

Change management for cloud-based digital services

Helping organisations, through pragmatic use of change management frameworks, to embed the changes necessary for achieving stated business objectives. The human variables of change are addressed systematically and sympathetically, as significant transformation creates uncertainty, particularly during those times when roles are being changed, and/or new skills are being developed.

Our change management service is recommended for any public sector organisation embarking on cloud technology adoption and usage, with the consequent need to deploy new cloud-based digital products and services as part of managing their transition. By sharing our in-depth, hands-on experience of leading and delivering large-scale change programmes, we help clients to develop a shared understanding amongst a wide range of stakeholders and delivery team members of the vision, objectives, and scope for service delivery, and the organisational and technology changes needed to successfully transform to a new operating model and ways of working.

Features

- Direct support in use of proven diagnostics, tools and models
- Help with re-skilling and adapting to new ways of working
- Facilitating cultural change to embed enduring change at all levels
- Operating model change to embed change in all organisational layers
- Transforming the Leadership layer of delivery
- Transforming the Delivery and Execution layers
- Benefits mapping to clarify how business outcomes are delivered
- Change leadership using established change management frameworks
- Business change strategy
- Key Performance Indicators

Benefits

- Successfully embeds change at scale with empathy for the challenges
- Improves employee engagement
- Addresses behavioural and cultural impact to reduce resistance to change
- Provides clear context and communication during times of change
- Connects strategic drivers directly to KPIs

- Baselines leadership qualities and behaviours during change
- Helps delivery teams see the value of their work
- Builds strategies for improving leadership behaviours during change

Our approach to change management

We recommend the pragmatic use of change management frameworks that allow high levels of flexibility and adaptation when recommending how organisations achieve its objectives and realise benefits.

Having gathered context to most effectively tailor our approach, we apply agile principles, using appropriate ceremonies such as stand-ups, showcases, and retrospectives. Progress is made visible through the use of physical spaces, as well as online tools like Trello.

One example model of change management breaks down the process into three distinct layers - Leadership, Delivery and Execution. Improving the approaches, techniques, methods and behaviours in all three layers can ensure organisations are set up for success.



Leadership

The leadership layer focuses on vision, strategy and providing direction. It looks out towards stakeholders and executives, as well as across into change initiatives. Roles in the leadership layer have accountabilities that include owning the Business Case, identifying the changes, and managing relationships.

Typical roles in this layer include (but are not limited to) Executives, Business Owners, Programme or Change Directors, and Business Experts (SMEs). Those operating in this layer are primarily outcome-focused, and manage the Delivery Layer (who in turn manage the Execution layer, which is output & delivery-based).

Discovery workshops help define the vision, how the strategy will be communicated, how objectives and key results can be identified and measured, and how the first effective actions should be determined.

The workshops also help build a shared understanding of the behaviours and qualities that can be expected during change and the most effective communication and engagement strategies to address these. A tailored approach to different stakeholder groups, projects and change initiatives will help gain buy-in and recommend which tools and methods should be used.

The uncertainty inherent in change creates resistance. A flexible approach for managing the change, involving everyone, should be developed as early as possible. Reducing uncertainty through the provision of support and direction is vital. Transparency and accountability amongst those in the leadership layer are necessary to successfully model the desired behaviours from the rest of the organisation.

A deep understanding of the organisation's cultural context is an important prerequisite when diagnosing the best strategies for change. Engaging with this process will surface problems and conflicts, and help shape the optimal ways to engage with resistance. Fundamental adjustments to culture are usually required, but it is important to preserve the core values, beliefs and behaviours if successful change is to happen and persist.

Allowing for the unexpected requires constant reassessment of the impacts change is having on people. This assessment should include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

We provide guidance and support in this layer, working with Directors and Line Managers to ensure effective change leadership and the development of compelling communication/engagement strategies. Work in this area includes building and sharing forthcoming changes, challenging the status quo, addressing individual and team resistance to change, building on lessons learned, and coaching and mentoring teams and individuals in the adoption of new ways of working.

We work with organisations to identify internal staff with the appropriate skills to take on specific roles, such as Service Manager and Product Owner, if they are not already in place. And we will mentor and coach to transfer our knowledge of transformation and change throughout the course of engagement to enhance the internal change capability.

Delivery Layer

The delivery layer focuses on the day-to-day management and control of the project, programme or change initiative. Resources in this layer include (but are not limited to) Programme Office (PMO), Programme Managers, Project Managers, Scrum Masters and Product Owners.

Discovery workshops and working alongside key delivery resources will help us understand how strategy, objectives and key results, benefits and business changes are translated into enablers across People, Process, Policy and Technology, ensuring that the projects and initiatives deliver outputs that achieve the desired outcomes. We will also gain insight into the alignment of delivery teams to the overall goals of the organisation.

The role the Programme Office (PMO) plays in supporting projects and change initiatives is crucial, and we will help support and evolve the communication and management approaches adopted by Project and Programme Managers.

Execution Layer

The execution layer is where the day-to-day efforts required to deliver the project or change initiative happen. As an example, solution design, development, testing and deployment are all carried out here.

Discovery workshops and working alongside key delivery resources help us to understand the dynamics experienced during change initiatives. We work to understand how empowered the delivery teams are, their level of autonomy, how well they understand the purpose behind the tasks they are carrying out, and the consequences of failing to achieve their key results. The analysis will include perceptions of change leadership and an assessment of the preferred leadership style(s).

As change is inherently a personal journey, teams and individuals need to know how their work will be different, how they will be measured, and what success or failure looks like for them. Honesty and transparency are key when developing appropriate channels of communication between all levels.

Methods - Benefit Maps

Outcomes and benefits are at the heart of any change initiative. In many cases, organisations focus on outputs without understanding whether the deliverables in which they are investing are going to deliver the value they need. We propose designing change initiatives that focus on outcomes by using benefits maps when making decisions and prioritising the process.

Benefits maps support the setting and management of stakeholder expectations throughout the change journey by tracking the impact of scope changes and delays against business benefits and outcomes. They also encourage business ownership and engagement by ensuring relevant stakeholders get to define the benefits management process.



They provide a transparent view of the connections between enablers (for example, policy shifts or process changes) and business results. Benefit maps are a powerful tool to identify business benefits in terms of financial, quantifiable, measurable and observable results and create the associated business case, as the basis for clear and transparent communication.

The benefits map framework asks a series of questions.

- What are you trying to achieve strategically?
- How will you measure success?
- If you achieve your key results, how much benefit do you expect?
- To achieve your goals, do you need to make changes to the organisational design?

Answering these questions allows change teams to identify what enablers are required (people, process, policy and technology), and design a set of initiatives to achieve the desired outcomes.

Connections are then made from each business driver to show which key results will measure whether it has been successfully achieved, what business benefits will be achieved as a result, what business changes are required to achieve those benefits, meet that business driver and what enablers need to be delivered. These are then aggregated into projects, so those working on a particular initiative have a clear line of sight on the purpose and consequences of what they are delivering.



We believe the benefits mapping process can work in two ways: firstly, as an output from Discovery to detail the changes we believe are needed to deliver the desired outcomes, and secondly, as an approach to assist teams in Change Management and delivery going forward.

To ensure a smooth and successful transition from the current to new ways of working, we recommend a flexible, context-driven approach to change management to ensure that an organisation's employees and stakeholders across the organisation are informed, empowered and engaged throughout the transformation.

Examples of change management in action

We were delivery partners responsible for a number of GDS's original 25 exemplar transformation projects across two of the largest Government departments - the Home Office and HMRC. At the time, agile delivery methods, open source and user-centred design were new concepts to most areas of government.

We worked closely with internal staff in cross-functional teams alongside GDS, and our success helped set the template for digital transformation and change across both organisations, ultimately feeding back into the GDS service manual with a major impact on how digital services are created across government.

One major business change was moving from infrequent Big Bang releases to frequent low-risk releases as part of continuous delivery pipelines. Within both organisations, we

worked closely with internal security and operational experts to share knowledge and expertise to develop a risk-based model addressing concerns about switching from tried and tested traditional methods.

Referencing our successful implementation of continuous delivery principles at various private sector clients helped make the case to persuade business and operational stakeholders to trial a new approach using automated agile processes to meet traditional waterfall auditing and security requirements, business readiness assessments and release governance. We helped HMRC make the change from two expensive, disruptive releases a year to many releases a day by 60+ individual product teams working in parallel on a single platform, helping with the behavioural and cultural change needed to move to a new operating model.

Another area new to both organisations was a focus on user needs within the delivery process. There was a belief that senior operational management had the best understanding of what happened on the ground. By embedding user research into the development process and showcasing user research and user testing on a regular basis, we demonstrated an evidence base, showing there was a disparity between what was actually happening and what was thought to happen. User research ultimately formed the basis for service design decisions that worked for end users as well as internal operations.

Legislation and case law influence our services. Sometimes, we have had to establish a legal basis to meet the user needs, searching, reading and discussing legislation with lawyers. And where possible, finding ways to meet user needs within existing legislation. Sometimes, though, the legislation needs to change. Our consultants combed legislation to establish a legal basis for data sharing between HMRC and NHS Digital. And they have been influencing new legislation to de-risk HMRC's API strategy. Both efforts stem from user needs (and opportunities) arising from business changes.

Much of our work with HMRC has had a direct impact on the operational business and we have worked closely with HMRC senior management and change teams to make sure that these business changes are rolled out in a way that supports agile delivery and has the right level of impact operationally e.g. the introduction of chat and messaging services to the 20,000 strong team of Personal Tax Advisers has been transformative, allowing advisers to interact with multiple users while actively using digital services.

Introducing web chat functionality was originally seen by HMRC as a simple piece of integration work. We helped manage this paradigm switch by asking questions that allowed HMRC to focus resources in the most appropriate places at the right times. Using

a data-driven approach to ask: Where is chat wanted? Where is the current demand?
What metrics will be needed to measure success?

On our Home Office Visa Application exemplar delivery, our team produced prototypes, built a content prototyping tool for testing multilingual content, and conducted contextual enquiry/lab-based user research to help develop a detailed understanding of user needs, validate potential solutions and understand viability from a legal, policy and operational perspective, and get feedback from diverse business stakeholders to understand the impact of change.

The results were used to help inform collective decision-making and to balance the competing needs of diverse stakeholders. The team developed a dynamic 'Product Catalogue' allowing policy team members to trace explicit policy guidelines to questions and functionality in the visa application. We encouraged a member of policy to join the team and pair with us to foster collaboration and ensure timely delivery. Extensive user research and testing in this way provided an evidence base to challenge and revise policy.

We actively participated in change management, using mature automated agile processes to meet traditional waterfall auditing and security requirements, business readiness assessments, and release governance, and helped the programme transition to agile methods over time. By including operational business users throughout delivery, we gradually overcame resistance, driving a programme mindset change in accepting that frequent, small, incremental releases are lower risk than infrequent, large releases.