

Top 10 Challenges *for* Global Process Owners

global process owner

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noun

Individuals responsible for end-to-end management and decision-making across a given process, extending across businesses, borders and functions.

1. DEFINITION

The GPO role inevitably overlaps with other roles in the shared services and operational structure. It is no easy task to define the specific responsibilities of GPOs and to prevent conflict in the organizational framework. Adding to the challenge is that there really is no one-size-fits-all definition that can be applied to all organizations.

2. DISRUPTION

Although the GPO model sounds good to many companies once they reach a certain maturity level, senior leaders are often reluctant to disrupt their entire current framework. This often leads to hesitant or half-hearted introductions of the GPO model.

3. CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Even if senior management fully buys into the GPO model, there will certainly be kickback from local regions/functions that may be reluctant to lose autonomy. Getting buy-in from all interested parties is a challenge that requires strong change management skills.

4. TECHNOLOGY

Although many companies implementing a GPO model already have an advanced automation platform in place, they are likely to have different platforms for different regions or functions. Integrating the platforms and standardizing processes across platforms can be an issue. To overcome these challenges, you'll need to work closely with IT.

5. BALANCE

GPOs must find the right balance between macro-level strategy and micromanagement. Although it's important for GPOs to have an understanding of local processes and management, the tendency is for GPOs to get bogged down in day-to-day operations.

6. ROAD MAP

Even if you create a road map for implementing the GPO, sticking to the plan is an even harder challenge. The GPO model necessarily overlaps with other frameworks, other structures, other offices, and other leaders, so it must be understood at the outset that your implementation strategy will rarely progress linearly.

7. MEASUREMENT

GPOs try to measure processes against global standards. However, not all regions or offices or functions should necessarily be treated the same. Understanding when to enforce truly global standards and when to enforce local standards is no easy task.

8. TALENT

GPOs are often expected to drive process improvements without an official mandate at their disposal. GPOs must be relentlessly persistent in enforcing change, and unabating in their pursuit of improvement.

9. CUSTOMERS

In the well-intended push to drive process improvement, sometimes customers get lost in the shuffle. If the changes are not well communicated, transparent and implemented smoothly, customer relationships can potentially be harmed.