

Change Management

Toss away your doubts and misconceptions regarding change management and cloud projects. It is absolutely a requirement for moving from any on-premises environment to a cloud solution. Almost by definition, going from on-premises solutions to cloud environments, delivers change across multiple facets of every part of an enterprise.

Likewise, this change is never simply isolated to only one part of an enterprise. Cloud projects require change management across all organizational venues including IT teams, business operations and executive suites. Often including customers and suppliers together with employees, the net is cast wide, especially when cloud projects engage broadly across an enterprise.

For success, change management needs to incorporate the traditional pillars of any modern project: people, processes, and technologies. For any on-premises to cloud move, it is easy to focus on technology. People and processes often get left behind as the new technology is promoted.

The bottom line is that the move from on-premises systems to cloud solutions often happens quickly. Alignment of an existing user community—with extensive enterprise knowledge and employment history—is important for success. **ALIGN** becomes a great acronym to match past experiences with future technologies.

Announce—When a new cloud project starts, it is best to engage everyone before kick-off. Start by letting everyone who will be impacted at go-live know why the cloud project is moving forward. This simple step will broaden awareness, reduce rumors and set the stage for everyone impacted by the cloud to positively support its success.

Learn—Identify in short presentations the changes in roles and processes people will encounter. Assemble short briefs on how the cloud will improve their daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly activities.

Involve—Assemble core users, department heads and other company leaders through regular updates involving project schedules and goals. Consider collaborative briefings covering cloud capabilities with demonstrations and social constructs.

Go-live—With data moved, modern best practices in place, and initial go-live complete, take a break to celebrate. Go beyond the project team, if possible, and bring in key users and company leaders to highlight your successful go-live.

Next steps—There is a big difference between traditional on-premises systems and cloud solutions. The cloud is incredibly dynamic and flexible. After go-live, users left behind will begin to clamor for their turn, which positions a new on-ramp for your next cloud project.