

# Innovation Implementation Checklist

How do you get from a brilliant idea to a real new path to success?

## ⇒ Strategic Alignment

- How does this innovation serve your mission/ most vital goal?
- What are your organization's current strengths? Does this innovation further enhance these strengths? Is there a risk that it would dampen/ hinder them?
- What are your organization's current challenges? Does this innovation provide a full or partial solution to any of them? Is there a risk that it would deepen any of them?
- What is your organization's outlook for the next 1, 5, 10 years? How does this innovation advance your operational plan?

## ⇒ Product Alignment

- How does the innovation help the product/ service you are offering? (if at all)
- Does the innovation help your organization enhance its understanding of your industry, your competitors? Will your market analysis look different once this innovation is operationalized?
- Will you position your product/ service differently once this innovation is integrated? What will that look like, and what are the pros and cons?

## ⇒ Process Alignment

- How does this innovation fit into the process your business currently has in place for doing what it does? (AI example: If you are bringing AI into the product/ service you are taking to market, your process may be minimally affected; if you are bringing AI into the process leading to your product/ service, your product may be minimally altered while your operations may be drastically transformed. Or it can be both! And it often is. Understanding these implications early on is vital.)
- Is there an external component to how the innovation impacts your processes? (Examples: AI for supply chain management, mining forecasting)

## ⇒ Cross-team Identification of Use Cases and ROIs

- What is the ideal combination of teams or colleagues across your organization that would bring both relevancy and breadth of perspectives to engaging with this innovation?
- Can this cross-departmental team quickly work to identify use cases and estimate ROI for quick-win/low-hanging-fruit implementation of this innovation? (This will jumpstart the process of going from idea to implementation)
  - Implementation pathways that result from the work of this internal taskforce/ committee do not have to be acted upon. It is essential to make that clear to the taskforce from the start. But the exercise of imagining these use cases, their utility, and pathways to implementation is paramount for stakeholder management.

## ⇒ Decide implementation model

- Questions to consider: are you starting with a pilot or rolling out a more complex set of changes? Are you building in house or buying/ outsourcing, or a combination of the

two? Will the implementation team be internal or are you bringing in an external party?

### ⇒ Readiness Assessment

- Data Readiness
  - Is your organization ready to take the leap? How do you make it ready if it is not there yet?
  - Focus on legal and technical security to address those critical areas of concern before any implementation resource allocation begins
- Resource Readiness (bandwidth, HR, capital, real estate)
  - A consultant who can share anonymized experiences from peers or an advisory board that can bring details on success stories can make a real difference in not underestimating or overestimating resource allocation.

### ⇒ What will Success Look Like?

- Use the alignment exercises outlined above to provide a detailed answer to this question. It will also help tremendously with stakeholder management.
- Metrics for measuring success
  - Integrate with your KPIs. Do not measure in isolation. Stay up to date on industry benchmarks to the extent to which these exist.

### ⇒ Implementation

- Strategies and Tactics
  - Write these out. Socialize them across your organization.
- Chain of Decision-making and Responsibility
  - Be as clear as possible, and be prepared to be nimble. That goes for any workflow, but especially with innovation implementation.
- Timelines and Progress Assessment
  - Review progress regularly and pivot as needed, as many times as needed. (AI example: the technology and its understanding are changing so fast that you need to build in the contingency that your process and your timeframe will change during implementation. Make this known to your teams before implementation begins.)

### ⇒ Impact Measurement & Scaling

- When your innovation implementation is underway, and you have begun seeing results, ask whether you want to continue measuring impact (no to low action), plan for continuous improvement (moderate action), or either pause or scale (drastic action either way).