

The Non-Project Manager's Guide to Launching Software Changes

A two-page checklist for business leads who need to describe a bug or a feature in plain text.

Page 1 — Describe what is broken

Do not start with the screen you want. Start with the week you are living. Write in the words you already use at work.

☐ 1. What happens today?

Name the current path, including email, spreadsheets, and workarounds.

☐ 2. Who is stuck?

People, roles, customers, or volunteers—not “the business.”

☐ 3. What goes wrong?

Time, errors, cost, risk, or people giving up. Be specific.

☐ 4. What should be different when this works?

An outcome. “I am not sure how” is a valid answer.

☐ 5. Who can answer follow-up questions?

A reachable owner. This is not a project-manager field.

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Page 2 — Make it launchable

These five lines turn a complaint into a request someone can estimate. Leave a line blank rather than inventing a date or a vendor.

☐ **1. What timing window already applies?**

A busy season, a freeze, or a reason—not a fake go-live.

☐ **2. What cannot move?**

Vendors, policies, systems, or people who are already maxed out.

☐ **3. Who must learn a new way of working?**

Training and rollout are part of the size. Write names or roles.

☐ **4. How will you know it worked?**

One sentence the same owner can check after launch.

☐ **5. What are you not asking for?**

Say what is out. A shorter first change is easier to say yes to.

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