

5 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR TECHNOLOGY CHANGE MANAGEMENT A SUCCESS



Valander
CYBERSECURITY

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INTRODUCTION

Businesses must constantly evolve and adapt to successfully overcome a variety of challenges that range from changes in technology and the rise of new competitors, to a shift in laws, regulations or underlying economic trends. A business that is unable to keep up with changing environments will be unable to sustain itself in the long term. Many companies still look the other way when the time comes to update outdated business processes and legacy systems. They simply want to avoid the hassle of operational disruption that might emerge from running updates.

Changing organization-wide technology solutions is one of the most difficult tasks for an organization. From guaranteeing that there are no technical obstacles, which could wreck the task when it goes live, to ensuring that everybody is on the same page about the change and adequately prepared, there are so many situations to consider before implementing change.

Applying change management best practices can help any organization in any industry, of any size, effectively scale and adapt to shifting market conditions without losing valuable team players.

Here are five best practices to manage change in the workplace when implementing new technology:

CHAPTER 1: IDENTIFY

Overseeing change is anything but easy. According to 'The 2022 State of IT' report, "organizations will reinvigorate spending on futuristic tech: Emerging tech adoption plans — especially for newer security solutions — increased significantly YoY." There are plenty of factors associated with successful change management: planning, assessment, time management, seamless communication, employee relations, and more.

It isn't just about investing in next-gen technologies. You need to ensure a fine balance between people, process and technology.



People: Communicate to the best of your ability

Simply introducing a new solution to your team without giving them any prior knowledge or training about it can cause a lot of stress and upheaval. Any technological change that isn't conveyed at the right time and in the right way can lead to a disconnect that impacts even well-planned improvements.

Communication is key in successfully driving technological change management. Make sure you have the right strategies in place to ensure your team adapts to changes.



Process: Build a well-thought-out strategy

Ensuring that you have the right processes in place is critical for supporting organizational change management. How you undertake a project, how you plan for it and how it impacts your employees are as significant as the result.

Everything needs to move in sync with your plan as smoothly and as efficiently as possible. This will determine the fate of your project and your organization's operations in the long run.



Technology: Integration is key

When your workforce is ready to incorporate a change and you have the right processes in place, technology can bring all pieces of the puzzle together. Choosing the right technological solutions is extremely important to ensure integration with your existing applications and to achieve compliance in a rapidly changing global landscape.

Remember, the following three steps are essential to developing a clear and concise rollout process:

- 1 Initiate top-down communication with your employees explaining why the planned change or transformation is necessary
- 2 Outline a plan how to best adopt the change and set up a process to carry it out
- 3 List out the impacts the change can have on your business

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATE

It's essential to review business processes first to identify the critical areas that need a technological refresh as soon as possible. Often, decision makers don't know where to start when it comes to technology gaps. Evaluate what you need to update and why.

Keep in mind, your objective shouldn't be to just buy any new solution in the market that catches your eye. First, you need to benchmark the state of your technology environment. Always pick something that will make your employees' lives simpler and more productive — consequently increasing the profitability of your organization.

Before trying to implement a technological change or upgrade in your organization, ask the following questions:



How does your workforce function?

Knowing the current workflow and troublespots of your workforce will help you identify the areas that need a technological revamp. It's quite common for large enterprises to superfluously upgrade technologies when there isn't any requirement to do so. Make sure you have a real purpose before making a tech update.



What are your business's qualities and shortcomings?

Technological updates have many benefits, giving you the chance to address your organization's shortcomings and add to its qualities. This allows you to identify the core problem areas of your business that resources can be diverted to.



Are there any dependencies?

Understanding dependencies is another vital parameter. Before making any kind of a change to your business environment, it's important to map out and understand how all systems interact with each other, find out which teams use them and when they're most needed. This way, you'll be able to identify windows of opportunity to upgrade when any resulting disruptions are less likely to impact productivity and customer experience.



Will the new solution integrate well within the existing ecosystem?

When planning a tech refresh, you need to ensure that it will integrate well with your existing applications, which is something many organizations face issues with.



Does your solution provider offer tech support?

Whenever you're upgrading to a new solution, technical support is vital. Ensure that your solution provider offers technical support. Regardless of whether you have an IT team or not, they should offer end-to-end assistance throughout the implementation.



How do you plan to manage training?

Any new technological upgrade gives rise to the need for internal workforce training. Is your organization ready to invest the additional time and money required to get employees up to speed? If not, what is your back up plan to train employees?

**Only 34% of respondents reported clear success
of their change management initiatives. ¹**

CHAPTER 3: MANAGE

Viable change doesn't simply take place by coincidence, and any strategy you formulate must be in the best interest of your organization. The way one approaches change management can differ from company to company. Some take rigid approaches while others are more open and adaptable in their methodology.

However, in general, the following “to-dos” can help you manage change more efficiently:



Define success - What will a successful implementation look like? What should it achieve (e.g., improve application efficiency by 20%)? How will you measure and communicate progress or success along the way?



Sponsorship/accountability - Seek an executive sponsor to drive your project forward and hold accountability to objectives.



People - Meet with relevant team leaders to inform them of upcoming initiatives and seek their feedback before detailing your change plan.



Process - Identify and list specific processes that will be impacted and need to be changed because of your technology project. List and communicate with relevant process owners and give them implementation timeframes so they'll know when to update and relaunch documentation and processes to support the new environment.



Technology - Understand all platforms and technologies that will be impacted by the pending updates and inform admins and emergency contacts (both internally within your IT team as well as externally – if you use a managed service provider) to be ready if there's an unexpected breakage during execution.

46% of CIOs report culture being the biggest barrier to success.¹

CHAPTER 4: CREATE

Once you've identified and met with people, process and technology owners to share your intentions and gather their input, you're ready to flesh out your implementation plan. This plan should include:

- ▶ Phases
- ▶ Detailed descriptions of objectives for each phase
- ▶ Tasks in each phase
- ▶ Task owners and contact info
- ▶ Targeted task timeframes (begin/end)
- ▶ Recurring change management planning meetings

Don't forget to include a "communications plan" as one of your task items. All affected parties should be notified of upcoming changes as well as how they might be impacted. Aim to communicate two to three times ahead of making a change, and then follow up once the change has been made to see if there are any issues or unanswered questions. While a communication plan is a part of implementation planning, it also serves as a separate communications map and can include:

- ▶ Slides for top executives to use in company update meetings (both employee and customer-facing, as applicable)
- ▶ Email campaigns to make employees and/or customers aware of upcoming changes and any actions they might need to take
- ▶ Training sessions (if the actions required are more involved than can be explained in an email)

32% of respondents said that improved communication is the key to their successful change management. ¹

CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENT

Start with the most straightforward goals to boost the confidence of your team. Real-time feedback and assessment of your methodology are important to map whether you are heading in the right direction. You can follow the steps below during implementation:



Kickoff meeting - Initiate your implementation with a kickoff meeting that introduces the executive sponsor and gives them an opportunity to explain why the project is important. It also covers the implementation plan and updates relevant task owners about whether organizational changes have occurred and solicits feedback on timeframe for recurring project planning meeting time until the project is complete.



Seek feedback - After the technology change goes live, solicit feedback from affected teams. Most people resist change at first, so review feedback keeping that in mind. However, if there are verifiable slowdowns or other measurable issues because of the change, investigate and correct them.



Regularly plan meetings - Meet weekly or at an agreed-upon interval to keep the project on track and address any issues along the way.



Iterate - Based on user feedback, optimize the technology environment to better serve the needs of the organization.



“Change the changeable, accept the unchangeable and remove yourself from the unacceptable.”

Denis Waitley

CONCLUSION

When small and medium-size organizations plan tech refreshes on their own without having a secure change management process in place, they leave their network highly exposed to security threats. As they don't have great access controls in place, a technically savvy employee could install an unapproved and potentially harmful app on the organization's network. With the help of an MSP, you can pivot this problem into a secure and cleanly managed solution.

Running technology updates and refreshes through an MSP not only ensures seamless integration and configuration but also saves downtime. An MSP like us can help you with system mapping, understanding dependencies and post-installation network auditing to ensure nothing is inadvertently misconfigured.

Contact us to develop a change management plan for your upcoming technology infrastructure refresh.