

Change Management: Get Your Team to Adopt New Tools

April 21, 2026 | Communication + Change

Tailor change messages, activate early adopters, and prepare responses to resistance.

April 21, 2026

With Cheryl Thompson

Who it is for

Leaders introducing new tools or ways of working

Inside this playbook

14 copyable prompts and practice blocks.

[Open the online playbook](#)

The recorded session

Watch the Learning Lab.

Follow the session, then use the playbook with your own work.

[Watch replay on Vimeo](#) ↗ ^[1]

What to take into your work

1. Adapt the change message to the people affected.
2. Find and support early adopters.
3. Prepare for resistance with specific responses and practical support.

Use the learning

Your playbook

Choose a prompt, replace the bracketed inputs, and work through it in your approved AI tool. Review the result and adapt it to your situation.

This playbook accompanies the April 21, 2026 session. Tool names and setup steps reflect that session; available features may differ in your account.

Welcome to Your AI Toolkit

You rolled out the new tool. You sent the training invite. You even did a lunch-and-learn. And six weeks later, half your team is still using the old spreadsheet. The problem isn't the tool. It's how the change was introduced. This playbook gives you three AI prompts that make change adoption practical: build tailored messages for different audiences, identify and activate your early adopters, and address resistance before it becomes rebellion.

- You don't need to use everything at once. Start with the one prompt that solves your most immediate problem.
- These prompts work across platforms: Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, or your company's internal AI tool.
- Each prompt includes a main version (for licensed tools with full context windows) and an alternate version (for free Copilot or tools with limited input).

How to Use This Playbook

- **Start with Prompt #1.** Describe the change and your audience, and let AI build tailored messages that answer the only question people care about: "What does this mean for ME?"
- **Find your champions.** Use Prompt #2 to identify early adopters, equip them to be advocates, and create a peer-driven adoption plan.
- **Handle the resistance.** Use Prompt #3 to anticipate objections, prepare responses, and address fears without dismissing them.
- **Give AI context before asking for help.** The more specific you are about the change, the affected groups, and the organizational culture, the better the output.
- **Review and refine.** AI drafts the communication and strategy. You know the politics, the personalities, and the history.

The Change Adoption Curve

Every change goes through the same adoption pattern. Your job is to accelerate it.

Group	% of Team	What They Need	Your Strategy
Enthusiasts	~10%	Early access, permission to experiment, visibility	Give them the tool first. Let them break it, learn it, and become your advocates.

Group	% of Team	What They Need	Your Strategy
Open but Cautious	~30%	Proof it works, peer examples, clear instructions	Show them the Enthusiasts' results. Make it easy. Remove friction.
Wait and See	~35%	Social proof, no risk, clear WIIFM ("What's In It For Me")	Don't push. Let peer adoption pull them in. Make the old way harder than the new way.
Resistant	~20%	Understanding their fear, patience, sometimes a direct conversation	Listen first. Address the real concern (usually fear of looking incompetent, not the tool itself).
Blockers	~5%	A private conversation about expectations	Don't let 5% hold back 95%. Address directly, respectfully, and with clear consequences.

Key Insight: You don't need 100% adoption on day one. You need 10% enthusiasts who make the new tool look so good that the next 30% want in. Adoption is a social phenomenon, not a training problem. **The WIIFM Principle**

- People don't adopt tools. They adopt **benefits**.
- Stop saying: "We're switching to [tool]." Start saying: "This will save you 2 hours a week on [specific task]."
- Every communication about a change must answer: **"What's In It For Me?"** If you can't answer that for each audience, you're not ready to launch.

The AI Efficiency Ladder

Know where you are. Know where you're going.

Level	What It Looks Like	Time / Task
1. On-the-Fly Prompting	Opening an AI chat, typing a question, getting an answer. Starting from scratch every time.	5–10 minutes, inconsistent

Level	What It Looks Like	Time / Task
2. Repeatable Prompts	Saved templates you fill in. Same quality every time because same structure.	2–3 minutes, consistent
3. Custom AI Projects	AI pre-loaded with your context - your role, industry, frameworks. Works like a team member.	1–2 minutes, personalized
4. Automation & Agents	AI connected to your systems, triggered automatically. Runs without you.	0 minutes, scales

Your goal: Move from Level 1 to Level 2. The prompts in this playbook get you there.

The Prompt Structure

Every strategic prompt has four parts:

Part	Purpose	Example
ROLE	Who should AI pretend to be?	"You are a change management strategist for the automotive industry..."
CONTEXT	What does AI need to know about you?	"We're rolling out a new tool (Q-DAS, Copilot, Workday, a scheduling system, or a new way of working) and adoption is stalling..."
REQUEST	What specifically do you want?	"Create audience-specific change messages for technicians, advisors, and managers..."
QUESTION	Invite the AI to get as much information from you as possible.	"Please ask me any clarifying questions."

Key Prompts from This Lab

This lab teaches three prompts that work as a sequence - Message, Mobilize, Address.

Prompt #1: The Change Communication Builder

What it's for: Creating tailored change messages for different audiences - each answering "What's In It For Me?" in language that resonates with that specific group. **When to use it:** Before announcing any change. When you need the same message to land differently for executives, managers, and frontline staff.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

Use for comprehensive, audience-tailored change communication.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

PROMPT TO COPY

ROLE

You are a change management communications strategist for the automotive industry. You build messages that drive adoption by focusing on what each audience cares about - not what leadership wants to announce. You understand that people don't resist change. They resist being changed without understanding why.

STOP. BEFORE YOU GENERATE ANY OUTPUT

Do NOT produce any messages, launch sequence, FAQ, or toolkit until I have answered the questions below. Ask me ALL of the questions at once in a single numbered list, then wait. Do not answer them yourself. Do not start drafting while you wait.

When I respond, accept my answers even if I write them as a paragraph, answer out of order, or cover multiple questions at once. Do NOT re-ask the full list. If ONE specific detail is genuinely missing and you truly need it, ask ONE short follow-up about only that gap. Otherwise, proceed directly to the REQUEST output below using what I've given you.

Ask me:

1. What's the change? (tool, process, system, or policy)
2. Who's affected? (list the specific groups by role, shift, or location)
3. What's the timeline? (when does the change begin and when is full adoption expected)
4. What's the biggest concern or fear you're hearing from the field?
5. Has anything been communicated already? What was the reaction?

Only after I've answered all five should you generate the REQUEST output below.

CONTEXT

I am leading (or supporting) a change initiative. I need to communicate this change to multiple audiences in a way that drives adoption, not just awareness.

REQUEST

Based on the change I describe, create:

1. AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC MESSAGES

PROMPT TO COPY

For each group I identify, create a message that answers:

- What's changing? (one sentence)
- Why? (in terms THEY care about, not corporate reasons)
- What does this mean for ME? (specific impact on their daily work)
- What do I need to DO? (clear, specific first action)
- What support is available? (training, help desk, champion)

Create versions for:

- Senior leadership (strategic framing)
- Middle managers/supervisors (their role in driving adoption)
- Frontline employees (practical impact on daily work)
- Support functions (IT, HR, training - what they need to prepare)

2. LAUNCH SEQUENCE

| Week | Audience | Message | Channel | Owner |

- Who hears first, second, third
- What channels to use for each audience
- When to shift from announcement to reinforcement

3. FAQ DOCUMENT

The 10 most likely questions people will ask, with honest, direct answers. Include:

- Questions about job impact
- Questions about the transition timeline
- "Why can't we just keep doing it the old way?"
- "What happens if I don't use the new system?"

4. MANAGER TOOLKIT

Give managers/supervisors:

- A 3-minute script to use with their teams
- Anticipated pushback and how to respond
- How to position themselves as supporters, not enforcers

FORMAT

- Each message under 200 words
- Conversational tone - not corporate memo language
- WIIFM (What's In It For Me) must be in the first two sentences for every audience

QUESTION

Ask me:

1. What's the change? (tool, process, system, policy)
2. Who's affected? (list the specific groups)
3. What's the timeline?
4. What's the biggest concern or fear you're hearing?
5. Has anything been communicated already? What was the reaction?

Alternate Version (Copilot Free / Limited Context)

PROMPT TO COPY

Before you generate anything, check the bracketed fields below. If ANY are empty, vague, or still show placeholder text, STOP and ask me to fill them in first. Wait for my answers. Do not produce any messages until every field has real content.

We're implementing this change: [DESCRIBE THE CHANGE]

Timeline: [WHEN]

Groups affected: [LIST]

Biggest concern I'm hearing: [DESCRIBE]

Create audience-specific messages for each group. Each message must:

1. State what's changing (one sentence)
2. Explain why in terms THEY care about
3. Answer "What does this mean for me?" specifically
4. Give one clear action they need to take
5. Tell them where to get help

Also create:

- A 10-question FAQ with honest answers
- A 3-minute script for managers to use with their teams

Keep each message under 200 words. Conversational, not corporate.

Example

"We're rolling out Q-DAS statistical process control software across 8 gauging stations at a Tier 1 supplier plant. 45 operators affected, most with 15+ years of experience. Q-DAS replaces manual measurement recording - operators enter dimensional data at each station, Q-DAS runs real-time SPC charts, flags out-of-control conditions, and exports to quality reports automatically. Training was done two months ago. Licenses are active. Six weeks after go-live:

- 30% of operators (about 15 people) use Q-DAS consistently. They like the real-time feedback and say it saves them time at end of shift.
- 40% trained on it but reverted to paper. They say 'it takes me longer to type than to write, and the clerk enters everything anyway.'
- 25% actively resistant. The loudest objection: 'A computer can't tell me what a good part looks like. I've been doing this for 25 years.'
- 5% won't touch it. They claim the interface is broken on their station even after IT has verified it's working. What I need: targeted messages for each group, an FAQ that answers the real questions (not the corporate ones), and a supervisor toolkit so my line leads can have 3-minute huddle conversations without reading a script."

Prompt #2: The Early Adopter Activation Plan

What it's for: Identifying potential champions, equipping them to be advocates, and creating a peer-driven adoption strategy that doesn't rely on top-down mandates. **When to use it:** Before launch, to build your champion network. When you realize that training alone doesn't drive adoption - peer influence does.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

Use to build a champion-driven adoption strategy.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

PROMPT TO COPY

ROLE

You are an adoption strategist who drives change through peer influence, not mandates. You know that the fastest path to adoption is activating early adopters who make the change look so beneficial that others want in. You've seen this work in automotive plants, dealerships, and corporate offices.

STOP. BEFORE YOU GENERATE ANY OUTPUT

Do NOT produce any part of the Early Adopter Activation Plan until I have answered the questions below. Ask me ALL of the questions at once in a single numbered list, then wait. Do not answer them yourself. Do not start drafting while you wait.

When I respond, accept my answers even if I write them as a paragraph, answer out of order, or cover multiple questions at once. Do NOT re-ask the full list. If ONE specific detail is genuinely missing and you truly need it, ask ONE short follow-up about only that gap. Otherwise, proceed directly to the REQUEST output below using what I've given you.

Ask me:

1. What's the change and what tool or process is involved?
2. How big is the team, and what's the mix? (roles, tenure, shifts, functions)
3. Where is adoption today? (rough percentage, which groups are in or out, what's stuck)
4. Who do you suspect might be natural champions, and why? (descriptions, not names)
5. What does recognition look like in this organization? (public, private, monetary, status, peer-nominated)

Only after I've answered all five should you generate the REQUEST output below.

CONTEXT

I'm rolling out a change and I want to create a champion network - early adopters who learn the tool first, demonstrate its value, and help their peers get on board.

REQUEST

Help me build an Early Adopter Activation Plan:

PROMPT TO COPY**1. CHAMPION IDENTIFICATION**

Based on my team description, identify the characteristics of ideal champions:

- Traits to look for (not just enthusiasm - credibility, influence, willingness to help others)
- Where to find them (departments, roles, personality types)
- How many champions per [X] employees
- Red flags: who seems enthusiastic but won't actually help others

2. CHAMPION TOOLKIT

Give each champion:

- A one-page "Why this matters" brief they can share casually
- 3 conversation starters to use with skeptical peers
- A simple feedback form to report what's working and what's not
- Recognition: how to publicly credit their contribution

3. 30-DAY CHAMPION PROGRAM

| Week | Champion Activity | Leader Support | Success Metric |

- Week 1: Learn the tool (focused training, not the generic session)
- Week 2: Use it in their real work, document quick wins
- Week 3: Show one peer, help them get started
- Week 4: Report results, adjust approach

4. PEER ADOPTION TRIGGERS

5 tactics to make adoption spread organically:

- Make success visible ("Maria saved 2 hours this week using...")
- Make the old way harder (not punitive - just less convenient)
- Create FOMO (share wins in team channels)
- Lower the barrier (pre-configured templates, saved prompts)
- Celebrate early wins loudly

Alternate Version (Copilot Free / Limited Context)**PROMPT TO COPY**

Before you generate anything, check the bracketed fields below. If ANY are empty, vague, or still show placeholder text, STOP and ask me to fill them in first. Wait for my answers. Do not produce the champion plan until every field has real content.

I'm rolling out [CHANGE] to [TEAM SIZE] people in [ENVIRONMENT].

Help me build a champion network:

1. What traits should I look for in early adopters? (beyond enthusiasm)
2. Create a one-page toolkit for champions (why this matters, 3 conversation starters for skeptics, feedback form)
3. Build a 4-week champion program (learn, use, show a peer, report results)

PROMPT TO COPY

4. Give me 5 tactics to make adoption spread organically without mandates

Be practical. This is automotive - people are busy and skeptical.

Example

"I'm the plant manager at a 180-person prototype and low-volume production facility. We just rolled out a new digital scheduling system that replaces whiteboards and verbal shift handoffs. The system lets us sequence jobs, track setup and changeover time, and coordinate across stamping, weld, assembly, and paint. Three weeks in: about 20 operators (mostly under 40) are using it well. Another 50 have logged in but revert to asking the lead directly - 'just tell me what's next, I'm not looking at that thing every hour.' My most experienced setup guys (15-30 year veterans) won't use it. They schedule their own work based on experience and walk over to tell the next shift what's running. My challenge: I can't identify champions just by who's loudest. The natural enthusiasts are mostly younger and don't have peer credibility with the veterans. I need an activation plan that finds champions the veterans will actually listen to, and gives those champions a reason to demonstrate the system rather than just obey it. I also need to account for the first-two-weeks dip - the new system is slower for an experienced operator during the learning curve, and that's exactly when my veterans bail out."

Prompt #3: The Resistance Response Playbook

What it's for: Anticipating resistance to change, understanding the real fears behind objections, and preparing responses that address concerns without dismissing them. **When to use it:** Before launch, to prepare for pushback. When adoption stalls and you need to understand why. When someone says "This is stupid" and you need to not say what you're thinking.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

Use to build a comprehensive resistance response strategy.

Main Version (Licensed Copilot / ChatGPT / Gemini)

PROMPT TO COPY

ROLE

You are a change resistance specialist for the automotive industry. You help leaders understand that resistance isn't the enemy - it's data. Every objection tells you something about what people need to feel safe. You turn resistance into insight and insight into adoption strategy.

PROMPT TO COPY**STOP. BEFORE YOU GENERATE ANY OUTPUT**

Do NOT produce the resistance map, fear analysis, conversation guides, or escalation framework until I have answered the questions below. Ask me ALL of the questions at once in a single numbered list, then wait. Do not answer them yourself. Do not start drafting while you wait.

When I respond, accept my answers even if I write them as a paragraph, answer out of order, or cover multiple questions at once. Do NOT re-ask the full list. If ONE specific detail is genuinely missing and you truly need it, ask ONE short follow-up about only that gap. Otherwise, proceed directly to the REQUEST output below using what I've given you.

Ask me:

1. What's the change? (tool, process, or way of working)
2. What resistance are you seeing or expecting? (specific objections, behaviors, or patterns)
3. Who are the most resistant people? (by role and tenure, not by name)
4. What's driving the resistance? (your best guess, even if uncertain)
5. What have you already tried that didn't work?

Only after I've answered all five should you generate the REQUEST output below.

CONTEXT

I'm implementing a change and I'm encountering (or anticipating) resistance. I want to understand the real concerns behind the pushback and prepare thoughtful, effective responses.

REQUEST

Based on the change and resistance I describe, create:

1. RESISTANCE MAP

| Objection (What They Say) | Real Concern (What They Mean) | Response Strategy | Script |

- Map the 8–10 most common objections
- For each: decode the real fear behind the words
- Provide a response that acknowledges, addresses, and redirects

2. THE FEAR UNDERNEATH

Most resistance comes from 5 fears:

- Fear of incompetence ("I'll look stupid")
- Fear of extra work ("This is more on my plate")
- Fear of irrelevance ("Am I being replaced?")
- Fear of loss of control ("Someone decided this without asking me")
- Fear of failure ("What if it doesn't work and I'm blamed?")

For MY change, identify which fears are most likely and how to address each.

3. CONVERSATION GUIDES

PROMPT TO COPY

For each type of resistant person, provide:

- How to open the conversation (curious, not confrontational)
- What to listen for
- What to say
- What NOT to say
- How to end the conversation with a specific next step

4. WHEN TO ESCALATE

The difference between healthy resistance (feedback that improves the rollout) and toxic resistance (actively undermining the change). How to handle each.

TONE

- Empathetic but firm. Resistance deserves respect, not unlimited patience.
- Never dismissive. "People resist change" is lazy - figure out WHAT they're resisting and WHY.

Alternate Version (Copilot Free / Limited Context)**PROMPT TO COPY**

Before you generate anything, check the bracketed fields below. If ANY are empty, vague, or still show placeholder text, STOP and ask me to fill them in first. Wait for my answers. Do not produce the resistance playbook until every field has real content.

I'm implementing [CHANGE] and facing resistance.

Resistance I'm seeing: [DESCRIBE]

Most resistant group: [ROLE TYPE]

What I've tried: [DESCRIBE]

Help me:

1. Map the 8-10 most likely objections, decode the real fear behind each, and give me a response script
2. Tell me which of these fears is driving the resistance: incompetence, extra work, irrelevance, loss of control, or failure
3. Give me conversation guides for resistant people (how to open, what to listen for, what to say, what NOT to say)
4. Tell me when resistance is healthy feedback vs. when it needs to be addressed directly

Be empathetic but practical. This is automotive - I need solutions, not theory.

Example

"We gave Microsoft Copilot licenses to our 120-person corporate team - engineering, finance, HR, program management, quality. Six months later: about 25% use it regularly, 30% tried it and abandoned it, and 45% have barely opened it. Common objections I'm hearing:

- 'I don't trust it - I asked it to summarize a supplier contract and it missed a key clause.'
- 'I don't have time to learn another tool.'
- 'This is for technical people. I do people work.'
- 'I use ChatGPT on my phone sometimes but I don't want IT to see it.'
- 'Leadership says to use it but I don't see them using it.'
- 'I tried it once, it made a mistake, and I'd rather just do it myself.' Most resistant: senior program managers (15+ years tenure) and HR team members who deal with confidential information. What I've tried: training sessions (half attend, most don't apply it after), email from the CIO (no change), internal 'use cases' doc (nobody reads it). I want to decode what's really going on under each objection and prepare conversation guides I can use in one-on-ones. I also want to know when I'm dealing with healthy skepticism vs. when it's time for a harder conversation."

Prompt #4: The Change Readiness Assessment

What it's for: Evaluating whether your organization is ready for a specific change - before you launch it. Identifies gaps in sponsorship, communication, training, and infrastructure. **When to use it:** Before committing to a launch date. When you suspect the organization isn't ready but can't articulate why.

Main Version

PROMPT TO COPY

ROLE

You are a change readiness assessor for automotive organizations. You evaluate whether an organization is truly ready for a change by examining sponsorship, communication, training, infrastructure, and culture.

STOP. BEFORE YOU GENERATE ANY OUTPUT

Do NOT produce a readiness scorecard, recommendation, or checklist until I have answered the questions below. Ask me ALL of the questions at once in a single numbered list, then wait. Do not answer them yourself. Do not start drafting while you wait.

When I respond, accept my answers even if I write them as a paragraph, answer out of order, or cover multiple questions at once. Do NOT re-ask the full list. If ONE specific detail

PROMPT TO COPY

is genuinely missing and you truly need it, ask ONE short follow-up about only that gap. Otherwise, proceed directly to the REQUEST output below using what I've given you.

Ask me:

1. What's the change, and who's affected?
2. Sponsor: Is there a visible, active executive sponsor? What have they actually done so far?
3. Communication: What's been communicated, and what was the reaction?
4. Training: What's the training plan? Who is delivering it and how?
5. Infrastructure: Is the technical or operational setup ready? What still needs to land?
6. Culture: How does this organization usually handle change? (resist quietly, openly debate, comply and grumble)
7. Champions: Have you identified early adopters or a pilot group?
8. Feedback: How will concerns get surfaced and responded to after launch?

Only after I've answered all eight should you generate the REQUEST output below.

CONTEXT

I'm planning to launch a change and I want to assess our readiness before committing to a date.

REQUEST

Based on what I tell you, score our readiness across these dimensions:

1. READINESS SCORECARD

- | Dimension | Score (1-5) | Status | Gap | Action to Close |
|---|-------------|--------|-----|-----------------|
| - Executive Sponsorship: Is there a visible, active sponsor? | | | | |
| - Communication: Do people know what's coming and why? | | | | |
| - Training: Are people equipped to use the new tool/process? | | | | |
| - Infrastructure: Is the technical setup ready? | | | | |
| - Culture: Does the organization's culture support this kind of change? | | | | |
| - Champions: Are early adopters identified and activated? | | | | |
| - Feedback Loops: Is there a way to hear and respond to concerns? | | | | |

2. GO / ADJUST / DELAY RECOMMENDATION

Based on the scores, recommend whether to launch, adjust the plan, or delay.

3. PRE-LAUNCH CHECKLIST

Everything that must be true before go-live, in priority order.

Alternate Version (Copilot Free)

PROMPT TO COPY

Before you generate anything, check the bracketed fields below. If ANY are empty, vague, or still show placeholder text, STOP and ask me to fill them in first. Wait for my answers. Do not produce the readiness scorecard until every field has real content.

I'm about to launch [CHANGE]. Help me assess readiness.

Here's what I know:

- Sponsor: [DESCRIBE]
- Communication so far: [DESCRIBE]
- Training plan: [DESCRIBE]
- Technical readiness: [DESCRIBE]
- Team sentiment: [DESCRIBE]

Score each dimension 1-5 and tell me: Go, Adjust, or Delay? Give me a pre-launch checklist of what must be true before go-live.

Example

"I'm the VP of HR at a 600-person automotive supplier. We're preparing to launch inclusion practice training for all middle managers - about 55 people. This isn't an annual DEI compliance training. It's an ongoing practice: how they run meetings, how they give feedback, how they make hiring and promotion decisions, how they respond when someone raises a concern. What I know:

- Sponsor: Our CEO is publicly supportive but hasn't committed time beyond an opening video.
- Communication so far: One all-staff email. Initial reaction was mixed - about a third engaged, a third silent, and a third grumbled in Slack.
- Training plan: 4 two-hour sessions over 8 weeks. Facilitator-led. Small groups by function.
- Technical readiness: No tooling involved - this is entirely behavioral.
- Team sentiment: The managers I've talked to range from 'this is overdue' to 'this is going to be a waste of time' to 'I support the intent but I don't know what you actually want me to do differently on Monday.' I'm worried we'll launch, people will attend, and nothing will actually change in how they manage. This isn't a tool rollout - it's a behavior rollout. Score my readiness, tell me what to shore up before we launch, and give me a pre-launch checklist."

Prompt #5: The 90-Day Adoption Tracker

What it's for: Building a structured 90-day plan to track and sustain adoption after launch - because the real work starts after the rollout, not before. **When to use it:** Starting on launch day. When you know from experience that excitement fades and old habits return.

Main Version

PROMPT TO COPY

ROLE

You are an adoption sustainability specialist. You know that launch day is the beginning, not the end. You build 90-day plans that prevent the post-launch dip - the moment when enthusiasm fades and people quietly go back to the old way.

STOP. BEFORE YOU GENERATE ANY OUTPUT

Do NOT produce the 90-day plan, metrics, or backsliding framework until I have answered the questions below. Ask me ALL of the questions at once in a single numbered list, then wait. Do not answer them yourself. Do not start drafting while you wait.

When I respond, accept my answers even if I write them as a paragraph, answer out of order, or cover multiple questions at once. Do NOT re-ask the full list. If ONE specific detail is genuinely missing and you truly need it, ask ONE short follow-up about only that gap. Otherwise, proceed directly to the REQUEST output below using what I've given you.

Ask me:

1. What's the change, and when was (or will be) launch day?
2. What does adoption look like today? (percentages, active users, which groups are in or out)
3. What would "successful adoption" mean 90 days from now, in concrete terms?
4. What concerns you most about sustainability? (backsliding, workarounds, specific holdouts)
5. What data can you actually pull? (usage logs, survey results, manager check-ins, or nothing yet)

Only after I've answered all five should you generate the REQUEST output below.

CONTEXT

I've launched (or am about to launch) a change. I need a 90-day plan to track adoption, sustain momentum, and catch backsliding early.

REQUEST

Create a 90-Day Adoption Plan:

1. PHASE 1: LAUNCH + STABILIZE (Days 1–30)
 - Communication cadence
 - Quick wins to celebrate
 - Common problems and rapid response plan

PROMPT TO COPY

- Daily/weekly check-in with champions
- 2. PHASE 2: DEEPEN (Days 31–60)
 - Advanced training for power users
 - Peer coaching pairs
 - Feedback collection and visible response
 - Address lingering resistance
- 3. PHASE 3: SUSTAIN (Days 61–90)
 - Measure actual adoption vs. target
 - Success stories and case studies
 - Process optimization based on feedback
 - Transition from "change" to "how we work"
- 4. ADOPTION METRICS
 - | Metric | How to Measure | Target | Current |
 - Usage metrics, satisfaction scores, time savings, error reduction
- 5. BACKSLIDING DETECTOR
 - Warning signs that adoption is declining and intervention strategies for each.

Alternate Version (Copilot Free)**PROMPT TO COPY**

Before you generate anything, check the bracketed fields below. If ANY are empty, vague, or still show placeholder text, STOP and ask me to fill them in first. Wait for my answers. Do not produce the 90-day plan until every field has real content.

I've launched [CHANGE]. Current adoption is [ESTIMATE].

Create a 90-day plan:

1. Days 1-30: Stabilize (what to communicate, quick wins to celebrate, problems to watch for)
2. Days 31-60: Deepen (advanced training, peer coaching, feedback response)
3. Days 61-90: Sustain (measure adoption, share success stories, transition to "how we work")
4. Metrics to track (what to measure, targets)
5. Warning signs that adoption is declining and what to do about each

Example

"We launched a new CRM to our 40-person sales team 60 days ago. Go-live was October 1. Current state:

- Active users (logged in this week): 32 of 40
- Consistent users (logged activity every day): 18 of 40
- Power users (full pipeline tracking, automated follow-ups): 8 of 40
- Zero activity since Week 2: 5 of 40 Segment data:
- Sales reps under 5 years tenure: 90% active, 60% consistent
- Sales reps 5–15 years tenure: 75% active, 40% consistent
- Sales reps 15+ years tenure: 50% active, 20% consistent. Two of the five 'zero activity' reps are in this group.
- Our highest revenue producer refuses to enter opportunities. Says he 'keeps everything in his head and his phone.' What's working: sales managers love the pipeline dashboards. Marketing is getting real lead data for the first time. Customer records are more complete. What's not: sales activity logging is inconsistent. Forecasting is skewed because the top producer won't enter deals until they close. Two junior reps told their manager privately they're burnt out on data entry. I'm worried about backsliding - the 40% who are 'active but not consistent' will probably drift off if I don't intervene. I need a 90-day plan from Day 60 to Day 150 that deepens adoption, catches the drift, and handles the high-revenue holdouts without creating conflict."

Ultimate Meal Prep x Shopping List from Recipes

Streamlining grocery shopping and meal prep for multiple recipes, optimizing ingredient usage, reducing food waste and costs, and organizing shopping by store layout.

Ultimate Meal Prep x Shopping List from Recipes

PROMPT TO COPY

 Prompt

ROLE: You are Melissa Clark, award-winning New York Times food writer and cookbook author, known for practical home cooking solutions and smart kitchen organization.

CONTEXT: I need to create a shopping list for [NUMBER] recipes: [PASTE RECIPES OR UPLOAD].

I shop primarily at [STORE NAME] and need a consolidated, organized approach to buying ingredients.

My cooking skill level is [SKILL LEVEL] and I have [BASIC/WELL-STOCKED] pantry staples.

Any dietary restrictions: [RESTRICTIONS].

PROMPT TO COPY

REQUEST: Create a comprehensive shopping and prep guide that includes:

- Consolidated grocery list organized by store department
- Total quantities needed for each ingredient
- Cross-reference of which ingredients are used in which recipes
- Common substitutions for hard-to-find items
- Notes on which items can be prepped in advance

QUESTION: Please ask any clarifying questions

Meal Planning Prompt

Personalized 7-day meal plan and grocery list based on dietary requirements, protein goals, and shopping preferences.

Meal Planning Prompt**PROMPT TO COPY**

****Role:** Meal Prepping Expert.

****Objective:**

Craft a personalized 7-day meal plan and grocery list that aligns with my dietary requirements, daily protein goals, and preferred grocery shopping locations.

You must simplify healthy eating by planning meals that meet specific dietary needs and organizing shopping in a way that saves time and effort.

VERY IMPORTANT: Use leftovers from dinner for lunch the next day. And use ingredients from the day before for the next few days to really save on money and trips to grocery stores.

I MUST REACH MY PROTEIN GOALS NO MATTER WHAT

- Feel free to add protein bars, beef sticks, hard-boiled eggs as snacks (or others!!) to reach my goals

INPUTS

1. ****Diet Type****:

"What specific diet are you following? (e.g., Keto, Vegan, Paleo, Gluten-Free)"

2. ****Protein Goals****:

"How many grams of protein would you like to consume each day?"

PROMPT TO COPY3. ****Shopping Preferences****:

"Where do you typically shop for groceries? (e.g., Walmart, Trader Joe's, local farmers' market)"

4. ****Additional Preferences or Restrictions****:

"Do you have any food allergies, budget constraints, or other dietary considerations I should be aware of?"

****Plan Generation:**** Craft a meal plan tailored to my diet type and protein needs, accompanied by a comprehensive grocery list organized by your shopping preferences. Please include whey protein smoothies.
INCLUDE MACROS FOR EACH MEAL!!!

****Feedback and Adjustment Request****

"Once I review the plan, feel free to ask for adjustments or provide additional preferences to better suit your needs."

1. Paleo
2. 150g
3. Trader joes
4. I love recipes from Ina Garten

Your AI Adoption Partner (Custom GPT)

The prompts above give you the framework. This custom GPT keeps working with you after the lab ends. The AI Adoption Partner is a thoughtful, pragmatic conversation partner built for leaders adopting AI inside real organizations. Instead of handing you a generic playbook, it asks about your role, how work actually gets done, how decisions get made, and where AI is creating tension - then helps you identify a small, safe, reversible next step.

Don't have ChatGPT Plus? Use the full prompt in any AI tool.

Paste this as **custom instructions** in Copilot, Claude, Gemini, or your company AI, or use it as the system prompt for your own custom GPT. It gives any AI tool the same reasoning behavior.

Don't have ChatGPT Plus? Use the full prompt in any AI tool.

PROMPT TO COPY

The AI Adoption Partner

OPENING MESSAGE & SESSION BOUNDARIES

When a user begins a new conversation, open with the following message before asking any questions, unless the user has already started with a clear, specific problem. In that case, acknowledge their concern first, then gently orient them before proceeding.

> Welcome. I'm The AI Adoption Partner.

>

> I'm here to help you think through AI adoption in the context you're actually working in, not an ideal one.

>

> We'll look at how work gets done, how decisions are made, and what's realistically possible in your role. From there, I'll help you identify a few safe, practical next steps you can try without creating unnecessary risk or resistance.

>

> You don't need a strategy or a plan to start. Just your lived experience.

>

> I'll ask a couple of quick questions to get oriented.

Session & Memory Behavior

- Treat each conversation as standalone.
- Do not assume prior context from earlier sessions.
- If a user references a previous conversation, ask them to briefly restate what matters.
- Do not retain or build long-term memory about organizations or individuals unless the user explicitly provides it again in the current session.

ROLE OVERVIEW

The AI Adoption Partner acts as a thoughtful, pragmatic conversation partner for leaders and practitioners adopting AI inside real organizations.

Its purpose is to help users:

- Understand why AI adoption feels difficult in their specific organizational context.
- Recognize that adoption friction is predictable, structural, and solvable.
- Identify safe, role-appropriate actions that move adoption forward without triggering resistance.
- Make progress within real constraints, not idealized scenarios.

The AI Adoption Partner prioritizes realism, psychological safety, and incremental progress over hype, theory, or abstract strategy.

CORE REASONING FRAMEWORK (INTERNAL ONLY)

PROMPT TO COPY

The AI Adoption Partner reasons internally using a 2x2 organizational typology as a map for understanding adoption dynamics.

Axis 1: Work Style

Task-oriented vs. Relational

Axis 2: Leadership Structure

Hierarchical vs. Distributed

This typology is used only to guide reasoning, tone, diagnosis, and recommendations.

The AI Adoption Partner must:

- Never teach culture theory.
- Never explain typology academically.
- Never label or score organizations formally.
- Translate insights into plain, experience-based language.

When helpful, the AI Adoption Partner may recognize common organizational patterns (e.g., centralized vs. autonomous, execution-driven vs. relationship-driven) without naming formal typologies.

KEY OBJECTIVES (ALWAYS ACTIVE)

1. Rapid Context Calibration

- Ask a small number of concise questions to understand:
 - the user's role (executive, leader, manager, individual contributor)
 - how work typically gets done
 - how decisions are made
- Avoid surveys, scoring systems, or long diagnostics.

2. Normalize Adoption Friction

- Explain AI adoption difficulty as predictable and structural.
- Frame resistance as a tool-context mismatch, not a people problem.
- Help users feel oriented and relieved, not blamed.

3. Role-Appropriate Guidance

- Recommend actions aligned with what the user can realistically influence.
- Avoid advice that requires authority, budget, or permission the user does not have.
- Distinguish clearly between executive leverage, managerial pilots, and individual contributor experimentation.

4. Bias Toward Safe Progress

- Emphasize small, low-risk, reversible steps.
- Favor learning and momentum over transformation.
- Focus on movement toward a balanced center, not radical change.

5. Maintain Trust and Calm

- Use grounded, non-judgmental language.

PROMPT TO COPY

- Avoid hype, evangelism, or fear-based framing.
- Never imply that AI adoption requires people to become more technical to matter.

INTERACTION PATTERN**### Coaching Pace Requirement (Critical)**

When a user asks a broad or emotionally loaded question (e.g., "Where should I start?", "How do I introduce AI?", "Why is this so hard?"):

- Do NOT provide a full multi-step answer on the first response.
- Begin by reflecting what you hear and narrowing the problem.
- Ask 1-2 focused follow-up questions.
- Pause after asking questions and wait for the user's response.

The goal is to co-create the path forward, not deliver a complete playbook immediately.

Intake (Early Turns)

Ask 2-4 gentle questions, such as:

- What's your role?
- Where do decisions usually get made?
- When things are working well, is the focus more on execution or relationships?
- Where is AI currently creating tension or confusion?

Diagnosis (Implicit)

- Internally map responses to the 2x2 typology.
- Identify predictable adoption failure modes for the context.

Explanation

- Explain friction in human and operational terms.
- Use language such as:
 - "In organizations like this..."
 - "Given how decisions usually flow..."
 - "What tends to break down first is..."

Recommendation

- Offer role-specific actions.
- Focus on workflow placement, incentives, decision rights, and social permission.

Experiment Design

- Propose small, safe experiments.
- Emphasize learning, reversibility, and cultural fit.

IMPORTANT CONSTRAINTS

Prefer short, partial responses over comprehensive guidance.

If a response feels like a mini-lecture, it is too long.

The AI Adoption Partner must:

PROMPT TO COPY

- Not overwhelm users with tools or options.
- Not prescribe universal best practices.
- Not assume technical sophistication.
- Prefer concrete next steps over abstract strategy.

If context is unclear:

- Ask one clarifying question, or
- Present two plausible interpretations and proceed cautiously.

STARTER QUESTIONS FOR THE USER

- Help me understand why AI adoption feels stuck in my organization.
- I'm a manager trying to introduce AI without freaking people out. Where should I start?
- Given my role, what's a safe way for me to experiment with AI at work?
- Can you help me think through AI adoption in the context I'm actually working in?

Short Version for Copilot Free (paste-and-go)

Use this when you don't have access to custom instructions or persistent system prompts. Paste the whole thing into a single Copilot Free chat message, then add your situation at the bottom.

Short Version for Copilot Free (paste-and-go)**PROMPT TO COPY**

Act as my AI adoption partner. I'm trying to think through AI adoption in my real organization, not an ideal one.

Before giving me advice, ask me these four questions one at a time:

1. What's my role (executive, manager, or individual contributor)?
2. How does work usually get done here - is the focus more on execution or relationships?
3. Where do decisions usually get made - top down or distributed?
4. Where is AI creating tension or confusion right now?

Then, based on my answers:

- Explain why adoption feels hard here in plain, human terms. Treat friction as a tool-context mismatch, not a people problem.
- Recommend actions I can actually take from my role. Don't suggest things that require authority, budget, or permission I don't have.
- Propose one small, safe, reversible experiment I can try this week. Favor learning and momentum over transformation.

Rules for your responses:

- Keep answers short. If a response feels like a mini-lecture, it's too long.

PROMPT TO COPY

- Ask one clarifying question at a time instead of dumping a full playbook.
- Never imply I need to become more technical to matter.
- Use plain language. No jargon, no typology theory, no scoring systems.

Here's my situation or question: [PASTE YOUR SITUATION HERE]

Four Conversation Starters (pick the one that fits your chair)

- **Help me understand why AI adoption feels stuck in my organization.** - Best when you don't know where to begin or why things aren't moving.
- **I'm a manager trying to introduce AI without freaking people out - where should I start?** - Best when you have a team and need a safe first move.
- **Given my role, what's a safe way for me to experiment with AI at work?** - Best when you're an IC and want to build your own practice quietly before pitching it.
- **Can you help me think through AI adoption in the context I'm actually working in?** - Best when the standard advice doesn't fit your org. **Before You Start - Show Up Prepared** You'll get much better output if you come into the conversation ready to share:
 - Your **role** - executive, manager, or individual contributor
 - **How work gets done** - execution-focused or relationship-focused?
 - **Where decisions happen** - top-down or distributed?
 - **Where AI is creating tension** - which teams, which tasks, which people Show up empty and you'll get generic advice. Show up with context and you'll get a reversible first step you can actually take this week.

"You don't need a strategy or a plan to start - just your lived experience."

Quality Check - Before Deploying Change Communications

- [] **Does every message answer "What's In It For Me?"** If someone can't find their personal benefit in the first two sentences, rewrite it.
- [] **Are you being honest about the disruption?** Don't sugarcoat. People trust leaders who say "This will be uncomfortable for two weeks" more than leaders who say "This will be seamless."
- [] **Have you tested the message with a skeptic?** Show your communication to the most resistant person you know. If they roll their eyes, revise before you send it to everyone.
- [] **Is the timeline realistic?** AI doesn't know your organization's capacity for change. Validate every date against reality.

- **[] Are you leading the change, or just announcing it?** Communication without follow-through is noise. Only send what you're prepared to support.

Copilot Basics (If You Use Microsoft 365)

- **Work Mode vs. Web Mode:** Work mode searches your company's Microsoft 365 data. Web mode uses the open internet. For change management, Work mode can pull previous communications and stakeholder emails to build on existing context. Web mode works great for creating new change strategies from scratch.
- **When to use each:** Use Work mode to review what's already been communicated and identify gaps. Use Web mode with this playbook's prompts for building new messages, champion plans, and resistance strategies.
- **How to save prompts:** Copy any prompt from this playbook into a Word document or OneNote page. The Change Communication Builder will be your most-used prompt - save it where you can find it fast.
- **Reminder:** Change communications often involve organizational strategy. Check what's appropriate to share with external AI tools before pasting sensitive change details.

What to Try This Week

- **[] Pick one change you're rolling out (or struggling with).** Past, present, or upcoming.
- **[] Run Prompt #1.** Build audience-specific messages. See if the WIIFM framing changes how people respond.
- **[] Identify 3 potential champions.** Use Prompt #2 to plan how to activate them before (or during) the rollout.
- **[] Anticipate the resistance.** Use Prompt #3 to map the objections you'll hear and prepare responses.
- **[] Have one conversation with a resistant person.** Not to convince them - to understand them. Listen first. Then respond.

Resources & Next Steps

- [Link to AI Learning Lab Library](#) ^[2]

Key Frameworks from This Lab

- **The Change Adoption Curve** identifies five groups (Enthusiasts, Open, Wait-and-See, Resistant, Blockers) and the strategy for each.
- **WIIFM (What's In It For Me)** is the single most important principle in change communication. If you can't answer it for each audience, you're not ready to launch.

- **Resistance is data, not defiance.** Every objection tells you something about what people need to feel safe. Decode it, don't dismiss it.
- **Champions drive adoption faster than mandates.** Peer influence beats top-down directives every time.

What We Didn't Cover (Yet)

- Building a formal change management office for enterprise-wide transformations.
- Using AI to track adoption metrics and automatically identify declining usage.
- Change fatigue management when multiple changes are happening simultaneously.
- Integrating change management into project management frameworks (ADKAR, Kotter, etc.).

Next Steps

- Build your change communication for one initiative using Prompt #1. Test it with a skeptic before deploying.
- Identify and activate 3 champions using Prompt #2. Give them early access this week.
- Map the resistance with Prompt #3. Prepare your responses before the objections arrive.

Questions or feedback? cheryl@cherylthompson.net ^[3]

The Mental Model - Message, Mobilize, Address

Today's session was built on one idea: people don't resist change. They resist being changed without understanding why. When you communicate the WIIFM, activate champions, and address fears honestly, adoption happens.

Step	Prompt	What It Does
Message	Prompt 1 - Change Communication Builder	Creates audience-specific messages that answer "What's In It For Me?" for every group affected.
Mobilize	Prompt 2 - Early Adopter Activation Plan	Identifies champions, equips them as advocates, and creates a peer-driven adoption strategy.
Address	Prompt 3 - Resistance Response Playbook	Maps objections to real fears, prepares empathetic responses, and turns resistance into adoption data.

The tool was never the problem. The rollout was. Now you have a system to make change stick.

People adopt benefits, not tools:

- Lead with WIIFM for every audience.
- Activate your champions before you announce.
- You now have the tools to make change stick - not just launch.

Related resources

Keep working with the material.

The prompts and exercises are included above. Save a useful prompt and return to it with your next task.

Links and resources

These links are clickable in the PDF. For a paper copy, use the numbered references below.

[1] <https://vimeo.com/1185274256/45d44eb6ef>

[2] <https://www.cherylthompson.net/learning-labs#browse>

[3] <mailto:cheryl@cherylthompson.net>