

PLAYBOOK

The Tool Stack Playbook

Build a lean, integrated tool stack

Too Many Tools, Not Enough Integration

THE PROBLEM

Most businesses have too many tools that do not talk to each other. Information lives in silos, work gets duplicated, and no one knows where the source of truth is.

The problem is not the tools. The problem is that no one designed the stack.

WHY IT HAPPENS

Tools get added one at a time as needs arise. No one steps back to ask: does this integrate with what we already have?

The solution is not more tools. It is a lean, integrated tool stack designed around your workflow.

Design your tool stack. Integration follows intention.

The 4-Layer Tool Stack

1

Communication Layer

Where conversations happen. Email, Slack, Teams. Pick one primary tool and stick to it.

2

Project Management Layer

Where work gets tracked. Asana, Monday, ClickUp. Must integrate with communication layer.

3

Documentation Layer

Where knowledge lives. Notion, Confluence, Google Docs. Must be searchable and version-controlled.

4

Automation Layer

Where repetitive work gets automated. Zapier, Make, n8n. Connects all other layers.

Your Tool Selection Criteria

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Integration Capability

Does it connect with your existing tools? If it does not integrate, it creates a silo.

Learning Curve

Can your team learn it in under 2 hours? If not, adoption will fail.

Cost vs Value

Does it save more time than it costs? If not, you are paying to slow down.

Vendor Stability

Will the vendor be around in 3 years? Avoid tools from startups with no revenue.

Data Portability

Can you export your data if you leave? If not, you are locked in.

Support Quality

Can you get help when something breaks? Test support before you commit.

Your 60-Minute Implementation Plan

NEXT STEPS

- 1** Audit your current tools and map them to the 4 layers
- 2** Identify gaps (missing layers) and overlaps (too many tools in one layer)
- 3** Pick one tool per layer that integrates with the others
- 4** Migrate data from redundant tools and decommission them

TIME BREAKDOWN

Total: 60 minutes

Step 1: Audit current tools (15 min)

Step 2: Identify gaps and overlaps (15 min)

Step 3: Pick one tool per layer (20 min)

Step 4: Plan migration (10 min)

Common Mistakes to Avoid

WHAT NOT TO DO

Adding Tools Without Integration Plan

Before adding a tool, ask: does this integrate with what we already have? If not, you are creating a silo.

Using Different Tools for Same Function

If you have 3 project management tools, you do not have a system. Pick one and migrate everything to it.

Not Training Team on Tools

Tools only work if people know how to use them. Build training into your onboarding process.

Choosing Tools Based on Features Not Workflow

The tool with the most features is not always the best. Choose the tool that fits your workflow.

Not Reviewing Tool Stack Regularly

Your workflow changes. Your tool stack should change with it. Review your stack every 6 months.

Keeping Tools You Do Not Use

If no one uses it, cancel it. Unused tools create confusion and waste money.

Ready to Build Your Tool Stack?

Download the Tool Stack Templates

Get the complete 4-layer framework, tool selection criteria, and integration checklist.

[Download templates →](#)

Book a Strategy Call

I will audit your current tool stack, identify integration gaps, and design a lean stack for your workflow.

[Check to see if you qualify →](#)

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