



Are you being asked GOOD questions during Transformation?

Contracting for Challenge

Maximise the role of the Board to help deliver your Transformation results

What does the Board do to aid your Transformation?

A Board plays a critical role in any Transformation. It is their role to provide objective challenge, distanced from the nuances of the detail, to ensure that the Change underway will provide the outcomes that the business truly needs.

There are three typical phases of transformation – initiation, approval, delivery, notwithstanding the need to Sustain it afterwards. Identification of the need for change is a critical initial phase. Whilst not strictly a transformational phase – it should already be in place – without it, no transformation can be truly successful.

This brief guide takes you through the four stages, and the key questions and focus area that your Board should be obsessing around to ensure its Business remains on track.

Stage 0: Identifying the need for change?

The initiation stage is where the idea for a transformation should first emerge. The outcome from this stage is a headline view of the dissatisfaction requiring resolution.

For this to happen well, ideally there are 6 questions which should regularly be asked of your Executive team. Change to these answers, and crucially any perceived variances to these answers from within the Executive will help to evidence what and where a transformation should focus.

- How agreed are you on current performance?
- Where do you want performance to be?
- What essential areas require focus?
- What impacts operational performance?
- Where will performance be improved?
- How coordinated is the business as a whole?

If these questions are not routinely asked and answered, transformation efforts will likely end in disappointment.

Stage 1: Initiating Transformation

- **Extent of Change:** What type of change is this? A minor fine tuning or a complete corporate transformation?
- **Impact:** What do we want the Transformation to achieve, and where will this be detected (£/KPIs), to what magnitude, and within what timeframe?
- **Support:** Has active ownership or endorsement to the idea been received from the Exec, customers, Investors? What concerns needed addressing?
- **Choices:** Have any alternative options been considered, and why does this represent the optimum route?

Stage 2: Agreeing the plan

- **Internal resource:** Where will we find the required capacity and capability to deliver this programme?
- **External support:** How will external expertise be used to support the delivery of our ambition? Is this skill requirement truly temporary?
- **Phasing:** How can the transformation journey be broken into distinct phases with options at each?
- **Momentum:** what will be required to sustain the required momentum throughout the lifecycle?
- **Value case:** How and where will progress against the business case and its associated value return be monitored, and acted upon?
- **Financial:** How can we deliver the transformation in a way that minimises cash requirements and allows early financial return to be reinvested in future phases? What return are we expecting?
- **Non-Financial Benefits:** What broader return will be delivered, and who will recognise these?
- **Risks:** What principle new risks does this add to the Board agenda? Which will it mitigate?

Stage 3: Delivering the results

- **Leadership:** What are the expectations on our leaders for sponsorship? How are they motivated?
- **Stakeholder Management:** What is the approach to stakeholder management and engagement?
- **BAU:** Who is responsible for delivering the BAU? How will transition take place?
- **Escalations:** How will obstructions be highlighted and managed? What are we expecting?
- **Benefit tracking:** How we will know if we are on track, and if not, determine what to do about it?
- **Capability:** How are we determining development of the required capabilities?
- **Wider Engagement:** How do we know that our people are with us? What do we need to do more?
- **Sustain the change:** Where will the transformation be owned following delivery of the programme?

Two warnings:

1) A transformation plan itself delivers nothing, but without a plan nothing will be delivered. But what is delivered is almost certainly going to be different from the original plan; this is perfectly normal, but methodically and regularly answering the questions above will help prevent surprises.

2) At times, tension will likely emerge. This is to be expected and encouraged; this is part of the required change journey.

Critical Success Factors



10 signs of an effective organisation

- Leadership provides unambiguous leadership from the top, and models the expected behaviours
- An empowered and visible 'Architect' is accountable to determine what, how and when action needs to be taken
- 'Coaches' across the business ensure that the process sticks, and variation is minimised
- Improvement and quick wins are considered part of everyone's job and are a key part of engagement
- Individuals who frustrate the process or act singularly are removed quickly and without exception
- Deadlines and demanding targets are set, with time and effort provided as required to areas or individuals that are struggling
- Rather than disconnected initiatives, an integrated programme of improvements is in place with required tools easily available
- A definitive world class body of knowledge on the business system exists, and is trusted and used by all
- Employees, suppliers and customers all have a place to see the system working in its entirety
- Commitment to continuous improvement is a non-negotiable part of the culture

About the author



Alex has over a decade of experience in helping clients find and remove inefficiency and cost from their business whilst simultaneously improving employee engagement. The approach used delivers transformative results predominately by changing what people and teams do, how they do it, and ensuring that this becomes the new way of working. This is achieved by ensuring that focus is entirely aligned to delivering to customers exactly what they want, precisely when they need it. In the last 4 years, Alex ensured improved operational performance and £400m of cost efficiencies for a FTSE 30 business and provided +1,000 people with the skills to continue.

Alex's 4D approach enables successful business transformation in 4 clear stages: discover the opportunity, develop the vision, design the approach, deliver the results.

Acting as an interim 'Guide' to the senior leadership team, Alex builds a core team of highly motivated people and focusses them towards a common goal and agreed benefits case, relentlessly ensuring that all benefits can truly be seen in the company's key performance measures and customer satisfaction scores.

The three customer benefits that differentiates the approach Alex uses are:

1. Commitment to deliver sustainable transformational results predominantly with existing employees, but with the ability to supplement with seasoned associates as required.
2. A simple but effective governance approach ensuring all results are clearly demonstrable within the financials and/or the primary outcome metric.
3. A proven delivery record at all transformational stages, expertise and insight from big consulting firms (former management consultant for both Accenture and EY), and senior operational experience (direct report of COO of FTSE 30 organisation) brought into your business through one main point of contact.

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