

7 - Implement

Now it is time to push out the new process to the entire organization. Training is critical – setting aside a few minutes or a few hours and, if possible, allowing your staff to practice the new process solidifies the buy-in and gives the opportunity for immediate feedback. As we have done in earlier iterations, have open candid discussions.

Shortly after the initial implementation, the project manager needs to schedule a follow-up review with the staff to solicit feedback. Depending on how often the new process is utilized and other scheduling considerations, a follow-up session could be in one or two weeks. The maximum would be one month unless there are extraordinary circumstances. In the end, you and your staff need to use your best judgement.

There may be immediate feedback, or a constant flow of feedback prior to the review sessions, so it is a best practice for the Project Manager or Process Owner to maintain a log of all the feedback, positive and negative, and no matter how minor. We are building a culture of constant improvement and trust, so we want this feedback unfiltered and direct.

During the follow-up session the Process Owner and Project Manager must be empowered to make decisions on immediate changes or improvements or accepting the process as up to date and proceeding to the next step of establishing review cycles.

After the follow-up session, do a debrief with the project team. This meeting should be run by the Project Manager and be an open forum of not only what could be done better, but what was done right, and any best practices – the team may have found certain tools more useful or a certain meeting frequency too burdensome. Set a positive tone by starting off the meeting with a round of congratulations and recognition to the team, the process owner, and any individuals that went above and beyond. This will help prevent the debriefing from turning into a complaint session. Take note of the lessons learned and use this opportunity to reinforce the organization's commitment to continuous process improvement. Let the staff know that there will be a process review and those who wish to participate are invited and encouraged to do so. If this review session frequency has already been determined, let them know what it is.

Most processes will be fine with a yearly review although some may require more frequent assessments be it every quarter (every three months) or every six months. Allow the Project Manager to make the ultimate decision even if you do not agree (unless there is an obvious reason to override them). Do not let a decision be made and go along with it. The best practice would be for the Manager/Owner, the Project Manager, and the Process Owner to discuss the proposed Review Cycle. This allows input from all levels so that certain aspects or criteria are not overlooked. This meeting can be as short as five or ten minutes; we want to get out of the habit of having long meetings just for the sake of having long meetings.

Ultimately, allow the Process Owner to make the final determination and **write it down** (an actual date). Add the review to the appropriate calendars and make note of it in the Process Improvement Guide.