

# Lead with agility

Harness a cloud mindset to accelerate growth and future-proof your business



**The business landscape is evolving rapidly. Customer expectations are rising, competition is fiercer than ever, and the pace of innovation shows no signs of slowing down. Yet far too many businesses are shackled by outdated legacy ERP systems, struggling to access real-time insights, automate processes, or pivot with agility when the market demands it.**

Your legacy systems may feel familiar, but this comfort comes at a cost. Manual workarounds, disconnected data, and rigid workflows slow down decision-making and leave businesses vulnerable to disruption.

Cloud ERP can be the antidote. With pre-configured best practices, scalability, and continuous updates, it provides companies with the tools they need to align operations, improve efficiency, and drive innovation. But this shift also requires a fundamental change in how businesses think and operate -- a shift to a cloud mindset.

To succeed in this transformation, businesses must go beyond adoption and fully embed cloud-led principles into their culture and daily practices. In this e-book we explore the five steps to unlocking the mindset critical for success.

# Step one: Embrace fit-to-standard principles

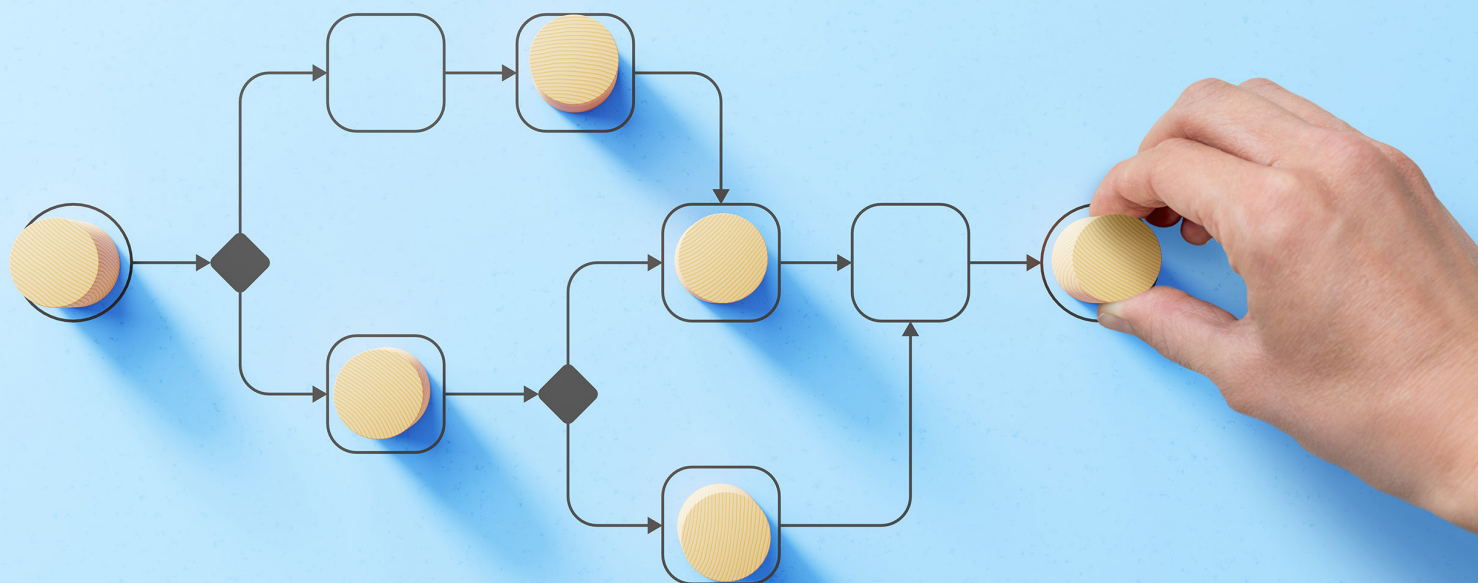
Cloud ERP systems are designed with best-in-class standards that streamline operations, reduce complexity, and set organizations up for long-term agility. Yet, many businesses resist these principles, seeking heavy customization to mimic antiquated workflows.

This resistance is a trap. Over-customizing adds cost, undermines the agility of bi-annual system updates, and perpetuates inefficiencies. To build a cloud mindset, businesses must align processes to cloud-native standards.

## What it looks like in practice:

- **Reimagine rather than re-create:** Challenge established ways of working and adopt processes that align with SAP or other leading standards whenever possible.
- **Shift the conversation:** Encourage teams to adopt an “adopt, not adapt” mentality, focusing on what works rather than re-engineering from scratch.
- **Enable faster deployments:** Leverage pre-configured systems to accelerate digital transformation projects.

By prioritizing fit-to-standard principles, organizations unlock faster deployments, lower costs, and build a foundation for continuous innovation.



## Step two: Prioritize change management

Even with the right technology in place, transformation can fail without buy-in from the people who use it. Moving to cloud ERP significantly impacts roles, workflows, and responsibilities. Without a structured change-management plan, even the most technically successful implementations can falter.

### Steps to success:

- **Start early:** Create a communication and change management plan from day one.
- **Engage super-users:** Identify internal champions who can act as advocates for the transformation.
- **Communicate the 'why':** Don't focus solely on what's changing; explain why the change matters and the benefits it brings.
- **Invest in enablement:** Equip employees with role-based training to ensure they can use the system effectively.

A proactive approach to change management ensures alignment across the organization and smooth adoption of new processes.



## Step three: Foster an agile and continuous improvement mindset

The shift to the cloud is not a one-time process; it's an ongoing evolution. Bi-annual updates, continuous innovation cycles, and new capabilities define the cloud ERP landscape, creating unprecedented opportunities for businesses to stay competitive -- if they adopt an agile approach.

### How to foster agility:

- **Experiment, iterate, improve:** Build a culture of experimentation, actively trying new innovations and iterating based on outcomes.
- **Governance models for innovation:** Create cross-functional teams to evaluate and prioritize updates and features introduced with each cloud release.
- **Link Improvements to Strategy:** Align updates with key business goals, ensuring every change serves the broader mission of the company.

Continuous improvement ensures the cloud system evolves with your business rather than becoming yet another legacy barrier.





## Step four: Redefine business and IT collaboration

Gone are the days when ERP systems were solely the domain of IT departments. Business agility depends on close collaboration between IT and functional teams. To fully leverage cloud ERP, organizations must redefine these partnerships.

### Key practices to champion joint ownership:

- **Establish cross-functional governance teams:** Bring together IT and business leaders to co-own decision-making processes.
- **Empower business-led solutions:** Equip functional teams with low-code/no-code tools to build quick solutions for their unique needs.
- **Cultivate shared accountability:** Create transparency in system adoption and ensure all departments take responsibility for the outcomes.

This collaborative approach enables organizations to bridge technical expertise with business understanding, fostering agility and innovation.



## Step five: Focus on data quality and integration

Cloud ERP is only as effective as the data fueling it. Legacy systems often leave organizations grappling with inconsistent, disconnected, or inaccurate data. Migrating to the cloud magnifies these issues, making data quality and integration a fundamental priority.

### Steps for data excellence:

- **Start with cleansing:** Clean up existing data sets to remove errors and inconsistencies before migration.
- **Leverage integration tools:** Use solutions like SAP Integration Suite to connect disparate systems and create seamless data flows.
- **Monitor, maintain, improve:** Implement data governance processes to ensure ongoing quality and relevance.

High-quality, integrated data provides the foundation for real-time insights, operational efficiency, and confident decision-making that cloud ERP promises.



# Actionable insights and next steps

Breaking free from legacy systems is about more than adopting new tools; it's about transforming how your organization thinks and operates. By following the five steps outlined here, your business can build the cloud mindset needed to thrive in today's fast-paced market.

## Your next steps:

1. Assess your current reliance on legacy workflows and identify opportunities to align with best practices.
2. Commit to a structured change management plan that prioritizes people as much as technology.
3. Build agile governance teams to evaluate and integrate continuous innovations.
4. Empower business leaders to take an active role in tool adoption and decision-making.
5. Prioritize data quality and integration as your foundational investment.

The time to act is now. Legacy systems have a cost -- but the opportunities unlocked by cloud ERP and a cloud mindset are priceless.

**Take control of your business's future.** Contact our team of experts at NTT DATA Business Solutions to begin your cloud transformation today.

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