

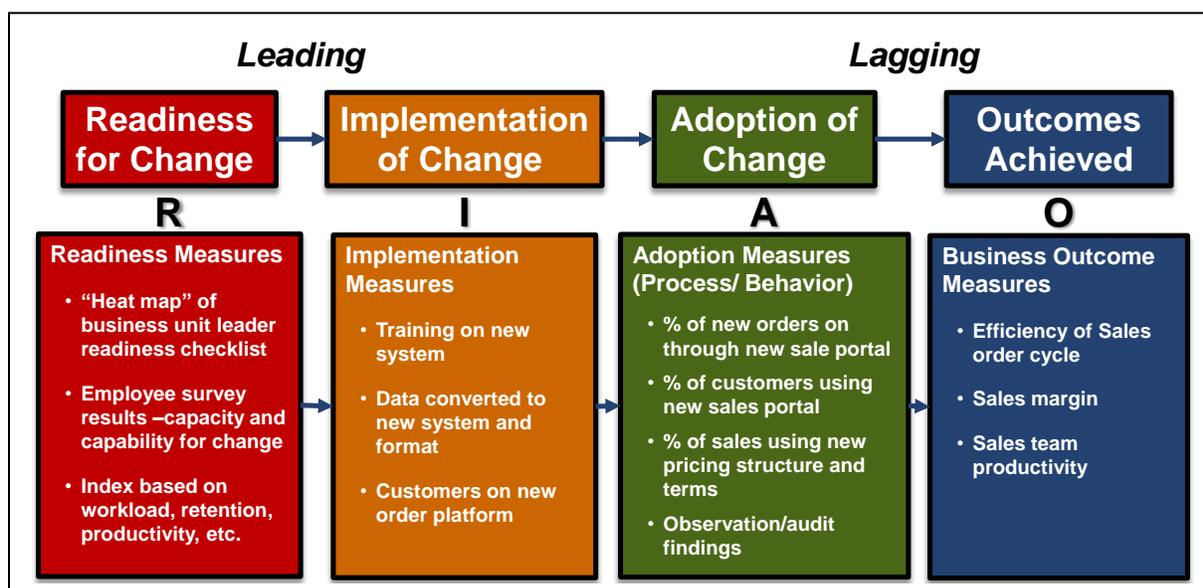
## Measuring Change

by Joe Kilbride, May 2015

### How do we measure change? RIAO is the answer.

In most organizations approaches to measure change are either non-existent or ineffective. Many have simply given up on the idea of measuring change; others have implemented some subjective measures, often using employee survey data, but lack a well-defined process for using these results to more effectively manage the change.

A better approach is based on the view that change is a process and like any process is best managed using an integrated system of in-process and outcome measures. Below is an example of possible RIAO measures at four stages: *Readiness*, *Implementation*, *Adoption* and achievement of business *Outcomes*. The example involves a new system designed to improve Sales efficiency and effectiveness.



**Readiness** – These are the measures used to understand each units readiness to implement change. This might include a “heat map” based on a readiness checklist updated periodically by leaders of the affected units. Other possibilities are to use employee surveys or a homegrown index of factors to assess the capability and capacity for change within specific units. This might evaluate workload, other pending projects and resource commitments. Think of readiness measures as signals more than valid, objective measures. As such, the key is to have a clear process for responding to the results. For example, you might stage deployment to different areas based on readiness, or you might identify the five areas with the lowest readiness score and deploy a Change SWAT team to identify and address the issues within these areas prior to implementation of the change.

**Implementation** – These are the typical project measures that focus on completion of the types of activities required to implement any new system or process. What is the number or percent of: Staff that have been trained? Users assigned login credentials? Databases that have been converted? Customers that have been migrated?

**Adoption** – These are measures of whether or not the targets of change (e.g., sales and support staff, customers, etc.) are using the new process or exhibiting the desired behaviors. What percent of orders are being entered through the new system or use the new pricing structure and terms? In addition, an observation calendar should be implemented in each area and the findings rolled up to report the results of observations of the new or modified processes.

**Outcomes** – These are the measures of whether the desired business results that were the reason to initiate the change in the first place are being realized. Often (not always) these are measures that were included in the original business case used to gain approval for a project. These are essential because it is possible for many to consider the implementation a “success” even though business performance declines as a result.

### ***Conclusion***

A system of RIAO measures like this example must be customized to reflect the leading (readiness and implementation) and lagging (adoption and outcome) indicators that are specific to each change. Readiness and Implementation measures are reviewed frequently during the months and weeks prior to go-live. Adoption and Outcome measures are reviewed every 30-90 days until results demonstrate consistent and sustained improvement.

Recognize that measures are not enough. They are only effective if leaders adopt new practices including performing the required observations, monitoring results, recognizing high performers and holding unit managers accountable for both adoption and outcome achievement.

This type of measurement system is a natural by-product of an understanding that major change is always evolutionary in nature. It enables organizations to adopt a continuous improvement mindset that dramatically enhances the likelihood of successfully managing change to achieve the desired business results.