

The “What This Cost Us” Retrospective

Documenting the Cost of Inaction After the Fact

DIGITAL DOWNLOAD — EXCLUSIVE COMPANION RESOURCE

This retrospective documents what the organization lost by delaying, blocking, or deprioritizing an AI initiative. It's not a blame document—it's an evidence-based record that makes the cost of future inaction harder to justify. Use after a delayed initiative eventually launches, or after a blocked initiative's value becomes undeniable.

INITIATIVE DETAILS

INITIATIVE NAME

DATE FIRST PROPOSED

DATE FINALLY APPROVED / LAUNCHED

TOTAL DELAY (WEEKS/MONTHS)

COST ANALYSIS

COST CATEGORY	CALCULATION	AMOUNT	NOTES
Manual labor during delay	Hours/week × weeks × hourly rate		
Error/rework costs	Error rate × cost per error × period		
Opportunity cost	What those hours could have produced		
Competitive positioning	Market movement during delay		
Employee morale / turnover	If quantifiable		

Total Estimated Cost of Delay			
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FRAMING

Present this as organizational learning, not blame. “This is what we can recover by moving faster on the next initiative.” The retrospective’s power is prospective—it changes future decisions, not past ones.