

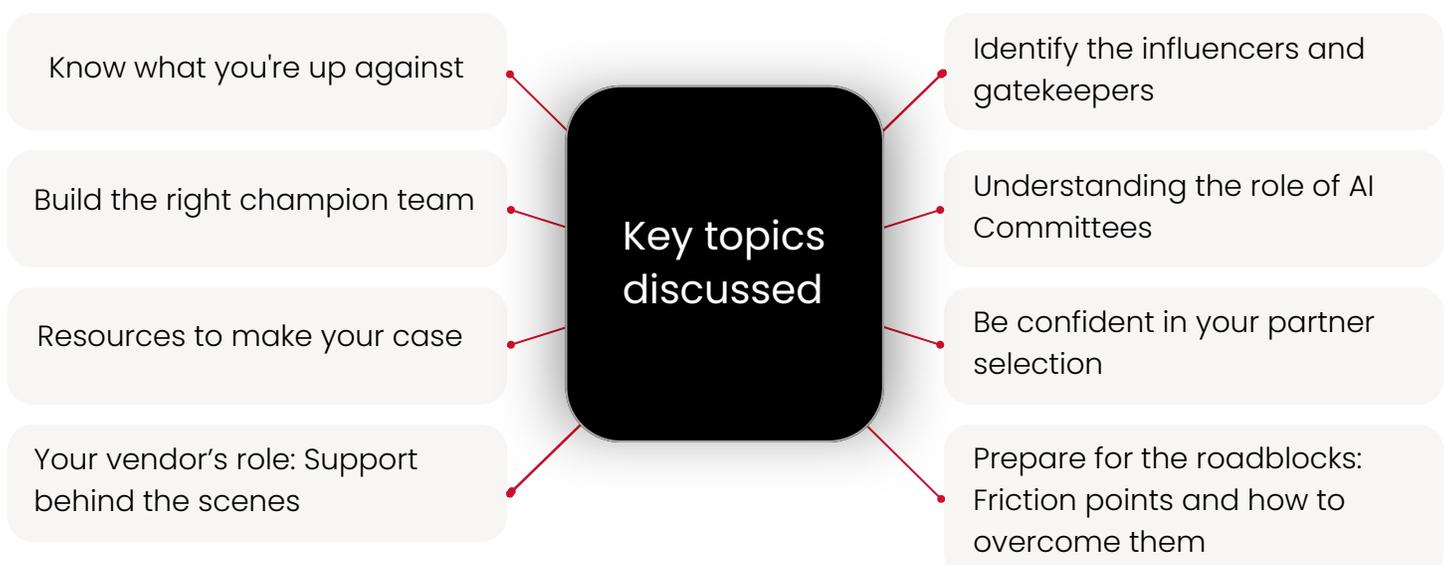
The clinical AI champion's guide: Getting to 'yes' in complex health systems

For clinicians, imaging and service line leaders, and administrators navigating the complex path to AI adoption in healthcare.

Executive summary: Why you need this guide

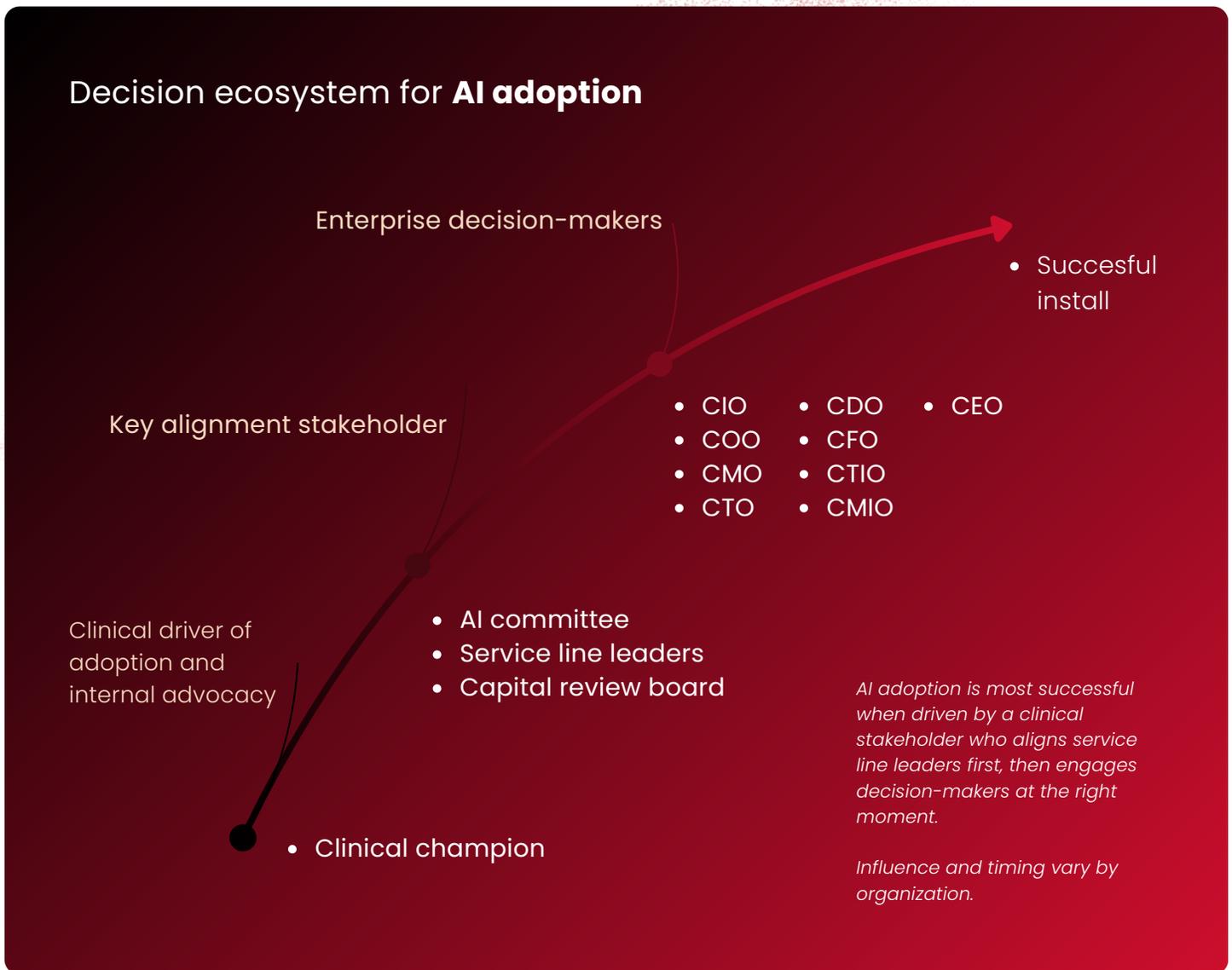
Bringing deep clinical AI into a health system isn't just about identifying the right technology; it's about navigating a decision-making process that involves many moving parts, evolving governance structures, and multiple layers of stakeholder input. Even experienced leaders find that the pathway can vary from one institution to the next, and from one project to another.

This guide is designed for internal champions, clinicians, service line leaders, and administrators who believe in the potential of AI to improve care and operations. It offers practical insights from a C-suite advisory panel from leading health systems across the nation on how decisions are made, who typically drives them forward, and what tools and strategies are proving most effective in securing alignment and buy-in across the system.



Know what you're up against

Before you can make the case for adopting a clinical AI solution, you need to understand how decisions are made and why even the best ideas often stall. Today's hospital environment is structured to minimize risk, reduce vendor sprawl, and protect capital budgets. Your idea must pass through a web of clinical, financial, operational, and technical stakeholders.



Identify the core team

Understanding motivations is key to building internal consensus. Each stakeholder has a unique definition of success and risk. It's critical to position the AI solution as a win for each stakeholder's domain.

Actionable tip:

Frame the problem and value in their language.



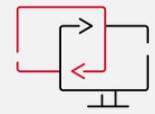
Clinical leaders

Clinical utility, workflow impact, patient outcomes, peer validation



Administrative and financial leaders

ROI, standardization, time to value, innovation visibility



IT and data leaders

Vendor reduction, security, infrastructure fit



Legal/Compliance

Risk mitigation, contract clarity

Build the right champion team

Behind every successful AI implementation is a strong internal team. But it's not just about individual drive, it's about pairing the right voices to navigate an increasingly complex, multi-step approval environment.

How to structure your team:

- Lean into a clinician champion who has credibility, clinical insight, and firsthand experience with the problem.
- If not yourself, pair the clinical champion with an administrative partner, someone who understands budget cycles, governance structures, and how to navigate the health systems approval process.
- Think in duos: the clinical voice brings authenticity; the admin voice brings momentum. Together, they can translate clinical value into business impact.
- Champions should take a phased approach: begin with 1:1 conversations, build internal buzz, and then present to formal committees with a unified front.

When built thoughtfully, this team becomes your internal engine for navigating the approval gauntlet.

Resources to make your case

Once you've built your champion team, the next step is arming them with the right message. Your points need to be simple, sharp, and aligned with institutional goals.

As one advisory member noted: "If you can't show ROI in one slide and under three minutes, it's not going to fly."

Valuable resources for a pitch toolkit:

- 1-slide on ROI (hard dollars > soft dollars)
- A3 template: current state → problem → metrics → plan
- SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, and Recommendation) summaries to prep stakeholders for group discussions
- Customized data specific to your site's case volumes, addressable gaps, or risk exposure
- Tailored versions of the impact for different audiences (clinical, financial, IT)

Pro tip: Make the ask for technology easy to champion, as the internal advocate for the AI solution, don't expect your admin lead or service line chief to build your case from scratch when moving it forward.

Prepare for the roadblocks // Friction points and how to overcome them

Even the most promising solutions can stall. From compliance reviews to cross-departmental politics, roadblocks are real, but can be predictable if you're prepared.

Common barriers to anticipate:

Roadblock	How to address it
IT/security bottlenecks	Engage <u>early</u> with security. Pre-screen vendors based on your system's security protocols. Address how the solution will help mitigate the number of vendors.
Legal review fatigue	Don't engage legal until all alignment boxes are checked; wasted cycles are costly.
Vendor sprawl policies	Highlight how your solution consolidates, not adds, as Platforms vs isolated solutions are key.
Turnover and stakeholder memory gaps	Before meetings, share written evaluations in a format the committee is familiar with (e.g. SBARs) and summarize decisions post-meeting. Don't assume people remember verbal conversations.
Message drop-off between clinicians and executives	Ensure the admin lead is equipped to deliver the clinical "why" when the clinician isn't in the room. Support them with clear, memorable messaging and rationale.

Understanding the role of AI Committees

AI committees are becoming an increasingly important part of enterprise health system governance. While they may not be the final decision-makers, their input can strongly shape whether an AI solution moves forward, and how quickly.

Key characteristics:

- Often operate at the system level, but can operate at the individual hospital level
- Focus on risk assessment, including IT security, data integrity, and clinical impact
- Often use stoplight-style frameworks (green/yellow/red) to flag risk levels
- Have veto influence, but not typically the final decision-making power

Current state

- Structures vary; some are formal, others are still evolving
- Many are transitioning from reactive reviewers to proactive partners
- Still lacks consistent standards across systems

Best practice

- Engage committees after aligning clinical and admin champions
- Come prepared with security answers, clinical impact data, and risk mitigations
- Treat them as collaborators in validation, not just a hurdle to clear

Your vendor's role // Support behind the scenes

Your vendor may not always be in the room to help, but they should always be a strategic ally.

How they should help:

- Build co-branded decks tailored to your hospital's priorities
- Create 1-pagers for execs and committees
- Help translate the hospital or system's internal data into business cases
- Offer competitive context (but stay professional)
- Provide white-labeled A3/SBAR templates for submission

“

Help me show the impact of the AI with our own data.”

—Neuroscience executive

Final thoughts // Be confident in your partner selection

Adopting clinical AI is a serious lift. It takes alignment, persistence, and time—and it's not a process you want to frequently repeat.

That's why the clinical AI platform you choose matters. Make sure you're confident the solution you champion will move the needle—clinically, operationally, and financially—not just today, but as your system evolves.

See how RapidAI is a vital enabler of high-performing service lines during a 1:1 discussion.