



Open Nudge

Transparent change for the AI era

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most AI transformations fail at the human layer. Open Nudge guides people through AI change without forcing or deceiving them.

Why AI transformations stall

Adoption is no longer the question. Value is. Organizations are pouring money into AI and seeing little return, and the barrier is not the technology. It is the people and the organization around it.

95%

of generative AI pilots show no measurable profit (MIT, 2025)

10%

of AI success comes from the algorithm; the rest is people and process (BCG, 2025)

32%

US public trust in AI, with about half of workers worried about their jobs (Edelman, Pew, 2025)

Introducing AI changes who does what, and people resist when their roles and livelihoods are in play. The usual response makes it worse.

The two responses that backfire

Force

Mandates buy compliance without commitment. You get a redesigned organization staffed by people doing the old work in new boxes.

Covert persuasion

Managing the message works only until people notice. Once a choice looks engineered, trust collapses and does not return.

AI sharpens both risks. Jobs are at stake, the workforce is alert to being managed, and trust is thin.

A third way: influence people can see

Open Nudge keeps what makes change work, leaders framing real choices rather than dictating them, and removes the part that fails under scrutiny. It uses influence that is always visible to the people it affects.

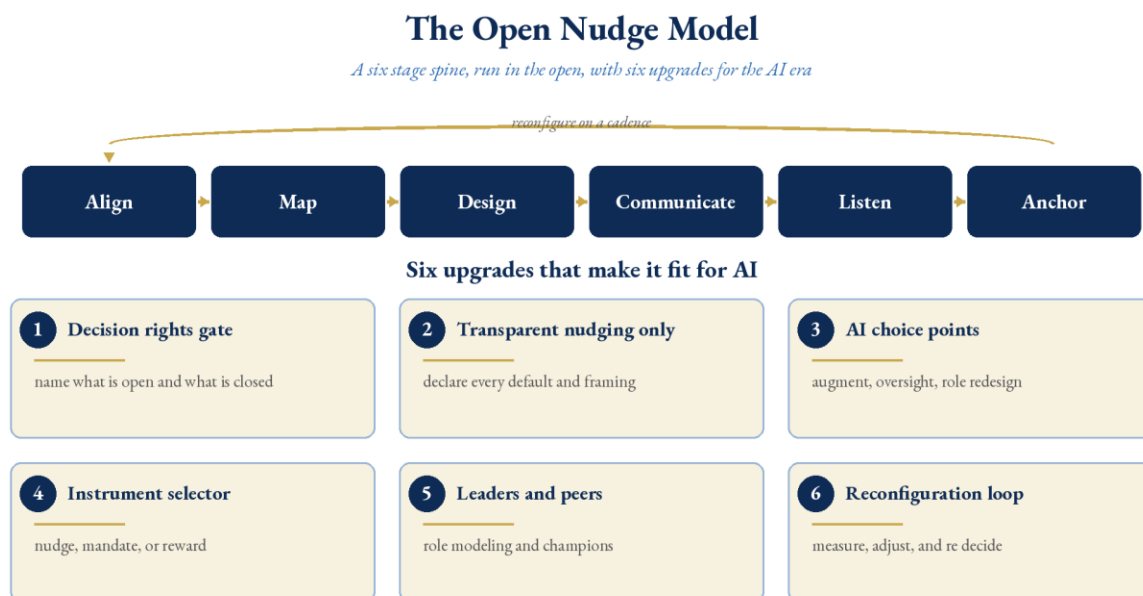
A disclosed nudge does not stop working.

This is not a hope. Across multiple studies, informing people about a default did not reduce its effect, and disclosing it openly sometimes increased compliance. The supposed trade-off between being honest and being effective is, for the decisions that matter in a transformation, largely an illusion.

The evidence. Transparent nudges retained their effect across repeated experiments (Loewenstein, 2015; Bruns, 2018; Michaelsen, 2024). You do not have to choose between an honest process and an effective one.

The Open Nudge model

Open Nudge is a six-stage approach, run in the open, with six upgrades that make it fit for AI implementation and organizational design. The stages carry the work. The upgrades carry what is different about doing it for AI.



What the six upgrades give you

1 Decision-rights gate

Your people always know what is open for input and what is already decided. No false choices.

2 Transparent nudging only

Influence is always declared, so trust survives contact with daylight.

3 AI choice points

Engagement happens on the decisions that shape the work: augmentation, oversight, and roles.

4 Instrument selector

The right tool for each decision: mandate the guardrails, nudge the rest, reward what works.

5 Leaders and peers

Adoption spreads through visible use by leaders and peers, not through memos.

6 Reconfiguration loop

The change keeps pace with AI through measurement and a regular reset.

What working together looks like

A structured engagement runs through six stages, each with a clear decision gate and your people in the room. The tools and dashboards are licensed to you, so the capability stays in house.

Stage	What happens
Align	The coalition, the change team, and a clear map of what is open versus closed.
Map	The road map, the choice points, and a baseline for your key metrics.
Design	Transparent nudges and the right instrument for each decision.
Communicate	A clear story, delivered manager first, with nothing landing as a surprise.
Listen	Upward feedback, answered openly, with the plan adjusted in view.
Anchor	Measured results, a reset cadence, and the loop handed to your team.

What you receive

Every engagement leaves your organization with durable assets, not a dependency on outside help.

- A clear map of which AI decisions are open to your people and which are already made.
- A practical engagement plan with decision gates and named owners.
- Transparent nudges, stated in plain language, that your leaders can stand behind.
- A live dashboard of adoption, fluency, cycle time, and the leadership to workforce gap.
- A reset cadence, with the tools licensed to you and the loop owned by your team.

Why it works. Among AI leaders, executives are about three times more likely to use the tools themselves, and redesigning the work is the single biggest driver of returns (McKinsey, 2025). Open Nudge builds both in.

The model is the method. The assessment is where it starts.

Start with the gap.

A readiness assessment reveals where leadership and the workforce differ. That gap is the clearest early signal of whether adoption will hold, and it is where Open Nudge begins.

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Organizational Design for the AI Era