



AI change management and adoption

Moving people from curiosity to dependable daily use through roles, habits, incentives and support.

WORKS WITH THE ASSISTANTS TEAMS ALREADY USE



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AT A GLANCE

Moving people from curiosity to dependable daily use through roles, habits, incentives and support.

Buying or building an AI tool is the easy part of an AI program. The hard part is getting people to use it well, every week, on real work. Adoption stalls for ordinary reasons: unclear purpose, no time to learn, managers who do not model the behavior, fear about jobs and quality, and tools that do not fit the work. This playbook covers why adoption stalls, the routines managers can run, how to use champions, role-based training, incentives, honest handling of worker concerns, the measures that show whether use is real and good, and the habits that keep it going after launch.

WHO IT IS FOR

Business unit leaders, people managers, HR and learning leaders, program managers and internal champions responsible for turning an AI rollout into everyday practice.

TIME TO USE

70 minutes to read; one planning session per team to apply

What you will have at the end

- A diagnosis of why adoption is stalling or likely to stall in your teams
- A manager routine that fits into existing meetings
- A champion network with clear roles and limits
- A role-based training plan built around real tasks
- Adoption and quality measures that distinguish real use from logins

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EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Adoption is a work design problem, not a communication problem

01



People adopt tools that make their own work easier and safer. They ignore tools that add steps, create risk or arrive with no time to learn them.

Many rollouts follow one pattern. Leadership announces the tool, a launch session is held, a few enthusiasts use it heavily, a larger group tries it once or twice and everyone else carries on as before. Six months later a dashboard shows licenses assigned but little change in how work is done. The usual response is more communication. The real causes are usually in the work itself: the tool does not appear at the moment of need, the task it supports is not part of anyone's goals, and nobody has time or permission to change how they work.

Treat adoption as the redesign of a small number of specific tasks. For each task, decide who does it, what the AI contributes, what the person still decides, how the output is checked and what good looks like. Then support the change with the same ingredients any change needs: a visible reason, a manager who backs it, practical skills, a way to get help and a feedback loop. Adoption is complete when the new way is simply how the work is done, not when the training is finished.

- Adoption is use on real work, repeated over time, with acceptable quality
- Logins and licenses measure access, not adoption
- Most of the effort belongs with managers and workflow, not with the launch event
- People need a reason that is specific to their job, not a general case for AI
- Quality and trust must rise together with use, or use will fall back

PLAIN TEST

Ask five people in a team what they used the tool for last week. If they cannot name a specific task and a specific result, adoption has not happened, whatever the dashboard says.



WORKING QUESTION

Which two or three tasks in your team would change first if the tool were genuinely part of the work?

WHY IT STALLS

Why adoption stalls: eight patterns to diagnose

02

Stalled adoption has recognizable causes. Naming the right one decides whether you need training, redesign, reassurance or a different tool.

Before designing any program, diagnose. Interview a handful of non-users and light users, and ask neutral questions: what did you try, what happened, what would make you use it more, what worries you. Look at the work, not just the attitudes. A person who says the tool is not useful may be right, because it may not support the tasks they do. Resist the instinct to label people as resistant before checking whether the tool, the data access or the process is the real obstacle.

PATTERN	WHAT YOU HEAR	LIKELY RESPONSE
No clear use case	I do not know what to use it for	Pick tasks per role; show worked examples from their own work
No time to learn	I am too busy this quarter	Protect time; remove or replace a task; schedule practice
Poor first results	I tried it and it was useless	Teach request design; supply starting prompts; fix access to context
Fear about jobs	Is this to cut headcount?	Honest statement of intent and scope; see the concerns section

PATTERN	WHAT YOU HEAR	LIKELY RESPONSE
Fear of errors	I will be blamed if it is wrong	Clear review rules; accountability stays with a defined owner; safe to report
Manager indifference	My boss never mentions it	Equip managers; add it to team routines and goals
Tool friction	It is outside my normal tools	Embed in existing systems; reduce steps
Unclear rules	Am I allowed to paste this?	Short, plain data and use guidance with examples

Often several patterns combine. A common cluster is unclear rules plus fear of errors: people do not know what data they may use and worry about consequences, so they avoid the tool or use personal accounts out of sight. That outcome is worse for the organization than a clear rule that allows careful use. Fix the rules first, because every other intervention depends on people feeling safe to try.

WORKING QUESTION

If you interviewed your five least active users this week, which of the eight patterns do you expect you would hear most?

MANAGERS

Make managers the engine:
routines that fit existing meetings

03

Managers decide what gets attention. A short, repeated routine from the direct manager does more than any launch campaign.

People watch what their manager asks about. If the manager never mentions the tool, never uses it and never asks how it went, the signal is clear. The fix is not a new meeting. It is a small, repeatable addition to meetings that already exist. Managers need three things: a personal understanding of what the tool does well, a few questions to ask, and permission to

let some work take longer while the team learns. Give them a one-page guide and a short session of their own before the team rollout.



01 Model it

The manager uses the tool on a real task and shares what worked and what did not, including mistakes. This makes testing normal and checking expected.

02 Ask weekly

Add a standing two-minute item to the team meeting: what did you try, what saved time, what went wrong, what should we all know.

03 Pick a team task

Choose one shared task per month to run with AI support and review together, such as drafting weekly updates or summarizing customer calls.

04 Remove a blocker

Each month, the manager removes one obstacle: access, a data question, a template, a rule that was unclear.

05 Recognize good practice

Name specific examples of careful, effective use in team forums, with attention to checking and judgment, not just speed.



Manager kit

- One-page summary of what the tool is for and not for in this function
- Three example tasks with sample requests and what good output looks like
- The review rule: what must be checked and by whom before output is used
- Plain data guidance with examples of allowed and not allowed inputs
- Where to send questions, defects and ideas
- A short script for answering questions about jobs honestly

COMMON MISTAKE

Asking managers to drive adoption without changing their own goals or workload. If their targets ignore it and their calendar is full, the routine will not survive the first busy month.



WORKING QUESTION

What is the smallest addition to an existing team meeting that would make AI use visible every week?



CHAMPIONS

Champions: a network for peer learning, with limits

04



Champions spread practice through trust and proximity. They need a clear role, protected time and a boundary around what they are asked to do.

A champion is a peer, not a manager or an IT specialist, who uses the tool well, enjoys helping others and is respected by colleagues. Their value is credibility and closeness: they answer questions at the desk, share examples that fit local work and report what is not working. Choose champions across functions and levels, including some skeptics who become convinced by evidence. Avoid appointing only the most enthusiastic technologists, who may not understand the daily pain of colleagues.



CHAMPION ROLE	DOES	DOES NOT
Practice sharer	Shows real examples in team meetings and a shared channel	Act as a help desk for every technical issue
First-line helper	Answers common questions; helps with request design	Give legal, security or policy rulings
Feedback carrier	Passes defects and ideas to the program owner	Hide problems to protect the rollout
Template builder	Maintains a small library of tested requests for the team	Publish unreviewed prompts to everyone
Peer reviewer	Helps colleagues check outputs in sensitive tasks	Take over accountability for the work



- Protect time for champions, for example a few hours a month written into their objectives
- Give them early access to new features and a direct line to the program owner
- Meet monthly to share what is working, what is failing and what is next
- Recognize the contribution in performance conversations, not only with thanks
- Rotate the role so it does not become a permanent unpaid second job
- Keep the network small enough to coordinate, often one per team or site

A champion network without time and recognition decays within a few months, because the work lands on the same few generous people. Treat it as a real, if modest, part of the program budget. Also check that champions are not creating a two-tier culture in which others feel the tool belongs to specialists. The aim is shared competence, with champions as accelerators and not as gatekeepers.

WORKING QUESTION

Who in your teams is already helping colleagues informally, and what would it take to give them time and standing?

TRAINING

Role-based training built around real tasks

05

General awareness sessions create interest. Skills come from practicing on the tasks a person does, with feedback, and returning to it over weeks.

Effective training is specific to roles. A finance analyst, a customer service agent and a recruiter need different examples, different checks and different rules about data. Start each session from a real task in the room: bring a recent email, report or request and work it through. Teach a small set of transferable skills: stating the task clearly, supplying context and examples, asking for structure, checking facts and sources, and iterating. Add the rules that matter for that role, such as which customer data may not be entered and which outputs need second review.

AUDIENCE	FOCUS	FORMAT
All staff	Safe use rules, what the tool is for, how to check output, where to get help	Short session plus one-page guide
Role groups	Three to five tasks from the role, with sample requests and review material	Hands-on workshop using real steps
Managers	Routines, reviewing AI-assisted work, handling concerns, setting expectations	Short briefing before team rollout, then monthly clinic
Champions	Coaching skills, advanced use, how to give feedback to the program	Monthly working group
High-risk roles	Stricter review, record-keeping, escalation rules	Assessed practice with sign-off

01 Learn

Short instruction on the skills and the rules, with two or three worked examples from the role.

02 Practice

Participants do a real task with the tool, in pairs, and compare results and checks.

03 Apply

Each person commits to one task to try in the next week and records what happened.

04 Review

Two weeks later, a brief session shares results, fixes problems and refines the templates.

05 Refresh

Quarterly short updates when the tool, the rules or the shared templates change.

COMMON MISTAKE

One large launch session and nothing after it. Skills fade without use. Spaced practice on real tasks, with a follow-up within two weeks, is more effective than a single long event.

WORKING QUESTION

For one role in your organization, can you list the five tasks you would train on, and the single most important check for each?

INCENTIVES AND CONCERNS

Incentives, resistance and worker concerns, handled honestly

06

People are not irrational to worry. Answer concerns with facts about intent and scope, and align goals so careful use is rewarded and not penalized.

Concerns about jobs, quality and surveillance are reasonable, and ignoring them pushes them underground. Be direct about what you know and do not know. If the program aims to avoid hiring or to reduce hours in some areas, say so in a way consistent with your actual plans. If no job reductions are planned, say that only if leadership is prepared to stand behind it for a defined period, and explain how freed time will be used. Do not promise that no roles will ever change; roles do change, and false reassurance destroys trust the first time it fails.

CONCERN	HONEST RESPONSE	SUPPORTING ACTION
Will this replace my job?	State current intent and scope; explain how freed time will be used	Publish the decision rules; involve staff in redesign
I will be blamed for AI errors	Accountability and review rules are defined and fair	Document who checks what; no-blame error reporting
My skills will be devalued	Judgment, context and relationships remain central	Offer development paths for new skills
Is my usage being monitored?	Explain what is logged, why and who sees it	Publish the policy; avoid individual league tables
The tool is not good enough	Often correct for some tasks; say so	Narrow the scope; collect and fix failures

CONCERN	HONEST RESPONSE	SUPPORTING ACTION
This is more work for me	Possibly true at first	Reduce other tasks; adjust targets during learning

Incentives should reward the behavior you want. If a team is measured on volume per day and the tool requires a review step, the target works against careful use. If individuals fear that saved time will simply bring more work, they have little reason to share their methods. Decide in advance how gains are shared: time for development, quality improvements, reduced overtime, or new work that people find more interesting. Avoid ranking individuals by tool usage; it encourages gaming and discourages honest reports of failure.

- Include adoption goals at team level, with quality measures beside them
- Avoid usage quotas that reward clicks instead of results
- Recognize people who catch errors and report limits of the tool
- Involve employee representatives or works councils where applicable, and check current legal requirements on consultation and monitoring
- Offer a route for concerns that is separate from the line manager
- Revisit commitments openly when plans change

WORKING QUESTION

What would you say, in two honest sentences, if a team member asked whether this tool puts their role at risk?

MEASURES

Measure adoption and quality together

07

Use a small set of measures that show whether use is real, repeated, good and valuable. Read them as a set, never one at a time.

Four questions organize measurement. Is the tool reachable and permitted? Is it used, by whom, on what? Is the output good? Is the work better as a result? Each needs a different type of evidence: access data, usage data, sampled quality review and process outcomes. Combine system data with short pulse surveys and conversations, because numbers alone do not explain why a team stopped. Set targets by team and task, and keep a baseline so you can see change.

MEASURE	WHAT IT SHOWS	CAUTION
Weekly active users	Reach beyond first trial	Counts a single question as use
Repeat use by task	Embedding in real workflows	Needs task tagging or sampling
Share of eligible tasks using AI support	Depth of adoption	Define eligible tasks first
Sampled output quality	Whether use is safe and good	Requires a rubric and reviewers
Rework or correction rate	Cost of poor outputs	Can be hidden if errors are not logged
Time per task against baseline	Efficiency effect	Beware self-reported estimates
Confidence and trust pulse	Sentiment and fear	Anonymous and repeated, not once
Questions and defects raised	Healthy feedback loop	A silent channel is a warning sign

READING THE SIGNALS

High usage with falling quality scores means people trust the tool too much. Low usage with high quality means a good tool is unreachable or unclear. Look for the combination before choosing a response.

**A simple adoption ladder**

- Aware: knows the tool exists and the rules
- Trying: has used it on a task or two
- Regular: uses it weekly on defined tasks
- Skilled: checks output well and adapts requests
- Contributing: shares templates and helps others

Place each team on the ladder using evidence from usage data and conversations, and plan one step at a time. The aim is not to push every person to the top rung. Some roles will stay at regular use of a few tasks, which may be exactly right. Review the picture monthly with managers and champions and use it to decide where to add training, change a workflow or fix the tool.

**WORKING QUESTION**

Which one measure would tell you soonest that use is rising but quality is slipping?



SUSTAINING

Sustaining habits and running the program

08

After launch, the work shifts from persuading to maintaining. Keep the loop of feedback, fixes and shared learning running.

Habits form around cues, easy actions and visible results. Build the cue into the workflow: a link in the system where the task happens, a template in the usual place, a standing agenda item. Make the easy action easy by keeping tested requests and examples close to hand. Show results by sharing specific wins and specific fixes, so people see that feedback leads to change. Assign an owner for the adoption program who has time, authority to coordinate across functions and a line of sight to leadership, otherwise the effort drifts when attention moves elsewhere.

01 Review monthly

Managers and champions look at the ladder, quality samples and open issues, and choose one improvement for the next month.

02 Maintain the library

A named person retires outdated templates, tests changes and publishes updates with a short note on what changed.

03 Update the rules

Data and use guidance is revisited when tools, laws or business needs change, and people are told promptly.

04 Onboard new joiners

Include the rules, the role tasks and a buddy in the first weeks, so new staff start from current practice.

05 Retire what is not working

Remove tools or use cases that do not deliver, and explain why. Pruning builds credibility.

Signs the habit is holding

- Managers raise AI use in routine meetings without being prompted

- Templates are being edited and improved by users, not just consumed
- Defects and ideas keep arriving and visibly lead to changes
- New joiners learn the practice from their team, not only from a course
- Quality samples remain steady or improve as volume rises
- Leaders can describe concrete work changes, not just tool numbers

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ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO (HYPOTHETICAL)

A support team launches an assistant for drafting replies. After a strong first month, use falls. Interviews show agents distrust drafts for refund cases. The team lead and a champion build a short checklist for those cases, retire two poor templates and review samples weekly. Use for refunds recovers, and agents contribute new templates.

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WORKING QUESTION

Who owns the adoption program six months from now, and what authority and time do they have?

PITFALLS

Common pitfalls and a 90-day shape

09



The same mistakes recur across organizations. Plan against them from the start.

- Treating licenses assigned as adoption achieved
- Launching to everyone at once instead of starting with willing teams and learning
- Giving managers no tools, time or goals for the change
- Training on generic examples instead of real tasks from the role
- Promising no job impact without the commitment to back it



- Ranking individuals by usage, which rewards gaming and silence
- Ignoring early defects, so the first skeptics are proved right
- Letting the program lapse after launch when the project team moves on



PHASE	FOCUS	OUTPUT
Days 1 to 30	Diagnose, set rules, pick pilot teams and tasks, brief managers	Baseline, guidance, manager kit, champion list
Days 31 to 60	Role-based training, weekly team routine, fast fixes	Trained pilot teams, template library v1, first quality samples
Days 61 to 90	Measure, adjust, extend to next teams, hand over to owner	Adoption ladder view, lessons, plan for next wave

Roll out in waves. Start with teams that have a clear task, a supportive manager and some interest, and learn from them before expanding. Their experience produces the examples, templates and honest stories that persuade others far better than central messaging. Expect the second wave to be harder than the first, because it includes people who are less interested and tasks that are less obvious. Budget more support for it, and adjust the program rather than blaming the people.



WORKING QUESTION

Which team would make the best first wave, and what would they teach the second?



30 / 60 / 90

A first quarter that produces evidence

10



Start with a few teams and real tasks, equip their managers, learn quickly and widen only on evidence.

First 30 days: ground it

- Interview non-users and light users to diagnose the stall patterns
- Publish plain guidance on permitted data and use, with examples
- Choose pilot teams, tasks and a baseline for time and quality
- Brief managers and give them the one-page kit



Days 31 to 60: test it

- Run role-based workshops on real tasks and a two-week follow-up
- Add the weekly two-minute team routine and start the champion group
- Build the first template library with named owners
- Sample output quality and log defects with visible fixes



Days 61 to 90: decide

- Review the adoption ladder, quality and time against baseline per team
- Address the top three blockers and retire what is not working
- Hand the program to a named owner with time and authority
- Plan the second wave using lessons and stories from the first



GLOSSARY

Terms used in this publication

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TERM	MEANING
Adoption	Repeated use of a tool on real work, at acceptable quality, as part of how the work is normally done.
Champion	A peer who uses the tool well and helps colleagues, with protected time and a clear role.
Change management	The planned work of helping people move to a new way of working.
Adoption ladder	A staged view of use from aware, to trying, regular, skilled and contributing.
Role-based training	Practice on the specific tasks, rules and checks of a given job.
Manager routine	A short, repeated team practice such as a standing agenda item that keeps a change visible.
Template library	A maintained set of tested requests and examples for common tasks.
Review rule	The defined check that must happen, and by whom, before AI-assisted output is used.
Pulse survey	A very short, repeated survey that tracks sentiment over time.
Quality sampling	Reviewing a small random set of outputs against a rubric to estimate overall quality.
Shadow use	Use of unapproved tools or personal accounts, often caused by unclear rules or poor access.
Wave rollout	Introducing a change to groups in sequence, learning from each before the next.

A note on use

This publication is a public orientation resource, not legal, technical, financial or professional advice. Adapt it to your people, information, workflows and obligations, and check current tool terms, regulations and risks before acting.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Take the free Halden assessment at halden.company/assessments, or talk to us at halden.company/contact about turning this into a plan for your organization.

