

WHY PROGRAMME HEALTH CHECKS ARE VITAL TO SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Project One recently received a call from a CTO at a clothing retailer asking what experience we had at evaluating large scale platform deployments.

The CTO has recently joined the retailer and was somewhat alarmed by the in-flight programme situation – the status was ‘green/on track but in the CTO’s mind there were a lot of risks and uncertainty that the programme had yet to highlight or surface.

A key symptom we often see with programmes which are facing structural challenges is the sponsors talking about lack of transparency of issues and a general feeling of lack of control. This was the situation the CTO faced.

HOW PROJECT ONE CONDUCTS A HEALTH CHECK

Project One has a well proven health check methodology which looks at 28 aspects of programme delivery from leadership and strategy, to delivery and ownership. Having performed a three-week engagement to get to the bottom of the programme challenges, we presented back to the board a view which not only confirmed the CTO’s concerns, but prioritised and categorised those concerns and provided specific actions across time horizons – short-term (act now), medium-term (act quickly) and longer-term (act when you can).

Some would say it is easy to come in and critique a programme pointing out areas for improvement, and there is some truth in that statement. What makes the Project One health check so valuable is the prioritised recommendations on how to make those improvements in a practical way. We have many customers say ‘you haven’t told me anything I didn’t already know’ when it comes to the diagnosis, but what they really value is being shown where to start in order to fix it – helping them with ‘I already know most of the what, I need help with the how’.

In the case of this retailer, the focus was getting a grip on the delivery plan, aligning the requirements to the solution and moving the ownership of the programme from the IT function to the business functions. Many large platform programmes involve significant business change and adoption, and therefore should be run and managed from a business perspective. In many cases, landing the technology is the less complex part compared to the amount of impact to business processes and day-to-day activities for employees.

Through a combination of document reviews, workshops and interviews, the health check looked across a programme end-to-end and identified a number of critical issues with vision and strategy, planning, resourcing, governance and architecture.

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HOW PROJECT ONE HELPED FIX THE CUSTOMER'S PROGRAMME

We provided 40 specific recommendations with implications, owners, effort estimates and expected outcomes. These recommendations were then prioritised by impact, loaded into a tracker and the customer pledged to the sponsors that they would address the recommendations and report back on a continuous basis.

Project One provided two change experts to bolster the existing team - a new Programme Director to reset the programme and gain control of the 3rd party delivery elements and a business change lead to setup and manage the business change and communications function.

They ensured the recommendations were actioned through the programme team using the recommendation roadmap as a guide for the early part of the engagement.

DO YOU NEED CHANGE EXPERTISE?

Our unique approach to helping organisations through expert evaluation and pin-point support has helped this customer get their transformation back on track quickly and with limited disruption to the programme, business and delivery team. Can we help your company keep your delivery programmes 'green'.

If you'd like to talk more about this topic, please get in touch with paul.monteith@projectone.com

"The difference in the programme between when you started and today is black and white" - CTO

THE OUTCOME OF THE INTERVENTION

The programme went through a formal reset which included a new baseline plan and budget to completion. Stakeholder expectations have been reset and are now carefully managed. The programme is delivering against the new plan with a tighter set of controls. The programme is expected to complete in line with the revised timetable which means dependent projects and business initiatives can continue at pace.

Project One focuses on creating capability within our customer's organisation and therefore we helped recruit and train business change and communications people. The business change and communications deliverables from this programme are now being used as a template within the organisation for delivering large-scale change.