

# Guide to Implementation Partners SAP SuccessFactors

**SAP SuccessFactors** 

Prepared by Raven Intel  
November 2020



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Raven Intel is an independent peer review site that helps Enterprise Software customers find, hire and review the best consulting partner for their implementation. We provide business leaders with valuable transparency into the software implementation process and raise the visibility of consulting partners who are doing the most to help their customers achieve the maximum benefit from their software purchase. Our site, [ravenintel.com](https://ravenintel.com), provides free access to hundreds of vetted customer reviews about Enterprise Cloud Software projects, as well as to the profiles and ratings of over 100 consulting firms—from the Big 5 to boutique organizations.

**900+**

Verified reviews

**100%**

Of our reviews are verified with 2-step verification

**150+**

Consulting firms represented

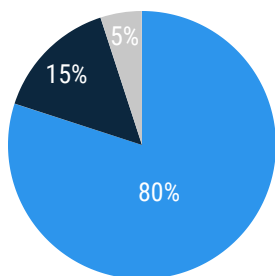
**40+**

Countries represented

## OUR VETTING PROCESS

100% of our reviews are verified. We know the identity of every one of our reviewers (work email & LinkedIn), their company and have validated their company uses the software they have reviewed. We disqualify approximately 20% of the reviews submitted when we are unable to verify full credentials. At no time can a partner, software company or other party pay for favorable data, for Raven Intel to delete negative reviews or for favorable reporting.

## SOURCE OF REVIEWS



- Direct-to-Customer - 80%**  
Raven Intel continually runs independent campaigns (email, LinkedIn, social media) targeted to Human Resources decision makers who have implemented a cloud-based Human Capital Management system within the past 18 months and requested that they review their project on our site.
- Consulting Firm Initiated - 15%**  
Consulting firms (aka Systems Integrators) have also sent customers to Raven Intel.com to complete a review, or provided us with contact lists so that we could go directly to customers.
- RavenIntel.com - 5%**  
Approximately 5% of customers came directly to Raven Intel to submit a review.

## ABOUT RAVEN INTEL'S COMMUNITY & BUSINESS MODEL

Raven Intel is free to software customers, as well as for consulting firms to be listed & reviewed on our site. For consulting firms, we offer a paid subscription service that allows them to purchase advertising space (similar to Glassdoor or Yelp!) for brand recognition, as well as provide them with in-depth analytics about their service delivery metrics and peer comparison scores.

We work with software vendors to provide independent, aggregate reporting of their customer sentiment data to inform them about how their partners and projects are performing, and how they compare to their peers in the industry. At no time is customer review data altered to enhance a software vendor or consulting firm's rating favorably.

At Raven Intel, we research partners who implement Enterprise cloud software to understand the composition of their company—the geography they serve, the type of projects they work on and the profile of consultants on their team. Firmographic data is important, but to really know a firm is to know their customers. The marketing adage, ‘your company’s brand is what customers are saying about you behind your back’ rings true. If you are a business making a decision to entrust a partner to lead you on an Enterprise Software project—knowing this ‘brand’ before you’re knee-deep in a project is critical. Hearing real-life customer experiences are perhaps the most indicative marker of a consulting firm’s quality and are the easiest way for you to gain confidence that a firm can deliver on the promises made during the evaluation stage.

## Expectations vs. Reality

We’ve seen a full range of quality when it comes to consulting projects and firms. There are firms that look impressive on the surface and say all the right things—but when you talk to their customers, a different picture of reality emerges. There are others that lack the million-dollar marketing budgets and polish of a larger firm, yet are delivering projects with high satisfaction, ahead of schedule. In addition, change happens over time—a firm who has once struggled may have added new talent or processes to improve the customer experience. Conversely, a firm once known for good quality might have gotten too overloaded with projects and thus now struggles to effectively satisfy customers. Being able to look under the hood and quickly get a sense for the current, authentic customer experience can end up saving your organization a lot of time and money in the long run.

## “I’ll just ask my software vendor for recommendations.” Think again.

In 80% of the projects we’ve reviewed, customers chose their implementation partner “because of the recommendation of their software vendor.” It would seem logical that your software vendor knows best when it comes to a partner. Not so. In those projects where the customer felt the decision for the partner was ‘made for them’, project satisfaction averages around 6 out of 10. While it is true that software vendors certify partners to implement their software and get used to working with certain firms, there is inherent bias in the process. Many times the same partners who implement are helping to sell the software engagement or are paying hefty fees for the ability to be walked in the door. In addition, the knowledge that software sales teams have about actual project delivery quality is many times incomplete and won’t provide your organization with options best-aligned with the scope of your project.

## The Upshot

Whether your software vendor tells you their small, tightly-controlled ecosystem will guarantee you get a good partner or the vast choices available will give you many partners to choose from—you still need to do your own homework. In the end, you’ll live with your partner choice.

## Reviews on Raven Intel

Visitors to Raven gain a bird’s eye view—and can look up any Enterprise software consulting firm on our website and read reviews—for free. Raven has over 900 vetted reviews about Enterprise Software projects and the partners that help lead them. We ask customers a series of quantitative and qualitative questions about their project, and that information is then verified for authenticity and published.

- Did the project succeed?
- What was the team like? Did the team stay consistent throughout the project?
- Was the project delivered on-time? On-budget?
- Was it scoped properly?

The answers to these questions are signals for other customers to learn from. In addition, we verify every review that it was written by a real customer who has gone through a Enterprise software cloud project within the past 24 months. This trust is critical for us as we have thousands of customers who use our information to guide their decision process.

## RAVEN INTEL'S REVIEW DATABASE

**900+**

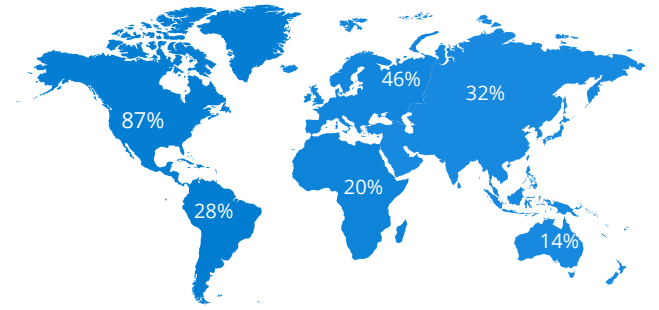
Vetted customer reviews

**40+**

Countries represented

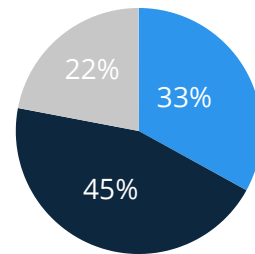
**87%**

Implementations completed via consulting firm

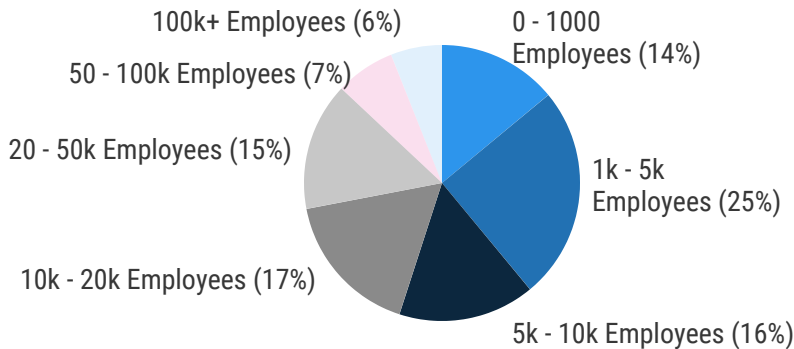


## COMPOSITION OF CONSULTING FIRMS REVIEWED

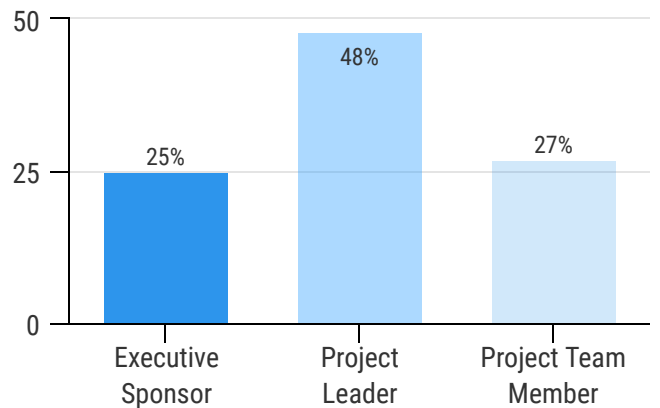
- Global consulting firms
- Independent consulting firms
- Boutique consulting firms



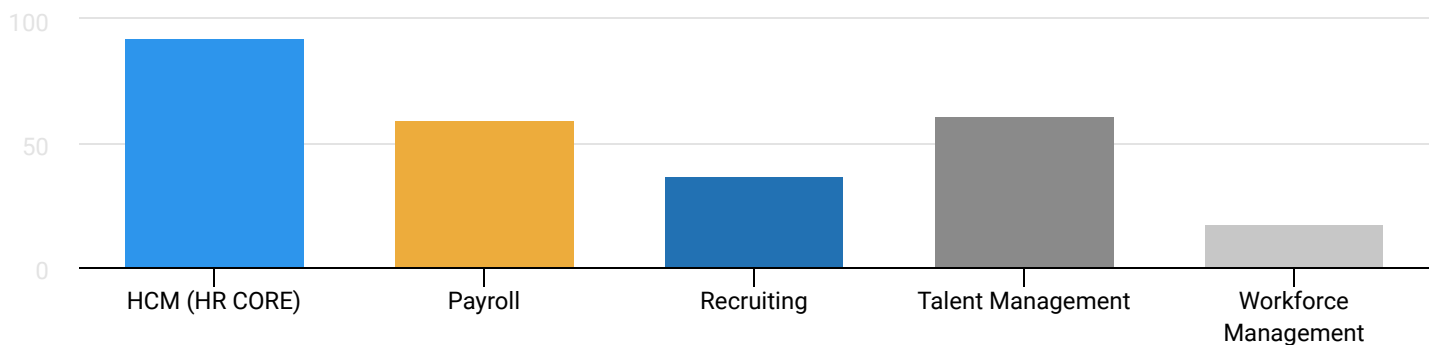
## CUSTOMER EMPLOYEE SIZES REVIEWED



## REVIEWER ROLES

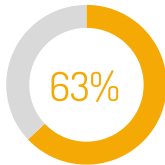


## IMPLEMENTATION TYPES REVIEWED (HCM)

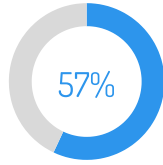


## ON-TIME & ON-BUDGET DELIVERY

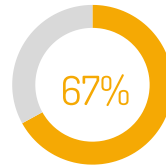
We ask customers if their project was delivered on-schedule and on-budget. If delivered late or over-budget, we ask to what degree. As compared to the HCM industry averages, SAP SuccessFactors and its partner consulting firms are **exceeding the average on-budget delivery by 6% and on-time delivery by 8%**.



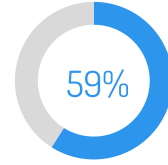
63%  
of SAP SuccessFactors projects delivered on-budget.



57%  
Industry average of projects delivered on-budget.



67%  
of SAP SuccessFactors projects delivered on-time.

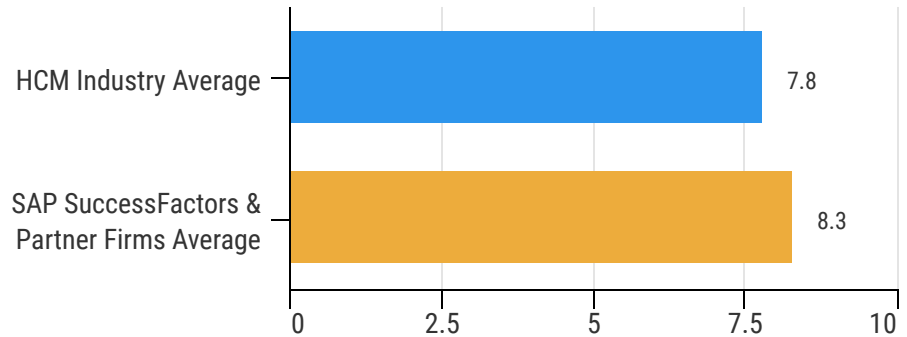


59%  
Industry average of projects delivered on-time.

## OVERALL PROJECT SATISFACTION

A summary of all SAP SuccessFactors and partner consulting firms show that their **average project satisfaction rate is 8.3**, on a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being the highest).

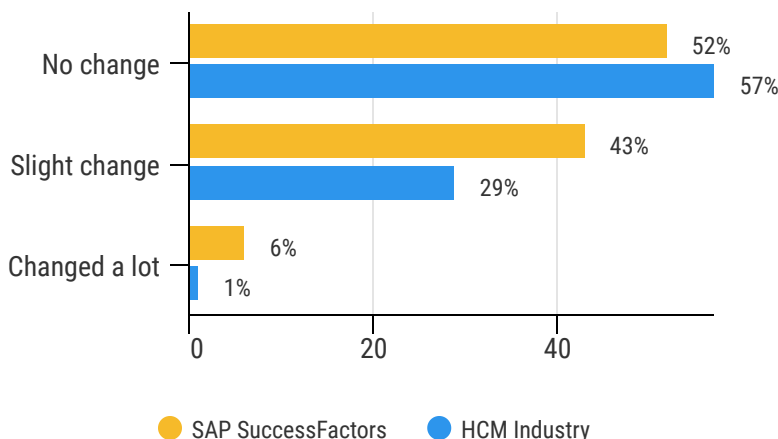
Compared to the overall **HCM software industry average of 7.8**, SAP SuccessFactors and its partner consulting firms are exceeding other consulting partners in project satisfaction.



## TEAM CONSISTENCY

We ask customers if their partner project team was consistent throughout or if there were changes. According to Raven Intel data, SAP SuccessFactors and its partner consulting firms are **14% more likely to have slight fluctuations in team** as compared to the HCM industry average.

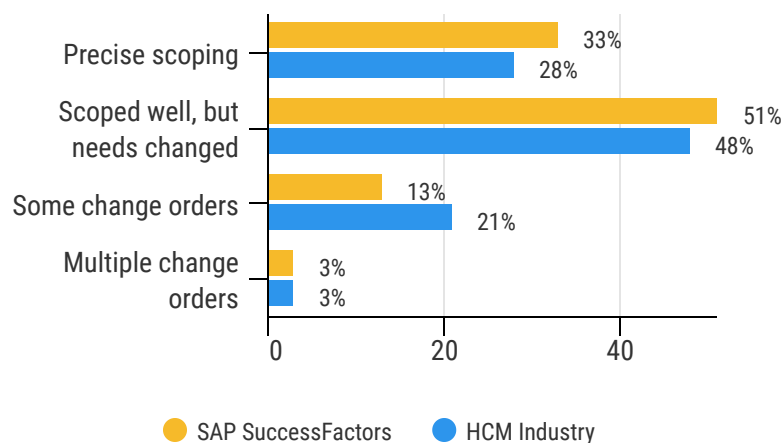
SAP SuccessFactors vs. HCM Industry



## SCOPING ACCURACY

We ask customers how accurately their project was scoped, and if they had change orders. Raven Intel's data indicates that SAP SuccessFactors and its partner consulting firms are **5% more likely to scope project precisely** compared to the HCM industry average.

SAP SuccessFactors vs. HCM Industry



# RIZING

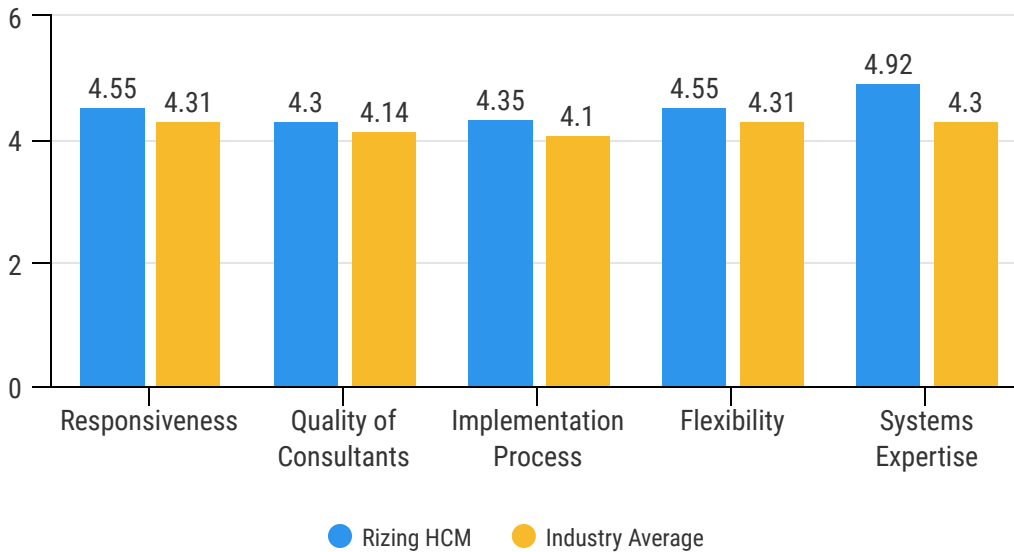


4.7/5

22 Reviews



Rizing HCM vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



2x  
**Professional Certifications**

Rizing HCM has the **largest # of SAP SuccessFactors Professional Certifications** of any partner in North America by 2x

3x  
**Associate Certifications**

Rizing HCM has approximately 3x the number of **Associate Certifications** of any independent firm in North America



Organization is critical; the Rizing teams that we worked with were wonderful and made the project feel easy (even though it was a very short timeline with a critical deadline).

Functional Lead  
Talent Management (Learning, Performance, Succession Planning, Social Collaboration), Compensation  
Manufacturing Industry

[Read More Reviews](#)



At Rizing, we pride ourselves on hiring and developing the **best talent** in the industry. **More of our consultants have received a professional certification by SAP SuccessFactors than any other firm** proving that they have both deep industry experience combined with product expertise. They readily apply practical knowledge to business issues, and their advanced proficiency is the foundation of our proven project methodologies, which enable customers to accelerate their transformation with reduced risk and increased positive business outcomes.

**LUC HEDOU**  
CEO, Rizing HCM

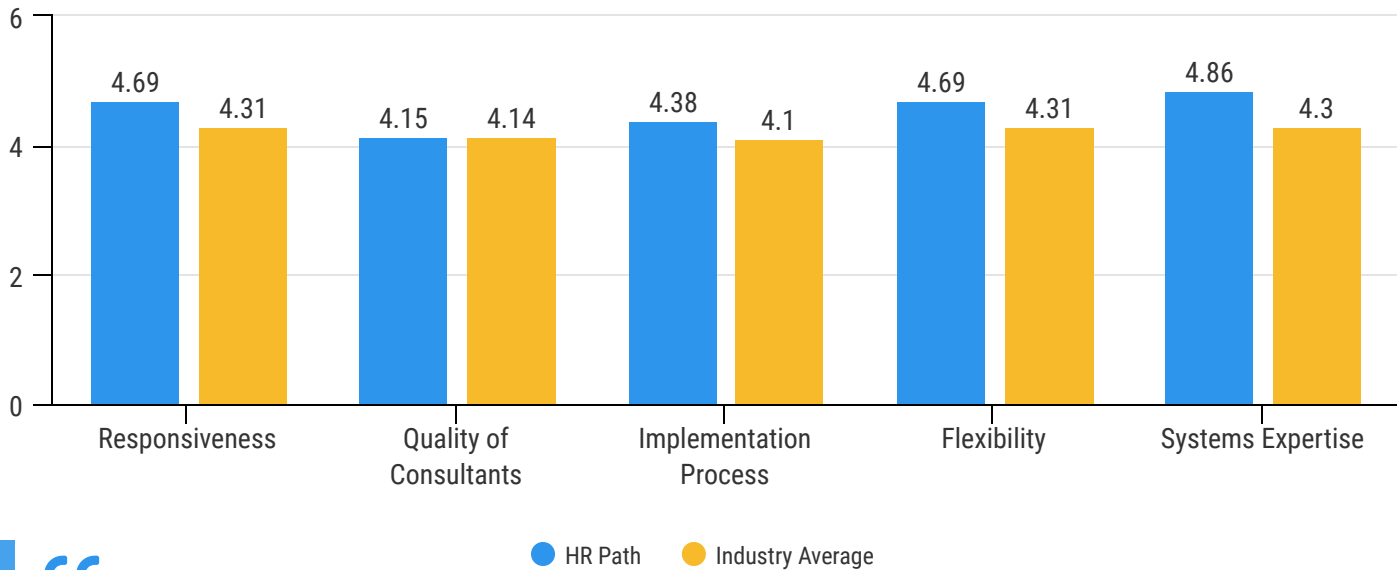
[RIZING PROFILE](#)



★★★★★ 4.7/5

13 Reviews

HR Path vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



“

HR Path is an amazing implementation partner. We used them last year for our goals and performance module and it was an awesome experience. We are currently implementing recruiting and the project is going well. I would highly recommend HR Path as an implementation partner, they really take the time to get to know your organization.

Project Team Member  
Talent Management (Learning, Performance, Succession Planning, Social Collaboration), Recruiting / Onboarding  
Manufacturing Industry

[Read More Reviews](#)

## What Makes Consulting Projects Successful: The HR Path Perspective



“ Change orders are the exception rather than the norm—we don’t look at change orders as part of our growth plan. We accurately scope projects and typically present a fixed scope plan that we don’t deviate from.

**FREDERIC VAN BELLINGHEN**  
PARTNER, AMERICAS  
HR PATH

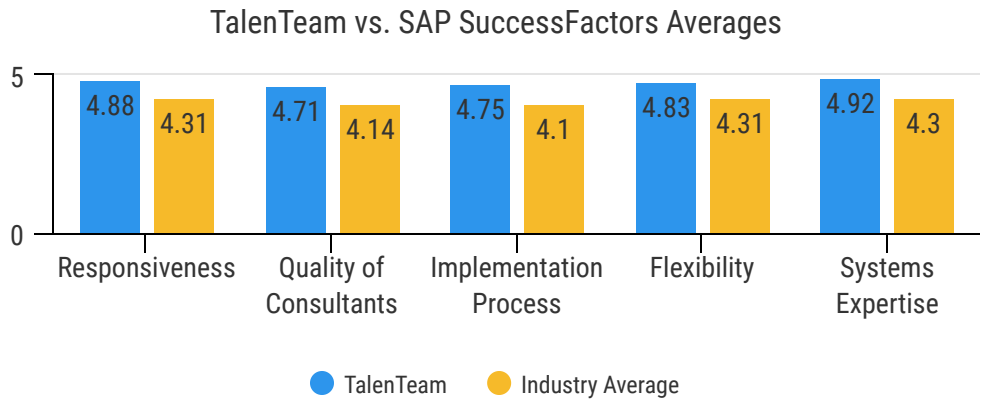
[Read the Article](#)



**TalenTeam**

★★★★★ 4.9/5

24 Reviews



“ TalenTeam was a pleasure to work with on this project. We have taken a pilot approach where we are implementing Blend to select audiences in the business, so we were able to come back to TalenTeam with user feedback early and often. They were always receptive to our feedback and implemented many changes to the system based on our suggestions.

Project Leader  
SAP SuccessFactors  
Manufacturing Industry

[Read More Reviews](#)

FEATURED SOLUTION PROVIDER

★★★★★ 4.8/5

5 Reviews

“ SpinifexIT were great to work with, from procurement through to delivery. Their solutions and technical team offered a lot of value to our project and enabled us to streamline data migration, as well as provide additional reporting capabilities to compliment the SAP SuccessFactors core HR and payroll solutions that we implemented.

North America  
Project Team Member

[Read More Reviews](#)

FEATURED SOLUTIONS FOR EMPLOYEE CENTRAL PAYROLL IMPLEMENTATION

**Easy Migration** empowers Project Teams to rapidly transfer and transform the Customer’s proven and working Payroll configuration from their on-premise (Legacy) payroll system to the new Employee Central Payroll/S4HANA system.

**Easy Go Live** Live de-risks, accelerates and streamlines the ECP go-live and post-go-live process. It provides data load accelerators for development, test and production systems and leverages built-in parallel payroll (legacy vs the new SAP Payroll setup) testing tools, and employee analysis with full tracking and resolution for each pay run comparison.

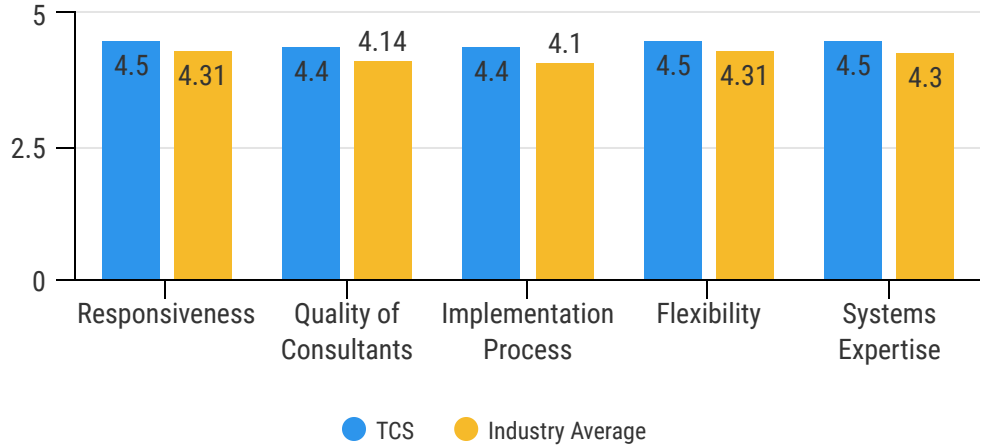


TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

★★★★★ 4.5/5

11 Reviews

TCS vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



I came in toward the end of implementation, but my ability to get up to speed was the direct result of the assistance and support provided by the Tata Consulting team.

Consultant  
SAP SuccessFactors  
Pharmaceutical / Chemical

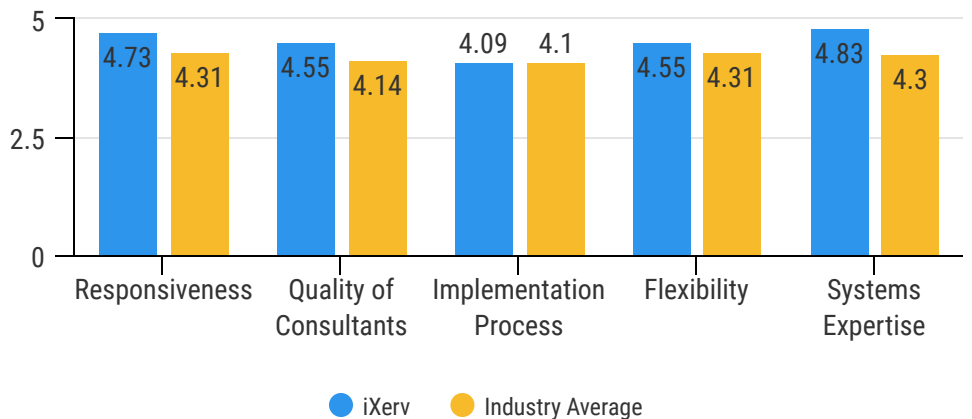
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.5/5

11 Reviews

iXerv vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



iXerv was a great partner to work with during our EMEA employee central implementation. Their communication was fantastic and their flexibility for meetings times was great. We have kept in contact with several of the team members from our project and they are still available for the occasional question when it arises. Fantastic customer service.

Project Team Member  
HCM (HR Core)

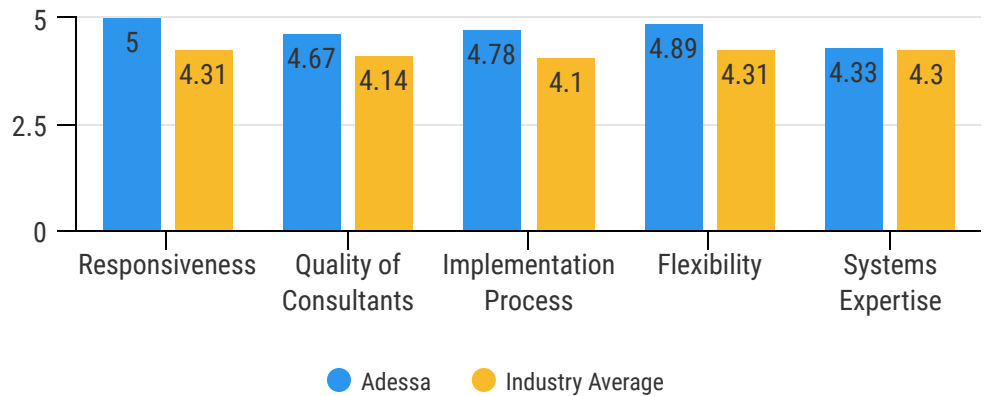
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 4.8/5

9 Reviews

Adessa vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



“ The implementing partner (IP) was very involved in every step of the project. felt supported and guided to ensure a well built system. It is crucial to have an IP who understands the business goals and business dynamics. Had that not been the case, the project would have ended up 2x delayed.

Project Leader  
Talent Management (Learning, Performance, Succession Planning, Social Collaboration)  
Non-Profit Industry

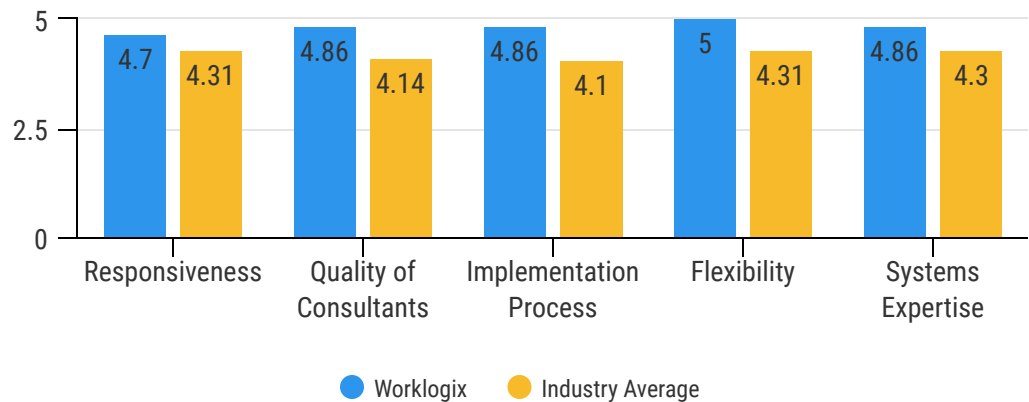
[Read More Reviews](#)



★★★★★ 5/5

7 Reviews

Worklogix vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



“ We have counted on Worklogix for years to provide excellent service to us for years, initially with SAP HCM products that they provided to us, and then again as advisors during our SAP SuccessFactors implementation. It was great to have Jeremy and Jamie provide us their expertise as we tackled a challenging global implementation with over 30 countries. Their extensive knowledge in both SAP HCM and SF gave them a unique advantage to understanding some of the pain points we had with our particular implementation. I always appreciate the great professional relationship that we’ve cultivated over the years as well.

Project Leader  
HCM (HR Core), Talent Management (Learning, Performance, Succession Planning, Social Collaboration), Recruiting / Onboarding  
Media / Printing / Publishing Industry

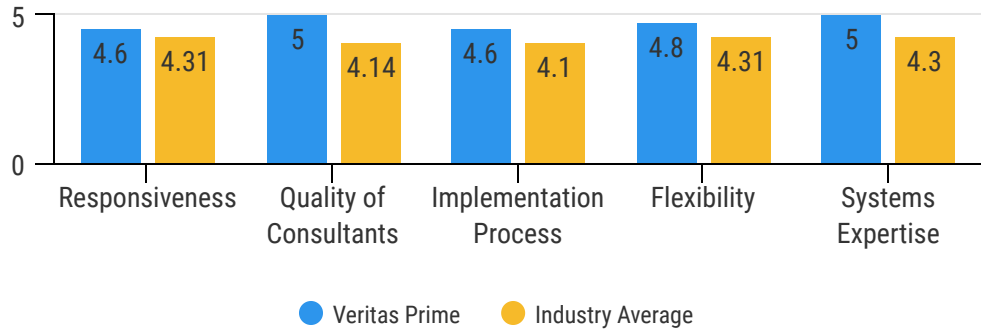
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5 Reviews

[Read All Reviews](#)

Veritas Prime vs. SAP SuccessFactors Averages



OTHER PARTNERS



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Raven Intel recently spoke with over 900 companies' HR teams about their recent implementation of Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Ultimate Software, ServiceNow, Cornerstone or Oracle HCM. We found these organizations went through a thorough review process to ensure every feature and function met their needs, but in most cases the consulting partner they chose to get the system up-and-running was an afterthought.

## In 95% of these projects, consulting partners were chosen based upon 2 factors:

- The recommendation of the chosen software firm's salesperson / customer relationship manager, or
- The chosen consulting firm had done a previous project with the company (typically non-HR related).

The majority of customers we spoke with received 2 or fewer proposals, and spent far less time on partner selection than they did selecting their software. We even spoke with one large organization who said, "We had a choice in partner?"

Just because you recognize a consulting partner's name because they advertise at the airport or because your software salesperson brought them to your door doesn't necessarily mean they are your best options. Conversely, a boutique vendor might not have the capabilities or capacity to handle your project depending on its scale. A thorough and independent partner evaluation with multiple options is important—at the very least to make sure you're confident in your choice and getting a competitive deal.

The vetting process for a consulting partner up until now has not been easy (see "[What I Learned as a Ghost Shopper for HR Services](#)"), but finding the right match is absolutely critical to project success. The capital investment made to implement these systems is just as large as the software purchase, and the team you end up with can make or break your project's success.

## Lessons Learned : Raven Intel Project Reviews

Below are 10 hard questions you should be asking (but might not know to ask) when you interview potential HR consulting partners. These are based upon the "Lessons Learned" that we hear in our project reviews at Raven Intel, as well as wisdom from industry experts. Raven Intel recently spoke with over 500 companies' HR teams about their recent implementation of Workday, SAP SuccessFactors, Ultimate Software, ServiceNow, Cornerstone or Oracle HCM. We found these organizations went through a thorough review process to ensure every feature and function met their needs, but in most cases the consulting partner they chose to get the system up-and-running was an afterthought.

### 10. Have you done this type of project before?

#### *Previous experience that matches your software, scope and geography are critical.*

Your potential partner should be able to point to specific projects (software, modules and geographic scope) that look similar to your project. Similar industry expertise is important, but so is expertise with the functional areas of the product you'll be installing.

We heard from one customer who said the consulting firm they chose did great in North America, but the "wheels came off the bus" during the European roll-out.

#### Other Questions to Ask:



- How many projects have you completed with the same software / modules / geography as ours?
- How long have you been implementing this specific cloud software?

#### Red Flags:



- General statements about implementing HCM v. your chosen cloud software.
- Few specific project references (or consultant certifications) for the modules that are important to you.
- If your project is global—lack of actual in-country project experience or consultants.
- Lack of proof points around the quality of implementations of similar scope.

## 9. Who is my team going to be? Where is my team located?

### *It's all about the people.*

No matter how strong a consulting organization is, the quality of your project is going to be based on the team that you are assigned. Many HR customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project leads by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction / project success.

There is much talk about the concept of choosing a partner for "Cultural Fit", but what exactly does that mean? It's important that your organization "likes" the persona of a consulting firm, but it's hard to truly know how that feeling will mature during the actual project. Many times the team that you "like" during the sales process is totally different than who you get during implementation as consulting firms assign resources based upon capacity. Industry expert, Brian Sommer says, "the wanting and the gettin' are 2 different things."

Depending on a firm's workload and staffing and when you sign an agreement with them, you may not get the resources you thought you would. No matter how strong a consulting organization is, the quality of your project is going to be based on the team that you are assigned. Many HR customers we surveyed recognized individual consultant project leads by name as the most important reason for their satisfaction / project success.

#### Other Questions to Ask:



- Is the team you present during the evaluation process going to be who I get during my actual project?
- Where is my team located? How often will they be on-site?
- How many other projects will they be working on at the same time?
- What type of background do they have? Are they recent college grads or HR functional experts?

#### Red Flags:



- The consulting sales team (v. actual consultants) is doing most of the talking
- The consulting firm makes no guarantees about who is going to be assigned to the project
- The consulting firm has no in-country resources in or near the countries you have a big footprint in.

## 8. What are customers and employees saying (independently) about this consulting partner? *No shocker—the consulting partner is only going to give you happy references.*

Real-life customer experiences are perhaps the most indicative marker of a consulting firm's quality. Without these proof points, all the number of certifications, projects completed and awards in the world don't matter. Most of the time customers 'spoke with a reference' that was provided by the consulting firm, but this isn't an objective approach—consulting firms wouldn't provide a negative reference. Independent peer reviews and references are the easiest way to gain confidence that a partner can deliver on their promises and hear the real-life stories of customers like you. (Raven Intel is and will be a huge source of information here.)

#### Other Questions to Ask:



- What independent project reviews are available about your firm?
- At Raven, we can spot good firms from a mile away with how receptive they are to providing customers for us to survey.
- What are independent references saying about your team?
- What are your employees / former employees saying about your firm?

#### Red Flags:



- Consulting partner talks a big game but has no publicly available reviews or references to be found
- Consulting partner is guarded about providing references (and uses the phrase "NDA" often.)

## 7. Certifications. *Bigger numbers don't always mean better. In some cases, one consultant can have 8 certifications.*

Certifications are indication of the breadth and expertise of a consulting firm and shows they've invested in bench strength to handle many projects. Larger firms will lead with these numbers, and while they are important, they still need qualification. What's most important is the team assigned to you has the right certifications to get the job done right.

## 7. Certifications - *Continued*

Each software vendor runs their certification and partner ecosystem differently. Some are tightly monitored and closed, others are more loosely controlled and open. In our research, we've found that no software company is immune to implementation hiccups or partners that may be aggressive in stating certification statistics.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- How many certified consultants do you have? (in the type of software modules we bought)
- Are they located in the same geography as my project? (very important that they are)
- Are they Professional v. Associate designations (+1 for Professional designations)
- What previous work / functional HR experience do your consultants have? (Recent college grads without any real-life work experience can earn certifications)
- Is your firm a Recognized Expert by the Software Company?

### Red Flags:



- Resources are not certified or have low certification #s in the geography you're in.
- The consulting firm is boasting about big numbers of certifications, but light on the actual project references or unable to tell you where or what those certifications are in (see #8).

## 6. How much is this going to cost? *Raven Intel has found when projects go over budget 25%+, NPS drops 2 points. That's significant.*

Chances are if a consulting firm can afford to advertise at the airport, they're not going to be the least expensive option. Conversely, if a consulting firm is coming in at rock-bottom prices, they might not be able to offer the breadth and depth of experience you need and that is a big risk as well. Finding the right balance between your confidence in the the firm's quality, capabilities and price is key.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- Is this quote fixed-bid or time-and-materials?
- In previous projects like mine, what % did you deliver on-budget?

### Red Flags:



- Rock-bottom pricing / "free" services up-front (that result in expensive change orders mid-implementation.)

## 5. Is this an HR Transformation or an HR Systems Implementation? *Which is it?*

If your project is a full-scale "HR Transformation" where you are re-defining company culture or significantly augmenting your processes, you probably need something more than a systems implementer. You also need to budget accordingly. Conversely, if you are just looking for a software implementation or project work, you very well could do well time / cost-wise to find a more niche player.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- Is my project a true HR Transformation or a Systems Implementation? Or an HR software project?

### Red Flags:



- Consulting partner is selling you an HR Transformation when all you need is a systems install
- Consulting partner is selling you a Systems Install when you need an HR Transformation

## 4. Integrations

This is one of the biggest sources of frustration for customers—integration scope-creep—that almost always results in project time and budget over-run. Make sure to define all of these up-front, and ask what the process is if ‘something new comes up.’

### Other Questions to Ask:



- What integrations are included with the project?
- Do you have pre-built connectors to my systems?
- How difficult are these integrations (e.g. Global Payroll integrations are very difficult)

### Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says ‘integrations are included’ without any specifics. It’s never that easy.

## 3. How much time is this going to take?

One HR Customer who just completed a Phase 1, full HCM global install said, “plan on 1.5x the amount of time you think it is going to take you to implement your system, then double that.” We hear this regularly on project reviews. In general, if you have a specific date you need your project live, plan on a nice cushion beyond the estimate.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- What is the time required to do this project?
- How often does your firm deliver on-time?

### Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says they can implement “as fast as you need us to”

## 2. What other services / products do you offer?

Many consulting partners offer pre-packaged services and software they’ve built beyond just consulting. Their firm might also have expertise beyond just the software you’re implementing. That can be a value-add and provide additional, out-of-the-box options.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- What ongoing, post-implementation services do you offer?
- What other systems do you have expertise with?
- Do you offer any additional out-of-the-box products you’ve developed

## 1. How big does my internal team need to be? Who does what?

One large global manufacturer said they assumed they’d need less IT resources than they did for their on-premise system because they were moving to the Cloud. Not so. This caused friction during the implementation process they wish they’d avoided.

### Other Questions to Ask:



- How many internal resources are needed from a functional as well as IT perspective?
- What is the % time commitment from each party given the timeline established?

### Red Flags:



- Consulting firm says that since it’s cloud software “fewer IT resources are needed.”