Why Internal Corporate Software Is So Frustrating

Poor Discoverability
Users need to find information and accomplish goals without delay. When features are tucked away or camouflaged in cluttered UIs, decision fatigue increases.

Obscure Signifiers
Signifiers are visual cues that denote interaction possibilities. Obscure (or missing) signifiers hinder discoverability and may cause users to overlook important features.

Counterintuitive Mental Models
When users interact with products, they form functionality expectations based on UI components and past experiences. If interactions don’t work as expected, users may lose focus or abandon the activity.

Insufficient Feedback
Every product interaction demands clear and timely feedback. Without feedback, users are left to wonder if their actions had the intended effects (a common cause of duplicate orders and requests).

Missing Confirmation Dialogues
Confirmation dialogues prompt users to consider the impact of their actions before proceeding with potentially hazardous commands. If dialogues aren’t included, users may run the risk of deleting, duplicating, or overwriting important data.

Impractical Targets
Targets are UI components with interaction potential. If scales and spacing relationships between related targets are poorly considered, users may have difficulty distinguishing between routine actions and potentially hazardous operations.

Unfamiliar Patterns
Patterns are proven UI components that users encounter daily: menus, buttons, icons, sliders, etc. Unfamiliar patterns introduce risk by forcing users to guess design intent without context.

Inadequate Constraints
Interface constraints leverage visual design principles such as white space, movement, and scale to direct users toward desired interactions. Without constraints, all possibilities take on equal significance and decision-making suffers.

Limited Recognition
Icons, labels, and microcopy based on universally accepted symbols are easier to understand. When products introduce foreign symbols, users are more likely to misinterpret meanings.

Unclear Hierarchy
Design hierarchy suggests significance and prompts users to prioritize some interface elements over others. Unclear hierarchy makes it difficult for users to navigate, find information, and perform desirable actions.