

CHANGE MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

A COMPREHENSIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH SUPPORTS SUCCESSFUL ERP IMPLEMENTATION, AND MORE.

An international contracting and procurement agency began implementation of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. West Monroe Partners applied an effective change management approach that not only won the support and involvement of users, but provided a model for future organizational change initiatives.

WINNING STAFF SUPPORT FOR A NEW ERP SYSTEM.

To deliver on its mission, the client—a public corporation that serves as an international contracting and procurement agency—sought to implement a single enterprise resource planning (ERP) system that would replace its legacy ERP system and related applications used for workflow, document management, and other functions. After a thorough search, the company chose Agresso Business World ERP due to the system's flexibility and fit with business needs.

In implementing the new system, one of the company's key goals was to gain the support and involvement of its staff. When the company implemented its existing ERP application five years earlier, the new system met with substantial resistance—employees quickly asked to return to “old” ways of working.

With West Monroe Partners already serving as its ERP implementation partner, the company began to evaluate the obstacles and risks that led to the difficult transition onto the legacy ERP. When winning the support and participation of its workers was identified as one of the largest issues for its legacy system, the company turned to West Monroe Partners for change management assistance.

PREPARING USERS FOR CHANGES TO COME.

West Monroe Partners designed an approach that fit not only with ERP implementation plans, but also with current, management-led efforts to shift the company's business strategy and culture. The change management approach focused on preparing users for the changes to come—with training sessions beginning some four weeks prior to the system's “go-live” date and continuing

for several weeks afterward. During the post “go-live” training sessions, users were encouraged to bring their current work tasks to use as examples and receive immediate hands-on assistance by the trainers. This approach enabled users to build and reinforce their new system skills over a longer period of time and helped to reduce errors within the first few weeks since training and support was readily available.

In addition to training, the project management team implemented a variety of other communication tactics, designed to ensure that users had sufficient information:

- ◆ Brown-bag system demonstrations
- ◆ Quizzes with gift certificates as prizes for participation
- ◆ “Office hours”—informal sessions that provided users the opportunity to ask questions

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the project team engaged both company leaders and users in discussion about the purposes and benefits of a new ERP solution. This included conducting KPI-focused discussions with company vice presidents, as well as information sessions involving vice presidents and their teams. These sessions not only demonstrated commitment from the top; they enabled users to provide input and recommendations.

A NEW APPROACH TO CHANGE.

User and management feedback indicates that the change management program has achieved its goals. Users report that they know what they are supposed to do, and when—and resistance to the new ways of working has been minimal. Company leaders recognize the importance of a focus on people during periods of changes—a principle they already are applying to other change efforts.

West Monroe Partners is an international, full-service business and technology consulting firm focused on guiding organizations through projects that fundamentally transform their business. With the experience to create the most ambitious visions as well as the skills to implement the smallest details of our clients' most critical projects, West Monroe Partners is a proven provider of growth and efficiency to large enterprises, as well as more nimble middle-market organizations. Our more than 300 consulting professionals drive better business results by harnessing our collective experience across a range of industries, serving clients out of offices across the United States and Canada.