

# Executive Guide to Change Management

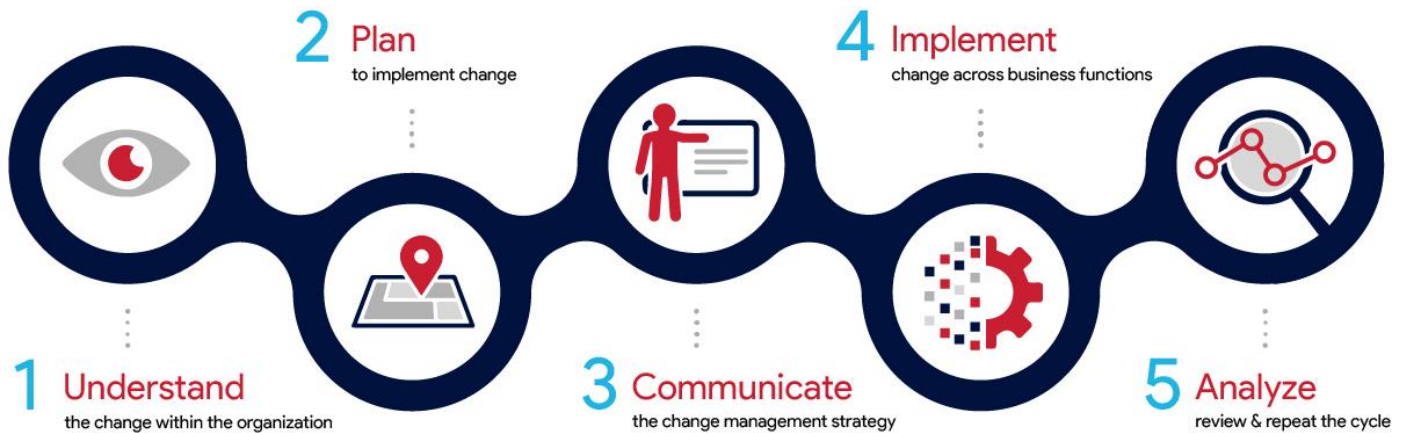


*In today's digital transformation environment, the ability to address and adapt to change within the organization is becoming a critical factor to staying competitive. The challenges organizations face are that employees may be reluctant to try new things or an organizational structure change may be perceived as too difficult.*

To achieve success with any change, it is vitally important to incorporate a change management plan to support timely and effective implementation of business-required changes, minimize negative impact of changes to/for the business, and ensure changes achieve desired business outcomes. With changes potentially directly affecting organizational structure, it is also important to keep in mind how employees will adopt these changes during the transformation efforts. There are several key steps to take when pursuing a change management plan, but all plans should start with understanding the potential changes.

## Change Management Plan Steps

A change management plan can be defined as the application of a structured process and set of tools for leading the people side of change to achieve a desired outcome. Being able to clearly identify steps for your change management plan can either make or break your transformation. To execute a successful change management plan, organizations need to understand the change, plan the change, communicate, implement, and analyze/repeat the change.



### 1. Understand

Understanding the change within the organization plays a crucial role in setting the foundation for a strong change management plan. To successfully understand the benefits of the change, we need to ask ourselves why the change is needed, what are our key objectives, how will it impact the way people work, and what will it take to successfully achieve the change. This step is normally done by determining the scope of the change, clarifying expected benefits, and developing a communication plan. The goal is to clearly identify the needed changes and the impact to the organization.

### 2. Plan

Once we understand the potential change, we can begin to plan how to implement the change, which will be different for every organization due to varying project types. It is estimated that majority of project failures stem from a lack of planning. At a high level, we need to consider how we gain approval for the change, who will be involved (internal or external expertise), and what is the expected future state. This step is normally done by identifying any additional training needed, agreeing on success criteria, and conducting working sessions with SME's and stakeholders to ensure that everyone who will be involved is properly prepared. The goal here is to gain adoption by the affected parties, develop a clear schedule and ensure we have acquired reliable internal/external expertise to move forward with the change.

### 3. Communicate

Once we have acquired the needed resources and identified an overall change management strategy for execution, it is time to communicate the change. Successful change management requires clear communication to all impacted stakeholders. Communication during a transformation effort is not limited to just a top-down approach from leadership to employee but also from employee to leadership. This communication should continue during and after transformations to validate that the change is part of the organization's vision. The goal is to create an environment for cross-department communication to help spread ideas, innovation, and awareness during transformation efforts.

#### 4. Implement

Once proper communication has been planned/executed, implementation of the change can begin. This step can sometimes be the most challenging due to the complexity of aligning the vision to the impacted change. During this step, organizations need to closely monitor the implementation of changes in the business and regularly measure and report outcomes. The goal is to successfully bring the business together and create change across business functions that align with the vision created in the "Understand" step.

#### 5. Analyze

Finally, the change does not end with the implementation. Once the changes are operational, organizations need to review progress toward adopted changes and ensure that additional adaptations are not needed. Organizations need to analyze, review, and repeat the change management cycle to ensure awareness, knowledge, and organizational change readiness. The goal of this step is to reinforce and strengthen adoption to change within the organization and leverage what we have learned to carry out future changes.

## What does success look like?

By successfully understanding and executing the steps required for an effective change management plan, organizations will increase adoption by the key stakeholders which will lead to a successful outcome. Leadership will need to embrace a culture of change and a clear vision of what each change encompasses. Success will look differently for every organization but developing and executing a change management plan will lay the foundation for organizations to continuously evolve and remain competitive.

## How Can Clarendon Partners Help?

Clarendon Partners, offers a dynamic consulting service with extensive project and change management expertise in strategic and operations consulting. CP approaches every initiative with strong program and project management, which involves change management, to meet the strategic goals of an organization. CP works with leaders from discovery through implementation and executes against the work necessary to achieve the resulting benefits of the future state.

Clarendon Partners can assist your organization to maximize process efficiency by:

1. **Enhancing Your Team** – our team has delivered on complex global transformations across a broad array of industries. We can immediately improve your team's process standardization in a scalable way that best suits your needs

2. **Strategic Focus** – our team has proven tools and experience that can help you translate your strategic objectives into initiatives to meet those objectives.
3. **Roadmap Development** – our team has experience in delivering successful transformation programs. We have the experience needed to help you build ,validate and execute your transformation plans.
4. **External Point of View** – many companies find it refreshing to have an external point of view that can help them to break their old way of thinking and achieve truly transformative results.

## Contact us

The authors of this article want to hear about the challenges you're facing and welcome the opportunity to support your digital transformation initiatives to evolve your organization.

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