

Kendall Taylor

DevOps

Module 8.2 Assignment

February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

### Change Management is Broken: Here's how to fix it

This source explains why the change management process can be disliked and tedious. This is often because of the long and difficult approval processes. The article goes on to explain suggestions on improving this process and creating a more successful system of managing changes.

#### Largest Issues in Change Management Process:

- **Outdated Methods of Approval:** Often time change requests require many levels of approval or large committees of people to approve. This can minimize motivation and cause inefficiency.
- **Misaligned Incentives:** Deployment and operation teams may have different goals or strive for different things.
- **Lack of Standards for Change:** Making and validating change plans can be a lengthy and expensive process.
- **Communication:** Poor communication between teams can slow or halt the process completely.
- **Siloed Teams:** Handoffs between siloed teams who work independently of each other can cause issues. This can result in misaligned goals, poor communication, or unnecessary resource expenses.

#### Tips to Improve the Change Management Process:

- **Standardizing change and deployment processes:** Management teams need to set these standards across the board for the entire organization. This will create more unity and efficiency.
- **Systems Quick and Easy Deployment:** Standardizing systems and technologies will help to ease the deployment process and cut out unnecessary approvals.
- **Smaller Changes, More Frequent Delivery:** This can allow for more attainable changes to be delivered faster.
- **Quicker Feedback Processes:** Minimizing manual processes and approvals for continuous delivery and integration.
- **Self-Service:** Incident responses can be automated, and resources should be available for self-service. This can minimize hand-offs between teams and allow them to not rely on each other to implement or fix things.

## Optimizing the Change Approval Process in a Timely Manner

This source gave a good example of how change approval processes can negatively affect deployment time and resources needed. It goes to explain, a client that is wanting to improve and optimize their change approval process. It explains that the main challenges were related to the complexity of the approval process and how it caused too much time and effort to be wasted on tracking, reviewing, and accepting or denying a change request. This resource also determined a strategy to optimize the process and ensure change requests were well reviewed before acceptance.

The example strategy:

- A schedule was created to ensure there was a plan for when a change request will be reviewed, approved/denied, and passed on. This also made it so changes could not be fully approved until the approval meeting.
- They created a notifications system to alert approvers on the steps they need to take, and when they can review and approve.

Outcomes:

- Process became time dependent, ensuring approvals were completed in a timely manner and there were no accidental or early approval. This improved the efficiency of the process.
- Minimize approval times: They created a structured approval schedule and ensured there were no unnecessary approvers involved.
- Guidelines helped approvers complete their reviews and approvals in a quick and efficient manner.

## Streamlining Change Approval

This resource explains that change approval processes are often used in the IT settings to avoid the operational and security risks of changes. It describes the issues and pitfalls in the change approval process that occur most often.

Most Common Issues in Change Approval Process:

- Relying on a Centralized Change Approval Board: These boards don't often work very closely to the development team and the changes being made. This creates risk of error and delays.
- Treating Changes as Equals: When it is required for all changes to go through the same exact approval process, it makes it difficult to prioritize changes.
- Responding to Problems by Adding More Processes: Businesses that require long, complex approvals and other processes waste more time and resources. These processes should be quicker and easier to make and apply changes.

The article then goes on to offer suggestions and solutions to improve problematic areas in the approval process:

- Peer Reviews: Peer review processes for individual changes with use of automated tests can ensure that changes are timely and do not require a lengthy process of multiple approvals before implementation.
- Automating Problem Detection: Automating detection for issues can help find problems that may otherwise be missed. It also helps to issues before they become larger and more expensive to fix. Automating detection will help to ensure they can be fixed with less time and resources.
- Review Approval Processes: Identify issues and experiment with strategies to perform validations during the development process.

#### Lessons Learned:

- Having a complex and lengthy change approval process can cost unnecessary time and resources.
- A major issue with the change approval process is requiring too many approvals. Eliminating unnecessary approvals will help to create efficiency in the change management process.
- Changes should be prioritized and team members should understand the correct protocols and steps to implementing change.
- Creating a schedule for reviewing and approval processes can help to provide guidance and timelines. This can improve the process and minimize the time it takes to push changes forward.

## Resources

Stahnke, M. (n.d.). *Change management is broken: Here's how to fix it*. dzone.com.

<https://dzone.com/articles/change-management-is-broken-heres-how-to-fix-it>

*Optimizing the change approval process in a timely manner*. IWConnect. (2024, May 17).

<https://iwconnect.com/casestudies/optimizing-the-change-approval-process-in-a-timely-manner/>

*Capabilities: Streamlining change approval*. DORA. (n.d.).

<https://dora.dev/capabilities/streamlining-change-approval/>