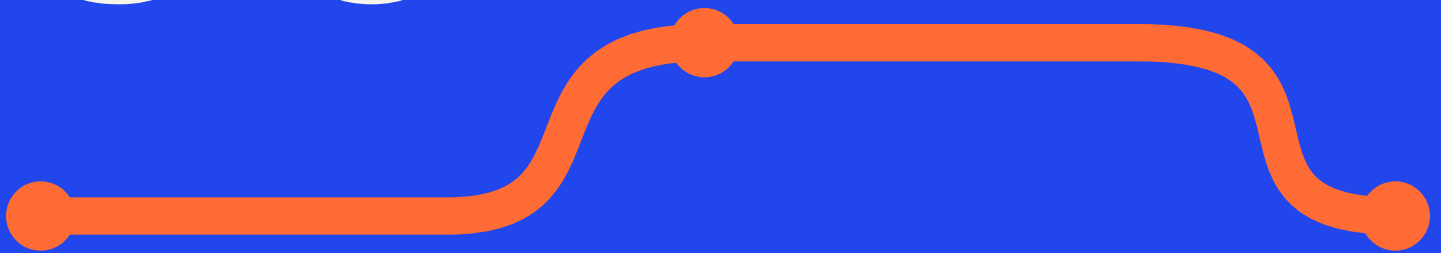


FIRST 90



Make the upgrade human.

A proposed 90-day approach to employee communications, manager support, and adoption measurement for federal AI rollouts.

Give the rollout a clear purpose.

Who this is for

Program leads, communications teams, managers, and contractor partners preparing to introduce an organization-approved AI tool.

The planning premise

A rollout needs a specific work purpose, an accountable sponsor, clear boundaries, and a practical path from introduction to supported use. FIRST 90 organizes those communications into three phases.

Before day one

Confirm the authorized environment, approved uses and data, review responsibilities, support contacts, and the decision owner. Communications do not grant permission to use a tool or expand its approved scope.

How to use this guide

Adapt the worksheets with your program team. The 90-day timing is a proposed planning structure, not a federal requirement. Replace every bracketed item in sample copy and have the appropriate owners review it before use.

What to keep visible

Describe what is known, what still needs a decision, and when people will hear more. Offer accessible formats and a practical way to ask questions.

One rollout. Different questions.

Use this as a starting map. Confirm actual roles, decision rights, and review responsibilities in your organization.

01 Program sponsor

Needs: a defined work problem, success criteria, and decisions requiring leadership. Message: begin with an approved use case and an accountable review plan. Action: confirm scope, resources, and the decision cadence.

02 Managers and team leads

Needs: what changes, time for practice, and answers they can use. Message: your team will get a briefing, a practice path, and named support. Action: hold a team discussion and surface unresolved concerns.

03 Employees and pilot participants

Needs: approved tasks, permitted data, output review expectations, and a place to get help. Message: understand the boundaries before the first task. Action: complete an approved exercise and share friction.

04 IT, security, privacy, accessibility and records owners

Needs: accurate claims, issue routing, and alignment with agency procedures. Message: communications will use the boundaries you validate. Action: approve relevant guidance and provide an escalation route.

A first 90 days with decision points.

01 / PREPARE / DAYS 1-30

Choose one approved work scenario. Interview a small cross-section of participants. Capture a baseline, publish an approved FAQ, brief managers, and schedule supported practice. Decision at day 30: are scope, support, and review responsibilities clear enough to begin?

02 / PRACTICE / DAYS 31-60

Run guided exercises in the approved environment. Keep the cohort and task definition stable enough to interpret feedback. Offer office hours, log unresolved questions, and revise instructions. Decision at day 60: what must improve before broader use?

03 / SUSTAIN / DAYS 61-90

Repeat the selected work task, compare quality and completion evidence, refresh manager guidance, and identify ongoing owners. Decision at day 90: continue, adjust, expand within approved scope, or pause?

The calendar supports decisions. Readiness and authorization determine when a team moves forward.

Define the rollout.

Complete together before drafting an announcement. Use only non-sensitive planning information in this portfolio template.

Program and accountable owner

Approved tool, environment and work task

Who is in the cohort, and what changes for them?

Which uses and data are permitted? Who confirms this?

What evidence will show useful, acceptable-quality work?

Support route, escalation owner and next decision date

Help managers answer the first questions.

Adapt this five-part briefing. Bracketed text requires a program-specific answer before use.

Open with the purpose

We are introducing [approved tool] to support [specific work task]. For this phase, [cohort] will work within [approved scope]. The program owner is [name or role].

Explain what people need to do

Please review [approved guidance] and complete [practice activity] by [date]. Allow [time] for the activity. Use only the permitted data and environment described in that guidance.

Set the review expectation

Follow [approved output review procedure] before relying on or sharing a result. If a result appears wrong or a use is unclear, use [support route].

Invite questions without promising answers you do not have

What would make this useful in your work? What is unclear? What support would help? I will send unresolved questions to [owner] and share the next update on [date].

Close the loop

After the conversation, record themes, decisions needed, and responsible owners. Share a concise update that identifies what changed and what remains open.

Write answers people can act on.

Owner: [role] / Review date: [date] / Approved guidance: [location]

What can I use the tool for?

Use [tool] only for [approved tasks] in [approved environment]. The current guidance is at [location], owned by [role] and last reviewed on [date].

What information may I enter?

Follow [approved data-handling instructions]. If the information or use case is not covered, ask [named review route] before entering it.

Can I use its output immediately?

Apply [required review procedure] before use. Identify who checks factual accuracy, completeness, suitability, and any other program-specific requirements.

What if a result is inaccurate or inappropriate?

Use [support route] and follow [incident or issue procedure]. Include only the information permitted by that procedure. Do not paste sensitive content into an unapproved help channel.

Is participation required? Will my work change?

State the actual decision: [participation expectations], [changes to work], and [what remains undecided]. Do not promise employment outcomes or individual performance benefits.

How will feedback be used?

Explain [feedback channels], [who reviews feedback], [how findings will be reported], and [next update date]. Describe the actual collection and retention practices.

A dependable update rhythm.

Days 1-10 / Listen and define

Communications lead: interview participants and managers; establish top questions. Sponsor and technical owners: confirm approved scope and the decision path. Output: audience map and agreed brief.

Days 11-30 / Explain and prepare

Sponsor: introduce purpose and expectations. Communications lead: publish FAQ and manager kit. Managers: hold team discussions. Output: accessible guidance, named support, and confirmed practice plan.

Days 31-45 / Demonstrate and practice

Training lead: run guided exercises. Support lead: hold office hours and tag recurring issues. Output: practice evidence and a prioritized question log.

Days 46-60 / Respond and refine

Communications lead: publish a You asked / We clarified update. Program lead: review quality, friction, and readiness for any expansion. Output: revised guidance and decision record.

Days 61-90 / Reinforce and hand over

Managers: reinforce the approved workflow. Program lead: compare evidence with baseline, explain limits, and assign continuing owners. Output: sponsor readout and next-phase decision.

Measure the work and its quality.

Agree definitions, permitted data collection, an owner, and review dates before launch. Report aggregate findings where appropriate.

Understanding

Definition: participants who correctly answer the agreed scope and support questions / respondents. Record the question set and response rate. A self-reported confidence score answers a different question.

Guided practice

Definition: assigned participants who complete the approved exercise to the documented rubric / participants assigned. Record the cohort, task version, and completion window.

Sustained use

Definition: eligible cohort members completing the selected approved task in the defined follow-up window / eligible cohort members. Interpret with access, workload, quality, and task relevance.

Quality and work effort

Compare a defined task against a baseline using the same rubric and similar conditions. Record errors, rework, and time including review. Describe sample size and differences in task complexity.

Support and friction

Track open issues, repeated questions, and time to resolution by issue type. A rise in questions can reflect better reporting, so review the themes before drawing a conclusion.

Build the sponsor readout.

Use this template for one chosen measure. Leave unknown values blank and describe uncertainty.

Measure and exact calculation

Baseline, sample size, cohort and time period

Current finding and data limitations

What changed, and what might explain it?

Decision requested, accountable owner and due date

Next check and evidence needed

Turn questions into a plan.

A proposed 60-minute working session for a sponsor, program lead, communications lead, manager representative, and relevant technical owners.

00-10 minutes / Establish the task

Confirm the work problem, approved environment, cohort, and what participants should be able to do after the exercise.

10-25 minutes / Surface the questions

Ask: what is useful, what is unclear, and where could someone get stuck? Separate communication gaps from technical or policy decisions.

25-40 minutes / Walk through the experience

Review one approved task from start to output review. Identify the instructions, support, and accessible formats people need at each step.

40-50 minutes / Assign the response

For each unresolved question, record a category, owner, decision date, and approved response channel. Route potential incidents through the established agency process.

50-60 minutes / Decide the next step

Agree what must be ready before practice begins, who confirms it, and when participants receive the next update. Publish decisions and open questions in the shared guidance location.

SOURCES AND USE

A concept built for practical review.

GSA / Federal AI adoption context

GSA expanded its OneGov AI offering on September 10, 2026 and included training and enablement support. This provides context for the concept; it is not evidence of a RELAY engagement.

[Open source](#)

NIST / AI risk management resources

The AI Resource Center links the voluntary AI Risk Management Framework and its companion Playbook. Use the current resources with the appropriate program owners. FIRST 90 is an original communications structure.

[Open source](#)

Section508.gov / Accessible digital products

GSA provides guidance for documents, PDFs, presentations, meetings, social media, and other digital content. Review the formats and requirements applicable to your organization.

[Open source](#)

Portfolio credit

Brand concept, strategy, writing, and creative direction developed for Elizabeth Carpenter with AI-assisted production. RELAY is fictional and is not affiliated with or endorsed by a government agency.

Use and limits

This guide is a planning resource, not agency policy, authorization, procurement advice, or a compliance certification. Templates must be adapted and reviewed. No client engagements or performance results are claimed. Sources reviewed September 2026.