

5 Warning Signs Your AI Implementation Is Headed for Failure

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A one-page diagnostic from **Pactus Advisory** | pactusadvisory.com | David Kennedy, PMP

*Built from 30 years of enterprise technology delivery experience. If **two or more** of these warning signs are present, the AI program is at risk — regardless of what the status reports say.*

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1

Leadership cannot agree on what AI is supposed to achieve

When the CEO, CTO, and department heads give different answers to "what does AI success look like?" — you don't have a strategy problem. You have an alignment problem. AI tools won't fix it. They'll amplify it.

SIGNAL:

Ask three executives what AI is doing for the business. If you get three different answers, the program is already at risk.

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2

Employees are using AI tools that IT doesn't know about

Shadow AI — unsanctioned use of ChatGPT, Copilot, and other tools — is both a governance failure and an early warning sign. It means the official AI program isn't meeting real needs, and sensitive data is leaving through unauthorized channels.

SIGNAL:

Ask IT to list every AI tool in active use. If the list takes less than five minutes to produce, it's incomplete.

03

The vendor is setting the AI agenda, not the organization

When the AI roadmap is shaped primarily by what your vendor is selling rather than what your business needs, the program is driven by the wrong incentives. Vendor-led AI strategies optimize for contract value, not business outcomes.

SIGNAL:

If your AI roadmap can't be explained without reference to a specific vendor's product suite, the vendor is in the driver's seat.

04

Adoption metrics are tracked, but business outcomes aren't

"68% of employees have logged in" is not a business result. The shift from measuring activity to measuring outcomes is where most AI programs stall — and where the gap between what was promised and what was delivered becomes impossible to ignore.

SIGNAL:

Ask for the last board update on AI. If it leads with adoption rates and not business impact, the program lacks accountability.

05

There is no clear owner of AI governance

When AI governance is everybody's responsibility, it becomes nobody's. Data handling policies, vendor risk assessment, employee usage standards, and board-level reporting all require a single accountable executive. Without one, the organization is exposed.

SIGNAL:

Ask who is accountable for AI governance decisions. If the answer involves a committee or a working group, the governance gap is real.

If you recognize two or more of these warning signs, a free 30-minute consultation will tell you how serious the exposure is.

Schedule at
pactusadvisory.com
Call (770) 676-1961

