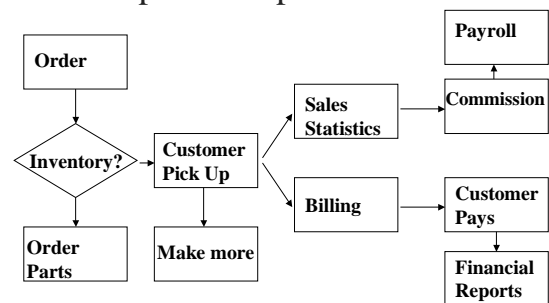
## Content

- What is an ERP
- Why ERP
- How ERP
- Who of ERPs
- Technical Communications and ERP
- Tips for succeeding

## ERP

- Enterprise Resource Program
- Enterprise Resource Planning Software
  
- An integrated software system that can automate all departments and functions across a company

## A Simple Example of ERP Flow



## ERPs

- SAP
- Oracle Applications
- PeopleSoft
- Baan
- JD Edwards
- Seibel Systems

## Why Implement an ERP?

- Y2K
- New technology
- Cost savings
- Reengineering -- automate tasks
- Competitive edge

## The Truth about ERPs

- Complex
- Expensive
- Require a team
- Consulting Opportunities

## Implementation Partners

- Vendors (SAP, Oracle, etc)
- IBM Global Services
- ICS DeLoitte
- Earnst & Young Cap Gemini
- Price Waterhouse Coopers
- Andersen
- Accensure

## Key Implementation Roles

- Business Analysis
- Configuration
- Programming
- Project Management
- Change Management
  - Super Users
- Documentation
- Training

## Technical Communication Roles

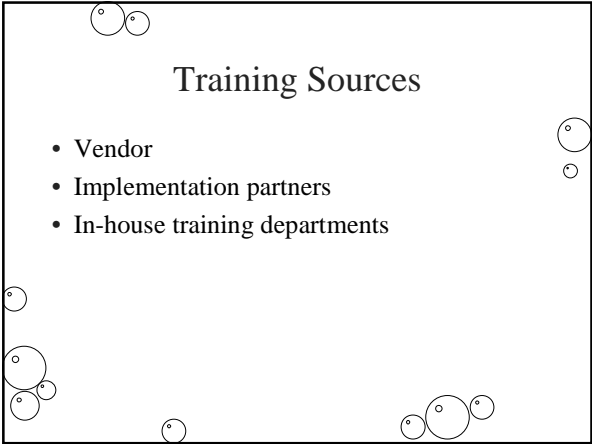
- Change Management
- Documentation
  - Technical
  - Non-Technical
- Training

## Change Management

- Prepares workforce for change
- Facilitate communications
  - Reduce fear and resistance
  - Build executive sponsorship
- Newsletters
- Other campaign strategies
- Ensures successful implementation

## Training

- Curriculum design
- Instruction materials
- Hands-on exercises
- Testing and certification
- Classroom instruction
- Distance learning
- Job aids



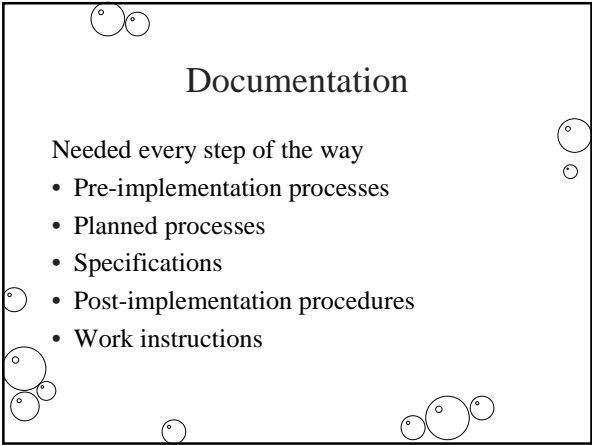
## Training Sources

- Vendor
- Implementation partners
- In-house training departments



## Custom Training

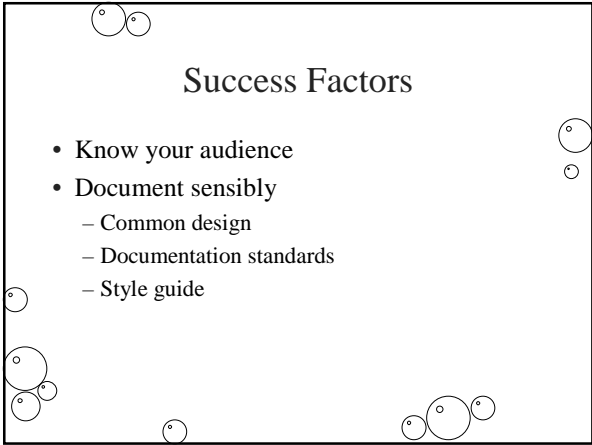
- Every implementation is unique
- Combination of technical and non-technical
- Ideal - specific to post-implementation roles
- Lots of opportunities for work!



## Documentation

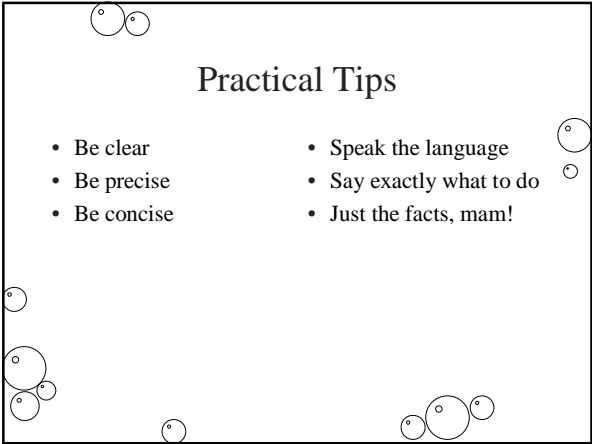
Needed every step of the way

- Pre-implementation processes
- Planned processes
- Specifications
- Post-implementation procedures
- Work instructions



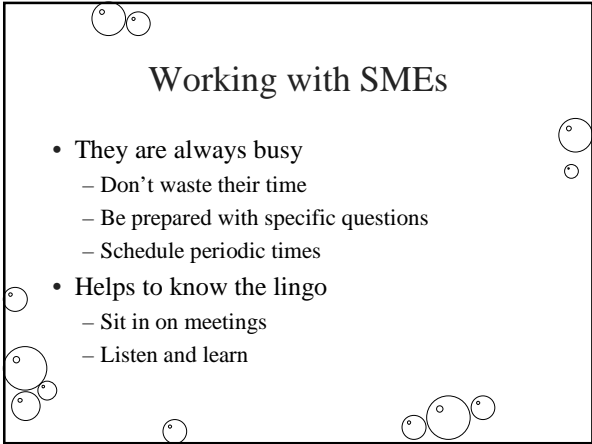
## Success Factors

- Know your audience
- Document sensibly
  - Common design
  - Documentation standards
  - Style guide



## Practical Tips

- Be clear
- Be precise
- Be concise
- Speak the language
- Say exactly what to do
- Just the facts, mam!



## Working with SMEs

- They are always busy
  - Don't waste their time
  - Be prepared with specific questions
  - Schedule periodic times
- Helps to know the lingo
  - Sit in on meetings
  - Listen and learn

## Characteristics of Non-Technical Users of ERPs

- They are experts in the work they do
  - Accounting
  - Human resources
  - Shipping ...
- Not experts in software technology
- Busy
- Software is a tool, not a goal
- Learning software may be frightening

## Common Pitfalls

- Isn't this a neat feature!
- Look at all the choices you have!
- This is how the software works ...
- This is a standard part of the software / this is a custom feature for this location

## Better Approaches

- This is how you
- Currently you \_\_\_\_\_. With the new system you will \_\_\_\_\_.
- Never \_\_\_\_\_
- Always \_\_\_\_\_
- Required, Mandatory, Optional fields
- Document transactions before overviews

## Why Enter the ERP Market?

- There are jobs
- There will be jobs for the foreseeable future
- Often pay more than other tech comm jobs
- Contracts tend to be long -- 6 months or more is not uncommon

## How to Start

“Use what you got to get what you need” James Brown

Leverage your:

- Business knowledge
- Training experience
- Technical writing experience
- Software design experience
- Foreign language knowledge

## Gaining Entry

- Vendors
- Major implementation partners
- Smaller implementation partners
- Small sub-contracts with all of the above