
Increasing the Return on Investment of Enterprise Software Through Coordinated Change Management and Learning

Software Investment is Increasing, but Adoption Rates are Not

It comes as no surprise that businesses are increasingly investing in software, from Enterprise Resource Planning to Customer Relationship Management, to business process automation. Gartner estimates that enterprise software spending rose [8.5% in 2019](#) to \$453 billion, even as total IT spending rose by only 0.5%.

Gartner predicts this spending will rise by 10.5% in both 2020 and 2021, and that's before the COVID-19 pandemic led to a reported [acceleration](#) in the adoption of enterprise cloud technologies.

And while investment in enterprise software is clearly growing, there's no evidence that adoption is getting any better. Failure rates range from 75% for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software to 70% of overall digital transformations; the numbers are

staggering. McKinsey [noted](#) that 56% of large IT projects delivered less value than predicted.

It's no wonder that while they're spending more than ever, companies are quicker to cancel licenses to software that do not deliver value. Overwhelmed employees are asked to use [over 200 apps in nearly 10%](#) of all businesses, so any chance to simplify comes with a warm welcome. Customer adoption has become an essential part of any software company's sales strategy.

Why Do Software Implementations Fail?



Gary L. Melling, CEO of Acquired Insights, a company that creates AI software, says that throughout his career, he has seen one common theme in implementation failures: a lack of investment in change management and training.

Some risks of not having an effective change and training program on software implementations include:

- Lack of engagement, readiness and buy-in from employees, suppliers, and partners
- Resistance to new ways of working and maintaining old ones
- Delays, additional costs, and loss of confidence in abilities
- Potential adverse impacts on uninformed customers and suppliers

- Stress, confusion, frustration, lower morale, less focus on priorities, and risk of talent loss
- Unrealized benefits and lower return on investment

For all the investment in new enterprise software, leaders often underestimate the work it will take to achieve accurate, consistent usage of the new system, even for business-critical processes.

How Change Management and Training Work Together to Increase Your Software ROI

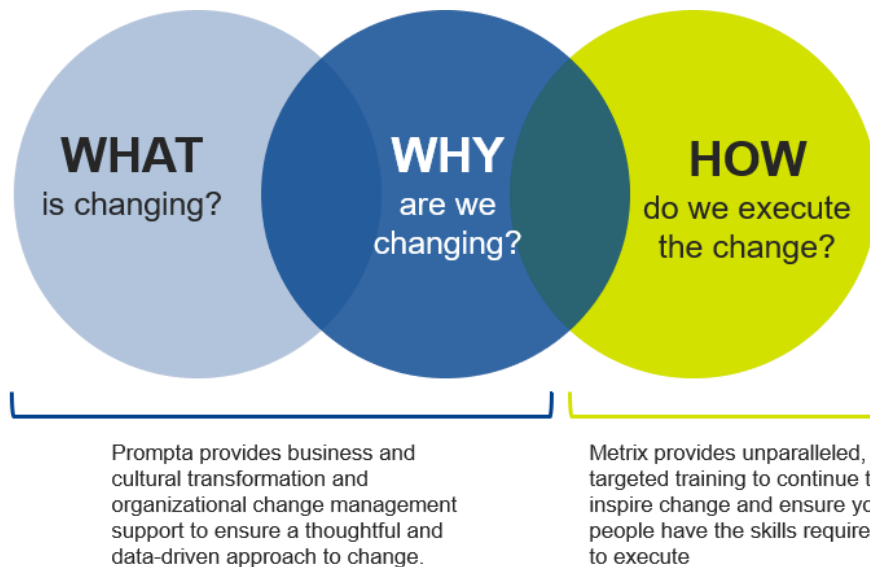
Software implementation programs introduce a great deal of people related change, from adjustments to roles and responsibilities to new policies, processes and ways of working.

A change management program drives people-related activities over the course of the project. It provides structured and measurable approaches for planning and managing activities to achieve one overarching goal: equip impacted employees and suppliers with the tools and information required to minimize their disruption and maximize their effectiveness,

such that tangible benefits are realized as quickly as possible.

A robust training program ensures that people know how to use the software and build comfort using it in the range of situations they might face. A really good training program will also consider workflows that are important outside of the software and reinforce associated skills such as communication with customers or critical thinking.

The following illustration shows how change management and training work together.



Because there is a connection between change management and training, when these functions work seamlessly together, you can get a greater impact for your end-users.

Common Implementation Failures and their Fixes

Looking holistically at your change management and training approach will only strengthen the impact of each one. Here are our top tips to ensure a successful implementation.

1

Change Management Perspective: The business must own sponsorship and be actively involved in implementation

During software implementations, it is vital for leadership to provide the vision and act as ongoing, consistent, active, and visible sponsors of the change. Their commitment and ability will be a key success factor. Change managers provide sponsors with support to successfully lead their people through change. Over the course of software implementations, sponsors need to partner with the Project Managers, the Change Management and Training team to provide direction, timely & focused decision making and issue resolution.

2

Change Management Perspective: Embed ongoing measurement, visible support and process refinement into your ways of working

Software implementations rarely fail because of technology. Proven technologies can be made to work. They fail because the business does not get involved and stay involved in becoming ready for a successful transition. The road to success starts with a structured change and training plans that are embedded within the overall project plans. A network of change champions and SME's from across the business needs to get involved and stay involved with the support of leaders. These business users co-create the future with change managers and trainers. They make sure that ways of working, processes, policies, procedures, role and responsibility changes are well documented and prepared for.

3

Training Perspective: Keep training streamlined and scenario-based

There's an instinct to want to include step-by-step training on all software tasks in one big training event at the launch of the new software. This is a mistake. Without real-world context and the opportunity to practice, employees usually retain very little. Instead, focus on getting people comfortable with the interface, a few of the most important and common tasks, and provide a range of real-world scenarios they can work through to put the tasks into context.

4

Training Perspective: Take a "teach to fish" mentality, with an emphasis on ongoing support

It's common to have several tasks that employees won't have to complete right away. It's also common to make mistakes, even on tasks that they have practiced many times over. That's why it's important to clearly define how people can get help as they learn. There are some great tools like WalkMe that are available that embed 'how to's' right into the system. But you need to pair this with human support and with the opportunity to practice getting the support they need from the available channels. This approach is more sustainable over time.

Common Implementation Failures and their Fixes (continued)

5

Combined Perspective: Plan for a journey, not an event

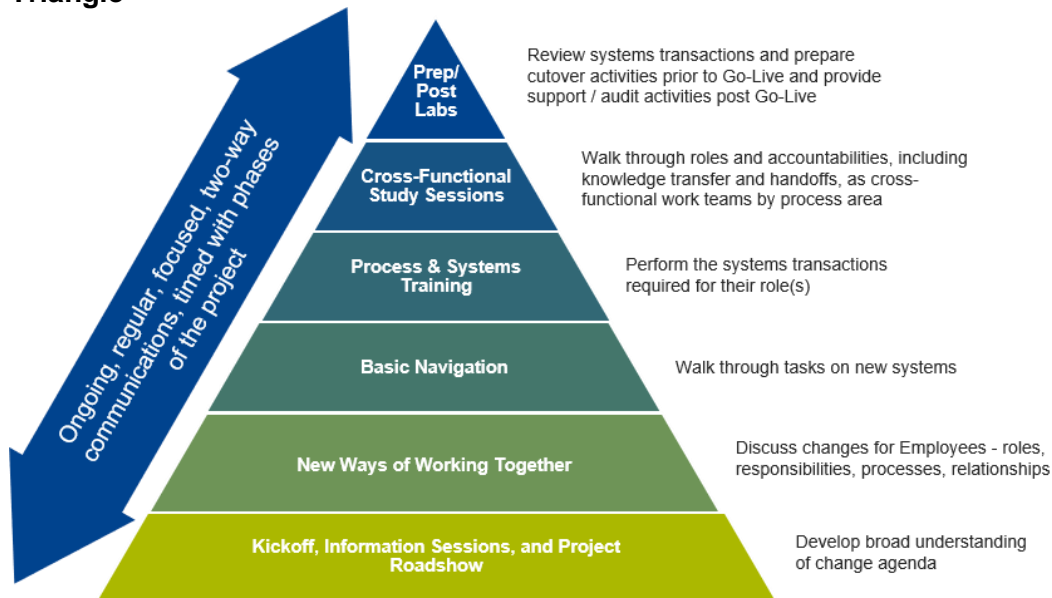
A successful software implementation is a journey which not only includes new technology solutions and processes but also ensures every internal and external stakeholder is ready with the support, knowledge, skills and mindsets to successfully operate in the new operating environment.

The change and training journey starts with the vision and criteria for success that leaders effectively share. It begins in earnest with broad change communications that become much more focused over the course of the software implementation. The Change Management and Training team prepares the business and takes teams and individual stakeholders through a journey to prepare them. They support, engage and involve leaders and enable them to bring their vision to life. The combined team involves users from the business to help co-create the solution and support others as super users and change champions. The journey comes into focus when users start to receive training on new ways of working, basic navigation and then role-based training.

Using a structured approach come launch, users are ready, prepared, supported, and have the tools, skills, knowledge, capabilities, and mindsets in order to adopt and proficiently complete new ways of working.

6

Combined Perspective: Change Management and Training team Readiness Triangle



When change management and training work seamlessly together, the end-users experience improved readiness and preparedness; they see integrated processes that reinforce key themes and messages across change management, training and communications.



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