SELECTING SOFTWARE – TOP TEN QUESTIONS

1. Do you understand 'Why' your business needs new software?
- What are the key deliverables and objectives (Success Criteria)?
- What is driving the search and where will there be some wins?

2. Do you understand each business users' needs and requirements?
- What are the requirements for the (executive group, marketing, sales, purchasing, production, project managers, accounting and external partners)?

3. Was a gap analysis created?
- What are the gaps between the current system (as-is) and your future system (to-be)?
- How easily can the information from your current system be migrated to a new package?
- How easy is it to implement a new system? What kind of support is there?
- Are there any advanced customizations required? Does the software support customizations?

4. How scalable is the business application?
- As your business changes over time, can the business application change too?
- When choosing a package, imagine the business 5 to 10 years from now?
- What is the future growth (life) of the application?

5. How easy is it to use?
- Allow the people who will be using the software to see and try out the applications.
- How well does the package interact with other software applications?

6. How well does the software fit the business?
- Does the application streamline or eliminate certain processes?
- Does the reporting provide more timely, accurate and "fit for use" information?
- How customizable are the reports? Are there tailorable business dashboards?

7. Is the business software application a major brand?
- Is there a strong company that will be around to provide regular updates and support?
- How old is the software?
- Is the software provider actively investing in resources and improving it or are they only maintaining it?

8. What are the other costs to consider?
- What are the network, server, database and workstations requirements and costs?
- How often are upgrades and how much do they cost to implement every year?
- Can you work from home, the hotel or anywhere away from the office? Is it mobile device friendly?

9. How strong is the sponsor or supporting partner?
- Your sponsor's level of commitment and support can have the greatest impact on the success of the implementation. How knowledgeable and qualified does the supporting partner appear to be?
- Are they customer focused? What experience do they have?

10. What is the best value for your money?
- Price is only one part of the equation. It is important to consider the quality of support, software provider and how well the software fits the business. This is a long term investment.

"When business software is setup correctly and users are adequately trained, people will fully understand its capabilities and future possibilities. Business software should improve your company's productivity and provide a strong information reporting structure."