Channel consultants Frank Lynn and Associates created the following list of the top ten reasons why channel programs fail. Each of these mistakes can be avoided with careful planning and forethought.

1. **Ignoring end user buying patterns and needs.**

2. **Assuming your direct sales force will support indirect channels for the good of the company.**
   - If you have two approaches to the channel, conflict will ensue. Deal with it quickly, fairly, and equitably.

3. **Expecting channels to change for you.**
   - Distributors are most reluctant to move out of their comfort zone. Find ways to motivate them to work for you and with you.

4. **Sticking with traditional channels too long.**
   - A frequent and fatal mistake that occurs when it is appropriate to leave old channels – or old partners – behind.

5. **Not realizing or building your importance (or lack thereof) to the channel.**

6. **Being casual about selecting and evaluating your distributors, dealers, and reps.**

7. **Not understanding the economics of channel marketing.**
   - You have to be able to afford the channel’s profit requirements.

8. **Hoping that one channel can sell to every customer and market.**
   - The primary reason for having multiple channels of distribution is to reach several different markets, locations, and customer types.

9. **Avoiding channel conflict instead of accepting and managing it.**
   - Channel conflict will not go away.

10. **Not developing strategic “business closeness” relationships.**

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