

Change Impact Heatmap Template

A change impact heatmap visually summarises how different parts of the organisation are affected by a change. It helps leaders identify which teams, processes, and roles face the most disruption, enabling targeted communication, training, and support.

1. Purpose of This Tool

- ☐ Assess the level and type of impact a change will have across the organisation.
- ☐ Prioritise areas needing greater support and engagement.
- ☐ Improve communication and training planning.
- ☐ Provide a clear visual summary for leadership and governance.
- ☐ Support proactive management of high-impact areas.

Tip: A well-structured heatmap ensures resources are focused where they are needed most.

2. Change Overview

Field	Details
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Change Initiative	
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Sponsor	
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Change Manager	
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Affected Departments	
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Review Date	
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- ☐ Record key details before mapping impacts.

Tip: Ensure all departments or functions are represented in the assessment.

3. Impact Categories

Category	Description	Example
Process Impact	Changes to workflows, approvals, or standard procedures.	New reporting structure.
System Impact	Technology or tool upgrades affecting daily tasks.	New CRM implementation.
Role Impact	Shifts in responsibilities or required skills.	Team leads taking on new management duties.
Cultural Impact	Changes to norms, values, or collaboration styles.	Moving from in-office to hybrid working.
Customer Impact	External-facing effects of internal changes.	New customer onboarding process.

☐ Identify which categories apply to your change.

Tip: Consider both direct and indirect impacts.

4. Impact Rating Scale

Rating	Definition
1 – Minimal	Minor or no noticeable effect on work.
2 – Low	Small adjustment required, no major disruption.
3 – Moderate	Noticeable change requiring training or support.
4 – High	Significant disruption or learning required.
5 – Severe	Major change to role, process, or structure.

☐ Use this scale to score impacts consistently.

Tip: Base ratings on both the scale of change and the number of people affected.

5. Change Impact Assessment Table

Department / Function	Process Impact (1–5)	System Impact (1–5)	Role Impact (1–5)	Cultural Impact (1–5)	Customer Impact (1–5)	Average Score	Comments / Notes
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☐ Score each department using the 1–5 scale and record any observations.

Tip: Discuss scores with department heads for accuracy and shared understanding.

6. Impact Heatmap Visual (Optional)

Impact Range Colour Code Description

4.1 – 5.0	Red	Severe impact – high focus area.
3.1 – 4.0	Orange	Significant impact – additional support required.
2.1 – 3.0	Yellow	Moderate impact – monitor progress and readiness.
1.0 – 2.0	Green	Low impact – minimal intervention needed.

☐ Apply these colour codes to your table using Word's shading options.

Tip: The heatmap should make high-impact areas instantly visible to decision-makers.

7. Key Impact Insights

Area Summary of Impact Primary Cause Recommended Action

☐ Summarise key findings from the impact assessment.

Tip: Use insights to inform readiness plans and stakeholder engagement priorities.

8. Mitigation and Support Plan

Department / Function High-Impact Area Support Action Owner Deadline Status

☐ Define actions to support high-impact areas through communication, training, or resources.

Tip: The more visible the mitigation, the more confident employees will feel.

9. Communication and Training Alignment

Impact Level	Communication Strategy	Training Strategy	Responsible Owner
Low	Include in general updates only.	No specific training required.	
Moderate	Provide targeted updates via team channels.	Short, focused learning sessions.	
High	Regular updates and leadership engagement.	Detailed role-specific training.	
Severe	Dedicated change manager support and ongoing monitoring.	Full retraining and transition plan.	

☐ Align communication and training to the impact severity level.

Tip: Tailored interventions save time and improve adoption.

10. Risk and Dependency Log

Impact Area Related Risk / Dependency Impact (H/M/L) Mitigation Owner

☐ Track dependencies and potential risks linked to high-impact changes.

Tip: Review this log regularly during governance meetings.

11. Review and Updates

Review Date Key Changes Since Last Review New Risks or Impacts Action Taken

☐ Update this section as change progresses and impacts evolve.

Tip: Treat the heatmap as a living document throughout the change journey.

12. Summary for Leadership

Category	Key Observations	Recommended Action	Owner
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High-Impact Areas			
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Quick Wins Identified			
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Additional Support Needed			
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Communication Focus			
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☐ Use this summary to brief leadership teams or steering groups.

Tip: Keep leadership focused on removing blockers and reinforcing support.

How to Use This Template

Use this heatmap early in the change planning process and update it as implementation unfolds. Combine it with the Change Readiness Checklist, Stakeholder Engagement Map, and Transformation Dashboard to prioritise focus and resources effectively across your organisation.

Notes