IT Failure Points

Examples of Common IT Issues to Know Before Your Audit

Speakers

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Topics

- Examples of Common IT Issues at Government Organizations
- Impact
- What You Can Do

Examples of Common IT Issues

IT Issue – Example # 1

Periodic User Access Reviews

– *Various Government Clients*

- Reviews of system access are not performed.
- Reviews of system access are not documented or have insufficient documentation.

Impact – Example # 1

- Access may not be appropriate to users based on their job function and may enter inaccurate data in systems.

- Without access reviews, the inappropriate access may be prolonged unnecessarily or create a segregation of duties conflict.

What to Do – Example # 1

- A review of user access for all key systems should be performed periodically and documented.
- Documentation of this review should include the following: evidence of business management approval, the listing of system users with their roles, as well as the queries used to generate this listing for completeness, and the notes of corrective actions that were performed by IT.
- IT and Accounting/Finance coordination

IT Issue – Example # 2

Access for Terminated Employees

- *Texas Higher Education Client*
    - Access retained for terminated employees
    - Timeliness in the removal of access

Impact – Example # 2

- Usage by terminated employee to enter inaccurate data.

- Usage by existing employees of terminated employee accounts to enter inaccurate data without accountability.

What to Do – Example # 2

- HR coordination with IT on termination process
- Define timeliness of disabling access
- Documenting date when account is disabled
- Ensuring access is removed at both the network and application layer
- Periodic review of terminated employee access
- Usage of Identity and Access Management
  - Doing a lot with a little

IT Issue – Example # 3

Change in Management Access Segregation of Duties

– *Local ISD client*

- Developers having access to migrate changes

Impact – Example # 3

- Unauthorized changes
- Functionality for financial system calculations and reporting may affect completeness and accuracy of data
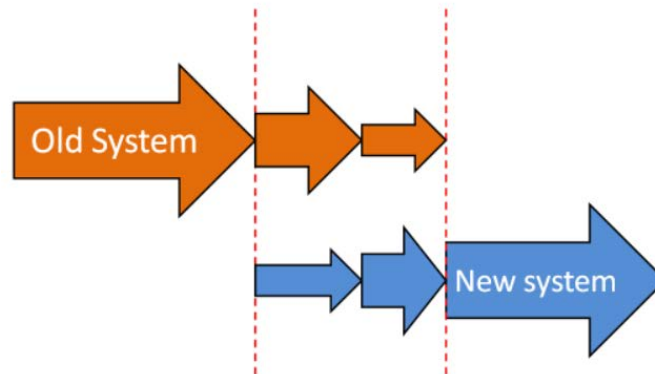
What to Do – Example # 3

- Access for individuals that have access to both develop and migrate changes to systems should be restricted for only either development or migration to prevent unauthorized changes.
- Monitoring should be in place if there are personnel limitations to review migrated changes.

IT Issue – Example # 4

System Implementation

– *Local Municipality client*

- Lack of documentation for testing, go-live approval, data validation, and system design

Impact – Example # 4

- Unbalanced journal entries posted
- Functionality for financial system calculations and reporting may affect completeness and accuracy of data.

What to Do – Example # 4

- A process should be established to include the development of testing plans with business users and requiring the documentation, as well as the retention of, approvals for user acceptance testing, data validation, and go-live approvals.

- Comprehensive documentation of system design including how it relates to business process objectives should be developed and retained.

IT Issue – Example

Formal IT Policies and Procedures

– *Various Government client*

- IT processes are not documented, periodically updated and retained centrally.

Impact – Example # 5

- Inconsistent and incomplete execution of IT function supporting information systems and data.
  - Unclear duties and responsibilities

  - Unexpected employee transition:

    - Loss of institutional knowledge

    - Key activities not performed

What to Do – Example # 5

- Document, consolidate, and periodically review IT policies and procedures.
- The policy should include at a minimum, the following IT process areas:
  - Security administration
  - Change management/Program Development
  - Incident management (help desk and network security issues)
- Policies should be stored in a central repository accessible to all IT employees

Documentation to Track and Support IT Activity

- *Texas Higher Education client*
  - IT requests are documented in emails.
  - Not fully utilizing ticketing systems already in place.

Impact – Bonus Example

- Management is prevented from utilizing technology to maintain a central repository to consistently track and monitor activities and IT related trends within the organization, including volume and duration of IT support activities.

What to Do – Bonus Example

- Utilize a ticketing system for IT related projects and activities to ensuring that each required step in IT processes are completed appropriately, with documentation and approvals maintained in a central location for reference.

Summary

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- Common IT issues
- Issues can affect completeness and accuracy of financial data.
- Accounting/Finance/HR coordination with IT

Questions?

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