



Submit Request

Know what you need?



Your iManage Success Depends on Three Key Factors

Follow

Last updated: 1 month ago

When implementing a mission-critical technology such as the iManage knowledge management platform, its success — as measured by the breadth and speed of adoption and utilization — depends on three key factors. You must have visible top-down executive leadership support, choose the right business stakeholders for your implementation team, and have a good change management strategy and plan.

Together these building blocks form the foundation not only for your iManage launch but also for long-term adoption and utilization. After all, the impact of an enterprise-wide system such as iManage goes beyond initial implementation. As an ongoing part of your change strategy, you'll want to align new features and capabilities with new workflows to increase your return on investment over time.

Success factor #1: Visible top-down executive leadership support

It's imperative to have a C-suite member act as a highly visible executive sponsor. This person will serve as the leadership team's spokesperson and face of the project to your wider organization. But this role is even more important than that because your iManage path to success requires someone with the position and authority to:

1. Connect the project's vision with your firm's broader strategy in all levels of communications.
2. Build a coalition of support across the executive team that spans those who lead practice areas or lines of business.
3. Ensure sufficient budget and people resources to achieve operational and transformational goals.
4. Serve as a source of guidance and an escalation path if prioritization trade-offs require arbitration.
5. Provide ultimate governance and accountability for the project's success.

If your executive sponsor is not the ultimate iManage decision-maker, they would ideally have had a strong say in the decision and would already understand the "why" of iManage. Now they must understand the "how" of its implementation, which involves not just the technology, but also — and most importantly — the people in your organization who will be its users.

After all, iManage can change how large numbers, if not all, of your organization's employees work. For many of them, new work practices and workflows can be difficult to accept. However, the technology can free them from previous manual tasks, so they have more time to drive good business outcomes.

Your executive sponsor will have to educate the rest of the leadership team on the "how" and keep them informed of progress. In addition, the executive sponsor will fill a liaison role to connect all the stakeholder teams. But that's not all. This person must also:

- **Communicate** from the start about the "why" behind the decision to move your organization to iManage. Regular executive communications across your organization should be part of your change management strategy
- **Learn the implementation project plan**, including onboarding's path to success, what lies ahead to get there, its stages and milestones, the work and resources required, who's needed to help get there, and how that can affect their current and anticipated responsibilities.
- **Make sure managers are properly prioritizing** the needs of staff for the required project plan deliverables.
- **Recognize the project team members by name** in a specific announcement as soon as possible after the team has been established.
- **Lead the organization's applause for milestone achievements** in the implementation success path and deliver kudos to each team member for their role in making those milestones happen.

Success factor #2: Choosing the right business stakeholders for your implementation team

In parallel with getting executive leadership's support and a designated executive sponsor, you have to build a cross-functional implementation team composed of different stakeholders from across your business. Not only can they assist you with various project tasks (e.g., your IT and HR representatives), but come launch time, they can also become champions willing to evangelize the adoption and use of iManage within their groups.

Another important reason is that different members of your team will help in the design stage of your iManage implementation, including its configurations, security, and workflow structures. Team members can also participate in the design focus group, user pilot group, and user acceptance testing. Incorporating their different perspectives will make your iManage platform design better serve the needs of each of their respective groups. In turn, this will improve the chances of its fast adoption and utilization after launch.

Start by selecting the right business stakeholders from different practice areas and relevant departments across your organization. Among them would certainly be representatives from your legal and IT teams. Other candidates may include individuals from accounting, HR, and possibly procurement in a corporate enterprise. Anyone outside of the legal department who frequently handles legal matters, especially contracts and intellectual property, could also be considered.

In selecting members of your implementation team, you should include the following criteria. Stakeholders must:

- **Know their group's workflows and requirements** on a day-to-day basis, especially so they can make meaningful contributions in the all-important design stage.
- **Have good communication skills**, so they can summarize relevant and timely information from iManage and your implementation partner for their colleagues. They will also need to share demo recordings, make presentations, and get feedback and report it to the implementation team.
- **Be personable and respected by their group**, which will reassure members of their own team about the benefits of iManage and using it in their work. That's why we typically call these people iManage ambassadors or iManage influencers
- **Be willing to assume this role and have their manager's buy-in**, after discussing the project with them both and explaining the need for their participation as a key to its success.
- **Be able to re-prioritize the potential team member's workload**, so they have time for implementation team meetings and all tasks assigned to them.
- **Meet with their groups for buy-in on the design** as it develops, so their colleagues feel they have been consulted for input. Without the opportunity for such input, stakeholder groups can be alienated enough to not use iManage in their work.
- **Take part in the user acceptance testing** of the various phases of the design stage, including evaluating its configuration and structures.
- **Act as an expert resource for their group** during pre-launch training and post-launch support.

Note that if business stakeholders have a hard time getting feedback from their group, they should escalate this issue to the project sponsor or the group leader. Feedback must be a priority to keep the project on track.

Success factor #3: A good change management strategy and plan

The technology part of putting iManage to work across your organization is relatively easy compared to the efforts needed to ensure its adoption and full utilization by your users. That's because people can resist changes to their work tools and workflows in varying degrees. Some will naturally be early adopters, while others could take longer to adopt iManage or even resist adopting it.

That's where having a good change management strategy and plan come into play. It's vital to your iManage success because every user in your organization needs to know well in advance what changes are coming and why. They can then be ready to adopt and use their new iManage tools, as well as adapt to new workflows, as quickly as possible during your launch.

Note that change management is much more than training. By itself, training is insufficient to bring about adoption and utilization, which are the keys to maximizing your iManage ROI. Change management must include good messaging that ties changes back to your business strategy. It also requires lots of planned communications — from your executive sponsor and business stakeholders — across your internal media channels. Finally, it is crucial to gather user input and feedback before, during, and after your launch. [\(For a more detailed look at change management, see this companion article.\)](#)

The combination of these three factors — having visible top-down executive leadership support, the right business stakeholders for your implementation team, and a good change management strategy and plan — gives you powerful leverage in changing your organization's behavior. Ongoing communications from the start of the project to after the launch are critical to success, too.

Another angle to consider is identifying and engaging the leaders among individual contributors in two-way conversations about what's in it for them — personal productivity, more ways to collaborate, and better business outcomes. This way, when launch time approaches, they'll be ready to participate in user acceptance testing, jump into training, and support iManage adoption and utilization during launch and thereafter.

Engaging stakeholders from across your organization can smooth your path to a successful iManage rollout. Ultimately, making knowledge work with our platform is not just about our technology; it's also about your people's adoption and utilization of it in the work they do.

Was this article helpful?

Yes No

1 out of 1 found this helpful

Return to top ^

Comments

0 comments



Comment input field

Be the first to write a comment.

Recently viewed articles

- [Moving to iManage Work 10 in the Cloud: Universal App readiness](#)
- [iManage Cloud Onboarding Welcome Package](#)
- [iManage Cloud on Azure Resource Guide](#)
- [Next steps when kicking off a new iManage Cloud on Azure Onboarding project](#)
- [Managing Cloud Service Updates in iManage Cloud on Azure](#)



Head Office:
CHICAGO

71 S. Wacker Drive
Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60606

[View all of our locations](#)

Main: (312) 667-7000
Support: (312) 626-8822
Fax: (312) 382-1753