



# Building a strong change management plan for a successful deployment



UKG Ready

When embarking on a new technology project, everyone has success as their top priority. But how do you define success? Delivering the technology on time and on budget is typically top of mind, but just as important is how the project is perceived and accepted by end-users. Even if your technical implementation is flawless and new practices are efficient and clearly defined, the true measure of success is adoption, which can be accomplished through creating a well-thought-out change management strategy and plan. In our experience, helping people embrace the change is more impactful than aiming for smooth implementation and leads to more long-term success.

## You selected UKG Ready for a reason

When getting ready to deploy the UKG Ready™ solution suite, ask yourself, “What do we want to achieve?” Maybe you’re new to UKG, implementing UKG Ready to ease up on manual processes and increase productivity. Or perhaps you’re rolling out new functionality or additional modules within UKG Ready to meet your business’s ever-growing needs. Regardless of your reasons, you are making a change within your organization.

At UKG, we’re constantly trying to make our product the best it can possibly be, and UKG Ready product releases happen every two months. Change management can be put into place at any time, not just during implementation. Customers can utilize all the tools UKG has to offer regarding change management at any point in their journey.

In order to drive user adoption with your UKG Ready project and maximize return on investment, you need to change the behavior of people within your organization. After all, embracing new technology involves altering the way one does one’s job.

Since most people prefer the status quo, some level of resistance is normal. You need a way to break down the barriers and change behavior to encourage widespread adoption and, ultimately, achieve your business goals.

It’s important to remember your employees are at the center of it all. Change, no matter how big or small, affects how people do their jobs. Change management aims to prepare everyone in the organization for what’s next.

We know that change isn’t easy, which is why we strongly suggest implementing a change management plan. Change management is the structured process used to prepare, support, and help individuals, teams, and organizations make a change.

Implementing a plan of action helps ensure employees are informed and prepared to be successful. Studies show that organizations that enact a change management plan are six times more likely to be successful than those that do not.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prosci Inc., Best Practices in Change Management, 10th Edition (2018).

## Types of change management

Change management typically occurs at three different levels:

- **Cultural Change:** With a change management approach that focuses on people, you can significantly increase the likelihood of success by bridging the gap between system implementation and realization of the project's business objectives. In order for this type of change to work, companies need to align the rollout process to the culture. For success, the reasons why the change is happening (your business objectives) need to be clear.
- **Organizational Change:** Typically driven by senior management, organizational change focuses on realigning people and processes to support evolving business goals. For example, it may involve transitioning from a decentralized human resources (HR) team to a shared services model for the HR function. Organizational change requires buy-in and reinforcement at all management levels in order to be successful.
- **Individual Change:** Through clear, direct communication from the right person to the right audience at the right time, you can promote individual behavior change and equip employees with the skills and abilities they need in order to *work their way*. It is the key to driving high user adoption rates and achieving project-related business goals.

## Define your goals

Knowing the types of change management that are needed will help you define your goals. Set your goals early on. Gather information on the state of your organization and the groups that will be impacted by the change in order to understand where your organization is now and what the expected future state will be. Organizations implement UKG Ready to achieve specific business goals. These may include human capital management strategies such as attracting and retaining top talent, providing real-time insights into labor costs, and creating a modern, mobile workforce while minimizing compliance risk and improving workforce productivity.

When you clearly define the goals your organization intends to meet, your change management plan is off to a great start. In addition to the high-level strategic business outcomes, most successful change management plans will also incorporate "SMART" goals into the detailed plan. SMART goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-based.

For example, perhaps your organization has made the decision to implement the UKG Ready platform as your new software as a service solution. Your organization may be moving from paper documentation (e.g., resumes, timesheets, W-2s) to a fully digital experience. This is certainly an important, strategic endeavor that requires a clear change management plan. When utilizing the SMART goal objectives, your plan will be a bit more detailed and may include specifics such as when to incorporate the Talent Acquisition functionality into your organization, how timesheet edits may be accomplished, and rollout of the new UKG Ready mobile application.

Defining goals is a crucial step in the change management plan, because goal definition provides a charter for the organization. This gives members of the organization an understanding of why the change is happening and helps motivate them to be successful.

## Stakeholders

When creating a change management plan, make sure to clearly identify your stakeholders. Stakeholders are those who have an impact on or will be impacted by this change. Stakeholders can range from decision makers to the project team to end-users. Make sure to decide who is *responsible*, who is *accountable*, who is *consulted*, and then who is *informed*.

It's essential to determine the players in your change management plan and the different roles and responsibilities each person has. Change management involves the following four different types of players:

- **Executive Sponsor:** This is a credible leader within the organization who is ultimately responsible for the strategy and execution.
- **Champion:** This is an individual whose role is to drive communication and alignment with the leadership at your organization.
- **Trainer:** This is the individual who is connected to all areas of your business and can help do any grass roots socializing of the change.
- **Employees:** Employees are not specifically involved in the change management planning but must implement the change in their workday.

Look to your stakeholders when it comes to decision making and get their feedback. What are their concerns? What do they like about the change so far? Do they have any questions for other stakeholders? Establish a regular cadence with your stakeholders for check-ins throughout the change process. These governance meetings give your organization visibility into how the change process is going and what aspects may need to be tweaked.

## Why communication is key

When it comes to change, communication is key. Remember, your employees are the center of this change. Depending on the project at hand, many employees can have day-to-day responsibilities that are affected. Clear, transparent, and timely communication should be an essential part of your change management plan.

Once a solid communication plan is established, make it public. Your organization should strive to be transparent. In order to make the change as seamless as possible, give employees complete visibility into what's happening during all phases of the project.

**Practice Tip:** In order to have an effective communication plan, make sure to send the *right* message, to the *right* audience, at the *right* time, from the *right* sender, through the *right* channel. We've seen organizations send weekly email blasts, video messages from the CEO, and even text messages to keep employees in the know.

## Preparing to make the change

Build awareness that change is coming and why — without getting into all the details. This can be accomplished through brief, widely spaced communications such as emails, team meetings, and organizational announcements.

Then start ramping up the frequency of your communications to improve understanding. Use demos, concept movies, and socialization to help the workforce comprehend what the change will like and why it's important to the organization.

Initiate more direct communications — potentially one on one — to engage individuals in the change process and explain how it benefits them. Encourage participation and drive interest by involving users in solution testing and soliciting their feedback.

## Implementing change

Make sure to focus communications on learning, in order to ensure that individuals have the skills and abilities to do what is expected of them once the change takes place. You've done all this preparation to implement the change; now make sure employees are adopting it. Provide crystal clear instructions on individual behavior through live and/or recorded training events.

If the goal was to move to a digital experience, but three months after go-live, 30% of employees are still verbally asking their managers for time off instead of submitting requests through the UKG Ready suite, your organization should find out why that's happening. If employees don't know how to request time off in the system, offer another training event. If employees know how to use the system but aren't adapting, consider revisiting your change management plan or building a reinforcement plan. Reward the right behaviors while addressing individuals who are resisting change.

Further reinforce your confidence in the change by leveraging tools within UKG Ready to provide insights to your management and employees around the impact.

Use the Charts and Graphs feature to inform and engage the workforce. For example, you may have a graph depicting which departments have the most shift swaps over a period of time or which shift produces the most late in-punches. These insights provide an opportunity for management to address concerns or celebrate wins.

Readdress communications! Don't be afraid to send out email blasts or provide webinars to employees. Use the system communication tools such as the Announcements and Events functionality to celebrate employees and reinforce the reason for change. Also, make sure to assess stakeholder feedback. Stakeholders could be seeing and hearing things that you are not.

Finally, readdress your goals. Employees should know what the organization was trying to achieve when implementing or adding modules to UKG Ready. Celebrate adoption of the change by reinforcing and rewarding desired behavior. Publicly recognize individuals who are embracing the change and doing what is expected of them, in order to encourage others to get on board.

## Tools to aid your change management strategy

Planning for change early is the key to successful user adoption. UKG Ready customers have unlimited access to a self-paced on-demand course that guides you through change management planning and offers a plethora of best practices and downloadable resources to help you prepare an effective change management strategy. Get a sneak peek. [Watch this 1-min video](#), then jump in and take the [course](#).

Then take advantage of everything My Learning, the UKG training repository, has to offer. You'll find a treasure trove of self-paced courses, worksheets, and templates to help guide you through change management. To learn more about what's available in My Learning, click [here](#).

## Conclusion

Change isn't easy. But by choosing to leverage UKG Ready, you are taking the correct first step. Using the strategies defined here — such as setting goals early on; identifying roles, responsibilities, and stakeholders; developing a thorough plan; and communicating appropriately and transparently — will put your organization on the path to success. The UKG Ready organization, from Services to Customer Success, is here to help you every step of the way.

[UKG Services](#) is committed to providing smart value fast, with a wide range of strategic service offerings — all delivered with the industry expertise and domain knowledge of a technology leader. We're dedicated to helping customers achieve a rapid time-to-value from their solution investment while delivering the experience they expect.



Our purpose is people

Building on 70 years of experience from two leaders in HR solutions, UKG™ combines the strength and innovation of Ultimate Software and Kronos®. Individually, we've always put people at the center of everything we do. Together, we're committed to inspiring workforces and businesses around the world, helping to pave the way forward for our people, customers, and industry.

© 2021 UKG Inc. All rights reserved. For a full list of UKG trademarks, please visit [www.ukg.com/trademarks](http://www.ukg.com/trademarks). All other trademarks, if any, are property of their respective owners. All specifications are subject to change.