

Change That Sticks: Why Engaging Your Team is the Key to Successful Transformation

In the rush to roll out new strategies, systems, or structures, many organizations make the same mistake: they design change for their teams instead of with them. While leadership alignment and clear planning are vital, the real engine of lasting transformation is engagement—actively involving team members in the change process.

This isn't about slowing things down to accommodate every opinion. It's about harnessing the insight, energy, and ownership that only your frontline staff can offer. Done right, engagement doesn't just increase buy-in—it builds skills, strengthens culture, and boosts business performance.

Engagement = Buy-In = Success

Research consistently shows that projects with high employee engagement are far more likely to succeed. Prosci, a leading authority in change management, reports that initiatives with strong engagement are six times more likely to meet or exceed objectives compared to those with low engagement.

When people feel included in shaping the change—whether by offering feedback, testing new processes, or identifying gaps—they're far more likely to support the outcome. Resistance drops, momentum builds, and change becomes something they own, not something done to them.

Building Capability Through Participation

Engagement isn't just a tool for smoother implementation—it's also a powerful method for building team capability. Involving staff in process mapping, problem-solving, or pilot testing helps them develop skills in systems thinking, collaboration, and continuous improvement. These are essential competencies in a world where change is constant.

At Aligned Outcomes, we use engagement as a lever to create what we call team-enabled transformation. Rather than relying on external experts to drive every piece of the work, we guide internal teams through structured processes that help them build the muscles needed to sustain and extend the change long after the project ends.

This approach does more than improve project results—it grows leadership at every level.

Healthier Teams, Stronger Businesses

There's a human side to engagement that's just as important as the operational side. When employees are invited into the process, their sense of agency and connection

increases. They understand the “why” behind the change, feel seen and valued, and are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction.

Gallup’s ongoing research into employee engagement shows a strong link between engagement, well-being, and business outcomes. Engaged employees are not only more productive—they’re also healthier, less likely to burn out, and more likely to stay.

And retention matters. Turnover during or after major change creates disruption, erodes trust, and slows progress. By engaging people early and often, organizations reduce that risk and increase the resilience of their teams.

Change is a Team Sport

Successful transformation isn’t just about getting the strategy right—it’s about bringing people along for the journey. By engaging team members as co-creators, you build better solutions, develop stronger teams, and improve both your short-term execution and long-term capacity for change.

Because when your people help shape the future, they’re far more likely to make it succeed.

References:

Prosci (2020). Best Practices in Change Management.

Gallup (2023). State of the Global Workplace Report.

Harvard Business Review (2018). The New Rules of Employee Engagement.