Chapter 3: Why Integration Matters

Is the crew ready?

You can build the perfect project plan. You can hit every milestone, manage every risk, and come in under budget. But if the people who need to use your solution aren't ready for it, the whole thing can still fall apart. That's a reality no one likes to talk about.

It's not enough to manage the technical side of change. You've got to manage the people side, too. And the sooner you bring those two things together, the better chance you have of delivering something that works long-term.

Why They Get Separated

In most companies, project management and change management live in different worlds. PMs own the schedule, the budget, the resources. Change folks (if they exist at all) are pulled in later to "handle the people stuff."

The problem is, by the time that happens, it's usually too late to influence the big decisions that shape how people will experience the change, and that's when things start to crack.

The Metrics That Lied

To the project team everything looked great. The project hit every delivery target and leadership was thrilled.

But when managers walked the floor a few weeks after launch, they saw a different story. Employees were bypassing the system entirely. They were using old tools and workarounds. Why? Because no one helped them understand how the new process worked or even why it mattered.

The dashboard said "green." The floor said "nope."

That's what happens when project success is measured in tasks, not adoption.

What Does PM and OCM Integration Look Like?

It means project managers and change managers work together from the start. It means building one timeline - not two. It means aligning on the understanding that success is not just "Is it done?" but "Is it used and useful?"

It means:

- Having shared planning sessions

- Including OCM tasks in your work breakdown structure

- Tracking behavior change alongside technical delivery

- Giving your sponsor both a progress update *and* a readiness report

When you do this, something amazing happens: People are ready. Resistance goes down. Value goes up. And the project sticks.

The Culture Crash

A manufacturing company invested in a big ERP system to improve supply chain visibility. Technically, it worked. But they ignored the day-to-day realities of how plant workers did their jobs. The system didn't account for long-standing routines and workarounds. There was no engagement with the people using it.

The result? Productivity dipped, turnover increased, and morale tanked. All because no one made sure the people part of the project was as solid as the tech part.

Pro Tips

Build one plan. Change work isn't "extra." It's part of the job. Treat it that way.

Stop separating status reports. Adoption and progress should show up on the same dashboard.

Walk through the project with both hats on. Ask, "What's the technical task here?" and "What's the people impact?" for every major step.

See Appendix A for a simple impact template you can start using right away.