

Change Management for Technology Rollouts



HOW TO ENSURE
ENGAGEMENT,
ADOPTION AND
SUCCESS



How to create buy-in
for new technology



Maximize the impact
of new tech



Strategies for successful
technology adoption



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Introduction

Your company is investing in its future – and part of that is leveraging technology to support your business objectives, increase organizational efficiencies and grow your bottom line. One opportunity to consider is how your sales process can be optimized with technology.

Gartner notes that about 60% of B2B sales organizations will transition from experience- and intuition-based selling to data-driven selling. This shift will require a “permanent transformation in strategy, processes and resource allocation that moves the sales organization from seller-centric to buyer-centric and from analog to hyper automated, digital-first engagement with customers.”

To support that technology transition, it is vitally important that you not only have a plan for the IT

implementation but that you also make sure your entire team is on board and ready to embrace the new solution. Without a solid change management plan in place, you risk adequate adoption and losing out on the substantial benefits of the new solution.

Fostering adoption does not have to be complicated, however. As you formulate your change management plan, consider that a successful approach incorporates these important steps:

1. Create buy-in and commitment
2. Mitigate resistance
3. Promote adoption and set appropriate usage expectations

Creating Buy-in

If a new tool isn't positioned as useful and credible during rollout, adoption will falter, even if the technology is beneficial to your organization.

Managers need to be excited about the tech and ready to coach their team through a rollout, and sales reps need to understand how it will help them.

Keys to Success

Focus on how the tool benefits sales reps – and make sure it does.

Many solutions on the market today just add work without adding value. When the tech is terrible, change management strategies won't make a difference. Just as personal technology can save

time and provide value in everyday life, reps will embrace technology in their professional life when it benefits them directly.

Over-communicate success stories.

Sales reps must understand how the technology can benefit their day-to-day workflow – in other words, what's in it for them. Start small. Identify a feature that can have an immediate impact on their workflow and then train everyone on that functionality. Tell stories of wins to help drive adoption. Make sure that everyone is aware of the good things that come from using the new solution. People won't want to miss out on the opportunity and success that other reps are experiencing.

Mitigating Resistance and Fear

Knowing why your reps might not be open to welcoming the new tech is very helpful in crafting a strategy to address those concerns. There are a myriad of reasons why reps resist technology. Sometimes it is fear of the unknown and the impression that by leveraging the new tech, they are allowing Big Brother to monitor their activities. In other situations, reps are fearful that the tech will replace them, are scarred by a negative experience with past initiatives, or are concerned that the new solution will be complex and challenging to use. Many reps also have established habits and workflows that have been fine tuned over the years. Some may resist a new tool or technology because working through the learning curve seems more cumbersome than continuing to work with tried-and-true methods.

Keys to Success

Make sure the reps know how the new tech helps them sell more.

Reps are more likely to champion and leverage tools that:

- Make responding to customers quicker and easier
 - With a warehouse full of SKUs, how can your sales team be an expert and promptly answer customer queries about every product you carry? They can't. Technology can help them quickly and easily get the information they need to satisfy the customer and make the sale.
- Free them from low-value, administrative tasks
 - Technology clears away some non-sales-related tasks, like manual data entry, to allow your sales team more time to focus on what they do best – provide that personal touch.

- Deliver a complete view of customers' buying behaviors
 - Technology can aggregate and analyze customer data from all sales channels faster and more accurately than sales reps can. Not only does this make your sales and service teams more successful, but it can also boost your customer satisfaction by helping customers succeed as well.

Have managers train reps on the key features and functionality.

We've found it best to have managers trained on a new tool before their reps are. This makes managers effective stewards of the software and builds internal enthusiasm and comprehension of the new tool. When sales reps complete user training given by their management team, they're more likely to trust that the tool will work for them and succeed when they begin to use it.

Promoting Adoption

Once you have successfully promoted the benefits of the new tech and addressed any hesitancy, it's time to get serious about the rollout. By investing in this process, you are making sure that the ROI of the new tech is quickly and fully realized. Proper adoption is the key to long-term success with technology investments.

Keys to Success

Make sure you have strong leadership support for the technology rollout.

When there is executive oversight and interest,

managers feel accountable for their team's adoption of the tech. And when managers are invested, tech adoption by their team inherently improves.

Train reps on the “art” of selling alongside technology.

This step complements the “science” of functionality training. New tools inevitably change reps' workflows. While you must teach sales reps the new tech's features and functionality, it's imperative to also train them on how tech can enable them to sell even more. Sales training on how to upsell based on insights from the data and technology is the “art” of selling alongside technology. Organizations that include role-playing exercises as part of their sales rep training and coaching see some of the best adoption rates.

Set clear usage expectations.

Identify who in your organization is responsible for tracking adoption and keeping users accountable for using the tool. Rather than say, “We want consistent usage,” define what that means to your organization.

The goal should be aspirational yet attainable. For example, each sales rep should pitch to at least 25 customers per week with three products promoted on average. Resist the temptation to slow-roll an adoption ramp over time. In our experience, organizations that go all-in with their technology adoption goals from the first week of implementation tend to have better adoption rates. Lean on your technology provider to help you develop applicable and fair usage goals – and be sure to hold your sales reps accountable for achieving them.

Incentivize the use of the tool.

Incentives can be as simple as Amazon gift cards, hours toward a day off or free lunches. In addition, team-based competitions can encourage usage of new technology. For example, set a goal that specifies a pitch threshold and offer prizes to individuals that exceed the goal. This works remarkably well when there are pre-existing teams in an organization, such as sales teams from different branches or when sales reps have similar work.

Examples of incentives include:

Usage-based rewards

Team-based competition

Add-on reward for top-performing individuals

Track results

If we're asking reps to integrate technology into their workflow and responsibilities, progress should be discussed in regular check-ins and the results should be shared. This would also be a great time to gather user feedback, acknowledge top users and discuss best practices. A regular report could include metrics related to the new tech, including attributed revenue, to drive usage and accountability.

Change Management Checklist

The most successful rollouts address each of the action items on this list. Start formulating your approach to ensure your tech rollout is a success.

Pre-rollout

- Identify what teams and individuals will be using the new tech
- Identify who will be the leaders responsible for tracking usage and adoption
- Set an internal usage expectation (e.g., 25 customers pitched/rep/week)
- Align on an incentive plan for spurring technology adoption

Training/initial onboarding

- Ensure managers are fully trained on the new solution and clear on responsibilities
- Train the reps on key functionalities (e.g., how to use the new tool to upsell)
- Train the reps on sales tactics/how to pitch (especially important for CSRs who have not upsold before and those doing a lot of phone pitching)

Initial go-live/early usage

- Set and enforce agreed-upon usage expectation and incentive program
- Keep a regular check-in cadence and incorporate results into existing results tracking efforts
- Celebrate top users but be sure to research why underperformers are lagging

Steady-state usage

- Lean on your top performers to share success stories and best practices
- Work with the vendor of the new tech to identify the need for re-trainings/new feature trainings

Conclusion

Maximize the Value and Impact of Your New Tech
While job No. 1 is to purchase technology that helps your team do their jobs instead of making more work, those dollars will go to waste without buy-in. Your sales team is more likely to accept the new tech when they can see how it enables them to make more sales and increase their own bottom line.

With the appropriate tools, sales teams can:

- Produce better results for customers and for your business.
- Gain insight into customer buying habits.
- Sell more.
- Improve response time.
- Provide a more comprehensive, enjoyable experience for customers.

By strategically introducing new technology, your sales reps will see all the benefits the new tool offers. Include a change management plan in your next sales enablement implementation to ensure the technology is adopted and that, as a result, your sales team thrives.

Role of the Manager

- ✓ Internal champions for new tech
- ✓ Ensure reps are properly trained
- ✓ Manage team progress against usage goals
- ✓ Support day-to-day oversight
- ✓ Address common concerns
- ✓ Share best practices across the team
- ✓ Collect feedback from their team to share with the vendor and senior leadership

Evaluating Tech Partners

The right vendor can make all the difference for your successful rollout. Look for companies with clear change management practices and who are excited to work with you to ensure a successful rollout. This proactive change management approach as part of the implementation will help ensure the technology is adopted – and that you get the return you're looking for.



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