System Installation, Project Closure, and Evaluation

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The Final Mile Journey

Information System Installation

- Definitions & Strategic Planning
- 3 Delivery Strategies (Direct, Parallel, Phased)
- Value Comparison

Project Closure

- The 5 Types of Project Termination
- Post-Project Reality Assessment

Closure Checklist & Evaluation

- The Handover & Formal Acceptance
- Resource Management & Archiving

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Information System Installation: A Strategic Framework

Deployment is strategic planning, not just flipping a switch.

Key Insight Framework

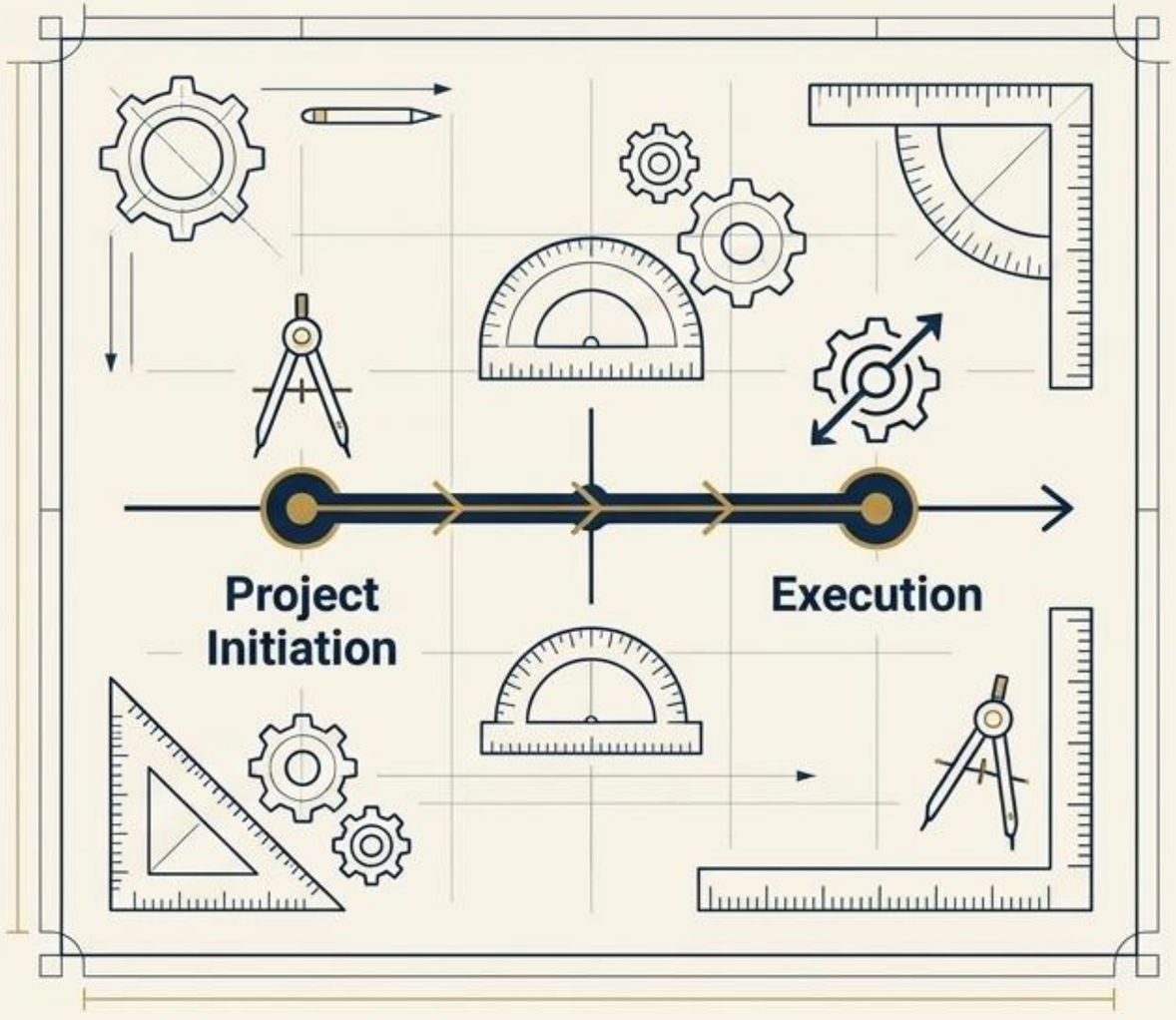
What & When:

Planning must happen upfront during Project Initiation to establish clear timelines and execution protocols.

The Transition:

It requires deliberate preparation to seamlessly shift operations from the legacy system to the new environment.

To ensure a smooth transition that fits the organizational context, leaders must choose from 3 primary installation strategies.



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Strategy 1: Direct Cutover

Mechanics & Advantages

- **Mechanic:** Terminate the old system and immediately launch the new system on a specified date.
- **High Speed:** The absolute fastest implementation time with immediate results.
- **Ideal Context:** Urgent rollouts or when the legacy system is critically failing and must be replaced immediately.

The Risks

- **High Pain:** If the new system is inadequately tested, failures cause severe disruption.
- **No Safety Net:** The old system is shut down; rollback is nearly impossible.
- **Business Impact:** Delays lead to frustrated users and potentially massive revenue loss.

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Strategy 2: Parallel Installation

Mechanics & Security

Mechanic: Both legacy and new systems operate concurrently for a set duration before a full transition.

High Confidence: Outputs from both systems can be compared to verify accuracy.

Safety Net: Maximum security; if the new system fails, the legacy system remains fully operational.

Drawbacks & Pressure

User Stress: Extreme burden on end-users who must perform double data entry and reconcile discrepancies.

Resource Drain: Double the operational time and significantly higher financial cost compared to direct cutover.

Delayed Finality: Unexpected bugs can push the final transition date indefinitely.

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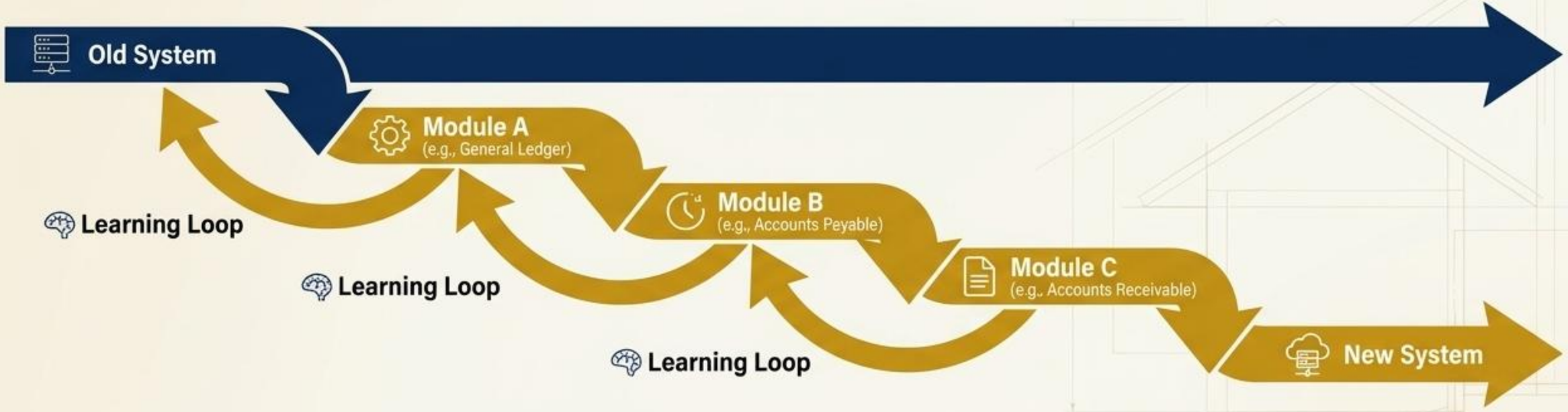
Strategy 3: Phased Installation



Mechanics & Advantages

Mechanic: Gradual deployment of the system by specific modules or physical locations based on a planned schedule.

The Learning Curve: Experience and bug-fixes from the initial phase dramatically smooth out subsequent rollouts.

Low Risk: System impacts are isolated and easier to control than other methods.

Precautions

Prolonged Timeline: Total deployment time and overall project costs are higher than a direct cutover.

The Domino Effect: Delays or critical failures in Phase 1 cascade, throwing off the entire organizational timeline.

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The Strategy Diagnostic Matrix

Comparative Analysis based on Marchewka (2006)

Evaluation Dimension	Direct Cutover	Parallel	Phased
Installation Speed	🔴 Highest	🟡 Slow	🟡 Slow
Risk Level	🔴 Extremely High	🟢 Low (Safety Net)	🟢 Low (Controlled Scope)
User Burden	🟢 Dev Team bears burden	🔴 Users bear burden of double entry	🟢 Gradual adaptation
Cost	🟢 Low	🔴 Very High	🟡 Medium to High
Key Advantage	Rapid Change	Confidence through Comparison	Phase 1 Experience informs Phase 2

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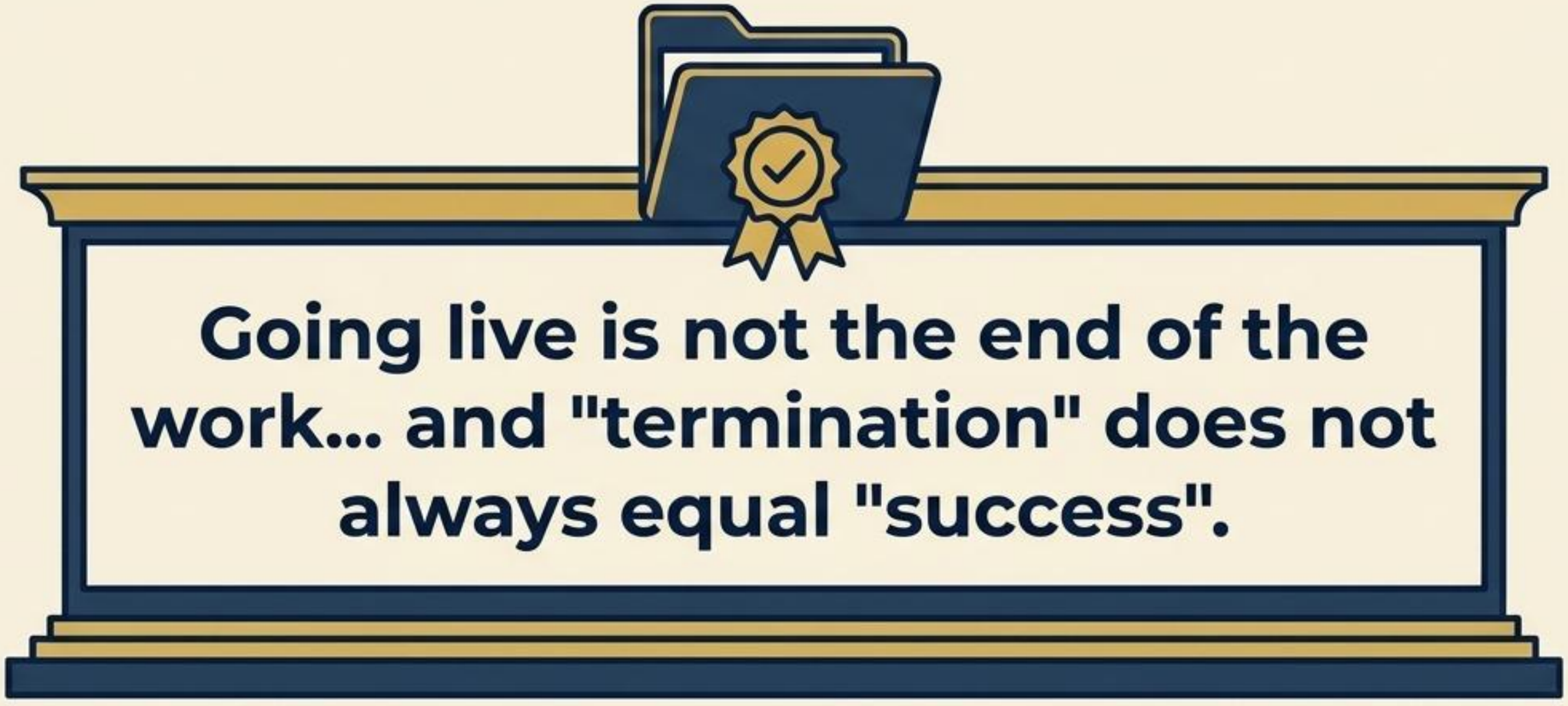
The Reality of Project Closure



Going live is not the end of the work... and "termination" does not always equal "success".

Projects conclude for a wide variety of reasons. In professional project management, closures reflect complex business realities rather than just technical milestones.

We categorize project termination into 5 Distinct Forms (The 5 Types of Project Termination) that dictate how a project is ultimately decommissioned.

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The 5 Types of Project Termination: Planned vs. Rushed

1. Normal Termination (The Trophy)

- **Complete Success:** The project is finished entirely according to the original baseline plan.
- **Scope Delivered:** Executed within budget, meeting all quality and time constraints.
- **Conclusion:** Formally handed over to sponsors, accompanied by team rewards and celebration.

2. Premature Termination (The Stopwatch)

- **The Rush to Deliver:** The team faces extreme pressure to push the project live earlier than scheduled.
- **Constrained Scope:** The delivered system lacks complete functionality or secondary features.
- **Conclusion:** Delivers only the core/essential functions to meet immediate, critical business needs.

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The 5 Types of Project Termination: Resource Drain vs. Collapse

3. Runaway Termination (The Tangled Loop)

- **The Never-Ending Project:** Continuously chases an elusive target, endlessly draining time and organizational resources.

- **Root Cause (Scope Creep):** Caused by initial ambiguity in scope, compounding delays, or sponsors continuously demanding new features.

4. Failed Termination (The Shattered Graph)

- **Cost > Value:** The ballooning costs and extended timelines far outweigh any potential business benefit.

- **Root Cause (PPT Neglect):** The project is terminated due to fatal flaws across the three core pillars: People, Process, or Technology.

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The 5 Types of Project Termination: Changed Priorities

The Executive Pivot: Termination driven by external environmental shifts.

Economic & Financial Realities

Existing resources can no longer be justified or frozen in the current project scope.

The Executive Pivot

Leadership mandates the reallocation of capital and talent to new initiatives that now hold higher strategic importance.

Market Dynamics

The original value proposition of the project has been negated by rapidly changing external market conditions or competitor moves.

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Closure Checklist Phase 1: The Handover

Deliverables & Open Issues

- Conduct a **granular audit** to ensure all promised components are fully developed.
- Resolve, mitigate, or officially close all outstanding Open Issues to ensure zero lingering technical debt.

Formal Acceptance

- Secure official, **documented acceptance** from the Project Sponsor or Client.
- **Strategic Importance**: This signature acts as the definitive legal and operational proof that the project scope has been **fulfilled according** to the agreed baseline.

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Closure Checklist Phase 2: The Cleanup

Archives & Knowledge Base

– Systematically organize, centralize, and securely store all critical project documentation.

– **Strategic Importance**: Transforms localized project experience into a permanent organizational knowledge base for future reference.

Resource Release

– Execute the planned return of all physical and digital project assets (hardware, software licenses, dedicated workspace).

– **Strategic Importance**: Formally release specialized team members back to their core departments or onto new initiatives to maintain business momentum.

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Closure Checklist Phase 3: The Post-Mortem

Evaluation & Review

- Conduct a comprehensive performance appraisal of the entire project team.
- Perform a rigorous post-mortem to document overarching successes and vital shortcomings, elevating the organization's standard operating procedures.

Financial & Written Closure

- Reconcile and zero out all project accounts, clearing remaining budgets and finalizing vendor payments.
- Issue the formal written declaration to the enterprise that the project is officially and comprehensively terminated.

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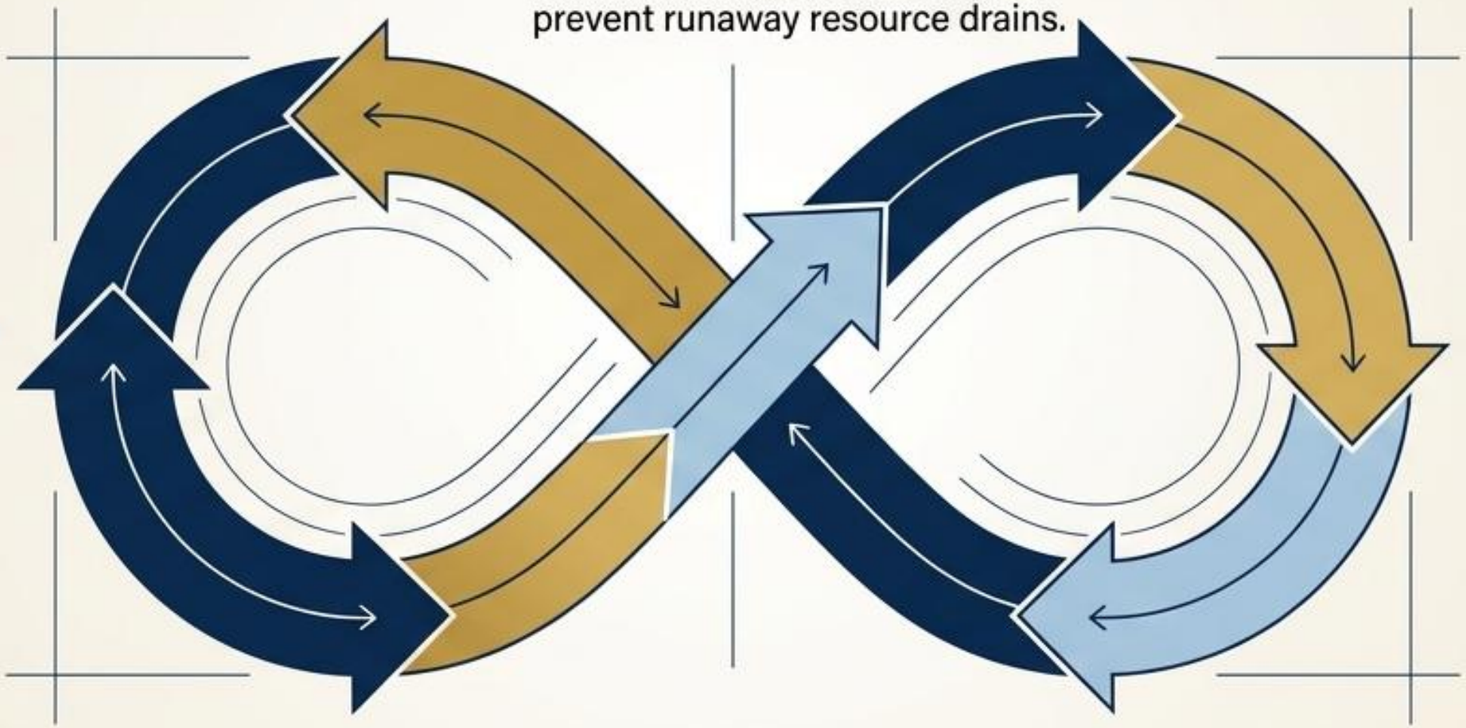
The Cycle of Success: Closure is the Foundation of Innovation

2. Clear Termination

Acknowledging and actively managing the 5 types of project endings to prevent runaway resource drains.



1. Stable Transition

Deploying the precise installation strategy (Direct, Parallel, Phased) to control risk.

3. Value Transfer

Executing the closure checklist to harvest knowledge, evaluate teams, and release resources.

Success in Information Systems is not merely about installing advanced technology. It is about managing user adoption, mitigating risk, and executing a systematic closure to transfer maximum value back into the organization.

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