

Hi. Welcome to the lesson on change management – pretty big topic. We covered the framework that we follow in the written section of this material, however, this is a topic that definitely needs some anecdotal support. Some examples of experiences that have occurred from good and bad change management. That, along with other topics that we're going to talk about in this video.

## **Common Challenges**

So, the common challenges that you're going to experience in the process of an AI deployment within the company. There are a lot of variables. Some companies are gonna be more tech-forward. Smaller size teams will be easier to work with and to manage the change that's occurring in their company.

However, let's assume a medium-sized business doing \$50M a year with 90 employees. You get the call. They want you to come and participate in the AI business strategy development as well as stick around to manage the deployment. Or if you're an employee of a company of that size, the same case matters.

## **Workforce Resistance & Fear of Job Loss**

Some of the common challenges that we're encountering, first off is job security. People are hearing things from the media regarding AI will take our jobs. I think the common consensus, especially from power users of the, particularly generative AI tools, is that AI is not gonna take your job. Someone who knows AI we'll take the job.

## **Skill Gaps**

So, keeping that in mind, it's very important that we look at number two, which is skill gaps. We address those skill gaps that may exist within the team as it stands today. So, the quickest rebuttal to AI is going to take my job, is to work with all of the department heads, all of the team leads, and even if necessary, down to the individual level and let them know that sentiment that I shared with you.

It's not that AI will take your job. It's that somebody who has invested the time to learn how to use the AI tools in that role. They're a better candidate for your job. So what we're going to do is we're going to spend a lot of time training you. I'm making sure that you have very clear process maps. That you're very comfortable with the tools and that you actually employee, team lead, or see the benefits of using the tools.

So that's the easiest way to address the workforce resistance or the, you know, AI is going to take my job.

### **Change in Job Roles**

Addressing the skill gaps is a big part of the change management and it's something that, at least at a high level, you'll want to be involved with participating in the training of the team, especially those who are going to be part of any pilot programs.

If you can start with a small project within your business or within the company that you work with, and get results there, it makes it a lot less scary for the other departments when you can say, "Look, we tried it in customer service. We tried it in H. R. We did it in Marketing. And so far, here's the results."

And if you reference the quote that I gave in the marketing video related to arithmetics, not an opinion. If you can show the employees that we did it in this department or this team or this even down to the workflow, here are the results. They're working less. They're having higher production. And then encourage the people who have benefited from the AI deployment to be evangelists for, "Hey, it wasn't that bad, the training wasn't hard, the tools are easy, I actually enjoy my job better." And if you can have the people who were the users of the tool, again, evangelizing within the organization, it's going to take the fear of change away. As I've always say, the confused mind says no.

And if you think about that, there's less risk for the employee. If it's confusing, rather than them getting outside of their comfort zone too much, it's just easier to say "No, I think I'll do it the way we've always done it." So if you can address those skill gaps in the manner that we talk about in the written material, as well as what we've just discussed here, I think you'll find that the resistance is going to be challenging.

## Lack of Clear Communication

Now, here's what you're going to encounter. Certain people responsible for certain workflows may find that through the impact assessment we identified, there's a huge opportunity for automation here.

And if that's the case, that means that the individual that was before manually doing repetitive tasks no longer has to do those. So the company is going to be faced with the challenge of, "Do we take that person down to a part-time role? Do we re-deploy that person somewhere within the organization? Or do they continue to operate in that workflow or that role? But now with all that extra bandwidth, we're going to put them over here."

Addressing that with employees, particularly before you implement the workflow will help people avoid surprises and shocks. Those are the types of things that in a change management environment can be counterproductive to the overall momentum for the deployment of AI within the organization. And as I just mentioned, the confused mind always says, no. If there's no confusion, less friction. If there is confusion, expect resistance.

It's important that throughout the change management process at all levels of the organization, you exercise clear communication. As well as encourage the leadership or the team leads or even down to the individual level clear communication as well about what they're doing, about what their concerns are, about what this means for. Will you still have my job? Will my job still be part of the company's operations?

So, addressing these four common challenges will go a long way in preventing you from being surprised. And what I mean by that is this has happened to me personally. You're in the middle of a deployment and as far as you know, if you're not involved in a communicative and collaborative environment within the organization, things are going great.

Hey, this is what the leadership wanted. That's what we're going to give them. Everybody else should just be getting on board. It doesn't happen that way. As a matter of fact, you may not even be aware that there is a rabble out there that is actively working against the implementation.



Depending on the culture of the organization that you're coming into, if there hasn't been a strong definition of the core values and there hasn't been a clear description of the big vision. And there hasn't been communication from their immediate superiors all the way up the chain. You'll find that there will be people who just want to do it the way that they've always done it by golly.

So, those are some of the main challenges that you're going to encounter. That's probably the 80% of what you'll experience. If you address it in the manner in which we teach in the written material, as well as take the tips that I've shared with you here, you should be in good shape.

### **Employee Empowerment**

I find that if within a deployment and within a company if you have kind of like those in the know over here and those who are just kind of like wondering what's going on behind the closed door, it creates a polarity within the organization that is counterproductive to friction-free deployment as friction-free as possible.

So the frameworks that we shared within the written material about how do you engage employees? How do you include representatives of the employee? The labor side of the business? How do you engage them in the process so that they can allay the fears of the other individuals who may not, They're busy doing their work, and they don't have time to keep up with what's going on with the latest wag from the AI change coalition.

When you consider that they're showing up to work, perhaps there's a commute. Even if there's not a commute, they're at home. Maybe they've got kids. The husband's car broke down. Wife's car broke down. Kids have to get to soccer. All of those types of things. Life gets in the way of them being able to fully immerse into what's happening with this AI deployment.

So by having those proxies that ideally are well-liked within the organization, particularly with their teams that have an enthusiasm for what's going on? Like, "Oh, this is exciting. I can't wait to see how this makes my job better, how this allows me to advance in the company,"



All those types of things. That avatar is perfect for a representative to get involved in the conversation about how the AI deployment will affect their department and their team. So it's important that you don't create this environment just for the leaders.

We're going to make the decisions and that sort of thing. And in some cases, the leadership may think that that's the way to do things because that's the way that they've done things. However, I can tell you that with the employee involvement, the experience of the deployment itself is going to be a lot smoother, with a lot less office politics involved, and fewer silos within the organization.

And it becomes this type of thing to where people look around and they see their peers are excited about it and their peers are using it. Dan from HR and Suzanne from customer service, have said good things about it. That gets everybody kind of lined up in the same direction rather than going all over the place with their fears, concerns, or negative opinions of the effort.

### Upskilling

This is a big part of what we do as Chief Officers as we identify particular roles. And then if there's an individual in that role that definitely needs upskilling, we invest in a clearly defined training path. For someone to be able to learn how to use the tools, how to apply the tools, to see it work, to watch others using it, and learn by observation, whatever the framework that works best for you or the culture of the company or the individual themselves.

But I would recommend that you consider people learning in multiple modalities. Just like we're doing in this certification program. Some people are readers. Some people are listeners. Some people would rather watch the video. Some people would rather collaborate and be able to ask questions dynamically. So by introducing multiple modalities into the learning, the upscaling process, you'll find that everyone's particular path to growth is addressed.

So it's important that you don't create this training in a vacuum. You sit in your office or in the boardroom and determine what the training is gonna look like. Just as we mentioned a moment ago with Employee Empowerment. The team leads or the employee representatives should be involved in this.



They're gonna understand what's gonna land with this team. You know what? How does this team? Are they a culture of learners already? So maybe they want to really dive in and have more advanced training on the application of AI as it pertains to their role. So it's not something that you just go to ChatGPT and say, build out a training plan. Collaboration in the development of the plan with stakeholders, and users is going to give your training and upscaling plan the refinement that it needs to really be effective.

A figure that drives us home. And this was as of Fall of 2023, the report came out that 40% of workers will need to upskill, reskill, whatever the terminology is that's used in, in order to use AI. You're talking about 40% not just primarily knowledge workers, but not exclusive to knowledge workers. Especially Generative AI, and especially as more companies are instituting their own proprietary LLMs using open-source models. It's going to be part of the job, just like the typewriter was part of the job, just like the fax machine was part of the job, just like the personal computer was part of the job, just like a desk phone was part of the job, this is that paradigm.

AI is becoming a utility for an individual to perform their role better. If the individuals aren't being taught how to use the typewriter or the fax machine in the example, they're going to perform very poorly when it comes time to fulfill whatever their contribution is to the company that involves those tools.

The leadership teams of most companies understand that "Oh boy. You know, we've got to get our folks trained up. We've got to upskill our folks." If you encounter resistance, particularly in visionary-led or high-growth founder-led environments, there's an expectation that everybody in the organization operates as they do fast.

They can figure things out. They're not afraid of risk. They know they just have to sometimes just bulldoze through it to figure something out. Not everybody in the organization operates that way. As a result, the persuasion that is required for those types of leaders can be supported by data points like this.

At the time of this recording, if you were to go online and ask certain questions related to how AI is going to impact industries, particular roles, and job titles. You'll be able to compile a compelling list of data points that will show those individuals who might be resistant to the investment in training that, hey, this has got to happen without it, you know, the AI deployment will be for naught.



## Step-by-step Framework for Upskilling the Team

The framework that we talked about for upskilling the team. That's what's referenced in the written material and certainly can be enhanced depending on your situation. However, if these are the high-level points that you want to structure your upscaling process and protocols around, this will be satisfactory.

I would encourage you though, because change management is where things can fall apart. You could have done a fantastic job. The leadership team is pumped about the benefits that they're going to be realizing from this. It's not adopted by the users. If the individuals all the way from the front line up the chain aren't on board, the deployment will hit snags for sure.

In extreme cases becomes so painful that the leadership team just decides, you know what, we'll try this again next year. So having the investment of your time. And the leadership's commitment and the AI change coalition's support and like evangelism in the ranks, the training process doesn't have to be difficult.

If you think about it unless you're training more technical roles, the tools that are being used, or the automation that are introduced are not that hard to use. The learning curve is pretty quick. However, not everybody learns in the same way at the same speed.

So investing in the upskilling team or upskilling plan is you're going to be glad you did it. Things will be a lot easier. The last thing that you want is to have some surprises from people who I've been covertly against the project and now they just don't want to participate. So those types of things make your role as the leader of the deployment.

Even if you're at a strategic level, they make the realization of that goal a lot. So trust me when I tell you about open communication and employee empowerment. Addressing their concerns and letting them know, hey, the training, this is what it's going to look like. It's pretty easy. We're going to be there to support you.

Those types of things are going to make it to where the users get on board. So the effort behind this particular focus within this module is not to alarm you or to scare you into thinking that it's going to be a lot harder than it appears at first pass. It's more to make sure that you don't make the mistakes that we've made.



So after hearing it, you may say, “Oh, well, that's common sense,” Perhaps, but without following a framework, it's easy to miss some of those steps. By missing some of those steps, you are potentially leaving somebody out or creating an adversary in the deployment. So the change management effort on your part is important.

And then, if you have clients, or if you're already a full-time employee at a company doing the leadership. We'll witness how well you've managed the change, and that is certainly not bad for your career or your billable fees. If you're a consultant, that's a mature approach to business. It's not as risky as it results in a much higher adoption internally of the tools as well as a higher success rate for the overall deployment.

So with that, I'm going to close the lesson and I'm going to remind you that we do have the live Q and As where you can ask specific questions about your cases. We've got the Slack community. You can always email us, of course and with any of your questions, we're here to support you and I'll see you in future modules.