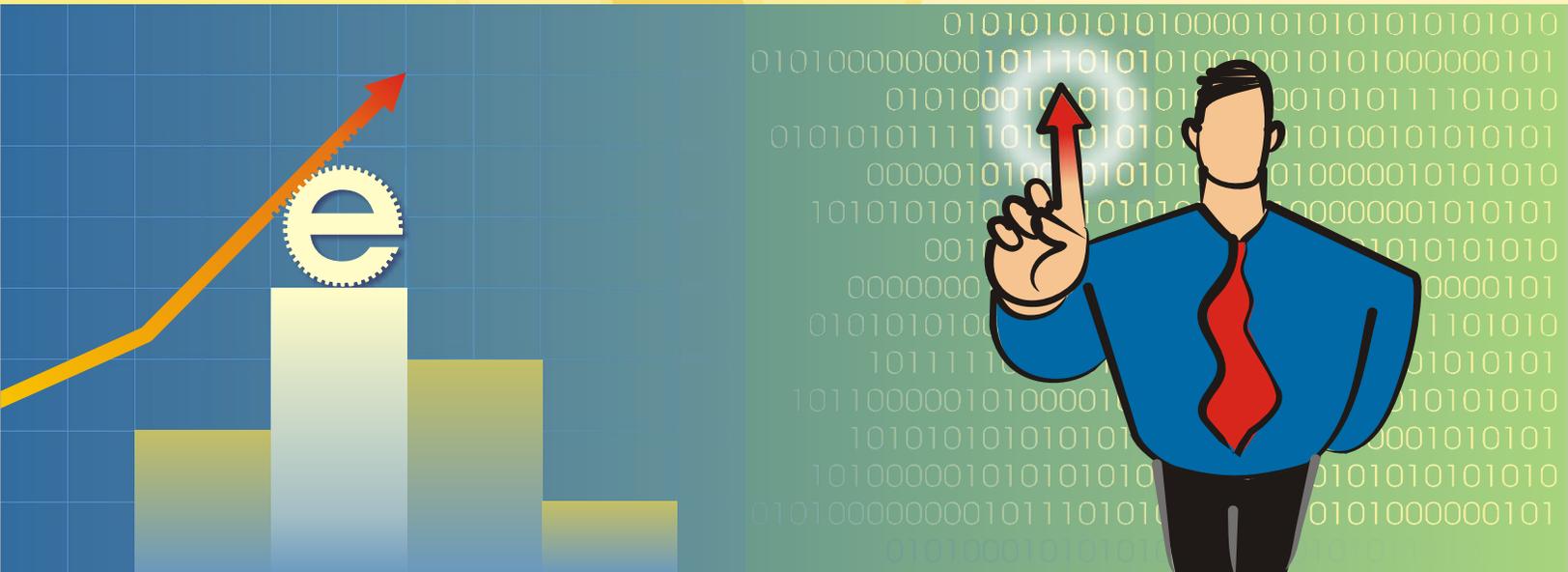




PRIORITIZING IT IMPLEMENTATIONS



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Who prioritizes the IT implementations in your organization? Is it the IT department?

Why? Does that not look logical?

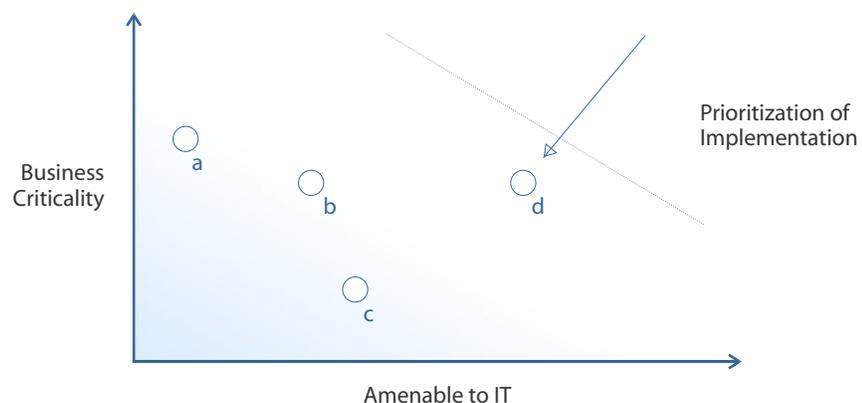
No. Surprised? Read on.

In many organizations the IT department is given a free hand on setting up the implementation schedule, many of the organizations do not even feel the need to question this procedure, but fortunately some of them do, and some of them get it right.

Why does the IT department exist? To aid the business. It doesn't exist for technology but for business. All the IT implementations have some bearing on the bottom line, on the business. So the top management can't totally remain blind to which processes are being automated and more importantly, when? So the role of the management does not end right after releasing the funds for IT implementation, it just begins.

Which factor should decide the implementation priority of an IT implementation, there are mainly two factors, how crucial is the implementation for business, and how amenable is the process for IT implementation. The process involves identifying the most important business processes and plotting them on a matrix as shown below.

Here is how it should look like after completion of the exercise:



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The management should first identify the business processes, then rank and rate them on a scale of business criticality. There is no correct rating, and the process is subjective.

The next phase should involve both the management and the IT division; this phase assigns a level of IT amenability to the business processes. This is also a subjective process as before, but some level of objectivity can be brought in by approximating number of man months required to complete the implementation of each of the processes. Finally the scores on two axes define a position for the business process on the matrix. The implementation sequence is from the 'most crucial and fast to finish' to 'least crucial and slow to finish', pretty logical right? Commonsensical! But the riddle is most corporate do not follow this procedure but do it all haphazardly.

One more thing, one should not spend too much time thinking about what should be the slope of the line that decides which one is first and so on? It looks like it can only tell you that 'process d' should be implemented before 'process c', and not much more. Remember, it's not an exact science, it's subjective, so base your decision on your judgment, and this procedure gives you a sense of direction.



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