Introducing the Mishaps Map: *Taking Your Technology Project to the Doctor*

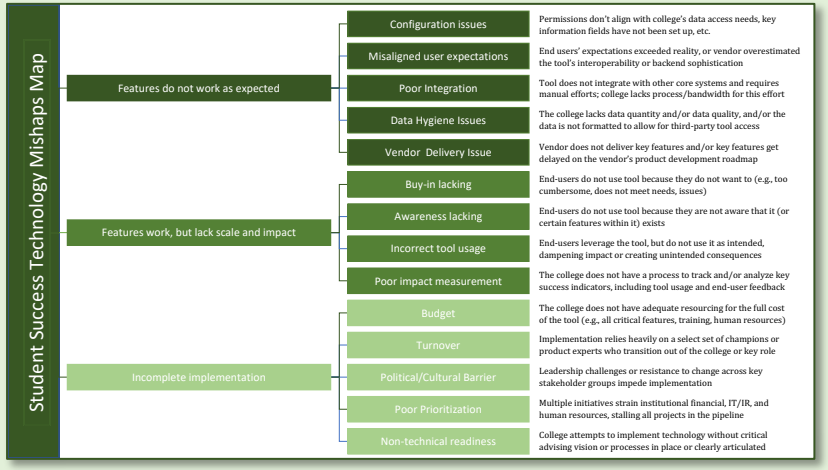
It's the telltale sigh. It's the tight grimace, the exasperated hands thrown in the air, and the all-to-common metaphors: "a train wreck," "a dumpster fire," "a real slog." It is, in short, the familiar song and dance of a technology implementation gone awry.

However, though we may all know the lines of this particular ballad, our individual stories can often be quite different. "It's like the old Tolstoy quote," one CIO noted, "the one that goes: 'All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.' That's the story of off-track technology implementations."

In other words, technology implementations can go off-track for a variety of reasons. As a result, solutions to off-track implementations can be equally varied.

So where do we start?

In short, while technology implementation challenges may come in every size and shape, turning those challenges around begins with the same first step: **Accurate, specific diagnostics.**



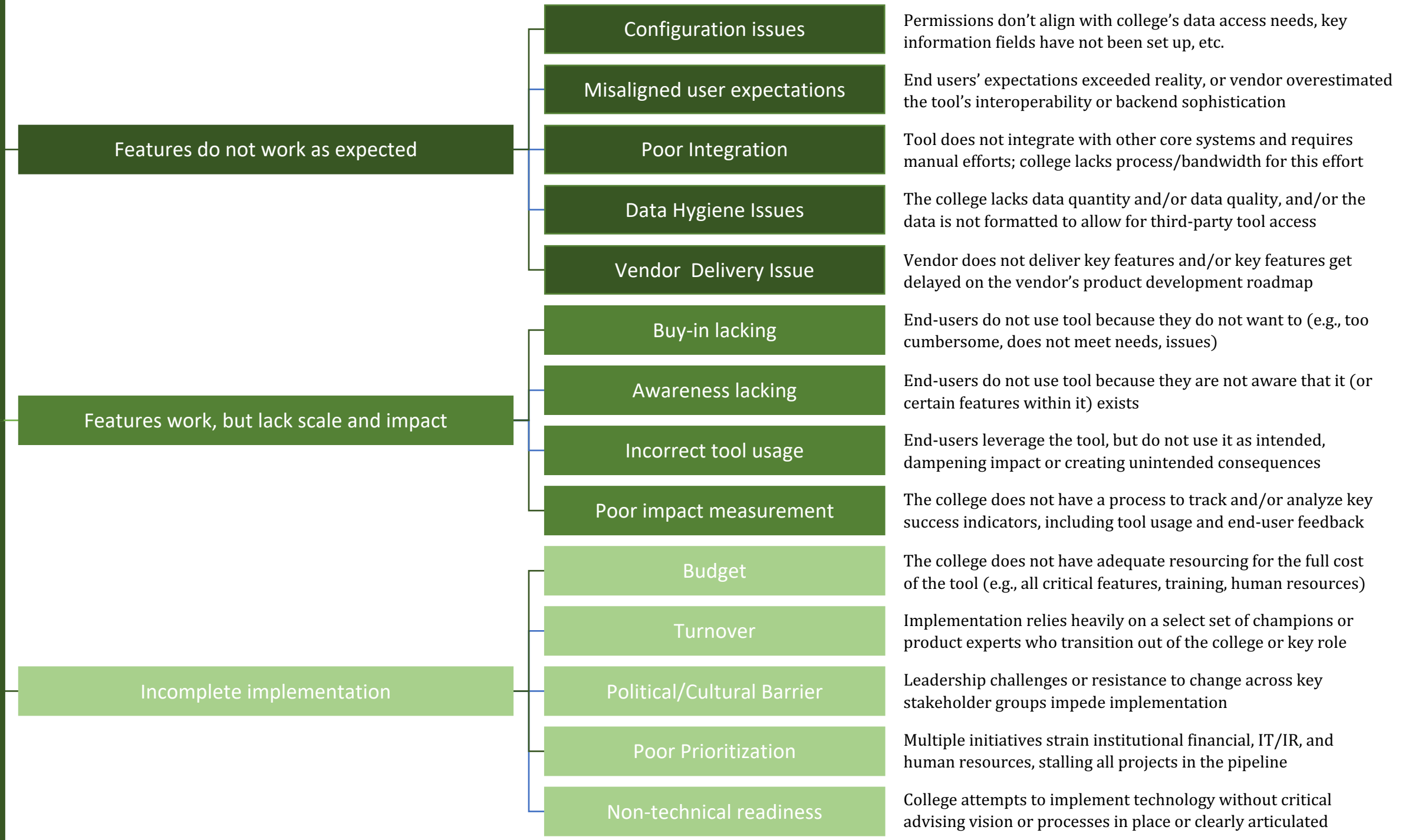
The "**Mishaps Map**" is a tool developed by The Ada Center to help pave a path forward for off-track implementations by figuring out:

1) **What**, specifically, is going wrong?

2) **Why** are these challenges are arising?

Then, equipped with this knowledge, we can then start to think strategically about which next steps and solutions make the most sense for our specific issues.

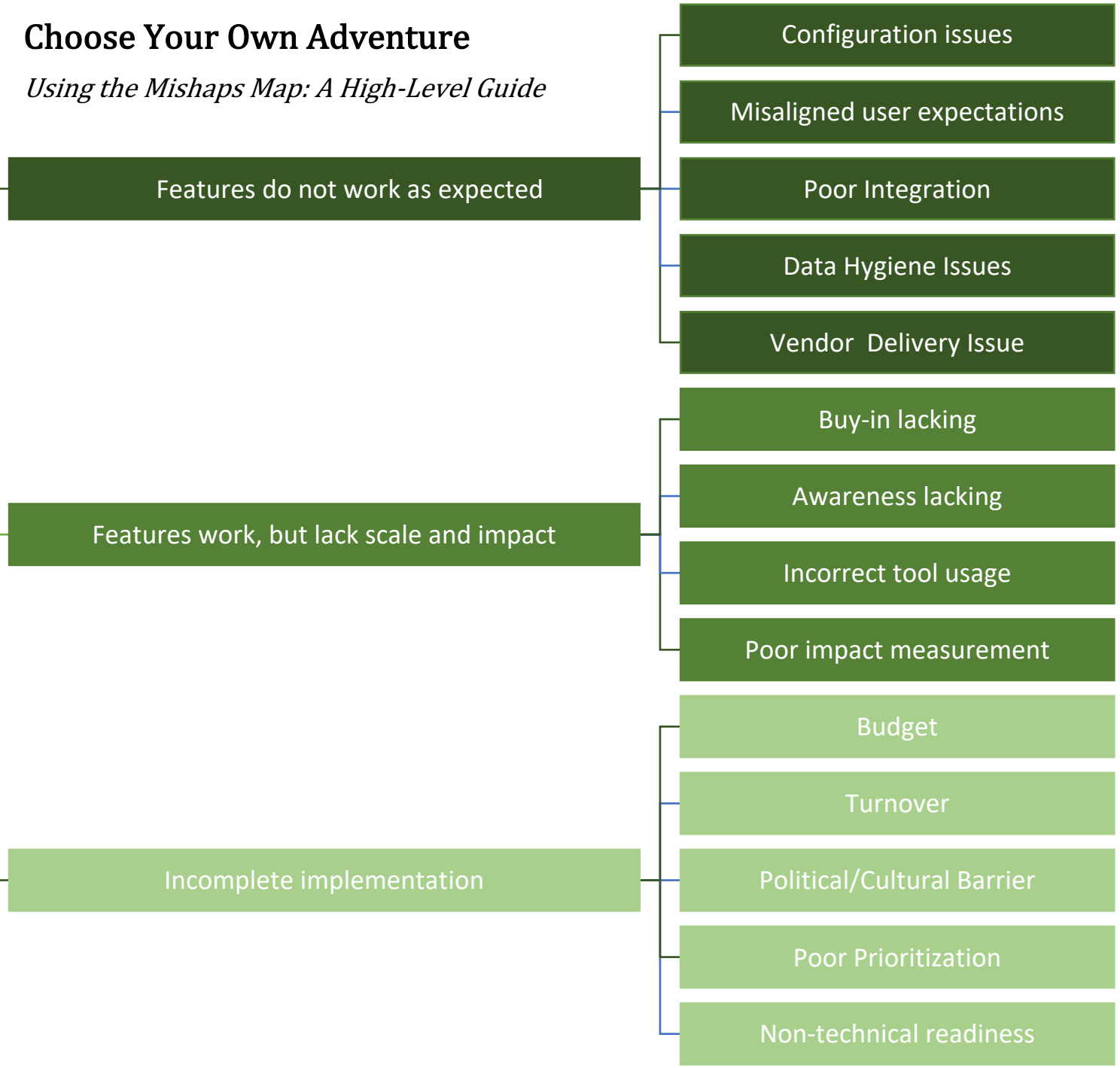
Student Success Technology Mishaps Map



Student Success Technology Mishaps Map

Choose Your Own Adventure

Using the Mishaps Map: A High-Level Guide



Consider Your Most Likely Root-Cause

Which of the following most represents what's going awry in your implementation? Circle all that apply.

Create a Plan to Unpack Unknown Unknowns

How do you know your root cause hypothesis is right? Who at your institution might be well positioned to help inform your diagnostic? Create a list of individuals and allow them to offer their input. (Suggested: IT, IR, End-Users)

Brainstorm Aligned Solutions

What actions are most likely to help resolve the specific root-cause issues you have identified? Brainstorm a list and prioritize this list based on how impactful you believe the actions will be in resolving the issue.

Assess Feasibility and Determine Next Steps

What will it really take to implement the solutions you've listed? Consider resources, stakeholders, communications efforts, coordination, partners, etc. Do you have all you need internally, or are external supports needed (e.g., contracted data or IT implementation support)?

Related Resources

Navigating Student Success Technology: Curricular Resources for Higher Education Practitioners: A five-part series developed by The Ada Center in partnership with Complete College America. The resources aim to answer some of the most common questions and address some of the most persistent student success technology-related challenges.
www.theadacenter.org/curriculum

- *Module 5.3: How Can We Fix Off-Track Technology Projects:* Step-by-step guide for using the Mishaps Map
  www.theadacenter.org/module-5