Guide to Getting Buy-In with New Technology

Dude Solutions

We all know that change in the workplace can be a frightening concept, and whenever technology is connected to that change, it can be even more fear-inducing. If you find yourself implementing new technology with your team, it's critical that you do everything you can to make the implementation process successful.

Your team may only have the time and patience to try to implement something new once (or maybe you've been down this road before), so it's important you have a plan to make sure all goes well and you have the tools you need to reinforce success.

Over the years, we've heard from clients that training and implementation is one of the most crucial steps to long-term viability with a new software or technology, from implementing a CMMS to switching to iPhones or iPads for work tracking. So, we've combined a variety of tips and tricks, as well as plenty of real-life examples, to help ensure you can get your team up to speed with new technology while creating value at the same time.

1. Weekly or Daily Check-Ins

Communication is an important key in creating a collaborative and open environment on your team and throughout your organization. When implementing a new system or software (whether you're streamlining your work orders, tracking utilities, etc.), you should include your team in the process as much as possible.

Involve them in the conversation before you purchase technology and let them help define your use of it. You can do this in a number of tangible ways. One that we see huge value in is scheduling weekly or daily check-ins to explore:

> › Are they using the technology?
> › What are they using it for?
> › What are some successful uses so far?
> › What about failed uses or barriers?
> › What are new ideas for how to better use it?

Even if it's just a 15- or 30-minute conversation each week, this can open up the lines of communication to hear from your team about what's working and what isn't, as well as encourage them to use the technology and report back (so as not to be left out).

Whether it's your whole team, select groups (supervisors, etc.) or one-on-ones, this can be an important time to show you're invested in the team's success.

See other tips for rolling out new software

2. Hands-On Training

We can probably all agree the best way to get someone to use new software is by showing them exactly how to use it. That means providing the training and real-world examples they need to feel confident using technology in their day-to-day work.

After all, greater employee adoption means greater ROI. Collaboration among engaged users is where the real power and ROI of technology is realized.

STAGES OF TRAINING

You may think about training as happening in two different stages: training from external sources (such as the software provider) and then internal employees. Select a core group of internal employees who can be designated to help others as needed. Some employees who are slower to learn technology may feel more comfortable going to an external source for assistance while others may prefer someone internal, so it's helpful if they have those options.

Be upfront with everyone that mistakes are okay and even anticipated. Changing processes and using new technology is a learning process for all involved. Encourage employees to share experiences and voice challenges and successes they encounter at your recurring check-in meetings. Keeping open dialogue helps everyone feel like they are in it together so that you see the adoption you want and the sustained behavior change needed.

TRAIN AT YOUR OWN SPEED

At the Dude, we offer help throughout the training and implementation process with webinars, training videos on Dude Learn and your questions answered on our Help Site. Whenever you're getting your team up to speed with something new, it might be worth holding one (or several) half- or full-day training session to go through the steps of what you're expected to do. In a Forbes article, Josh Kaufman says it takes about 20 hours to learn something new,[1] so a decent session can make it so your team is one-third or halfway there before they're even out in the field with it.

It's important to allow individuals to take on new technology at their own pace and provide ample training opportunities. While some may feel comfortable after only one or two training sessions, others may need more guidance. **Allowing individuals to learn at their own speed, while also providing ongoing training and support, will help to ensure successful implementation of the new technology.**

For our maintenance management software, some clients have held training sessions in their computer labs to let the team create mock work orders and see them through completion. Regardless of the type of technology, it will help your team have confidence in the new system when they can try it out and ask questions in a low-risk environment.

See how Bruce Ferguson executed his hands-on training for users

3. Create Cheat Sheets

We all know that repetition is the key to learning, but many of us don't have the time to study while on the job. But, whenever there are quick ways to retain a small amount of information, it's much more likely that we can remember them.

When implementing a new software, it's often a good idea to create PDFs or cheat sheets of common tasks that your team will need to do. After your initial trainings and team discussions, it's nice to have a way to remind everyone how to do what they've learned.
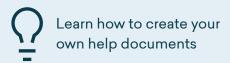
IN THE REAL WORLD

"I usually do little how-to PDFs if I see the same question continually coming up. This is my way to get the info out." — Matt Ramirez, Administrative Coordinator for City of San Ramon, CA

Maybe you could use a cheat sheet on how to:

› Log in to new software
› Download and sign in to an app
› Make a report
› Create and complete a work order
› Put in a work request

These types of short and simple training sheets on your community corkboards or screenshotted and saved to your work phone can be a constant reminder of best practices.

Learn how to create your own help documents

SPALDING COUNTY'S STORY

"When we first started, we decided that our training approach was going to be a little different. We understood we couldn't train everyone at the same level. You have to understand that you need to focus your training on the level of comfort that the employee is providing.

We made a conscious decision to never train more than five people at one time. That way, we're able to progress at one level. We went to more of a one-on-one approach, so we could have more effective results at the end.

We also continue training and we do a newsletter once every three to six months to bring people up to speed around the system and what we're doing with it. The important thing with training is to make that decision to not do it all at one time. It makes people comfortable with the system in the reality of the technology." — TJ Imberger, Superintendent of Parks

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4. Creative Comment Box

We've heard from our clients that they find it much easier to get buy-in and feedback about new technology and processes when they welcome that feedback, often in creative ways. Instead of just waiting for the inevitable complaints to come in, why not find an inclusive and interactive way to ask your team for their feedback on what can be improved?

What could your creative comment box be?

› A spot on the shared whiteboard (or sheet on a corkboard) where anyone can write their ideas

› An email account (ideas@yourfacility.com) for team members to send in their feedback and suggestions for new technology uses

› An old-school comment box in a common area where people can submit suggestions, then you can review or reward a winning one at a monthly team meeting

Once you start collecting feedback (and possibly rewarding it to increase participation), you'll start to see things from your teammate's perspective. This will help you better understand where they're coming from with their feedback, and it may even give you new ideas you would have never thought about to increase your efficiency with new technology.

Learn how to empower your workforce through change management

Bonus: World-Class Support

At Dude Solutions, we do everything we can to help our clients get up and running as quickly as possible, while making sure your entire team is using the technology to its fullest capacity. Whether you have a quick question or need some basic tips for buy-in and implementation, you can reach our support team by email, phone or chat. We also have a robust help site where you can find quick answers to your questions about how to use the software and much more. We know that sometimes you only have enough time to type something into Google or read a few pages of a website to answer a question, so we've set the site up to meet you where you are.

Conclusion

New technology and change don't have to be so scary when you're prepared to give your team the tools, training and new processes they need to learn and respond with feedback. There are so many ways to get everyone excited and on the same page. Next step, new tech!

ABOUT DUDE SOLUTIONS

Dude Solutions is a leading software-as-a-service (SaaS) provider of operations management solutions to education, government, healthcare, senior living, manufacturing and membership-based organizations. For nearly two decades, Dude Solutions has inspired clients to create better work and better lives. We combine innovative, user-friendly technology with the world's smartest operations engine, empowering operations leaders to transform the most important places in our lives. Today, more than 10,000 organizations use our award-winning software to manage maintenance, assets, energy, safety, IT, events and more. For more information, visit dudesolutions.com.

SOURCES

[1] Dan Schawbel, "Josh Kaufman: It Takes 20 Hours Not 10,000 Hours To Learn A Skill."
https://www.forbes.com/sites/danschawbel/2013/05/30/josh-kaufman-it-takes-20-hours-not-10000-hours-to-learn-a-skill/#78bda97363d5