

# Internal Alignment

Last Modified on 06/08/2021 9:46 am EDT

## Align Your Stakeholders

Ultimately change is about people and the more actively you engage stakeholders the more prepared you'll be for the inevitable bumps that come with change. Stakeholders may be different than your project team; they are the folks who will be impacted by and benefit from, the platform. While many of your stakeholders were at the table during the buying process, there are likely additional stakeholders at different levels of your company (hint: end-users of the platform) who you'll want to make sure are part of your team.

***Tip:** challenge yourself to bring on stakeholders who represent the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of your company. This will help with user adoption in the future.*

## Align on Your Why

This may seem a little too existential for a software implementation, but understanding your WHY gets us to a better HOW. WHY is not about technology....technology will just make delivering on your vision a whole lot easier! With this, we recommend that you do this away from technology and perhaps even go analog to a whiteboard (virtual counts).

What problem are you solving? Who does it impact? How will it make an impact? What does NOT going through this change mean? (yes, change means disrupting the status quo). Why is this change important? This is what we call the *Toddler Phase* of change; asking a lot of questions, perhaps being a little annoying with your team, but ultimately getting to the root of your WHY.

***Tip:** get your stakeholders to answer these questions independently and then come together as a group to discuss. This minimizes Group Think and ensures even the quiet ones are sharing ideas and perspectives. Explore similarities in ideas and really poke into differences.*

***Disclaimer:** the amount of time for this discussion is proportional to the degree of change. If you are a small team, it could be 1 hour. If you are a large team with multiple locations /processes going through a digital transformation, this will be multiple conversations over multiple weeks (and when you say multiple this much it's because this is a form of conversational math).*

## Establish a Vision

Now that you've had a great discussion, it's time to step back and make sense of your scribbling. This is where you establish a vision. Your project vision should be aspirational and focus on where you want to go as a team in the future. This will be your guiding light as you go through your implementation. It will also help with how you communicate the corresponding launch and integration of the platform solution into your company.

## Acknowledge and Understand Resistance

Change typically comes with some form of resistance. It can show up with, "*this won't solve things*", "*users won't do it*", "*you didn't include me, so I don't like it*" (although that one usually isn't articulate quite that directly). To understand where the resistance is coming from, ask yourself: *do Resisters align with your vision?* If this the answer is yes, then help them focus on the

common goal. If the answer is *no*, why? Does their perspective change anything in your vision? If yes, great perhaps evolving your vision is necessary. If the answer is no *it doesn't change our vision*, then having a direct conversation about the WHY is needed.

***Tip:** Don't shy away from Resisters. Understand them and have conversations to understand their perspective. The earlier you do this the better.*

## Define Your Processes

Technology makes adherence to your company's processes easier. With ease comes better data. With better data comes better insights....you can see where you're going with this! Our Resolver Project Team will share industry best practices on processes, but we always recommend that you go through an internal review first.

***Tip:** draw out how you would LIKE your internal processes vs. how they currently are. There is no time to improve and ideally simplify your processes than when you're going through a change.*

We can't stress simplicity enough! **Simplicity** facilitates end-user adoption. It also minimizes the barrier of training and administration in the future. Ideally, you can get to the point of standardization across teams and locations. In doing so, you'll remove silos and have the opportunity for really meaningful data and insights.

If you have different business units, usually from different locations (countries), sometimes this isn't possible. Aim for **consistency vs. uniformity**. This means that the overall objective is the same, but there is room for a difference in flow.

## Iteration

Some software implementations use the "waterfall" approach. This meant go get some requirements, go away and do work, come back a few months later and hope there is no broken telephone. You can imagine the margin of error that creeps up--and that's not fun for anyone! Having your project team understand the iterative approach can help align both your stakeholders and resisters.

Our approach is iterative which means that we work beside you in short sprints: design, configure, test (with you), feedback, improve (if necessary), repeat. One of the key benefits of this approach is that we can learn more about your WHY and the vision you're tracking towards through our platform. If not we're not hitting the mark, we can easily make the micro-correction.

The Resolver Project Team is here to help you through the change. We have a lot of learning and best practices to share! That said, the journey of change starts with your WHY.