

30 Admired Companies to Watch 2021

CIO Bulletin

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A portrait of Jenifer Namestka, CEO of Avo Solutions. She is a woman with blonde, wavy hair, smiling, wearing a black top. The background is a textured, stone-like wall.

Avo Solutions **Delivering Strategic Initiatives** **for Measurable Change**

Jenifer Namestka | CEO

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Avo Solution Delivering Strategic Initiatives for Measurable Change

Jenifer Namestka, CEO

Avo Solutions - Delivering Strategic Initiatives for Measurable Change

To remain relevant and continually improve business outcomes, companies need to grow and change in response to client and market needs—essentially transforming how they operate over time. Successful implementations at this scale, most often handled through strategic initiatives, require deep understanding of potential cultural, people, and process challenges.

With more than 20 years of experience developing strategies, managing program execution, and organizational transformation, Avo Solutions can help organizations manage both targeted and large-scale change. We spoke with Avo CEO Jenifer Namestka to learn more about the secrets of her firm's success. Read on for the highlights.

How do you help clients transform their organizations?

Before we can transform an organization, we need to identify its future state—the desired outcome of the transformation.

Over the years, we've developed multiple models to align program objectives and measurable results, including keeping stakeholders informed of progress, barriers, and enablers. Avo's unique methodologies help us deliver tangible, quantifiable results for our clients.

For example, with technology implementation, our adoption strategies go beyond increasing tool usage to driving sustainable behavioral change and business impact. Using the ROI Institute Business Alignment Model, we shift focus from technology objectives to business and cultural change, improving adoption through:

- Proactively managing the user experience
- Communicating and training at appropriate levels
- Clearly defining behavior expectations
- Measuring and reporting business impact

Describe a successful program implementation.

We were asked to help a multinational company that

had rolled out an Enterprise 2.0 technology that wasn't achieving the desired results. We found that the distributed global sales team kept booking the wrong subject matter experts (SMEs) for sales calls, leading to unproductive meetings and sales cycle delays. SMEs skipped meetings, assumed their expertise wasn't relevant. Sales reps would engage with clients solo, and risk being unprepared.

Once the problem was clear, Avo Solutions used the Business Alignment Model to identify needed organizational, business, and functional change. A gap assessment identified current and optimal states for collaboration between sales reps and SMEs. Using Avo's Enterprise 2.0 Adoption Model, we then defined the solution and mapped desired behaviors and business impacts to Avo's New Initiative Adoption Lifecycle. The result was improved communication and performance for all participants.

This engagement helped the company find collaborative sales solutions, supporting impressive early results:



COVER STORY.

Jenifer Namestka, CEO

“Avo Solutions has been a joy to work with. Jenifer’s passion for understanding and professional growth coupled with a commitment to delivering quality solutions and services has greatly benefited the global education market. She is willing to tackle challenges head on, with clear thinking and communication. Jenifer is a true and indispensable asset to any team.” -Helen Honisett, Director, Partner Ecosystem for Education Solutions, Oxford, England

- 32% fewer unnecessary meetings
- 16% less time required to find the right expert
- 16% more expert content used in client engagements
- 21% rise in connectedness, organizational cohesiveness, and project and expert awareness
- 10% more time for business development (unplanned outcome)
- 5% better work-life balance (unplanned outcome)

What characterizes a typical Avo engagement?

Avo Solutions usually gets involved in the strategy or implementation phase of a new initiative. We support technology implementations—CRM, Enterprise 2.0, LMS, FMIS, ERP, SDLC lifecycle tools, and PMIS—with proven change management solutions and methodologies. We also work with clients to ensure successful implementation of

nontechnical initiatives, such as enterprise safety, talent strategy, and succession planning.

How can change management make projects more likely to succeed?

We often use “we” when describing our client projects. We see ourselves as an extension of the client team, a distinction that encourages clients to be more transparent about their situations and challenges. We believe that the art of change management lies in all the little pieces that keep a client moving through the adoption lifecycle—and how leadership, behavior, and process changes intersect.

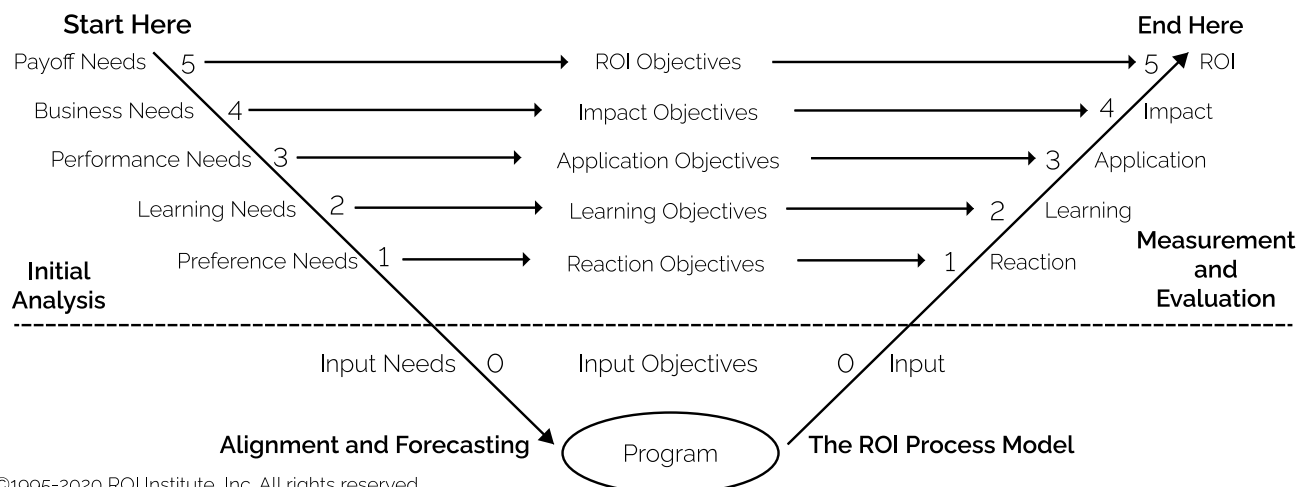
For example, if project outcomes aren’t clearly defined and measured, stakeholders won’t see its value. Some may view change management as nebulous; we avoid that by consistently quantifying and communicating incremental improvements as part of a larger formal process. We celebrate the wins—as well as highlight the obstacles, with the understanding that change doesn’t happen overnight. Clients

need encouragement to stay energized, and reinforcement when setbacks happen. And key stakeholders need to see a roadmap of successes, along with examples of how the team has overcome obstacles.

How do you help organizations understand and fulfill real-world requirements?

Every day, clients make decisions based on little to no data. My job is to help change that. I listen to my clients, with the understanding that there’s no one-size-fits-all solution. Avo offers flexible engagement packages to meet the client’s unique needs, ebbing and flowing to best support each transformation. Companies often say they want 100% participation in change management and training—but a closer look lets us identify a workable tolerance for noncompliance and set more realistic expectations. We then follow through with mechanisms for measuring and reporting training or adoption KPIs, supporting continued stakeholder support and funding.

THE BUSINESS ALIGNMENT MODEL



NEW INITIATIVE ADOPTION LIFECYCLE

PHASE
0

ON-BOARDING

Critical mass on-boards to the environment & processes

PHASE
1

EFFICIENCIES

Achieve goals with less effort and resources

PHASE
2

GROWTH

Achieve additional goals with the same effort and resources

PHASE
3

TRANSFORMATION

Innovations are developed and can be seen transforming the business

Business impact increases over time.
Phases overlap as the organization evolves to the next phase.

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Have you received any accolades for your work?

Yes! Some recent recognitions:

- Manage HR magazine recognized Avo Solutions as a Top 10 Change Management Consulting/Services company for 2020
- CEO Views magazine recognized Avo Solutions as a Top 50 Most Innovative Companies to Watch for 2021
- As CEO, I was awarded the 2013 Worldwide Who's Who Award for dedication, leadership, and excellence in international change management and business strategies
- In 2013, Avo earned Better Business Bureau accreditation based on its Code of Business Practices

What differentiates Avo Solutions from other players in the market?

We combine the structure and standards of a large consultancy with the intimacy and flexibility of a smaller firm. Our intensely hands-on consulting solution uses highly developed and proven methodologies. As a boutique consulting firm, Avo relies on client and professional network referrals for new contracts.

Our mission is to create value for our clients' initiatives, with intentionality and integrity. We strive for genuine understanding of each business and its unique challenges, and we partner with our clients to deliver measurable results. We uphold our core values and professional standards while delivering exceptional service.

Our vision is to create a network of consultants focused on delivering quality solutions with measurable value in eLearning, change management, project management, and program metrics. We foster a culture of community, work-life balance, and lifelong learning. We believe that when people are properly engaged, programs can have exponential success.

CB



Making
Change
Happen.

Transforming
Organizations.

What's your organizational future state? We'll help you get there using proven methodologies to realize project goals and deliver measurable results. Use our customized change management and training programs to improve individual, program, and organizational performance. Along the way, clearly communicate adoption rates, track program metrics, and showcase wins, ensuring stakeholders are fully engaged and onboard.

Learn more at avosolutions.com
or by emailing info@avosolutions.com



AVO SOLUTIONS

Change Management. Program Management. Program Metrics.