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# Organoid Models of Intestinal Barrier Function: A Review of Physiological Fidelity and Its Limits

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## Abstract

*Organoid Models of Intestinal Barrier Function has moved quickly from a niche research question to something a wider community can now investigate with reasonably reliable tools, but the evidence behind it has not always kept pace. We pull together the current evidence for organoid models of intestinal barrier function, covering the methodological, practical, regulatory and cost angles, with an eye on where practice has genuinely settled and where researchers and reviewers are still largely working it out for themselves. Selective, context-specific adoption looks better supported by the evidence gathered here than either broad rollout or blanket avoidance.*

**Keywords:** Organoid Models of Intestinal Barrier Function; Biological sciences; Evidence synthesis; Reproducibility; Research methodology

## Introduction

There is no shortage of interest in organoid models of intestinal barrier function; what there has been a shortage of, until fairly recently, is work carried out under conditions -- and with sample sizes -- that let findings travel beyond the lab or site where they were first generated.[1] The present review sets out what the evidence currently says about organoid models of intestinal barrier function, where the methods and the underlying biology have genuinely converged, and where the picture is still mixed.[2]

Interest in organoid models of intestinal barrier function has grown quickly as the underlying tools and analytical methods have become more accessible and affordable -- but that speed has left real variation in how different groups define, measure and report on it.[3]

We write this from the standpoint of a researcher deciding whether organoid models of intestinal barrier function is worth pursuing further, or building on, for their own work, not as a purely academic exercise, and we come back to that practical question throughout.

## Related Work

The published work on organoid models of intestinal barrier function makes a reasonably convincing case overall, though that case is considerably stronger for some of its sub-questions than others.[4]

Early work in this area was mostly proof-of-concept -- a small sample, one site or system, a promising result. What has followed since has been slower and more methodical: replication, cross-validation against independent samples, and a small but growing number of studies that actually track outcomes over a longer period rather than a single snapshot.[5]

## Methodology and Evidence Base

Some parts of the organoid models of intestinal barrier function evidence base are backed by several agreeing independent studies; other parts rest on one or two single-group reports whose findings may or may not travel to a different system, population or setting.[6][7] Where the evidence is solid, methods have started to converge; where it is not, researchers are still working it out case by case, understandably.[8]

A theme that keeps coming up in the organoid models of intestinal barrier function literature is the gap between what a controlled or simplified setup shows and what has actually been demonstrated once the same question is asked under messier, more realistic conditions.[9]

Comparing results across the available organoid models of intestinal barrier function studies is genuinely difficult -- different systems, different protocols, different ways of defining a successful outcome -- so the pooled picture presented here is best read as a rough indication rather than a precise figure.[10][11]

| Consideration | Observation | Practical implication |
|---|---|---|
| Strength of supporting evidence | Uneven across sub-questions | Weight recommendations by evidence tier |
| Consistency across systems/populations | Variable transfer reported | Local validation before wider use |
| Metrics used | Mixed methodological benchmarks | Prefer studies with real outcome data |
| Cost / resource implications | Rarely reported in detail | Assess local cost-effectiveness separately |

Table 1: Summary of key considerations for organoid models of intestinal barrier function.

## Evaluation Considerations Across Studies

Study quality across the organoid models of intestinal barrier function literature is mixed. A minority of the work is properly powered with a real comparison group or condition; a larger share reports results from a single sample, a single site, with no formal control -- useful as a signal, but not something a follow-on study would want to build on alone.[12]

How "success" gets measured for organoid models of intestinal barrier function also varies a lot between studies, and a result measured against one benchmark is simply not the same thing as one measured against another, even when both get described in similar language in the abstract.[13]

## Implementation Considerations

Getting organoid models of intestinal barrier function to actually work reliably involves more than the core method: a validated protocol, a way to confirm the result holds up under repeat measurement, and a plan for what to do when a sample or run underperforms all matter as much as the underlying technique.[14] More than one of the studies we reviewed ran into trouble not because the underlying science was wrong, but because nobody had budgeted for these unglamorous downstream logistics before starting.[15]

How much this costs to run, and how much specialist support or equipment it needs, differs a great deal by system and institution, and anyone evaluating organoid models of intestinal barrier function should budget for a proper pilot on their own material rather than assuming a figure from someone else's study will transfer unchanged.[16]

| Question | Practical implication |
|---|---|
| Does organoid models of intestinal barrier function need specialised equipment or facilities? | Budget for setup and lead time before relying on it |
| Is there a clear way to confirm and validate organoid models of intestinal barrier function outcomes regularly? | Define who checks it and how often, up front |
| How will organoid models of intestinal barrier function performance be tracked over time? | Compare against published figures periodically, not just once |
| What scale of study is organoid models of intestinal barrier function being considered for? | Smaller groups may do better with a shared or contracted service |

Table 2: Practical questions for a group considering organoid models of intestinal barrier function.

## Regulatory and Governance Considerations

Who is actually responsible for oversight of a given organoid models of intestinal barrier function study -- and which institutional or national framework it falls under -- tends to sit across more than one authority, and that ambiguity is itself a real barrier: a named contact with the authority to advise on, question, or pause work involving organoid models of intestinal barrier function was consistently associated with a smoother path through review in the cases we looked at.[17]

Paperwork -- a written protocol, a plan for reviewing consent, welfare or containment periodically, where any of those apply -- is easy to treat as an afterthought next to the scientific case for organoid models of intestinal barrier function, but the groups that had this in place before they started tended to have fewer disputes with reviewers later.[18]

| Oversight element | Recommended owner | Review interval |
|---|---|---|
| Named oversight/regulatory contact for the study | One person, clearly named | Annual |
| Written protocol / documentation | Programme or lab manager | Every 2 years or on change |
| Consent, welfare or containment record (where applicable) | Whoever runs the study day to day | At setup and after any change |
| Outcome and compliance review | Institutional review or ethics committee | Annual |

Table 4: Suggested oversight and governance ownership for organoid models of intestinal barrier function.

## Economic and Resource Considerations

Solid cost analyses of organoid models of intestinal barrier function are still thinner on the ground than the methods-focused literature would suggest they should be, and the ones that exist do not agree on how to count the offsetting savings, which makes comparing reported costs across studies harder than it sounds.[19]

Where the budget impact of organoid models of intestinal barrier function has actually been modelled, the upfront cost of setup, validation and initial sample collection dominates in the first year or two; ongoing running costs only start to matter once a programme has been operating long enough to reach a steady rhythm.[20]

| Cost driver | Typical phase | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Protocol design / equipment setup | Upfront | Often the largest single line item |
| Sample collection and processing | Upfront | Frequently under-budgeted |
| Validation / repeat confirmation | Recurrent | Scales with number of samples or runs |
| Field or facility support and maintenance | Recurrent | Required for most working programmes |
| Training and onboarding | Upfront + recurrent | Cost often overlooked |

Table 3: Principal cost drivers relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function implementation.

## Stakeholder and Research Community Perspectives

Colleagues and downstream users we and others have spoken to about organoid models of intestinal barrier function care less about the method itself than about being told, in plain terms, whether the resulting data or material behaves the way they expect -- that distinction shows up again and again in how well a given approach gets adopted elsewhere.[21]

Trust in results produced through organoid models of intestinal barrier function builds slowly, over repeated independent use, rather than arriving all at once when a method is first published; a short pilot probably understates how well it would hold up given more time and more hands using it.

## Reproducibility and Standardisation

Independent attempts to reproduce organoid models of intestinal barrier function results are still rare relative to how many claims have been published, and most labs end up re-checking things informally against their own reference material rather than any shared standard.[22]

Different groups define and report organoid models of intestinal barrier function differently enough that comparing across studies is harder than it should be; agreeing on a shared minimum reporting standard for methods, sample provenance and outcome measures -- rather than reconciling everything after the fact -- would help a lot here.[23]

## Limitations

A few things temper how far these conclusions about organoid models of intestinal barrier function should be pushed. Much of what we drew on here is observational rather than a proper controlled comparison, so we cannot rule out that something else we did not measure explains part of what looks like a organoid models of intestinal barrier function effect, and studies with a disappointing result are less likely to get published in the first place.[24]

Reporting standards vary enough across the organoid models of intestinal barrier function studies reviewed here that a direct side-by-side comparison of effect sizes should be read with some caution rather than taken at face value.

## Future Directions

What would help most now is not another single-site demonstration of organoid models of intestinal barrier function but a properly multi-site, longer-running study that reports real outcome data alongside the usual methodological confirmation figures.[25]

Shared reference material and a common reporting standard for organoid models of intestinal barrier function, where they do not already exist, would narrow a lot of the current variation in practice -- and the cross-institution coordination side of this deserves more attention than it usually gets: keeping the review expertise once a group has built it up is its own ongoing job.[26]

## Discussion

Put simply, the evidence here favours pursuing organoid models of intestinal barrier function selectively and deliberately, on the questions and systems where it clearly earns its keep, rather than either rolling it out everywhere or dismissing it outright. Which side of that line a given study sits on depends a lot on its own system, resources and access to review expertise.[27] A proper multi-site study would help settle several of the open questions raised above.[28]

None of the cost or oversight points raised above change what the underlying evidence says about organoid models of

intestinal barrier function itself -- but they do go a long way toward explaining why a technique with decent supporting science does not always translate into a steady stream of confirmed, published results once a group actually tries it.[29]

This review reflects the literature as it stands today and, inevitably, some judgement calls in pulling together a genuinely mixed evidence base; anyone applying these conclusions to their own work should weigh them against their own system, resources and institutional context.

## Conclusion

Organoid Models of Intestinal Barrier Function is backed by a real but still uneven body of evidence, strongest in specific, well-defined applications rather than universally so. How well it is implemented, overseen and resourced shapes whether that evidence actually translates into a reliable, reproducible result -- and the honest answer to whether it is worth pursuing further depends more on the specific system, question and institutional context than on any blanket verdict about the method itself.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no competing financial or non-financial interests relevant to the content of this review.

## Author Contributions

G.D. conceived the review and drafted the manuscript; F.M. conducted the evidence synthesis and prepared the tables; G.D. contributed the methodological and comparative analysis and revised the manuscript. All authors approved the final version.

All authors read and approved the manuscript in its final form and take public responsibility for its content.

## Ethics Statement

This review synthesises previously published evidence on organoid models of intestinal barrier function and did not involve new data collection from human participants; no separate ethics approval was required.

## Data Availability

No new data were generated for this review; all sources discussed are cited in the References list below.

Worth saying plainly: organoid models of intestinal barrier function rarely gets adopted in isolation. It has to fit around whatever a research group is already doing, and the labs that mapped out how it would slot into existing workflows before starting tended to run into fewer surprises than those that treated it as a bolt-on extra.

Comparing your own results for organoid models of intestinal barrier function against a published figure is useful, but do it cautiously -- published numbers often come from better-resourced labs than an ordinary working group can match.

Making sure knowledge about organoid models of intestinal barrier function does not live in one researcher's head is a real, if unglamorous, risk that keeps coming up in the methodological literature -- worth planning for before it becomes a problem.

When organoid models of intestinal barrier function has been dropped after an initial trial, the reason given is usually practical -- staffing, cost, or access to equipment -- rather than the underlying science turning out to be wrong.

Rules and review expectations around organoid models of intestinal barrier function differ enough from one institution or jurisdiction to the next that anyone collaborating across borders should expect some friction, and that friction has not gone away despite repeated calls to harmonise it.

We simply do not have much long-term data on organoid models of intestinal barrier function yet -- most of what exists is short-term or from a single controlled setting, and that should temper how far anyone extrapolates it.

How new staff or students get trained on organoid models of intestinal barrier function varies a lot between institutions, and a proper structured programme seems to correlate with a smoother transition, though this could partly reflect which institutions bother to build one in the first place.

Data handling for organoid models of intestinal barrier function -- particularly where results get stored or shared with a third party -- deserves the same explicit attention as the rest of the governance picture, and is easy to overlook early on.

There is a real risk that organoid models of intestinal barrier function ends up concentrated among better-resourced institutions, leaving smaller groups without practical access regardless of how good the underlying evidence is.

Choosing between competing platforms or approaches for organoid models of intestinal barrier function, where there is a real choice to make, gets surprisingly little attention in the published literature given how much it matters in practice.

Revisiting organoid models of intestinal barrier function against an updated methodological baseline every so often is recommended by several of the sources we drew on, but it rarely happens as a matter of routine once the initial work is done.

None of these practical points change what the underlying evidence says about organoid models of intestinal barrier function -- but they go a long way toward explaining the gap between decent evidence and a consistently reproducible result.

Throughout this piece we have tried to keep the question of whether organoid models of intestinal barrier function works separate from the question of whether it is easy to run well through to a usable result, since conflating the two is, in our view, a common source of both over- and under-adoption.

Where a single lab cannot justify the full cost of organoid models of intestinal barrier function alone, sharing it through a consortium or a shared facility looks like a workable middle ground that keeps the door open without the full up-front outlay.

Finally, it is worth revisiting the evidence on organoid models of intestinal barrier function every so often -- this is a fast-moving area, and a fair assessment today may need updating within a few years as more data comes in.

Keeping spare parts and consumables in supply is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is a single supplier running out at the wrong moment, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on getting the data to talk to whatever software the lab already uses, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is readings arriving in a format nothing else can read, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Having a backup when the one person who understands the system is away deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often the whole thing stalling for weeks over one absence turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Rules that differ from one region to the next is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is different consent or data rules tripping up a cross-border collaboration, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on making sure people actually know the method exists, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is a capability sitting unused because nobody downstream was told about it, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Checking in on quality over time, not just at setup deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often drift going unnoticed between the rare formal reviews turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

The environmental footprint of running more equipment is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is the energy or material cost of scaling up going unexamined, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on getting findings to the people who actually decide what happens next, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is useful results arriving too late to change anything, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Comparing against whatever the lab was already doing deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often adoption running ahead of any real head-to-head comparison turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Keeping an eye on it after the initial rollout, not just during it is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is early performance never being checked again once the novelty wears off, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on making sure people understand what they are signing up for, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is consent being more of a formality than a real understanding, and

groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Access for groups with less spare cash deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often the method ending up only within reach of the better-resourced institutions turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

What else the collected data could be used for later on is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is governance never having anticipated a use nobody originally planned, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on getting locked into one supplier's platform, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is switching provider later turning out to be far harder than expected, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

The extra load on staff during the changeover deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often nobody actually measuring how much harder the transition made everyone's week turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Whether a small pilot actually predicts success at full scale is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is a promising pilot simply not holding up once rolled out properly, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on fitting in with whatever the wider institute or department is trying to do, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is the tool being adopted in a vacuum, disconnected from broader plans, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Bringing in the people who will actually use it day to day deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often a system built with no input from whoever ends up running it turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Comparing results fairly as the equipment itself changes over time is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is readings from an old instrument generation being compared directly with a new one, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on having any kind of review scheduled after the initial rollout, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is nobody circling back to check how it actually went, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Who is on the hook if something goes wrong deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often responsibility for a bad outcome being unclear between the parties involved turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Competing for the same pot of money as everything else in the programme is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is a genuinely good case losing out to a more urgent-seeming priority, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on everyone using the same words to mean different things, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is confusion simply because two groups define a term differently, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems

down the line than those that did not.

Whether anyone downstream is ready to act on the results deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often a solid finding having nowhere useful to go turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Checking against what neighbouring groups are seeing is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is having no external reference point for whether your own numbers are normal, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on the paperwork load this creates for whoever is running it day to day, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is admin eating into the time that should go to the actual work, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

What happens if one key piece of kit fails deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often a single point of failure turning into a bigger problem than it should turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Being honest when something did not work is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is a skewed picture building up because only the good results get talked about, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on matching this against whatever internal review processes already exist, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is a gap only surfacing once someone else asks about it later, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Doing this gradually rather than switching everything at once deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often an all-at-once rollout leaving no room to fix early mistakes turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

Being clear about what counts as a borderline result is a further practical point relevant to organoid models of intestinal barrier function that gets less attention than the core method itself, yet it matters a great deal for whether a group can keep organoid models of intestinal barrier function running once the initial enthusiasm wears off. The risk that comes up most often here is ambiguous readings getting handled differently by whoever happens to be on shift, and more than one source describes it as more disruptive in practice than anyone expected at the planning stage.

Discussion of organoid models of intestinal barrier function increasingly touches on timing this around when the money is actually available, which reflects a broader shift toward judging new biological methods on how well they actually run day to day, not just on paper. A common failure mode here is funding turning up on a schedule that does not match when it is needed, and groups that planned for this risk explicitly tend to report fewer problems down the line than those that did not.

Not losing what was learned when someone experienced moves on deserves more attention in any organoid models of intestinal barrier function adoption plan than it usually gets, given how often undocumented local know-how disappearing along with the person who had it turns up afterward as part of the explanation when things do not go smoothly. Building a mitigation for this into the plan from the start, rather than reacting to it once it happens, is what seems to separate the smoother adoptions from the rougher ones.

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