



Operational Payoff

By Emergent Skills

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Operations consulting for stalled projects and recurring operational problems.

STALLED PRIORITY SNAPSHOT - ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE - COMPOSITE, NOT A CLIENT

Pricing rollout: delivered, benefits below plan

Northline Group

Prepared for: Commercial Operations leader | Delivered by: Jim Wilde, Founder | Report date: 2026-09-24

We investigate two routes:

1. The work gets stuck.

Queues, approval loops, and unclear handoffs delay delivery.

2. Work demands disrupt execution.

Interruptions, switching, and decision overload can contribute to errors, rework, and missed handoffs.

Manager's decision brief

Result missed 35 percentage points below the 80% adoption target. Margin benefit is not yet measured.

Business consequence Not established. Non-use does not show that a sale or margin was lost; the 35-point adoption gap cannot be multiplied by company revenue. Expected pricing benefit remains unverified despite an on-time launch. Review accepted contracts and realized margin, not process use alone.

Value still at stake The remaining rollout and expected pricing benefit. No supported dollar value yet; confirm the remaining volume and commercial case before funding a change.

Recommended decision Use the internal analyst's bounded 100-quote review to decide whether to change routing, work demands or the commercial assumptions. Confirm review effort and remaining rollout value before funding further investigation. Owner: Sales Operations analyst. Review: 2026-10-02.

Confidence Route 1: unresolved. Route 2: unresolved. Business-value confidence: low. The 45% adoption result depends on the eligible-quote definition and recorded use. A corrected denominator or evidence that price and customer fit dominate could change the recommendation; the suspected exception queue is not yet a demonstrated cause.

Expected result	Launch the new pricing process by June 30 and reach 80% eligible-quote adoption by August 31, supporting the planned realized-margin improvement.
Observed result	The process launched on June 30. Adoption reached 45% by August 31.
Earlier comparison	No previous rollout comparison
Work traced	Pricing process published > Sales prepares eligible quote > Exception decision requested when needed > Quote accepted or reverted to prior process

ROUTE 1 - WORK-PATH OBSTRUCTION

Finding	Unclear. The available record does not yet show how the route contributed.
Evidence	An exception queue is suspected; no comparison yet links it to non-adoption.
Source	Hypothetical stakeholder account only.

ROUTE 2 - WORK-DEMAND CONTRIBUTION

Finding	Unclear. Candidate demand conditions are present, but the record does not yet link them to execution errors, rework or other degraded execution.
Evidence	Exception handling and repeat touches may add demand. No comparison yet links them to errors, reversions or missed handoffs. Compare adopted and reverted quotes before attributing the gap to work demand.
Source	Stakeholder account; no matched demand-to-execution record.
Other explanations	Price competitiveness, customer fit, sales incentives, training, eligibility definitions and exception routing could explain the gap.
Prerequisites checked	The record does not confirm that delivery prerequisites and external constraints were checked.
Already tried	The team published instructions and reminded sellers to use the process. The adoption gap persists; the records do not isolate why.
Decision implication	Commission a bounded internal comparison of the existing 100-quote cohort before choosing a workflow test, a work-demand test or a business-case decision.
Business measure	Adoption: eligible quotes using the new process / all eligible quotes. Baseline: 0 of 100 before launch (fictional comparison). Target: 80 of 100 (80%). Actual: 45 of 100 (45%)
Result owner's view	The result owner reports the target partly met. Delivery owner calls launch successful; commercial leader assesses adoption below target.

BUSINESS EVIDENCE

Basis and gaps	The register shows 45 uses among 100 eligible quotes against an 80% target. Eligibility, acceptance, actual price and margin must be linked before estimating the commercial effect.
Result source	Fictional eligible-quote register and result-owner brief; demonstration only.

1. CONFIRM THE NEXT STEP

First action	By September 28, validate the 100-quote eligibility list. For adopted and reverted quotes, record exception waits, repeat touches, reason for reversion and accepted price/margin where available.
Owner	Sales Operations analyst Result owner: Commercial Operations leader.
Approval needed	The Commercial Operations leader authorizes the review and access to quote and Finance records. No workflow change is approved at this stage.
Effort and cost	Not yet estimated. The analyst agrees record-access and review hours with the result owner before starting.

2. RESOLVE THE QUESTION

Question	What distinguishes the eligible quotes that adopt the process from those that revert?
Timing	Planned start: 2026-09-28. Review: 2026-10-02.
Measure	Adoption and exception turnaround, segmented by comparable quote type
Evidence needed	Review all 100 eligible quotes in this fictional cohort, including both adopted and reverted quotes.
Guardrails	Preserve pricing authority, contract controls and customer commitments.

3. DECIDE FROM THE RESULT

Decision rule	On October 2, the result owner reviews the 100-quote comparison. If routing explains the gap, design a routing test; if demand-related errors explain it, design a work-demand test. If customer fit or assumptions dominate, review the business case. If inconclusive, keep the cause unclassified and specify the missing evidence.
Business follow-up	Eligible-quote adoption; realized margin reviewed separately Target: 80% adoption; Finance to confirm a realized-margin target. Review: 2026-10-15. Source: Quote records and Finance-approved margin data.