

PROJECT ONE

A GUIDE TO
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**CHANGE
PLANNING**

PROJECT one

REAL CHANGE

Real change is the type of change that makes a defining difference to an organisation. It can be tough. But it can be done.

Here at Project One, we're passionate about helping ambitious organisations to change, thrive and grow, by bringing clarity, pace and greater certainty to the delivery of real change.

Over many years, our team of battle-hardened change leaders have brought a refreshingly different way of working to some of the UK's largest organisations.

The sectors and business challenges we work on may be diverse, but our resolve is the same.

WE ARE PROJECT ONE

Our expertise lies in helping organisations to transform their change and IT delivery capability.

We have over 20 years' experience in leading and delivering transformational change across many different industries, including business critical programmes for many household names.

PLANNING

The most common challenge when delivering change

In the 2015 Change Capability Survey*, leaders of change in large organisations voted Change Planning as their biggest challenge.

Every organisation must adapt, change and transform continually in order to deliver sustained levels of business performance. Change is not optional, and it's never easy. Now, more than ever before, being good at change is a key differentiator in the business world. Those who understand this and invest in improving their change capability are far more likely to attain and then sustain the level of business performance needed.

Alongside leadership, solution design and sourcing, change planning is one of the four key change capability disciplines that an organisation needs to master throughout the change journey*. Planning may lack the kudos of leadership, the

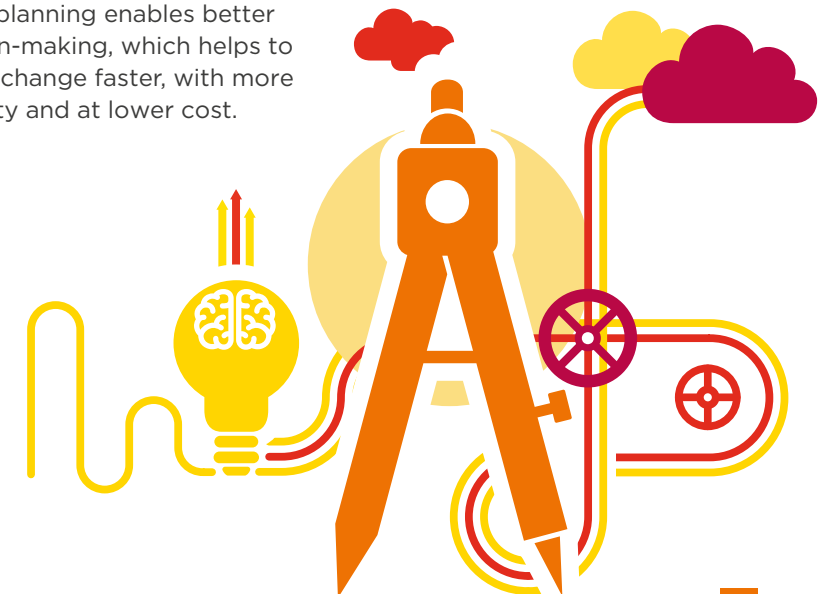
creativity of solution design and the commercial cut-and-thrust of sourcing, but it's the key to effective change. Many change programmes miss expectations because of planning challenges – things that weren't done before the project started. And recent research underlined the fact that, of all the change disciplines, planning is the one that organisations struggle with most.

If you want to maximise the return on your investment in change then planning is a challenge worth fixing. Better planning enables better decision-making, which helps to deliver change faster, with more certainty and at lower cost.

This article focuses on the discipline and essence of planning. Prepare yourself for the important and sometimes uncomfortable realities that may have to be faced to make significant improvements in the way your organisation plans for real change.

* See Project One's paper 'How to improve your organisation's change capability' (projectone.com/insights/how-to-improve-change-capability)

IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH
CHANGE PLANNING,
YOU'RE NOT ON YOUR OWN





Poor planning can leave you feeling like you're going nowhere

A CHALLENGE THAT NEVER SEEMS TO GO AWAY

Most organisations find change planning hard, and it's going to get harder.

Change planning is a complex process touching every area of the business. From deciding where to invest, to planning the resources for future change, as a change professional you have a tough job on your hands.

In many big businesses it feels like change planning is a homing issue - a problem that never goes away. Like business whack-a-mole, the people in charge of change end up just encountering problems that repeatedly pop up and have to be dealt with. Issues often don't get solved properly, they just get shifted but come back bigger and more severe.

Time and time again, when we talk to those in charge of real change, they tell us they need to get much better at planning change.

And it will get harder. In 1980, a Change Director could see and control those involved in delivering change. Today, where are they? They're in partner organisations and multiple offshore facilities. The component parts of change are more numerous, distributed and complex, and they're shifting all the time.

So if planning feels hard today,

fix it today, because, brace yourself, tomorrow it will be even harder.

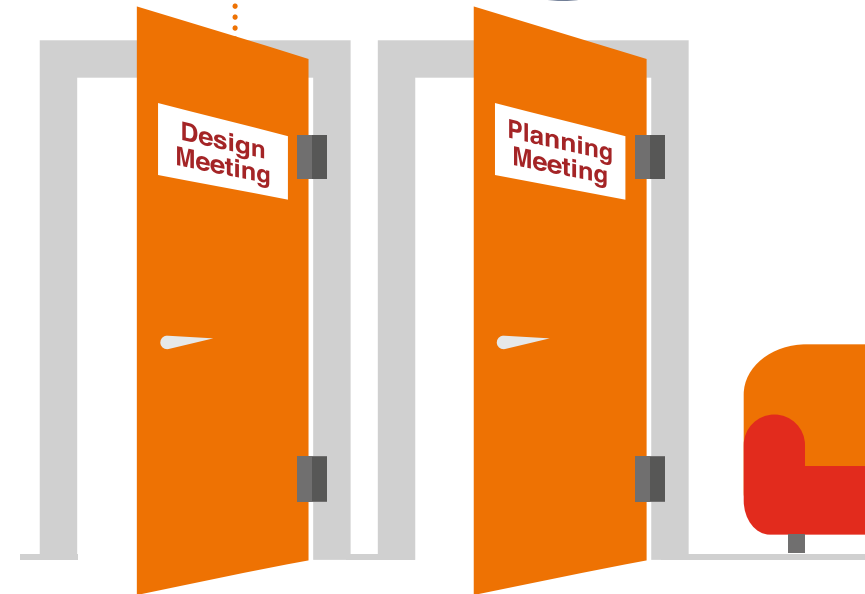
Finally, newer businesses may find change easier, but many twentieth century organisations struggle. Amazon has been designed to be flexible, big banks were designed to be efficient and profitable. Amazon can start selling a product immediately, for a big bank it can take months or years.

SO WHERE DO YOU START?

GIVE PLANNING THE FOCUS IT NEEDS

When you decide to focus on change planning, think about the status and priority that it has in the organisation. When planning is given the right focus, priority and support, when business leaders are properly engaged in it, then planning can be done well. As a result, steering groups, change boards and delivery teams can focus on driving the delivery of the plan rather than having to deal with the all-consuming implications of poor planning.

"Planning is done badly, if at all, then someone realises something was missed and it gets done again. Then priorities change and we have to re-plan, then someone realises we can't do it all and we have to re-plan again."
CIO, FTSE 100 business

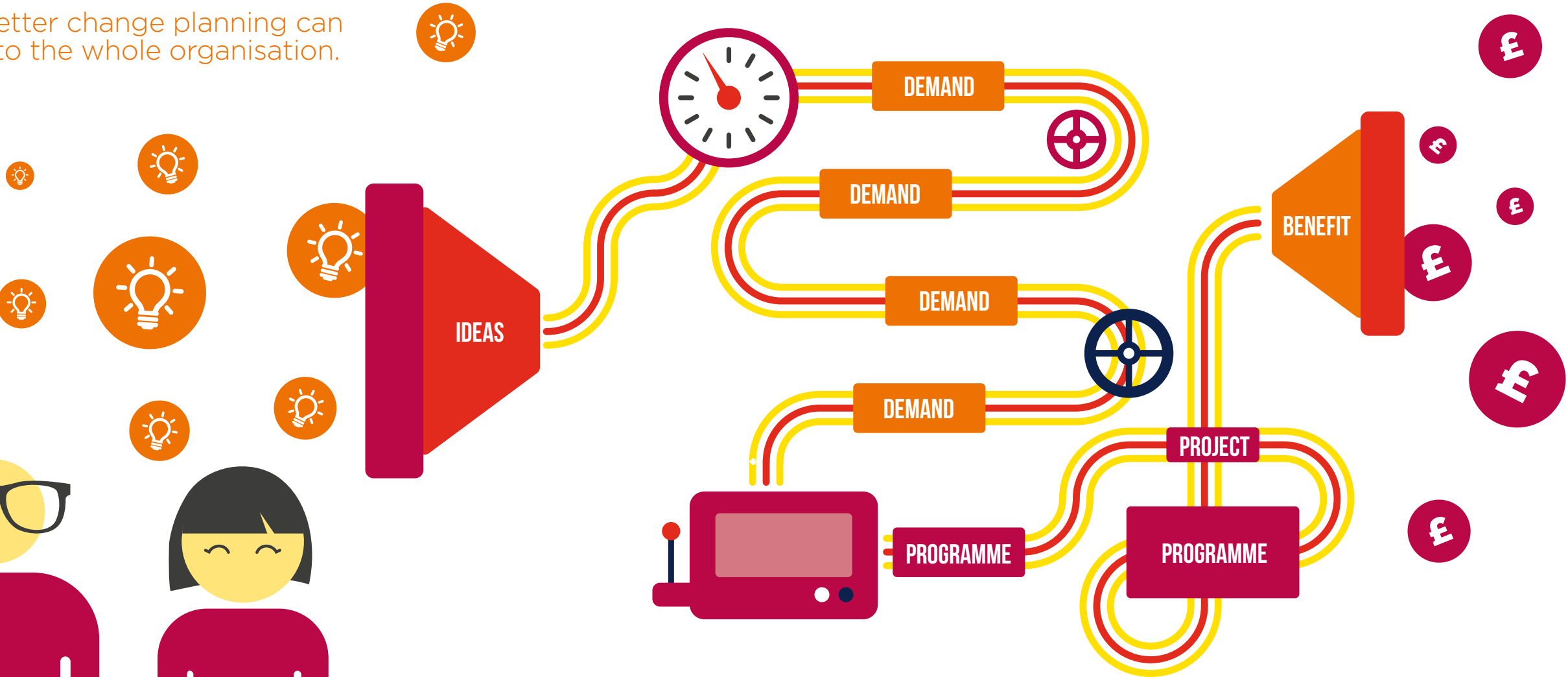
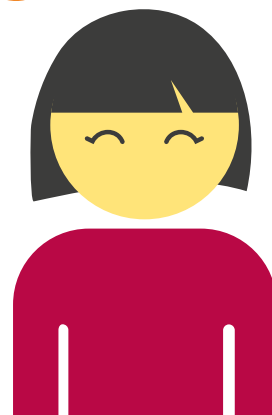
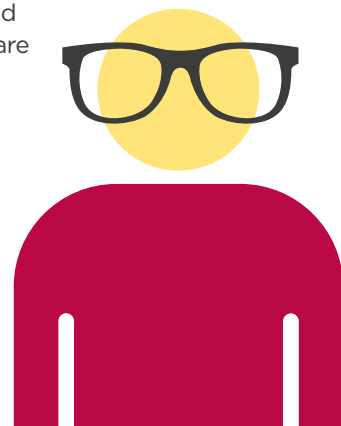



THERE IS REAL VALUE IN GETTING BETTER

It's worth the focus. Better change planning can deliver massive value to the whole organisation.


Change planning is a classic business integration challenge involving people, processes and technology. To get it right, start by being very clear on the true purpose of planning.

It all boils down to giving the right people, the right information at the right time to enable them to do what they need to do. Giving those with the accountability the information they need to make rational decisions about all the elements of change, for example - resources, money, risk, partners, outcomes and benefits, so that these are properly managed.




MAXIMISING RETURN 


Getting the best possible return from the investment you're making in change. The best "bang for the buck"

DELIVERING ON TIME 

Planning and co-ordinating the delivery of multiple changes, so that each lands, as far as possible, when the business needs it to land.

GREATER CERTAINTY 

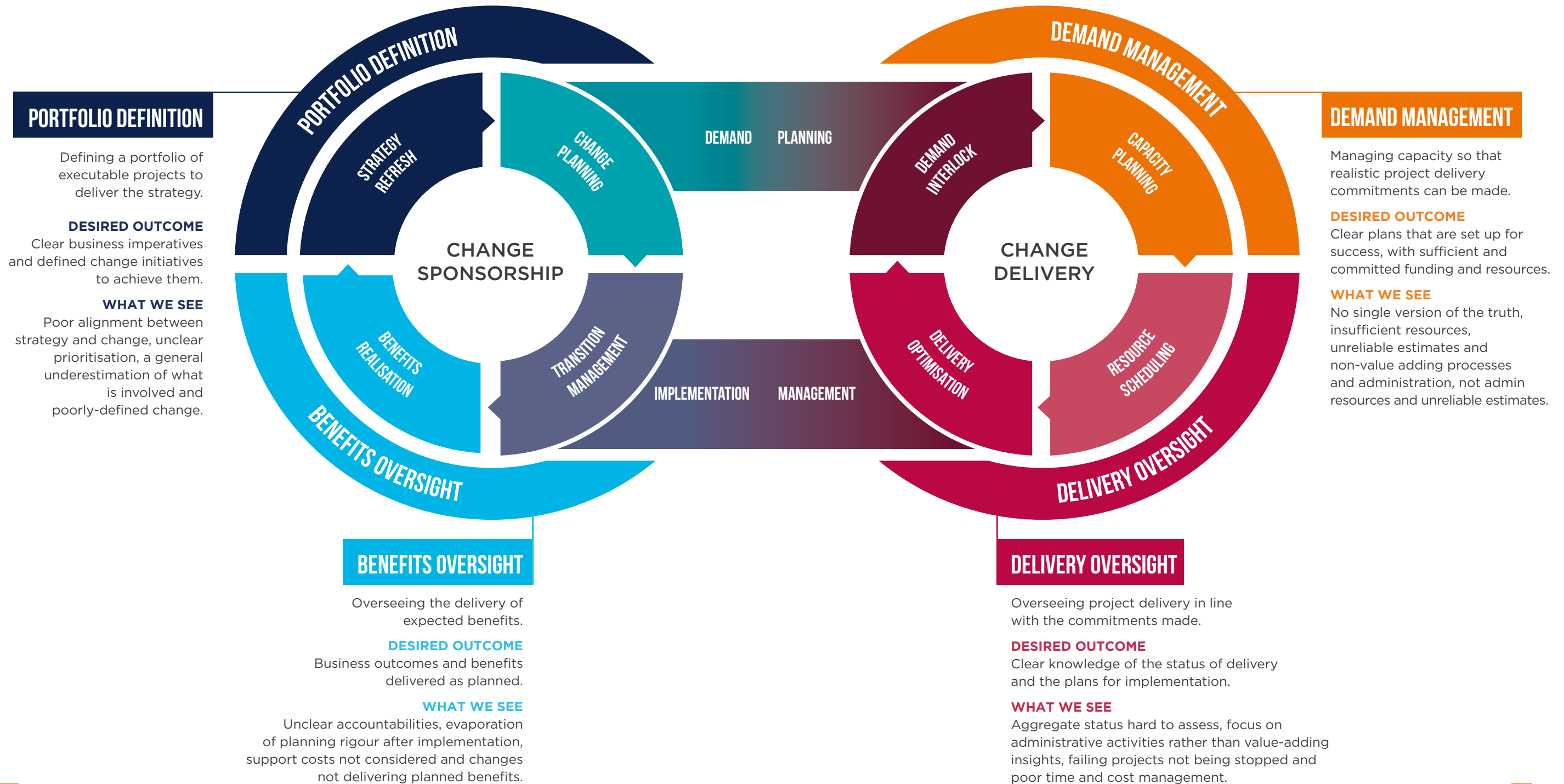
Good planning creates confidence, which allows change to be driven hard, minimising rework and delays.

REDUCING COST 

Cost is minimised when you're delivering the right change, at the right time, with increased levels of productivity and reduced overheads.

A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING YOUR INVESTMENT IN CHANGE

This is our framework for change planning, designed to help us understand how information flows through the process.



PORTFOLIO DEFINITION

Defining a portfolio of executable projects to deliver the strategy.

DESIRED OUTCOME
Clear business imperatives and defined change initiatives to achieve them.

WHAT WE SEE
Poor alignment between strategy and change, unclear prioritisation, a general underestimation of what is involved and poorly-defined change.

BENEFITS OVERSIGHT

Overseeing the delivery of expected benefits.

DESIRED OUTCOME
Business outcomes and benefits delivered as planned.

WHAT WE SEE
Unclear accountabilities, evaporation of planning rigour after implementation, support costs not considered and changes not delivering planned benefits.

DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Managing capacity so that realistic project delivery commitments can be made.

DESIRED OUTCOME
Clear plans that are set up for success, with sufficient and committed funding and resources.

WHAT WE SEE
No single version of the truth, insufficient resources, unreliable estimates and non-value adding processes and administration, not admin resources and unreliable estimates.

DELIVERY OVERSIGHT

Overseeing project delivery in line with the commitments made.

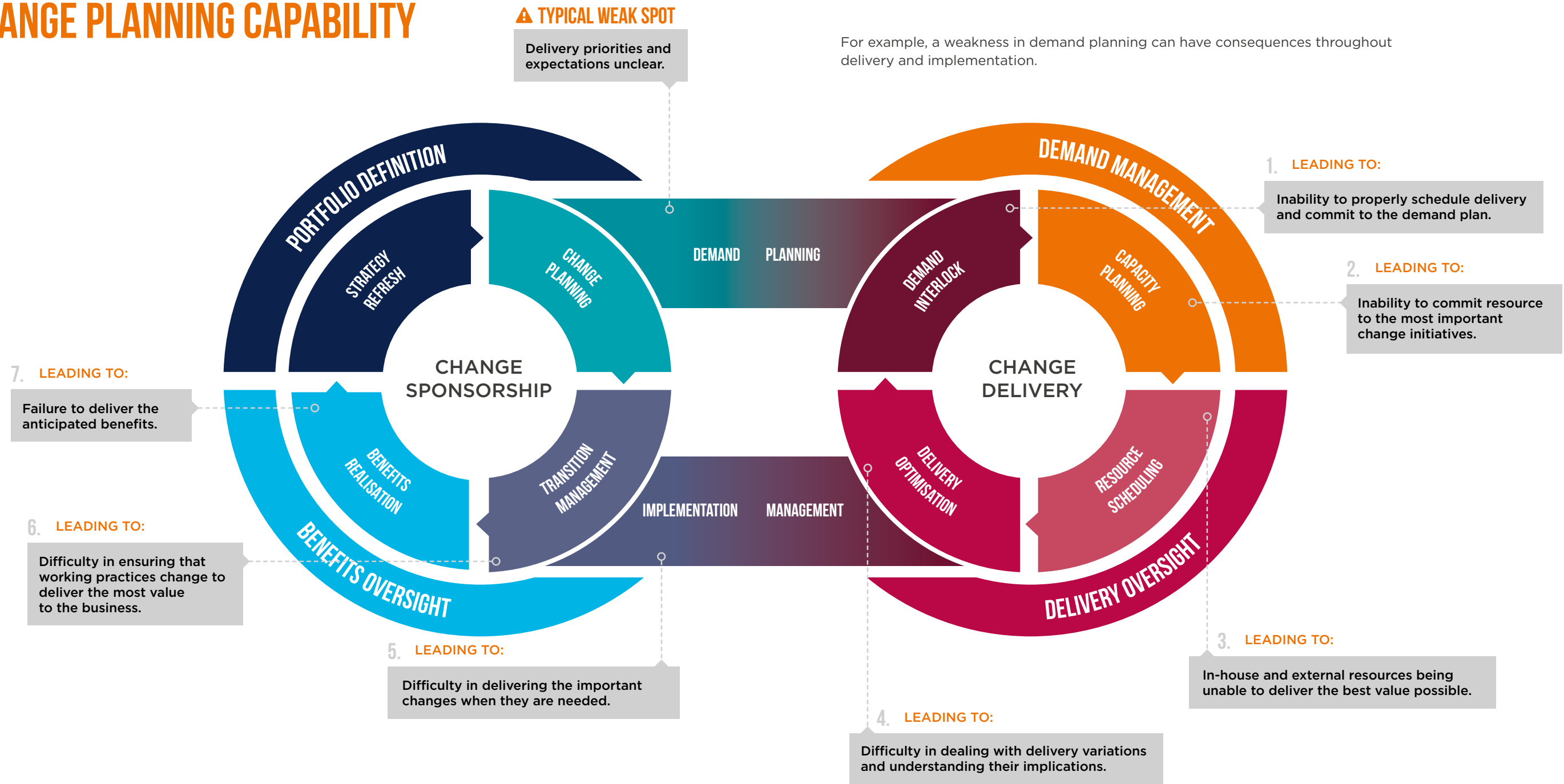
DESIRED OUTCOME
Clear knowledge of the status of delivery and the plans for implementation.

WHAT WE SEE
Aggregate status hard to assess, focus on administrative activities rather than value-adding insights, failing projects not being stopped and poor time and cost management.

ASSESSING YOUR CHANGE PLANNING CAPABILITY

Problems that we see in practice, are often the result of weaknesses in earlier processes.

For example, a weakness in demand planning can have consequences throughout delivery and implementation.



Change Planning Diagnostic

Understanding your capability and building an improvement plan, needs experience to differentiate the problem from the downstream symptoms of that problem. This is what the diagnostic helps to uncover. It needs experienced people too!

A 4-STEP APPROACH TO IMPROVE CHANGE PLANNING

Where you start depends on what you've already got in place. The important message is to follow the sequence and complete the step as each step informs the next.



CONSIDER WHO HAS THE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO MAKE ALL THIS HAPPEN
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THINK TALENT!

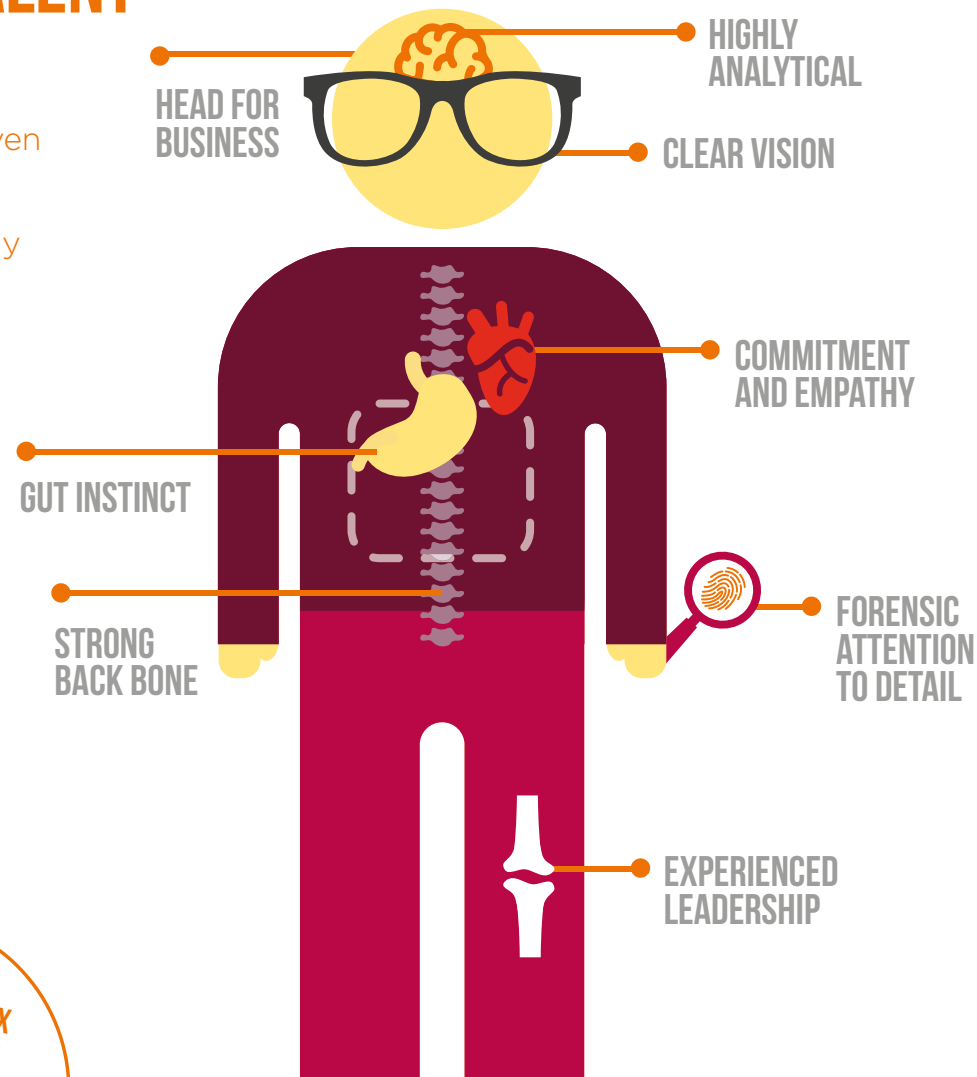
There is one more important thing to consider. You need to use talented people to make this happen and happen well. People are what planning is all about and it takes good people to do it well.

ANATOMY OF A GREAT CHANGE PLANNER

THE RIGHT TALENT

Planning isn't often given the priority it deserves in organisations; the planning role frequently falls to people who aren't best equipped to manage it.

The difficult-to-place Project Manager can be handed the poisoned planning chalice, and left to deal with it.



IF YOU WANT TO FIX
CHANGE PLANNING
THEN YOU NEED TO
HAVE THE RIGHT
TALENT INVOLVED
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CHANGE PLANNING NEEDS REALLY TALENTED PEOPLE

It's a big job, so use people who know how to do it, and do it well.

HEAD FOR BUSINESS

Relishes the task, with the personal and analytical skills to cope with the myriad of challenges.

HIGHLY ANALYTICAL

A good thinker with a logical mind. Instinctively analytical, with real, financial and planning acumen.

CLEAR VISION

You could say 20:20 vision, someone with the focus and clarity to think about and plan the future.

COMMITMENT AND EMPATHY

Understands the challenges and needs of the key stakeholders, possibly because they've been in their shoes.

GUT INSTINCT

It takes someone with the instinct to really understand what outputs and activities will add real value.

STRONG BACK BONE

It's a tough job, so we need someone who has bags of tenacity and conviction.

FORENSIC ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Organised, thorough and accurate, leaving no stone unturned to get the job done right, whilst keeping sight of the big picture and priorities.

EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP

A natural leader who can lead through influence rather than authority. Someone who can build and support a high-performing team.

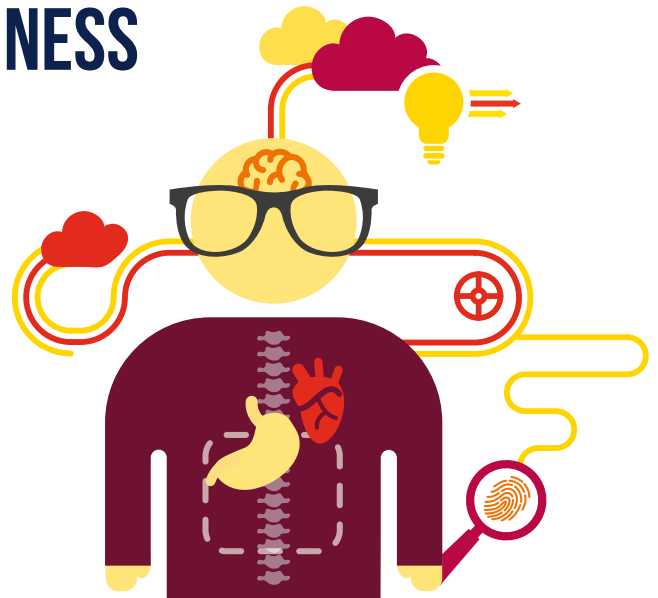
Think about the talent.

Don't set under-qualified

people up to fail.

DELIVERING GREATER BUSINESS VALUE THROUGH BETTER CHANGE PLANNING

For any organisation, the fundamental capability to change in order to tackle future challenges and opportunities, is what sets it apart from others. Being great at change means being great at several things, and in this document we've covered one of the most important. If you want to improve change planning in your organisation, we hope that this document helps you think through how you might do this.



THE APPROACH TO TAKE

Agree a framework for change to help you improve. Use ours as a base and make the language work for you.

Follow the four steps suggested:

1. Develop the strategy for change and the operating model to deliver it
2. Understand the KPIs, targets and management information that support effective decision-making
3. Decide where this information will come from and through what processes
4. Sustain and improve the processes through appropriate automation

Use talented people to bring it all together.

THE BUSINESS VALUE

- To maximise return on investment
- To deliver change when it is needed
- To have greater certainty of delivery
- To reduce the overall cost of change

GET IN TOUCH

If you'd like some help reviewing your organisation's change capabilities, or just want to discuss the points in this document, please get in touch.

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