



# USING THE ADKAR MODEL FOR EMPOWERING MANAGERS

Applications of ADKAR Research Study

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# INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that frontline managers are key to the success or failure of a change management initiative. Managers are the most likely to be directly impacted or have direct reports who are impacted by the change. Managers are also best positioned to see and address any resistance and can have the largest impact on the employee experience of the change.

Organizations looking to be successful at change will work to ensure that their managers are not only on board with the change but can also act as positive change agents with their direct reports. Enabling this kind of buy-in and competency involves many moving parts. Several organizations have chosen to empower their managers with the **Prosci ADKAR® Model** (ADKAR) as a significant part of the managers' education and change management toolbox.

ADKAR is easy to learn, understand and apply, and can be used by managers very quickly after they are introduced to it. Managers empowered with ADKAR are able to help their employees' transition through a change, have a way of talking about change that uses common phrases and words, and are better positioned to aid the change manager in ensuring that the change is successful.

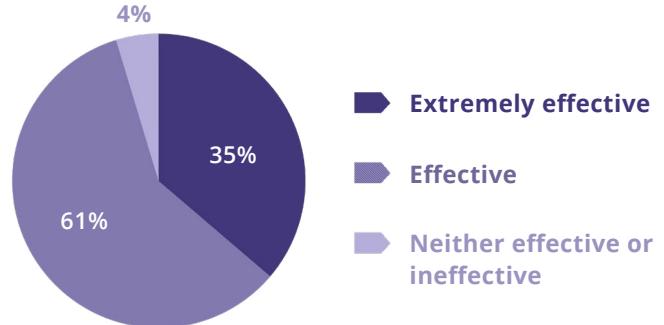
In a research effort to understand how organizations use ADKAR, Prosci asked questions about empowering managers with ADKAR. Here, we examine why organizations empower their managers with ADKAR and how they empowered their managers.

SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CHOSEN TO EMPOWER THEIR MANAGERS WITH ADKAR AS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE MANAGERS' EDUCATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT TOOLBOX.

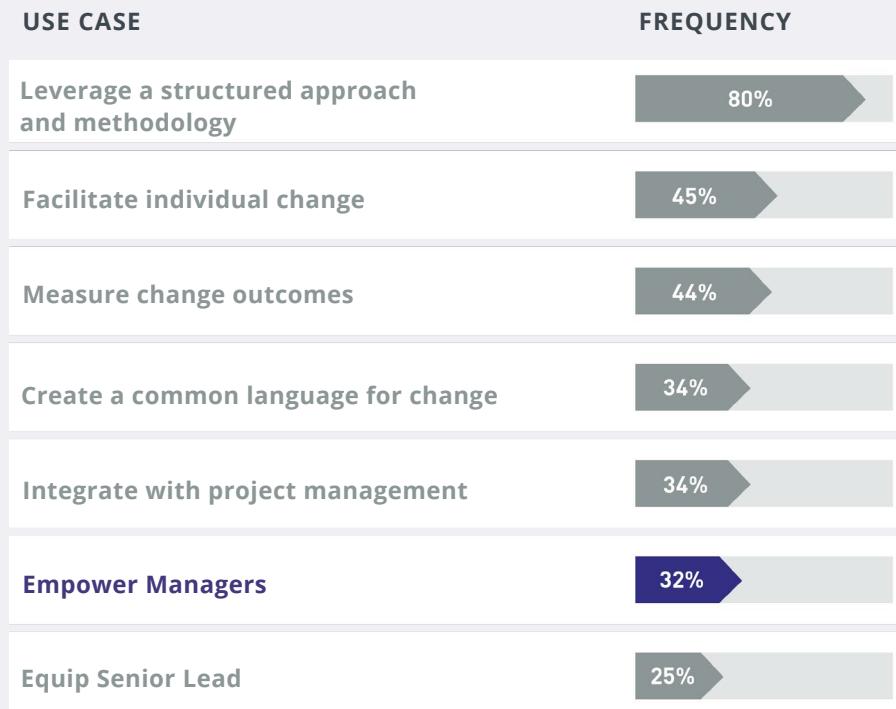
# EMPOWERING MANAGERS WITH THE ADKAR MODEL

Nearly one-third of study participants reported that they empowered their managers with ADKAR, and nearly all of these participants said that ADKAR was either effective or very effective for this particular use.

**Effectiveness of ADKAR when provided to managers**



**Percent of Study Respondents Who Used ADKAR to Empower Managers for Change**



# WHY EMPOWER MANAGERS WITH ADKAR

Prosci asked study participants why they had equipped their managers and supervisors with ADKAR. Participants revealed three main reasons:

## 1 ADKAR provided their managers with a common language for talking about change

Participants reported that ADKAR empowered their managers with a shared language for talking about and understanding how individuals experience change. Participants felt that managers who could talk about change in a meaningful and understandable way would better understand it themselves and therefore would be better at helping their direct reports during change.

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*It provides them a framework to understand where in the process they are in terms of implementing change to their teams and how they can/should have a cadence to their delivery. Also helps them understand their role as a sponsor of change.*

## 2 ADKAR was easy and simple to use

Participants were able to quickly and easily become proficient in using ADKAR to help their direct reports during a change process. Further, participants reported that empowering their managers with ADKAR was simple and easy; this allowed participants to quickly set expectations for managers on how and when they would be using ADKAR with their direct reports.

### 3 ADKAR had been successfully deployed in previous situations

Participants reported that having other groups or individuals in the organization successfully utilizing ADKAR to manage change was a key factor in their organization's decision to empower managers with it. Sometimes the motivation to empower managers was an attempt to reproduce the success previous groups and people had using ADKAR. Other times, the motivation to empower managers stemmed from the positive impact using ADKAR had on the work environment in groups.

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*Managers tend to move fast through the project mode, and think that people will behave differently as soon as they hear that change is required. With ADKAR, we get them to understand that more will be needed, that you need to invest in awareness, that you need to talk with people, engage them to come up with ideas etc... We hope to reduce the stress and burnout in the organization by paying more attention to how we implement projects/ changes.*

# WHAT STEPS WERE TAKEN TO EMPOWER MANAGERS WITH ADKAR



## Providing formal training

Participants reported formally training their managers in ADKAR. These sessions varied from half-day courses to having all managers attend a multi-day change management practitioner training program. While some used the ADKAR book and experiential learning/role playing to supplement the learning experience, others reported facilitating informal ADKAR briefings.

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*It was done through a project. After being accepted by the change management board, we presented to the managers and proposed coaching sessions to mobilize their employees and help them establish the steps to ensure success.*



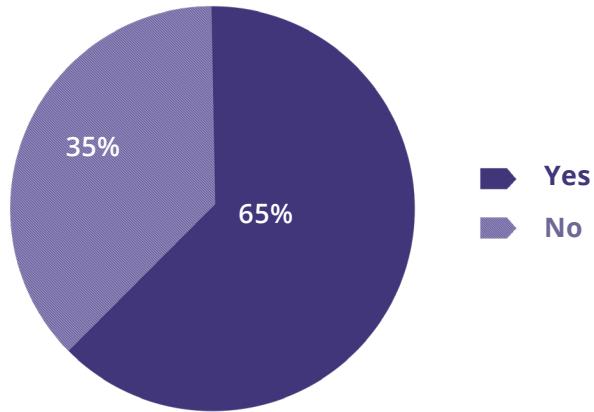
## Coaching managers

Many participants reported that change management practitioners used ADKAR as a tool to help coach managers. Whether managers had received formal or informal training, they would work with them throughout the application of ADKAR.

## Training and formal materials

In a follow-up question, participants were asked if their organization provided formal training for managers on ADKAR. More than half of participants did so:

**Participants conducted formal training when empowering managers with ADKAR**



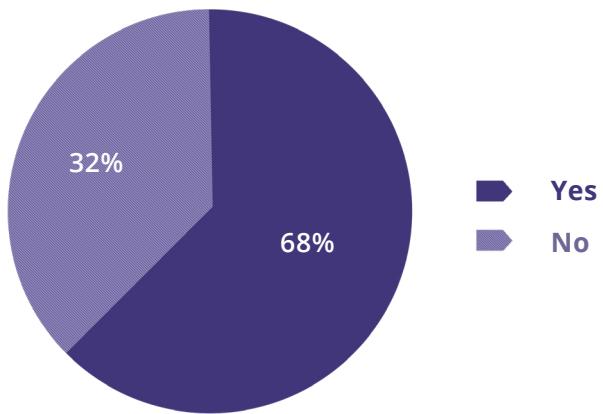
Those participants who offered formal training to empower their managers with ADKAR were asked what types of training they provided:

**Types of training provided**

| <u>USE CASE</u>  | <u>EFFECTIVENESS</u>  |
|--|---|
| Formalized training offered by internal trainers         | 47%  |
| Formalized training offered by a consultant              | 21%  |
| Formalized training offered by Prosci                    | 18%  |
| In-house produced webinar or instructional video         | 9%   |
| Formalized training delivered electronically (eLearning) | 6%   |

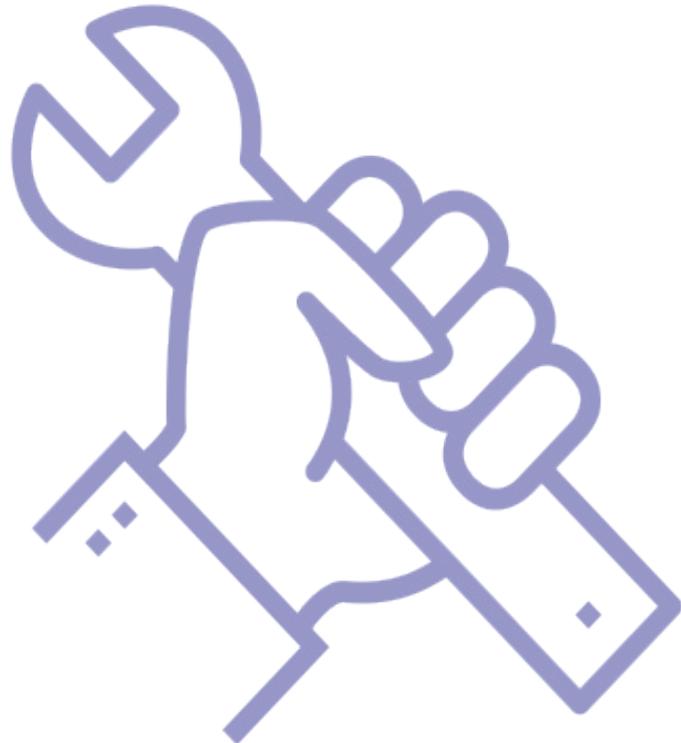
Participants were also asked if they provided reference material, tools and/or additional resources to managers in their organization. Nearly three-fourths did.

**Participants provided reference materials, tools and/or resources when empowering managers with ADKAR**



# CONCLUSION

Managers and supervisors are some of the most impacted and impactful individuals in any change. Our research has shown that organizations view ADKAR as a meaningful, necessary and easily implemented tool to empower their managers so that they can better manage change. While the onus for change falls squarely on the individual, ADKAR has shown to be a valuable tool in helping organizations proactively manage their change by empowering their managers to aid in the individual transitions of their direct reports.



# SUCCESS STORY: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY

In pursuit of creating the safest environment, a federal government agency responsible for setting safety standards across an industry must adapt to a constant stream of changes, from technology changes, to regulation changes, to business-motivated change. It is critical for this agency to be able to process and manage the people-side impact of these changes so that it can keep the millions of people it is responsible for protecting safe every day. It should then be of no surprise that the agency has been working to install a cultural competency for change that is currently focused on empowering their managers with a capability to both navigate change and help their employees navigate change.

The agency focused on top-down change management enablement. Starting at the top, a newly established change team spent considerable time and resources not only equipping their senior leaders and executives with a working understanding of ADKAR and change management, but also with an understanding of why change management is critical to their organization's success. Now they are working to increase the capacity and desire for their frontline managers.

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*Our goal is to become a high-functioning change management culture.*

The agency imagines their future change management state as a three-tiered system with large-scale projects placed in the first tier to be led by change management professionals, medium-sized projects placed in the second tier and led by the project owner with internal consultant support, and all other projects falling under the third tier with change management done by impacted frontline employees.

..... “ .....

*We can't provide internal consulting for change management on every project. It is going to be critical to our success to grow this capability in every department and individual in our organization.*

Having successfully instilled change management capability in senior leaders and executives, as well as standing up a change management office to support large-scale changes, the agency is turning its attention to empowering managers and supervisors with change management, specifically ADKAR. With the tools provided by ADKAR, managers can begin to manage all second-tier changes in their departments.

This agency has long-term goals for change management competency. Empowering managers with ADKAR is just one step on the path of creating an organization that is completely immersed and bought into change management, yet it is a crucial step to the agency's overall success. The agency knows that having an organization that can truly be responsive and embrace the many changes that it sees in a year requires having all members of the organization actively working to manage change.