

6 Best Practices for Selecting Performance Development Management Software

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Executive Summary

Performance Development Management solutions are, by nature, large and complex. How do you select the solution best-suited to your firm? In this guide, Benchmark One's software and performance/professional experts share their top [6 best practices for selecting Performance Development Management software](#). You can learn even more about making an informed Performance Development Management buying decision by downloading the [2012 Benchmark One's Experts' Guide to Performance Development Management Resource Planning](#).

Best Practices Checklist

1. Know your requirements.
2. Make sure vendor competencies match your requirements.
3. Check vendors' training and support resources.
4. Treat your Performance Development Management project as a change-management project.
5. Enlist the aid of consultants.
6. Don't skimp when allocating resources.

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Best Practices

1. Know your requirements.

Make sure that you know, in detail, what organization training management you're trying to solve through the use of a software solution. This takes a multi-departmental approach.

Understand your own needs and match them against potential vendors' offerings. Every Performance Development Management vendor has some particular sweet spots where they are strongest — for example, vendors can aim their products at large organizations (or small), public or private, regional service providers, and so on. If you don't get the right product 'fit,' you may end up trying to shoehorn a round peg into a square hole, which can lead to disaster Make certain that a vendor provides you the requirements necessary to meet the Federal Rules of Civil Procedures with regard to storage and retrieval of e-mail generated through their offering. Additionally, if you accept credit card payments for training and materials costs, be absolutely that the vendor meets all of the requirements of PCI (Payment Card Industry) Data Security Standards. (Cobean, 2012)

Make sure you define your needs up front, or you might select a solid Performance Development Management solution that addresses the wrong issues. The needs assessment should involve all relevant functions/employees. This will also help to obtain employee 'buy-in' and generate enthusiasm for this project. The requirements list should have a ranking by importance of all functionality/capability of the Performance Development Management solution.

2. Make sure vendor competencies match your requirements.

Check your solutions partner's experience. Are they well-versed in the unique needs and 'pain points' of your industry? Have they worked with systems similar to yours? Have they written custom reports in your industry?

Demonstrations are where the vendors put rubber to the road. You should take advantage of this opportunity to have the vendors show you how well their respective systems handle your organization's key processes.

During the demo, ensure that the Performance Development Management solution can perform all the key functionality that you require. If you cannot see the functionality that you need, do not assume that it exists. I would not proceed with the vendor unless they can demonstrate the functionality or allow you to see the functionality at one of their customer sites.

If a potential vendor shows you his product before trying to learn your organizational processes, process flow, and challenges — run, do not walk, to the next vendor on the list

To determine your comfort level with potential partners, ask yourself: Do they communicate clearly and effectively? Do they respond to requests quickly and thoroughly? Do they understand the unique demands of your industry? Can they explain and demonstrate technology in language all employees will understand? Are they open and friendly?

Find service providers that understand your specific organization. Ask the integrator about directly relevant industry experience. This is even more important if your organization or industry has specific requirements that are unique.

3. Check vendor's training and support resources.

Make sure there are at least three consultants on staff are fully certified and receive product education annually. To control the cost of training new hires, make sure the reseller has at least one resource dedicated to phone and remote support.

4. Treat your Performance Development Management project as a change-management project.

Performance Development Management projects are change-management projects, not technology installs. At their core, Performance Development Management projects are fundamentally people-driven change-management projects intended to improve cross-functional organization processes. Just throwing your users the keys to a new technology product will not spontaneously result in the organization improvement desired. New software implementations need to include user engagement and knowledge transfer so users understand not only their own roles, but the roles of others — and how what each person does affects the others in a given process chain.

5. Enlist the aid of consultants.

Find an internal or external expert who has worked with at least two different Performance Development Management systems and has also spent time in a functional role. Make sure it is someone who has been on both the sides of your fence, and does not have any vested interest in any vendor's solution.

6. Don't skimp when allocating resources.

Be ready for a long and challenging journey. Commit enough resources both financially and managerial time. It is not a website development project, and it will make or break your organization.

Spend the time needed to review each vendor's implementation approach and assumptions to ensure their 'standard' approach really does meet your needs.



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About this Report

Benchmark One's Best Practices Reports are designed to help professional trainers understand education, organization and technology best practices in particular topic areas. The best practices included in each report are sourced from experts who have exhibited expertise in the particular topic. Best Practices Reports are designed to be practical, easy to consume, and actionable.