

7.

# Delivering a Successful AI Pilot Project



# 7. Delivering a Successful AI Pilot Project

---

## 1. Identify a genuine business need or problem

AI can potentially support a wealth of business areas and processes. Identifying areas where there is a genuine capacity need helps to make the pilot project more meaningful and increases the likelihood of buy-in from business leads and users.

## 2. Make sure managers in the business area are on board

AI pilot projects are likely to encounter blockers and may attract differing opinions from colleagues. Having senior-level support from the relevant business area is vital to keeping things moving.

## 3. Use simple AI tools to experiment and explore the problem

Before bringing in external expertise, experiment with readily available tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot. Paying a small monthly fee for these tools offers greater functionality and enhanced data protection capabilities - but make sure they comply with your data protection policies before entering any sensitive or personal information. Experimenting with these tools helps develop internal AI literacy and gives you a clearer idea of what is possible, the kind of prompts you would need to use and the kind of outputs you require. This can help improve your scope of requirements for any external support you want to bring in, potentially saving developer time and money.

## 4. Bring in external technical expertise where required

Whilst tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot are relatively simple to use for experimentation, technical support is likely to be required to create tools which can be tested and used by colleagues. This could come from within your organisation's IT department or through external consultancy.

## 5. Involve relevant colleagues in the whole process

AI projects typically require input from a range of colleagues. This may include colleagues from the business area you are supporting, colleagues with specialist skills and knowledge such as data, data protection, security and IT, and end users. Identify these colleagues at the start of the project and involve them throughout. Give end users the chance to inform the scope and test the output. Share learning regularly with all involved.

## 6. Run the pilot in a test environment

Running a pilot project in a test environment alongside the regular live process allows you to compare the two and makes sure that end users are not exposed to AI tools until they have been fully tested.