

Best Practices for Getting Started With DevOps

DevOps can make an agency more efficient and free up time for innovation, but pursuing this approach is a long, continuous process. The entire agency must embrace DevOps and be prepared for the journey ahead. The first steps can be confusing and tedious, but the seven tips below will provide practical guidance and useful hints to jumpstart the transition.

✓ Build a strong communications network

The cornerstone of DevOps is collaboration. Multiple teams blend together to work toward a single goal. A strong internal communications system or collaboration app, including finding the right project management tool, makes for a smoother transition. An effective communications network should also include a platform for employees to share which parts of the transition to DevOps are going well and which need improvement.

✓ Know the Agile manifesto

The [manifesto](#) provides guiding principles that any agency can adapt to fit their DevOps goals as their team evolves. Welcoming change, encouraging cooperation, developing sustainably and other Agile sentiments will keep your DevOps team from deviating from the mission. If this is a struggle, try hiring an Agile coach to guide the team through the process.

✓ Invest in prepping your personnel for the transition

Building a DevOps team affects the entire agency, but development and operations units in particular must be [trained](#) on new software and daily functions. A competent staff with qualified leaders can not only help plan the shift to DevOps, they can also troubleshoot unexpected malfunctions along the way.

✓ Start with small projects and changes

New DevOps teams will experience hiccups as they adjust to a new daily routine. Attempting to overhaul the entire system in one day or pressuring a budding DevOps team to take on the biggest project of the year can crush spirits before the journey begins. That

said, be sure to let the DevOps team take on important projects once they find their footing or else the team may not see the benefits of a DevOps approach.

✓ Test even the most minor modifications

Before releasing updates or IT adjustments, the DevOps team should be confident in the quality instead of rushing to launch programs immediately. Confirm that even the smallest tweaks still perform across all platforms.

✓ Include the entire agency

DevOps should not end at the IT department. Instead, the entire agency should be aware of how the transition to DevOps benefits their work and why the agency is making this transition. Break down the silos that separate each department with demonstrations of the DevOps approach and opportunities for critiques to raise awareness about the value of switching to DevOps.

✓ Keep improving

Provide a channel for feedback and [room to fail](#) as the DevOps team finds its footing. Restructuring the development and operations departments can be uncomfortable and lead to shortcomings that affect citizen-facing services. Routine internal and external evaluations, especially if the development and operations teams are reporting to the same lead, can ensure that the new DevOps team is serving its purpose.

For more information about implementing DevOps processes, visit [GSA's DevSecOps Tech Guides](#).

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