

Rolling It Out Across Your Team

Five steps, in order. One department. Thirty days. One workflow at a time.

Most AI rollouts fail the same way. Somebody buys seats, sends an announcement, and waits. Nothing happens, and six weeks later the owner decides AI does not work for their business. With forty people it is worse: three departments start three different ways, and nobody can say which one is working.

The tool was never the problem.

It was the order. Here is the order that works.

Set up the pilot

Pilot department	Rollout owner (the trusted manager)	Who runs the check-ins (owner or GM)
Start date	Day 30 review date	Hours per week the rollout owner gets

WHAT STOPS THE PILOT

Agree on this before you start, so nobody argues about it in week three. A rule that works: the pilot ends at day 30, or sooner if two check-ins in a row have nothing to report. Either way, you review before you decide anything.

Our rule

1 Pick the department with the loudest complaint

Not the biggest opportunity. Not the department with the most enthusiasm. The loudest complaint: something one specific person gripes about out loud, every week.

Enthusiasm fades in about three weeks. A complaint that has been there for a year is still there in month two, and the team will help you fix it instead of defending how it works now. You want a job that is repetitive, predictable, and annoying.

The department and workflow we are starting with

Who complains about it, and what they say

Roughly how many hours a week it takes today

2 Name one rollout owner, and make it your most trusted manager

Not you. Not your most technical person. The manager in that department the team already goes to when they are stuck.

Adoption is a trust problem wearing a technology costume.

If the person leading this is someone people trust, they will ask questions. If it is the person who is good with computers but nobody talks to, they will not. And you cannot run the pilot and protect it at the same time, which is why it is not you.

WHAT THE ROLLOUT OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR

Runs the first setup. Answers the “is this okay to use for” questions, using the data policy from section 2. Protects the pilot for thirty days. Tells you what the team did with it every two weeks. Reports back at day 30. That is it. This is not a second job.

3 Build the first one together, out loud, in a room

Do not send instructions. Do not record a training video yet. Get the people who do the work in one room, or on one shared screen, open the tool where everyone can see it, and build the thing together while talking it through.

People need to see someone fumble with it. A polished demo teaches them that it works for you. A live build teaches them that they could do it.

Rules for the session

- One screen, everyone watching
- Questions welcome mid-build
- Nobody takes notes, because you are saving the result
- Use files your data policy clears, not the folder with everything in it

Date scheduled

Who is in the room

Where the finished setup gets saved so everyone can reuse it

4 Wait thirty days before you measure

You will want a verdict in week one. Do not take one.

The first two weeks are people forgetting to use it, using it badly, and quietly deciding whether it is worth the trouble. A number pulled at day 10 tells you about the learning curve, not the workflow. Thirty days, no earlier.

THE TWO-WEEK CHECK-IN

Every two weeks, the person running the check-ins asks the rollout owner one question:

What did the team do with it this week that they could not do before?

Two answers of nothing in a row means the pilot picked the wrong complaint. It does not mean AI failed. Go back to step 1 with the next loudest complaint.

CHECK-IN	DATE	WHAT THE ROLLOUT OWNER SAID
Day 14		
Day 28		

Do this now

Put the check-ins and the day 30 review on the calendar today, with the rollout owner invited. What you will measure is in section 4: four numbers, one workflow.

5 Read silence as confusion, not resistance

At some point it will go quiet. Nobody is using it, nobody is complaining, nothing is happening.

The instinct is to read that as pushback. It is almost always simpler: people do not know what to use it for. That is a leadership problem, not a team problem, and it usually gets fixed in one department meeting where somebody asks the question they were embarrassed to ask.

► THE ONE QUESTION TO ASK WHEN IT GOES QUIET

What did you try to use it for that did not work?

Ask it out loud, to the room, and wait. Do not fill the silence.

Notes from the quiet period

After thirty days

Three outcomes, three responses.

It worked

Write down what the setup was and who owns it. Then run this checklist again on the next loudest complaint, in the next department. One department at a time is not slow. It is the only pace that sticks.

It half worked

Usually the workflow was too big. Cut it in half and run another thirty days on the smaller piece.

It did not work

Ask whether the tool was wrong for the job before you conclude the job cannot be done. Check the decision guide in section 1. Picking the wrong tool for the work is the most common reason a pilot stalls.

Day 30 review

Fill this in at the review, with the rollout owner in the room.

What happened

- ☐ It worked
- ☐ It half worked
- ☐ It did not work

What the setup is, and who owns it now

What we are doing next, and by when

Next department

Next rollout owner

Next start date
