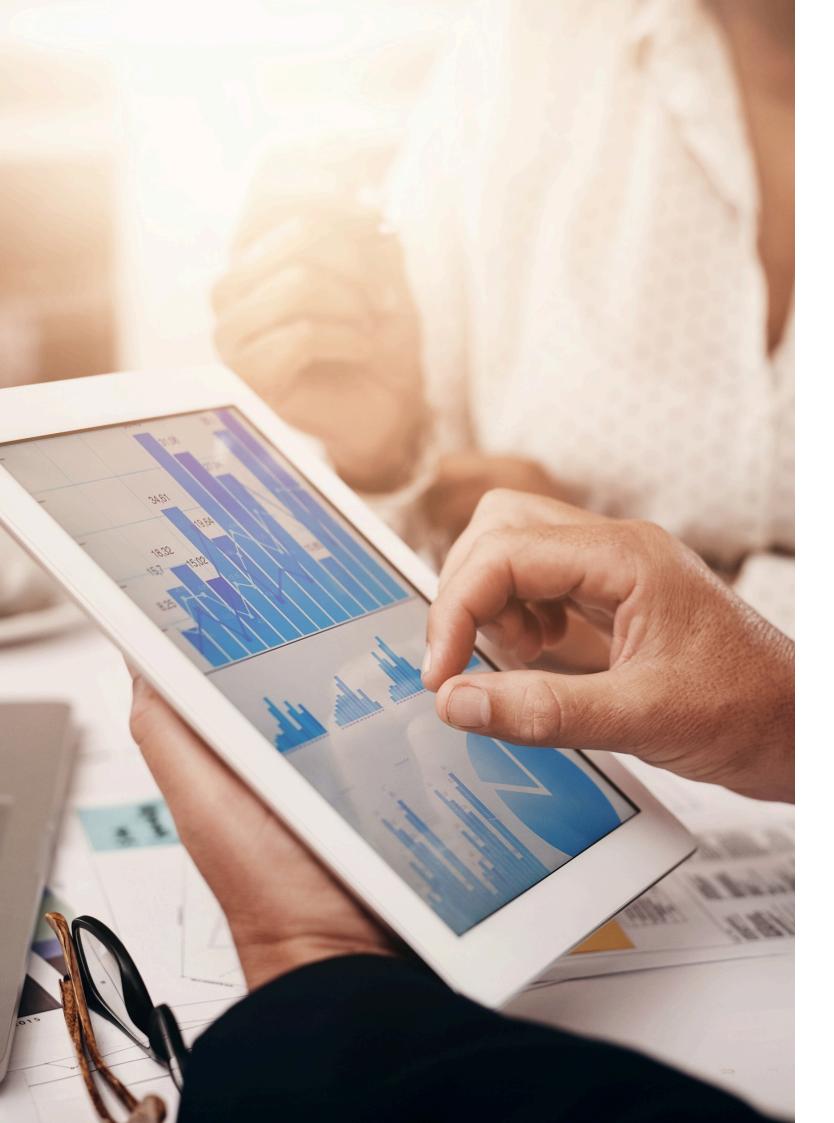
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# Building a high-performing SAP team

A hiring manager's guide to successful enterprise transformation





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### The case for SAP innovation

SAP gives enterprises the tools to modernize fast by integrating finance, supply chain, procurement, HR operations, and processes into one intelligent system.

Despite this, most organizations fail to extract SAP's full value due to siloed data, manual workflows, and fragmented systems that block agility.

High-impact features like embedded analytics, AI forecasting, and process automation are often underutilized. When deployed properly, however, these tools cut operational costs, eliminate manual errors, and drive faster, data-backed decisions—directly boosting margins and accelerating time to value.

SAP's strength is intelligent planning. Real-time visibility allows teams to respond to volatility, while scenario modeling identifies inefficiencies that drain time and resources.

High-performing organizations use SAP as a control center. They reduce friction, catch risks early, and drive innovation through precise, automated processes.

The next section breaks down where momentum slips and how to restore it by activating features most teams ignore.



### Roadblocks to innovation:

**Rigid operations:** Legacy systems limit agility and stall transformation. SAP S/4HANA enables real-time operations through a unified data model that eliminates redundancy and accelerates transactions. Core processes become streamlined across functions, allowing businesses to adapt faster and implement changes with confidence.

**Inefficient planning:** Outdated planning tools rely on static data and miss crucial market shifts. SAP's integrated planning and analytics use predictive models to align forecasts with real-time performance. This increases accuracy, enables rapid reforecasting, and gives teams the speed to act before problems arise.

**Manual compliance tasks:** Regulatory requirements are constantly changing, yet many organizations still track compliance manually. SAP automates reporting and risk controls so that organizations align with standards like SOX, ESG, and IFRS. This reduces audit prep time, ensures continuous compliance, and reduces the risk of regulatory penalties.

**Disconnected data:** Fragmented systems create data silos that block insights. SAP unifies data across finance, supply chain, and HR into a single platform. This enables real-time reporting, powers Al-driven recommendations, and gives leaders more visibility to make faster, smarter decisions.

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## Overcoming common SAP challenges

SAP is designed to unify enterprise operations, but poor execution during rollout can cause delays, cost overruns, and system instability. The most common breakdowns stem from poor planning, weak change management, and underestimating the complexity of enterprise data.

Data harmonization is often the first major barrier. SAP relies on consistent, clean master data across finance, supply chain, and HR systems. Legacy environments typically contain duplicate, outdated, or misaligned data, making migration difficult and error-prone. Without standardized governance, these issues cascade into reporting errors and process failures after go-live.

To avoid this, make data readiness a priority. Assign data ownership early, run cleansing routines, and set up validation rules well in advance of cutover. Once data is stabilized, the focus must shift to user adoption—the most underestimated risk in SAP programs. The platform introduces new workflows and interfaces that can frustrate users if change management is not embedded from the start.

Excessive customization is another hidden cost. While custom code may seem necessary, it often slows future upgrades and inflates technical debt. To maintain agility, organizations should use SAP's built-in Business Technology Platform (BTP) and native extensibility tools. These allow workflow configuration without compromising the core system.

The list below contains additional tips to maximize SAP deployment success and help businesses extract the most value from their investment.

**Redesign processes before implementation:** Map core workflows using SAP best practices before the project starts. This prevents legacy inefficiencies from being carried over and ensures full use of SAP's capabilities from day one.

Adopt Fit-to-Standard over customization: Align processes with SAP's out-of-the-box capabilities to minimize custom builds. This accelerates deployment, simplifies upgrades, and frees IT to focus on high-impact initiatives instead of managing technical debt.

**Use SAP Signavio and Cloud ALM for visibility:** Leverage SAP Signavio for process mining and Cloud ALM for monitoring and issue tracking. Together, they surface bottlenecks, streamline workflows, and enable proactive performance management after go-live.

**Embed analytics into daily operations:** Give users real-time insights through SAP Analytics Cloud or S/4HANA dashboards. This improves decision-making in procurement, finance, and operations without relying on manual reporting.



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### How leading enterprises are evolving their SAP strategy

Amid volatile supply chains, regulatory pressure, and shifts in customer demands, leading organizations are rethinking how they deploy SAP. The main challenge organizations face is connecting operations that scale faster, execute smarter, and respond instantly to change.

This often begins with cloud infrastructure. Many are adopting the RISE with SAP methodology to migrate core ERP functions to standardize global operations while extending flexibility through modular tools. This foundation supports faster deployments and unlocks advanced capabilities that are often underused in traditional setups.

Building on this, organizations are embedding hyperautomation into their operations. SAP's Intelligent Robotic Process Automation (iRPA), machine learning, and event-driven workflows eliminate repetitive tasks across finance, procurement, and supply chain. This allows teams to focus on value and speed up execution.

SAP's embedded analytics ensure every decision is backed by real-time insight. Instead of relying on historical reports, teams can operate from live dashboards that guide predictive, data-led decisions across the organization.

Cloud flexibility, intelligent automation, and real-time analytics are not siloed initiatives. Together, they transform SAP into the central operating system for modern organizations, linking people, systems, and data across the value chain. What emerges is a foundation built for adaptability, precision, and sustained competitive advantage.

The examples below show how enterprises can realign their SAP deployments to meet evolving demands and stay competitive in markets that demand agility.

**Modular cloud adoption:** SAP's modular approach through RISE with SAP and S/4HANA Cloud enables phased migration without disrupting critical operations. Businesses can move core finance and logistics first, then expand into additional functions like HR, compliance, and planning. This staged strategy accelerates time-to-value while lowering transformation risk.

**Process intelligence and automation:** SAP's integration of iRPA, AI Core, and SAP Build Process Automation allows teams to automate invoice processing, supplier onboarding, and exception handling. These tools reduce process latency, improve accuracy, and allow business users to trigger automated actions based on real-time data events.

**Data-driven resilience:** SAP Datasphere and SAP Business Network unify internal and external data to eliminate silos. With real-time visibility into supplier risk, inventory gaps, and logistics disruptions, organizations can adapt plans proactively and respond before issues escalate.

Composable architecture for agility: SAP's Business Technology Platform (BTP) enables teams to build, extend, and integrate applications without custom code. Its low-code, event-driven architecture accelerates innovation while keeping the core ERP clean and upgrade-ready.





## SAP innovation case study

Hitachi High-Tech Corporation, a global manufacturer with 12,000 employees, needed a more agile and scalable ERP foundation. Years of growth and custom development had resulted in over 9,000 SAP ERP customizations, creating upgrade bottlenecks and stalling innovation.

To modernize its ERP systems, Hitachi High-Tech shifted to a flexible, cloud-first model focused on speed, scalability, and standardization by adopting a two-tier approach with SAP S/4HANA Cloud.

It used the private edition at its headquarters in Japan, where greater customization and control were required. For international offices, it deployed the public edition to prioritize speed and simplicity. This structure allowed Hitachi to streamline operations while meeting diverse regional needs.

SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP) served as the central hub for integration, analytics, and low-code application development. Together, these tools gave Hitachi the flexibility to scale efficiently while reducing complexities that accumulated over time.

The migration followed a fit-to-standard approach, reducing code modifications while maximizing agility. Using SAP BTP, the team built key extensions like mass registrations, EDI interfaces, and reporting tools without touching the SAP core. This kept the system upgradeready and accelerated innovation cycles.

Within months of going live, Hitachi High-Tech saw major operational gains. A full system upgrade that once took 18 months was completed in just one. This was made possible by SAP's structured release cycles and the reuse of side-by-side extensions built on BTP.

With SAP BTP's extensibility model, Hitachi High-Tech cut core customizations from over 9,000 to just 22. Including APIs and CDS views, total extensions now remain under 600, streamlining upgrades and improving system stability.

User feedback confirmed the impact. Teams reported faster performance, easier navigation, and improved self-service through SAP Fiori apps. Process owners and developers now operate with greater speed, clarity, and alignment across both public and private cloud systems.

Looking ahead, Hitachi High-Tech is scaling its innovation on SAP BTP. The company is developing automation projects with SAP Build Process Automation, including robotic data entry and Al-driven financial forecasting.

With its fit-to-standard policy and two-tier architecture, Hitachi High-Tech now upgrades faster, scales more easily, and responds quicker to new demands within the organization. This approach has positioned the company as a leader in intelligent enterprise transformation, combining flexibility, innovation, and operational control.



"We made the decision to become skilled at side-by-side development on SAP BTP for our customization requirements instead of developing add-ons to the standard code like we did in the past. This allows for faster upgrades, giving our people more immediate access to improved functionality."

#### Takuya Sakai

General Manager, Digital Transformation Business Group, Hitachi High-Tech Corporation

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## Maximizing SAP's impact on enterprise transformation

SAP's modular architecture, embedded intelligence, and open integration framework enable enterprises to build scalable, cloud-first operations. This reduces complexity, accelerates innovation, and provides end-to-end visibility, allowing businesses to respond quickly to disruption and change.

To unlock these capabilities, organizations need expert implementation partners and the right tools. SAP Cloud ALM provides real-time system oversight, SAP BTP supports agile development and integration, and SAP Activate offers a structured methodology with proven best practices.

DevOps is crucial to the process. With CI/CD pipelines integrated into SAP BTP, teams can automate builds, deployments, and validations. This reduces risk, shortens release cycles, and enables continuous improvements to both core and custom applications.

Post go-live, robust Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) ensures system health, compliance, and change control, critical for managing SAP S/4HANA Cloud updates and maintaining operational continuity across hybrid environments.

SAP's cloud-ready design offers scalable infrastructure, secure data handling, and embedded analytics. Automation bots, lifecycle monitors, and regression tests reduce manual effort, streamline patch cycles, and enhance platform reliability.

- **1. Intelligent incident response and automation:** Enterprises must ensure business continuity during unexpected failures. SAP Cloud ALM offers real-time incident dashboards, while SAP BTP Event Mesh enables proactive alerts and automated actions to prevent service disruptions and minimize downtime.
- **2. Performance optimization and observability:** Real-time telemetry and diagnostics are crucial for platform resilience. SAP EarlyWatch Alert and built-in analytics identify performance risks early, feeding insights into SAP Cloud ALM dashboards. These tools enable proactive scaling and ongoing performance tuning.
- **3. Structured change management and scaling:** Enterprises need strong governance to manage platform updates, integrations, and business rule changes. SAP Activate provides a framework for sprint-based delivery, while SAP BTP supports side-by-side extensions, ensuring core processes remain uninterrupted.
- **4. Mandatory cloud updates and readiness:** SAP S/4HANA Cloud follows a regular update cadence. To maintain compliance, businesses align release planning with regression testing, dependency management, and custom extension validation. SAP Cloud Transport Management automates deployment workflows.
- **5. Future-proofing and system resilience:** Enterprises need robust systems to safeguard data integrity and compliance. SAP's layered security model, along with centralized observability through Cloud ALM and automation in SAP BTP, ensures reliability and scalability.



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## Work with an SAP talent specialist

Successful SAP transformation relies on having the right people at the right time. Enterprises need certified experts skilled in SAP S/4HANA Cloud, SAP BTP, and integration tools to manage updates, design scalable architectures, and drive innovation.

In addition to technical certifications, transformation success also depends on process knowledge, collaboration between IT and business teams, and experience with agile delivery.

Roles like SAP Solution Architects, Integration Developers, BTP Extension Engineers, and Functional Consultants are crucial for aligning SAP strategy with enterprise goals.

Access to professionals with expertise in SAP Cloud ALM, SAP Integration Suite, and SAP Build Process Automation enhances system visibility, streamlines development cycles, and simplifies workflow automation.

A strong talent strategy minimizes delivery risk, optimizes cloud performance, and accelerates ROI on SAP investments.

Procom connects enterprises with SAP-certified specialists to support rapid deployment, cloud readiness, and post-go-live optimization. To learn more about how Procom helps companies build high-performing SAP teams, visit our <u>website</u>.



**SAP Technical Consultants** work on implementations to configure, enhance, and stabilize SAP S/4HANA Cloud and on-premises systems. They manage system parameters, apply SAP Notes, optimize performance, and support upgrades to ensure secure, reliable, and efficient operations.



**SAP Integration Developers** specialize in building end-to-end integrations using SAP Integration Suite, APIs, and IDocs. They map data flows between SAP and third-party systems, configure middleware, and manage message orchestration to enable real-time data exchange across supply chain, finance, and HR systems.



**SAP Functional Consultants** bridge business process requirements with SAP configurations. They gather requirements, design process flows aligned with best practices, and configure modules like MM, SD, FI, and HCM. Their domain expertise ensures business continuity and maximizes user adoption.



**SAP Test Analysts** validate system functionality, data integrity, and process performance. Using the SAP Test Automation Framework, eCATT, and third-party tools like Tricentis, they design test cases, automate regression cycles, and ensure compliance before going live and during quarterly updates.



SAP Cloud Implementation Specialists oversee the end-to-end delivery of SAP S/4HANA Cloud deployments. They coordinate provisioning, activate SAP Best Practices, manage fit-to-standard workshops, and lead data migration and cutover planning to ensure a seamless transition and accelerated time-to-value.

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#### The future of SAP transformation

SAP is advancing its cloud ERP, AI integration, and industry-specific capabilities to help enterprises build intelligent, future-ready operations.

A key focus is embedding generative AI across functions like finance, procurement, supply chain, and HR to boost productivity and decision-making.

These AI features are natively integrated into SAP S/4HANA Cloud and SAP BTP, offering contextual recommendations, automated drafting, and predictive insights directly within user workflows. Tools like Joule, SAP's generative AI assistant, deliver real-time suggestions based on role, process, and data context.

Upcoming SAP BTP updates will expand support for event-driven architecture, low-code extensibility, and centralized governance for AI models and business rules. Paired with SAP AI Core, these upgrades will accelerate the deployment of intelligent workflows across composable processes.

SAP Datasphere and SAP Analytics Cloud unify structured and unstructured data for real-time planning, continuous performance management, and predictive forecasting, all grounded in trusted enterprise data.

With growing ecosystem connectivity, SAP is enabling seamless integration of partner solutions through the SAP Business Network and SAP Store. This open model supports co-innovation, agile value chains, and scalable capabilities across global operations.

#### The following trends are shaping the future of SAP transformation:

- 1. Predictive planning and intelligent forecasting: Integrated with SAP Analytics Cloud and SAP Datasphere, predictive planning models provide dynamic forecasts based on real-time operational data. These insights help finance, logistics, and HR leaders quickly adapt plans and manage uncertainty.
- **2. Al-enabled application observability:** SAP Cloud ALM will feature enhanced observability powered by Al-based anomaly detection and root cause analysis. These features help IT teams resolve issues faster, maintain uptime, and ensure business continuity across SAP S/4HANA Cloud and integrated apps.
- **3. Composable business process automation:** SAP Build Process Automation allows enterprises to design modular workflows, automate repetitive tasks, and integrate Al-driven logic without coding. This supports rapid innovation, lowers technical debt, and speeds up go-to-market initiatives.
- **4. Enterprise-grade AI governance and compliance:** As AI becomes embedded across workflows, SAP will offer governance tools to manage the model lifecycle, ensure compliance with ethical standards, and monitor algorithmic transparency. This supports responsible AI adoption across regulated industries.



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#### **About Procom**

The people who power performance

Procom is a global leader in SAP talent staffing, IT staffing, and contingent workforce solutions. With over 45 years of experience, Procom's expertise combined with an extensive network of IT professionals enables organizations to build high-performing teams that drive successful SAP solutions.

We understand that people are at the heart of every successful implementation, and our proven track record of matching exceptional talent with transformative projects has helped thousands of organizations achieve their IT talent goals. Whether you need to scale your IT team, access specialized expertise, or build long-term cloud capabilities, Procom's comprehensive staffing solutions can help you navigate SAP transformation.

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