MINNESOTA

Modernization Playbook

A framework to transform how we deliver value through Minnesota's programs and services

State employee resources

The Modernization Playbook is a common, end-to-end outline for consistent roles, language, and activities to streamline and improve access to modern government services through Minnesota's executive branch.

The Governor's Blue Ribbon Council on Information Technology, which consisted of a group of private and public sector information technology experts, developed the Modernization Playbook to ensure that the State of Minnesota's IT systems and government programs work together efficiently to deliver value to the people of Minnesota.

While the Playbook is powered by Minnesota IT Services (MNIT), a team of project management professionals of technical and non-technical staff across Minnesota’s executive branch are helping state agencies to incorporate the Playbook framework into new and existing business and project management processes.

State employees can find training and resources to implement the Modernization Playbook on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

Modernization Playbook phases

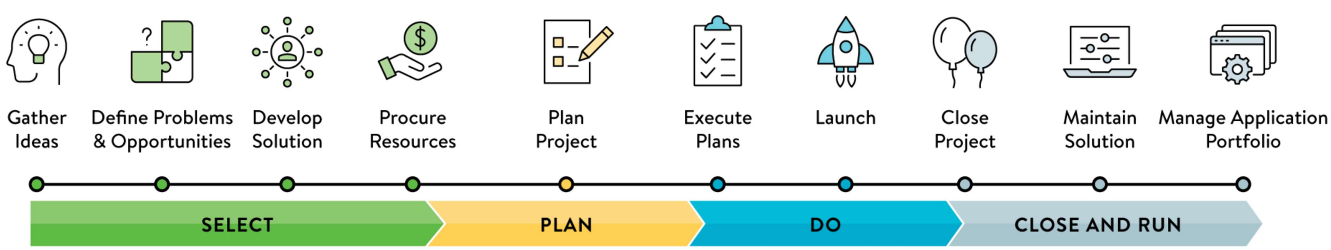
Why does the State of Minnesota need to modernize its systems and processes?

Align priorities across agencies and improve end user access: A modernization-focused state government improves Minnesotans’ experiences accessing government services.

Complete projects on time and in budget: Modernization helps to realize cost-savings and efficiencies as Minnesota streamlines access to systems, services, and programs. It creates more secure and better supported technology systems and applications.

Put a greater focus on solutions that meet that needs of the people we serve. Modernization efforts center around people and their experiences, allowing the State of Minnesota to focus on finding new ways to address barriers to services.

Modernization Playbook phases and plays



Playbook phase:

Select

Define the change

The Select Phase identifies and defines the problem you are trying to solve and its root causes, who might be impacted by a change, and how you will measure success. State agencies drive this work with a clear and repeatable idea intake process. Then, they determine which ideas move forward for more detailed planning.

Play 1: Gather ideas

To foster innovation from within all ranks of the agency, agencies evaluate ideas through a documented process. This allows agencies to prioritize ideas and look for opportunities to combine related ideas into one initiative.

Questions

- What are the high-level impacts of problems or opportunities this idea addresses?
- How does this problem or opportunity compare to our other priorities?
- Which idea(s) should be approved to move forward?
- Could some ideas be combined into one initiative?
- Could some of the ideas be operationalized as immediate tasks for existing teams?
- How does the idea or project align with our agency's core capabilities?

Activities

- Evaluate submitted ideas against set criteria; re-evaluate as new ideas are submitted.
- Prioritize submitted ideas; re-prioritize as new ideas are submitted.
- Look for opportunities to combine related ideas into one initiative.
- Determine which ideas go forward into the Select Phase or which requests may be moved to immediate tasks for existing teams.

Roles

- Leadership
- Idea initiator (the person submitting the idea)
- Business architect and/or business analyst
- Business portfolio manager
- IT portfolio manager
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Agencies should work to establish an executive decision-making (aka "governance") body to review and prioritize ideas and requests for projects, to ensure the investment of resources serves to support the agency's core business functions or strategic plans. To learn more about establishing a governance body at your agency, state employees can access helpful information here on the Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery collaboration site.
- Approved idea with authorization to develop a business case, or decision to put the work on hold.

STOP: Approval 1

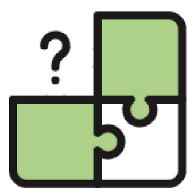
Decide which ideas or project work move forward for more detailed Business Case planning. Agency and IT leadership should be involved in this approval process. State employees can find training and resources to set up an executive decision-making team on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

Ask:

- Which ideas or project requests align with state and/or agency strategies?

Play 2: Define problems and opportunities

Compare where we are now, and where we want to be. What will it take to get there? What processes, systems, or barriers stand in the way? Engage with stakeholders and groups to dig into real causes of the problems. You may use a human-centered design approach – bringing stakeholders into the conversation from the beginning and building solutions that meet their needs.



Questions

- What are the root causes of the pain points you are trying to solve? Who is impacted by those pain points?
- What would an ideal process look like?
- What are key metrics that define outcomes?
- What are the gaps between the current and future states?
- How does the idea or project align with our agency's core capabilities?

Activities

- Identify and measure impacts of pain points/opportunities based on agency priorities and stakeholders.
- Conduct root-cause analysis for the pain points or opportunities.
- Define ideal processes and outcomes that matter to your agency or the people you serve.
- Conduct a gap analysis between the current and future states.

Roles

- Leadership
- Business analyst or project manager
- Business architect
- Business portfolio manager
- IT portfolio manager
- Product owner
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Draft a partial business case that includes a problem statement, impact analysis, stakeholder list, future-state processes, success metrics, and gap analysis.
- State employees can find training and resources to draft a business case on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

Play 3: Develop solution

Identify a solution that looks at changing the way we work – business process improvements – and technology solution options. Avoid automating outdated and inefficient processes. Look for opportunities to use or leverage what is already in place so we don't introduce redundant systems.

Questions

- What are the high-level solution requirements? What is required to integrate that with our current systems and processes?
- Are there any constraints that may limit our solution options?
- What are potential solution options? What are the pros, cons, major risks, and feasibility for each option?
- Should new business processes be introduced, or existing processes modified?
- Are there existing technology solutions that would work?
- What do other government organizations do?
- What is our recommended solution?

Activities

- Discover high-level solution and integration requirements.
- Identify constraints.
- Conduct market & peer research.
- Identify in-place or new solution options and thoroughly evaluate each option.
- Recommend a solution.

Roles

- Leadership
- Business analyst or project manager
- Business portfolio manager
- Enterprise architects
- Finance
- IT portfolio manager
- Product owner
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Updated business case with solution options and a recommended solution.
- State employees can find training and resources to draft a business case on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

Play 4: Procure resources

Think about the resources you might need for your solution. This includes agency and IT staff and any financial investment. Decide if you need to build your technology solution, can purchase it or work with a vendor, or will combine both approaches.

Questions

- What are the procurement options available based on budget, timing, immediate needs, resource availability, and vendor options?
- What is the most beneficial and cost-effective procurement strategy?

Activities

- Identify and evaluate procurement options.
- Select a procurement strategy.

Roles

- Leadership
- Business analyst or project manager
- Business portfolio manager
- Enterprise architects
- Finance
- General counsel
- IT portfolio manager
- Product owner
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Completed business case that is at least 50% accurate.
- State employees can find training and resources to draft a business case on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

STOP: Approval 2

Get your business case approved. Steps 2, 3, and 4 bring together teams from agencies business, MNIT, and procurement to develop a business case.

Ask:

- Are there agency business processes and IT systems in place to support the solution?
- Is this technically possible?
- Do we have the resources?
- What else will be impacted?
- How will this be prioritized?
- Is more information needed?
- What are the objectives?
- What is the timeline and cost?
- What are the risks?
- Do we need a vendor?

Playbook phase:

Plan

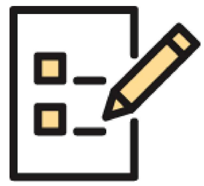
Plan the change

The Plan Phase results in a detailed set of project plans, which will include all the information to decide whether to fund and authorize a project. If appropriate, plans will also include the selected and contracted vendors.

Play 5: Plan project

Agency, MNIT, and procurement teams continue to work closely together to develop detailed project plans. The team should decide on a project approach, such as agile or waterfall. Finalize a contract with a vendor, if needed. Project plans will clearly outline scope, objectives, and how success is measured.

Think about user adoption and communication in your project plans.



Questions

- What methodology will be used to manage the project (agile, waterfall, or hybrid)?
- What are the detailed functional, non-functional, and organizational change requirements?
- Who are the stakeholder groups and how will they be involved?
- What project resources are needed?
- What is the timing for resources and timeline for tasks associated with the project?
- How will we coordinate with other related projects?
- What are the risks and associated response strategies?
- What are the best strategies for testing and launch?
- What is the detailed architecture and solution design (including interfaces)?
- What is the baseline scope, cost, and time?
- What is our change control process?
- What are your audiences' communication needs?
- What is the end user education/training plan?
- Has the vendor been selected, and contract completed (if appropriate)?

Activities

- Determine the project approach.
- Develop project management plans.
- Develop and distribute progress reports.
- Select vendor and approve contract (if appropriate).

Roles

- Leadership
- Business analyst
- Business portfolio manager
- Enterprise architects
- Finance
- General counsel
- IT portfolio manager
- Procurement specialist/contract managers
- Project sponsor
- Project champion
- Project manager
- Project team members
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders
- Vendor(s)

Deliverables

- Vendor contract (if appropriate).
- Progress reports.
- Project plans.
- State employees can find project planning resources on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

STOP: Approval 3

Get your project plans approved. This will allow for any final funding you need for execution.

Playbook phase:

Do

Implement the change

Your solution will be working and live for end users and Minnesotans to access. Before it goes live, agencies' decision-making bodies give the go/no-go decision. Engage end users every step of the way to test accessibility, security, and rollback plans.

Play 6: Execute plans

Create the changes you've laid out in your plans. Make sure to let end users or stakeholders know what changes might mean for them. Test as you go along to make sure the solution works for your end users.

There should be a transparent understanding of how the project is going throughout execution.

Questions

- If there is difference between our plan and how we are performing to cost, time, and/or scope? Why?
- Are our stakeholders included in testing? Does our solution align with what they're looking for?
- Are stakeholders educated, trained, and ready for launch?
- Is leadership engaged?
- Is the solution documented?

Activities

- Code and configure systems, migrate data, and build interfaces.
- Implement business process changes.
- Perform iterative testing and obtain stakeholder acceptance.
- Manage schedule, issues, and risks.
- Develop and distribute status reports.
- Cultivate or maintain leadership engagement.
- Develop training materials; educate and train end users and operations team.
- Complete solution documentation.
- Finalize go/no-go documentation and communications.

Roles

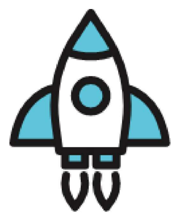
- Leadership
- Agile/product roles
- Business analyst
- Business portfolio manager
- Developers
- IT portfolio manager
- Operational & maintenance personnel
- Project champions
- Project sponsor
- Project manager
- Quality analyst
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders
- Vendors

Deliverables

- Tested and accepted solution.
- Training materials.
- Solution documentation.

Play 7: Launch

Launch when project deliverables have passed functional and usability testing, your stakeholders know what changes to expect, and you are ready to go live.



Questions

- Has the Project Sponsor or Product Owner issued the go/no-go decision?
- Is launch documentation completed?
- How will the launch be communicated and monitored?
- Is the solution validated by technical and business personnel?
- Has a launch notification been communicated to stakeholders?

Activities

- Validate solution in the production environment.
- Notify stakeholders about launch.
- Document launch readiness when go/no-go criteria are met.
  - Tested solution and launch strategy.
  - Trained and ready end users.
  - Documented solution.
  - Trained operations and maintenance personnel.
  - Support for post-launch and disaster recovery.
  - Complete data back-ups.
  - Tested rollback plan.
  - Verified launch date.
- Launch solution and execute communications plan.

Roles

- Leadership
- Agile/product roles
- Business analyst
- Developers
- Operations and maintenance personnel
- Project champions
- Project governance leadership
- Project manager
- Project sponsor
- Quality analyst
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders
- Vendors

Deliverables

- Go/no-go decision.
- Stakeholder communication plan.
- Solution and system documentation.
- User guide.
- Validated solution.
- State employees can find a checklist to hand off projects to an operations team on MNIT's Office of Transformation and Strategy Delivery's collaboration site (for executive branch employees).

Playbook phase:

Close and run

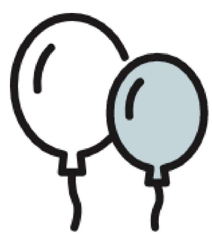
Sustain and benefit from the

change

Close your project and transition it to operations when you confirm that its objectives are met, meeting the needs of Minnesotans and agency strategic priorities. This may include a roadmap for future applications or efforts that further improve and modernize systems, programs, and services for Minnesotans.

Play 8: Close project

Transition a project to operations when you've confirmed that it has met its goals. Gather agency, IT, and procurement staff to document lessons learned and how processes might be improved for future projects.



Questions

- Is the project ready to close? Have project objectives been fulfilled?
- How do outcomes compare to our plan?
- Do we understand why it might be different?
- What lessons can we apply to future projects?
- Have vendors been evaluated and have we closed contracts?
- Is solution and project documentation complete?
- Do we have sign off from operations/maintenance personnel or end users?
- Are all critical issues and defects resolved?
- Are out-of-scope items documents?

Activities

- Perform project review.
- Confirm project deliverables are accepted and project objectives fulfilled.
- Document action items and issues.
- Summarize and report risk management outcomes.
- Close contracts and evaluate vendors.
- Develop and communicate project closure report.

Roles

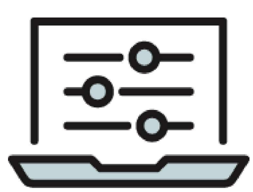
- Leadership
- Agile/product roles
- Business analyst
- Developers
- Operations and maintenance personnel
- Project champions
- Project governance leadership
- Project manager
- Project sponsor
- Quality analyst
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders
- Vendors

Deliverables

- Project close report.
- Lessons learned document.

Play 9: Maintain solution

Regularly review how well the solution is meeting its goals. Create processes to track and report on performance. Document whether any improvements to the solution need to be made.



Questions

- Are operational risks being managed?
- Are we meeting agreed-upon service levels?
- Is solution documentation updated?
- Could we support this solution more effectively and/or efficiently?

Activities

- Define, monitor, and manage operating risks.
- Implement, track, and report performance metrics.
- Maintain solution documentation.
- Recommend improvements.

Roles

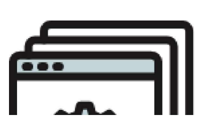
- Agency-based IT leadership
- Agency stakeholders
- Product owner
- Operations and maintenance personnel
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Operational reports.
- Maintained solution documentation.
- Improvement recommendations.

Play 10: Manage application portfolio

Use a dashboard and automation to create a roadmap for future and in-place applications. This will help you plan for modernization investments.



Questions

- Are we in compliance with licensing and contracts?
- Does investment in applications align with strategic priorities?
- What is the plan for future enhancements and maintenance?
- Are stakeholders satisfied with in-place applications?
- What is the technical health of the applications?
- What is the value of the applications?

Activities

- Comply with licensing and contract requirements.
- Manage and report the ongoing technical health and support.
- Develop and maintain the application roadmap.
- Align the application roadmap with strategic priorities.
- Ensure the application/solution continues to deliver value.
- Measure stakeholder satisfaction.

Roles

- Agency-based IT leadership
- Agency stakeholders
- Application portfolio manager
- Application subject matter experts
- Operations and maintenance personnel
- Product owner
- Relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders

Deliverables

- Application assessments and reports.
- Application roadmap aligned to agency's strategic priorities.
- Stakeholder satisfaction assessment and reports.