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## CORE ELEMENTS OF A CHANGE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Effective change needs an effective change management plan to help your stakeholders – from your team to your customers – make a smooth transition. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the following 7 steps should always be considered when planning your change.

Initiatives with excellent change management are 6 times more likely to meet objectives than those with poor change management.<sup>1</sup> [↗](#)

### 1 Understand your stakeholders

Identify, analyse and assess stakeholders. Make sure you can answer the following:

- Who are they?
- Why are they important?
- How will they influence and/or be affected by the change?
- How will you engage them?
- Where will you prioritise your efforts?



### 2 Build support/buy-in

Plan activities to enlist support and buy-in for the change initiative. In the AIPM's 2021 survey, 53% of respondents said that having an integrated change management approach was a key success factor for transformation projects.<sup>2</sup> [↗](#)

- Form a solid team to help communicate goals and expectations
- Include people who can answer questions and allay concerns.



### 3 Develop competencies

How will you ensure that those involved in managing the implementation and embedding of change have the skills and capabilities they need? Plan this out in advance to help support the initiative and minimise delays.

Some areas to consider when assessing your capacity to deliver the change include:

- Drawing on skills from other business units
- Investing in appropriate training courses
- Recruiting into the team from outside.



63% of organisations often or always use standardised project management practices for change management.<sup>3</sup> [↗](#)

### 4 Select communication methods

Communication should be clear and ongoing throughout the change process.

- Ask stakeholders what information they would like to receive
- Brainstorm the modes and channels of communication that can engage them
- Consider that different stakeholders require different information at different frequencies.



### 5 Manage resistance

Despite the constancy of change, people find it difficult to adapt to new ways of working and many experience change fatigue. In 2016, 74% of employees were willing to support organisational change; in 2022, that figure was only 38%.<sup>4</sup> [↗](#)

Effective two-way communication helps to minimise mistrust and speculation. Ensure you're well prepared to handle resistance by considering:

- expected types of resistance
- likely reasons for resistance
- strategies to address resistance.



### 6 Allow for feedback

Establishing an open dialogue with stakeholders and staff contributes to trust in the change process.

- Allow questions and discussion; consider how stakeholders' thoughts about the change, and their approach to implementation, can be fed back into planning
- 'Town halls', FAQs and focused feedback sessions all ensure people are heard and ideas and concerns are addressed.



Involving stakeholders in decision-making has been found to increase change success by 15%.<sup>5</sup> [↗](#)

### 7 Measure effectiveness

Establish clear KPIs early on to assess whether you're meeting your change goals. KPIs may include factors such as:

- productivity
- profitability
- risk or cost reduction
- project completion
- better compliance
- stakeholder (team and/or customer) satisfaction.



If your change interventions don't have the desired effect, have a plan for what steps you'll take to rectify the problem.

#### 3 tips for creating your plan

To ensure your change management plan drives efficiency, start with the following tips:

- 1 Create a task checklist:** Document every action that needs to be completed to optimise your organisation's readiness for change.
- 2 Build in due dates:** Give each task a delivery deadline to keep the change initiative on track.
- 3 Use appropriate software:** Choose a project management tool to keep all the moving parts in check – you can input action items and owners to build in accountability.

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While tasks and procedures are central to a change management plan, organisational change is primarily driven by people. Transforming attitudes and behaviours can be difficult, but by considering all the key components when planning your initiative, you can help to guide meaningful change and drive your organisation forward.

**Want to make sure your organisation is change-ready? Our comprehensive Change Management Foundation course affords participants a working knowledge of the key principles of change management and our Practitioner course prepares them to become a change professional. Contact us or call 1300 70 13 14 to increase your change capability.**

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