

# ACTIVE SPONSORSHIP

## Implementation



### Active sponsorship

Ensuring there is effective and active sponsorship is the key to successful and efficient implementation. Implementation is the most active phase for sponsors; their actions drive the pace of implementation.

### Implementation

The purpose of this phase is to effectively implement the solutions you have developed, so they become the new way of working.

## Key points

### 1. Identify your sponsors

After identifying the departments and teams that will be impacted by the change, determine all of the sponsors who will play a role in the change. These are the people managing the teams impacted and the managers that sit above them, and so on. Accelerating Implementation Methodology has a tool called a key role map that may assist you.

### 2. Identify required behaviours

Identify the behaviour changes that individuals and teams will need to make to implement the project successfully. Sponsors need this information to enable them to talk about the change (express), demonstrate the change themselves (model) and reinforce behaviours. Expressing is when sponsors talk about the change at every opportunity, telling the audience why it is personally important to them.

### 3. Sponsor meetings

Set up frequent meetings with the sponsor to keep communication lines open. Project leaders need to provide sponsors with progress information and accurately report the successes and barriers in the process. Leads and sponsors need to work together to determine actions required to promote the change. For example, the project lead may produce information for the sponsor, and the sponsor may present this at the next staff meeting.

### 4. Monitor effectiveness

Project leads also play an active role in monitoring if the change is happening. If no behaviour change is occurring, it's important to understand what factors are working against the change. Is there a problem with the change that is making it difficult to adopt? Is the communication process working? Do teams know what's expected? Are the sponsor actively role modelling and rewarding the right change?

## Considerations and tips

Active sponsorship occurs when the sponsor is engaged and has clarity around what is expected. It is the change agent's responsibility to ensure that the sponsor understands what you need them to do to fast track implementation.

### Agreed strategy

Active sponsorship goes hand in hand with change facilitation. Develop an action plan that lists what needs to be expressed and when, the modelling actions to take, and how the sponsors will recognise and reinforce the change at key times. This plan needs to be agreed with sponsors and monitored.

### Get creative!

Brainstorm appropriate reinforcement options with the teams to consider what might work (reward, recognition and consequences). Include your team members in these conversations, as they will be directly affected. The most effective reinforcement strategies are often suggested by the groups that are most impacted by the change.

### Support for sponsors

Sponsors may not feel that they have the skills to apply the suggested strategies for reward or consequence. Ensure that you have explored this with your sponsor and consider whether peer support would help to implement the 'express, model and reinforcement plan'.

### Ease the way

Make it easy for your sponsor. Maintain a good relationship and encourage your sponsor by giving them positive feedback regarding the impact of their actions. Work together to monitor the effectiveness of the 'express, model and reinforcement' plan to determine if it needs review, and agree on new strategies to progress the change.

## Express model reinforce



## Further information

[My Health Learning Log in Form](#) – Redesign Implementation (202464792): Generate Sponsorship  
Project Management Institute White Paper: “Executive Engagement: The Role of the Sponsor”  
– [www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/documents/public/pdf/business-solutions/executive-engagement.pdf](http://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/documents/public/pdf/business-solutions/executive-engagement.pdf)

## Next steps

Remember that great change facilitators bring their teams along on the journey with them, rather than trying to force a change. Encourage your sponsor to express, model, and reinforce the change implementation and support them by giving feedback on their impact.