

Chapter 6: Execution

This is where the rubber hits the road. Tasks are flying. Meetings are nonstop. People are building, testing, reviewing, fixing, and updating to move the project toward go-live.

It's easy to get so deep in the delivery that you forget what the change will *feel like* for the *people* on the receiving end.

The Trap of “We’ll Fix It in Training”

Here's what often happens in execution:

Someone raises a concern such as, "Hey, this is going to be confusing for users." The response? "We'll cover it in training."

Another person says, "I think this will mess with how the team handles X." Reply: "We'll deal with that after go-live."

That kind of thinking is how resistance builds quietly behind the scenes. You don't see it on the dashboard, but you'll feel it when adoption tanks. Execution isn't just about finishing deliverables. It's about preparing people to thrive in the new norm.



The Help Desk That Couldn't Help

A finance team was rolling out a new forecasting tool. Everything was on track. But no one thought to loop in the internal help desk until two days before launch.

The support staff hadn't seen the system, had no documentation, and no access to test accounts. And guess what? They got slammed on Day 1 and couldn't answer basic questions.

That's not an IT problem. That's a planning gap that showed up in execution.

What OCM Looks Like During Execution

This is where you bring the change plan to life. It's also where you keep listening, adapting, and reinforcing. Here's what it looks like:

- **Previews and pilots.** Let a small group try it early. Collect feedback, adjust, and build trust.
- **Ongoing communications.** Updates shouldn't stop at kickoff. Keep people informed of progress, decisions, and "what this means for you."
- **Manager enablement.** Give people leaders the tools to talk about the change with their teams. They're your front line.
- **Training and practice.** Not just how-to guides. Give folks real practice before they're live in the new system.
- **Support plans.** Who answers questions? Where do users go when they're stuck? Have it ready before launch day.

The Pilot

A hospital introduced a new scheduling system. Before rollout, they ran a two-week pilot in one department to refine training materials, tweak workflows, and gather feedback from staff.

During the full launch, those pilot users became the "change champions" that helped train peers, troubleshoot issues, and share how it made their jobs easier.

That single pilot did more to drive adoption than the project team ever could alone.



Pro Tips

If you're launching something new, someone should already be using it. Pilots reduce surprises and build momentum.

Don't forget the managers. If they don't understand the change, their teams won't either.

Look for small wins and name them out loud. Adoption builds when people see progress, not just pressure.

[Appendix C](#) has some great questions you can ask to keep people-centered thinking front and center throughout.