



## Interview with Bob Cape, CIO, College of Charleston

### Readiness Assessment Case Study

*Jennifer S. Higgins*

#### **Why did College of Charleston decide an ERP Readiness Assessment was the best course of action for the institution?**

At the launch of an expensive, mission-critical project we wanted an independent and critical review of our preparations, and help in identifying any potentially significant risks in undertaking this project.

#### **Did the Readiness Assessment improve your confidence level for a successful ERP launch? If so, why?**

Yes. We trust the Assessment process and findings. The Readiness Assessment was conducted in a way that built confidence, given the third party nature of the determinations and methodologies that were employed.

There was little opportunity for personal bias to significantly influence findings.

#### **Do you believe the Readiness Assessment helped prepare the College of Charleston stakeholders? If so, how?**

The Assessment provided a way to actively engage our most relevant stakeholder groups. In doing so, stakeholders gained familiarity with the project and realized an opportunity to influence the work. Created were the beginnings of a sense of ownership by stakeholders.

## Did you adjust your budgetary expectations for the ERP implementation after the Readiness assessment results?

Prior to the Readiness Assessment we did not have a well-informed basis on which to make budget projections.

The Readiness Assessment provided impressively detailed budget information which has become our basis for financial planning.



## Did your understanding of backfill and resource issues for the ERP implementation increase after the Readiness Assessment results?

The Readiness Assessment provided a sharper specification for backfills, reinforcing our informal projections. No real surprises.

## What cultural impact did the Readiness Assessment have on College of Charleston?

We don't typically do things (like the Readiness Assessment) around here...we have not systematically reached out to interest groups on a large scale. This was one significant step in creating a culture of genuinely active College community engagement in high-priority institutional projects.

## Given your experience with the Readiness Assessment, what types of institution do you feel would best benefit from this service?

I cannot think of any that would not benefit.

Those that would benefit most are those with limited and/or only distant past experiences with ERP projects.

## What is the greatest benefit College of Charleston received from the Readiness Assessment?

Detailed budget projections. Preliminary budget estimates had been scaled to match our decision-makers' expectations. The detailed budget is an early concrete step in transitioning from a project in the "talking phases" to a project in the "doing phases".

Also, the Readiness Assessment galvanized the project team around an important early task and involved College senior administrators in the project for the first time.

## Final Thoughts?

Because the Readiness Assessment was so well executed, it set a high standard for quality and timelines of work for the balance of the project.

**If you found this interview helpful and would like to read more, please go to our website at [www.collegiateproject.com](http://www.collegiateproject.com) and browse our ERP Library.**