

THE PROJECT ADOPTION ACCELERATOR CHECKLIST

Build Adoption Into the Project, Not Onto It

The Project Adoption AcceleratorSM helps organizations build adoption into the design and delivery of any project from the beginning. It moves the work upstream, before the major decisions are locked and the project team is left trying to communicate, train and manage resistance around a solution people had little chance to shape.

The goal is not consensus or giving everyone everything they want. Leaders still lead, project teams still make decisions and constraints still exist. The difference is that the people closest to the work are treated as contributors who can help identify risk, test assumptions, improve the solution and make the new way of working usable in practice.

USE THIS CHECKLIST TO ASK

- Are we solving the right problem?
- Have the people closest to the work been involved early enough to influence the solution?
- Have we designed the new way of working for real operating conditions?
- Do leaders, managers and teams have what they need to use and support it?
- Do we have evidence that the project is producing sustained use and measurable value?

THE PROJECT ADOPTION ACCELERATORSM



Change is co-created, not imposed.

01 UNDERSTAND

Understand the Adoption Landscape

Start with the real work, the people affected and the conditions around the project. Assess the business context, current ways of working, readiness, dependencies, risks and what must be true for the project to succeed in practice.

CHECK THAT YOU HAVE

- ☐ The business problem and outcome the project is meant to address
- ☐ Affected roles, teams, customers, partners and communities
- ☐ Current workflows, handoffs, workarounds and points of friction
- ☐ What will change, what will stay the same and where uncertainty remains
- ☐ Current readiness, capacity, competing demands and change saturation
- ☐ Prior project experience, trust and expectations
- ☐ Operational, technical, regulatory and policy constraints
- ☐ Dependencies, adoption risks and possible unintended consequences
- ☐ Conditions required for successful adoption
- ☐ Baseline measures for the work and intended outcomes

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *Do we understand the reality of the work and the conditions around it before deciding how adoption should happen?*

☐ Not started	☐ In progress	☐ Good enough to move forward
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NOTES / DECISIONS / GAPS

02 ENGAGE

Engage the People Doing the Work

Involve leaders, managers, users, subject-matter experts and other affected groups early enough to influence the project. The purpose is not to seek agreement on everything. It is to improve the quality of the decisions, surface weak assumptions and build practical ownership.

CHECK THAT YOU HAVE

- ☐ The right mix of leaders, managers, users and subject-matter experts
- ☐ Representation from the people closest to the day-to-day work
- ☐ Clear decision roles, boundaries and areas open to influence
- ☐ Meaningful opportunities to co-design, test and improve the solution
- ☐ Project assumptions made visible and tested against operating reality
- ☐ Concerns, hesitation and disagreement treated as useful information
- ☐ Feedback channels people can use without unnecessary friction
- ☐ A visible way to show what was heard, decided and changed
- ☐ Leaders and managers actively involved, not simply copied on updates
- ☐ Shared ownership that extends beyond the project team

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *Have people had a meaningful chance to shape the solution while important choices can still change?*

☐ Not started	☐ In progress	☐ Good enough to move forward
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NOTES / DECISIONS / GAPS

03 DESIGN

Design Adoption Into the Project

Build adoption requirements into project decisions, solution design, workflows, governance and delivery plans. Communication and training still matter, but they cannot compensate for a solution that does not fit the work or an operating environment that cannot support it.

CHECK THAT YOU HAVE

- ☐ Future-state workflows designed for real operating conditions
- ☐ Role, responsibility and accountability changes made clear
- ☐ Decision rights, handoffs, exceptions and escalation paths
- ☐ Adoption impacts reflected in scope, schedule, budget and resourcing
- ☐ Specific leadership actions needed before, during and after launch
- ☐ Clear expectations and practical support for managers
- ☐ Communication tied to decisions, timing and what people need to do
- ☐ Role-based, scenario-based learning and practice
- ☐ Access to the tools, data, time and resources required to perform
- ☐ Support channels, job aids and peer learning built into the work
- ☐ Adoption, performance and business measures established early
- ☐ A realistic transition from the old way of working to the new one

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *If the project went live tomorrow, would people know how to use, lead and support the new way of working under real conditions?*

☐ Not started	☐ In progress	☐ Good enough to move forward
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NOTES / DECISIONS / GAPS

04 ADAPT

Test, Learn and Adapt

Use pilots, demonstrations, feedback loops, user observation and early performance data to improve both the solution and the adoption approach. Testing is not a ceremonial checkpoint. It is where the project learns what works, what does not and what must change before broader implementation.

CHECK THAT YOU HAVE

- ☐ Clear learning questions and test objectives
- ☐ Representative users, teams, locations and operating conditions
- ☐ A documented baseline for comparison
- ☐ Observation of actual use, not only stated preference
- ☐ A practical way to capture feedback, friction and unexpected effects
- ☐ Testing of handoffs, exceptions, edge cases and high-pressure conditions
- ☐ Measures for quality, time, effort, disruption and intended outcomes
- ☐ Agreed criteria to proceed, adjust, pause or stop
- ☐ Named owners and enough time to make corrections
- ☐ Clear communication about what was learned and what changed

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *What did we learn that should change the solution or the adoption approach before broader implementation?*

☐ Not started	☐ In progress	☐ Good enough to move forward
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NOTES / DECISIONS / GAPS

05 SUSTAIN

Enable Sustained Use

Prepare the organization to reinforce, support and improve the new way of working after launch. Adoption is not complete when the project goes live. It becomes durable when the work is usable, leaders reinforce it, problems are resolved and operational owners can keep improving it.

CHECK THAT YOU HAVE

- ☐ Leaders consistently reinforce the purpose and expected behaviors
- ☐ Managers can coach the work and address day-to-day friction
- ☐ A clear support model with owners, response paths and service expectations
- ☐ Peer champions, local experts or communities that can share learning
- ☐ Updated procedures, job aids, role expectations and performance supports
- ☐ Goals, incentives and measures aligned with the new way of working
- ☐ Ownership transferred from the project team to the operating organization
- ☐ Old tools, processes and workarounds retired when appropriate
- ☐ Ongoing monitoring of use, performance, risk and business outcomes
- ☐ Learning available for new employees, role changes and future releases
- ☐ Feedback loops that allow the organization to keep adapting

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *Who owns sustained adoption after the project team moves on, and do they have what they need to keep it working?*

☐ Not started	☐ In progress	☐ Good enough to move forward
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NOTES / DECISIONS / GAPS

Measure Adoption and Value

Measure whether the new way of working is being used, supported and producing the intended outcomes. Awareness, attendance and training completion may tell you that activity happened. They do not tell you that adoption happened.

You will not need every measure below. Choose the few that show whether people are engaging, behavior is changing, the work is improving and the organization can sustain the result.

Category	Possible Measure	What It Helps Us See
Activity	Participation in co-design, testing and learning	Are the right people engaging early enough to influence the work?
Activity	Feedback raised and addressed	Are concerns and practical issues being surfaced and acted on?
Behavior	Use of the new workflow or process	Are people working in the intended way under normal conditions?
Behavior	Continued use of old workarounds	Is the organization truly moving away from the old way of working?
Behavior	Support requests and escalations	Where are people getting stuck, confused or forced outside the process?
Performance	Time to proficiency	How long does it take people to perform the new work with confidence?
Performance	Cycle time, quality and rework	Is the work becoming faster, better or easier without creating hidden effort?
Performance	User or customer experience	Is the change improving the experience it was intended to improve?
Performance	Business value realized	Are the expected operational, financial or service outcomes showing up?
Capability	Operational ownership	Can leaders, managers and support teams sustain the work after the project closes?
Capability	Continued improvement	Can the organization learn, adjust and improve without restarting the project?

BEFORE MOVING ON, ASK: *Can we show that the project is changing the work and producing value, not just that rollout activity occurred?*

What This Work Should Produce

Depending on the project, the work should produce a practical set of decisions, plans and operating supports such as:

- ☐ Adoption landscape and readiness assessment
- ☐ Stakeholder, impact and workflow analysis
- ☐ Engagement and co-design approach
- ☐ Adoption requirements integrated into the project plan
- ☐ Leadership and manager enablement plan
- ☐ Communication, learning and support design
- ☐ Pilot, testing and feedback-loop plan
- ☐ Adoption measures and success indicators
- ☐ Risk, dependency and friction tracking
- ☐ Launch, transition and reinforcement support
- ☐ Sustainment and continuous-improvement roadmap

Typical Outcomes

- ☐ Earlier involvement and stronger ownership from the people doing the work
- ☐ Better-informed project decisions and fewer late-stage surprises
- ☐ Less rework and disruption to day-to-day operations
- ☐ Faster movement from launch to effective use
- ☐ Improved confidence, capability and support for the new way of working
- ☐ Stronger operational, customer and business outcomes
- ☐ Greater capacity to keep learning and adapting after implementation

The Difference

Traditional change work often begins after the solution has largely been decided. The focus then turns to explaining what is coming, preparing people to accept it and responding to resistance.

The Project Adoption AcceleratorSM begins earlier. It involves the people closest to the work while decisions can still change, treats concerns and hesitation as useful information, builds adoption requirements into project delivery and measures success by sustained use and value.

NEED HELP PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE?

The Project Adoption AcceleratorSM helps organizations move from project delivery to sustained use and measurable value.

Build the project with people, not simply for them.