

Change Management Strategies

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Change isn't easy. But, with a good strategy you can make it less painful on yourself and your team. Learn what steps need to be taken to ensure success.

Questions You Should Ask First

The next step in change management methodology is [building a strategy](#) to ensure successful change. When creating a change management strategy, you need to realize that one strategy is not going to fit every proposed change for the organization. Your strategy should target the particular project that you are presently working on.

Before you begin any change, you need to understand why the change is being undertaken. You should also try to answer the following questions:

- What is the need for the change?
- Who is being impacted?
- How are these people being impacted?
- How long will the change take?

Answering these questions will help you understand the culture of the change. This in turn will help you [develop a change management plan](#) and adapt your change management strategies to the current climate.

Finding Out Who is Impacted

Once you figure out the need for change and which members of your organization are being impacted, you can then move onto whom do you need to support the intended change. You need a pretty substantial support structure no matter how large or small the intended change is.

First of all, you need the support of your team. Helping them understand and buy into the change will increase your chances of success. Provide incentives for those that do accept the change. They are more likely to talk up the project and get many of their team members to accept it as well. You need to get a majority of those affected by the project to agree to what you are doing. If not, you are very likely to fail.

Plus, you need to make sure that the sponsor (the person who decided that the change was necessary) and all managers are on board. Most of your employees and teams will be looking to management for guidance. If these people don't embrace the change and their new roles, you are probably already in trouble.

It may help to develop a strategy for incremental change. You should start the change by instituting one phase of the change for a few months and then assess the effectiveness. If the current project is successful, then you can institute the next phase of your change management methodology. [Using Change Management Methodology to Deal with the Risks of Change](#), explains in detail the relationship between change and risks.

Assessing Risk

Finally, you need to assess what risks are involved with the project. Change always involves risk. If you, however, plan for that risk, you can take steps to deal with it. You should definitely record any possible risks, both overall and individualized.

You know that there is going to be resistance in the organization. People like doing things the way that they've always done it. You need to figure out where the resistance is most likely to come from (those that are most impacted or saboteurs) and come up with individual tactics to deal with the resistance.

You also need to develop specific tactics to deal with the particular change that you are dealing with. Generalized tactics may not work for your specific problem.

Steps in Writing a Risk Management Plan

Before you can start implementing your change management strategies, you need to come up with your risk management plan. These plans help you counteract issues way before they actually become a problem. This plan institutes all of your strategies and any other issues that you believe that you may encounter.

The major steps of creating your risk management plan with your change strategies include creating a definition of the risk. You need to think about all the risk involved in the change, including current and future risks associated with the change. Once you have your risk, your plan should have six key items:

1. Risk Identification
2. Risk Analysis
3. Risk Triggers
4. Resolution
5. Action Plan
6. Responsibility/Evaluation

Risk identification involves writing down every risk that could occur. Risk analysis involves analyzing those risks and giving them a number based on how much that risk affects overall success. The action plan is the steps that you will take to resolve the issue. The responsibility part of the plan means assigning a risk to a person who will be responsible for dealing with the risk. You must also evaluate the success of your overall strategy.

Dealing with change and writing a [risk management plan](#) will ensure that your change plan is a success. Always evaluate the success of your plan throughout the process. Do not wait until the end. It's better to deal with issues as they happen than when they really become an issue. Your risk triggers are subgroups of the main risk plan. These are warning signs that could indicate that you are getting ready to experience an issue.

References

Image Source: [ADONIS Community](#)

[Change Management Learning Center](#)

Nickols, Fred. "Four Change Management Strategies".

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

This series explains what change management is and how it can be used within a project manager's organization.

- » **What is Change Management Methodology?**
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