



## Implementing the vision of transformational change

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## Implementing the vision of transformational change

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A great deal is written about the need for a vision of change that will inspire everyone in your organisation to transform how they work and achieve the organisation's strategic objectives. Motivation comes from this exciting vision of the future, but motivation and positive feelings about the changes your organisation needs to make are not enough. Transformational change is disruptive, impacting every area of the organisation, and if there is no framework for guiding the changes then at best they will fail to embed but at worst your organisation has taken resources away from the 'day job' but realised no benefits from this effort.

Every organisation needs a business change lifecycle - a set of processes, activities and roles for defining, planning, implementing and embedding change. Organisations are continually changing so you already have people who implement change, but without a business change lifecycle the approach will lack consistency, there will be duplication of effort and a detailed understanding of how the change will be achieved and its impact on other business initiatives will be insufficiently defined.

## Benefits of a business change lifecycle

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A decision to develop a business change lifecycle sends a clear message about how the organisation views change:

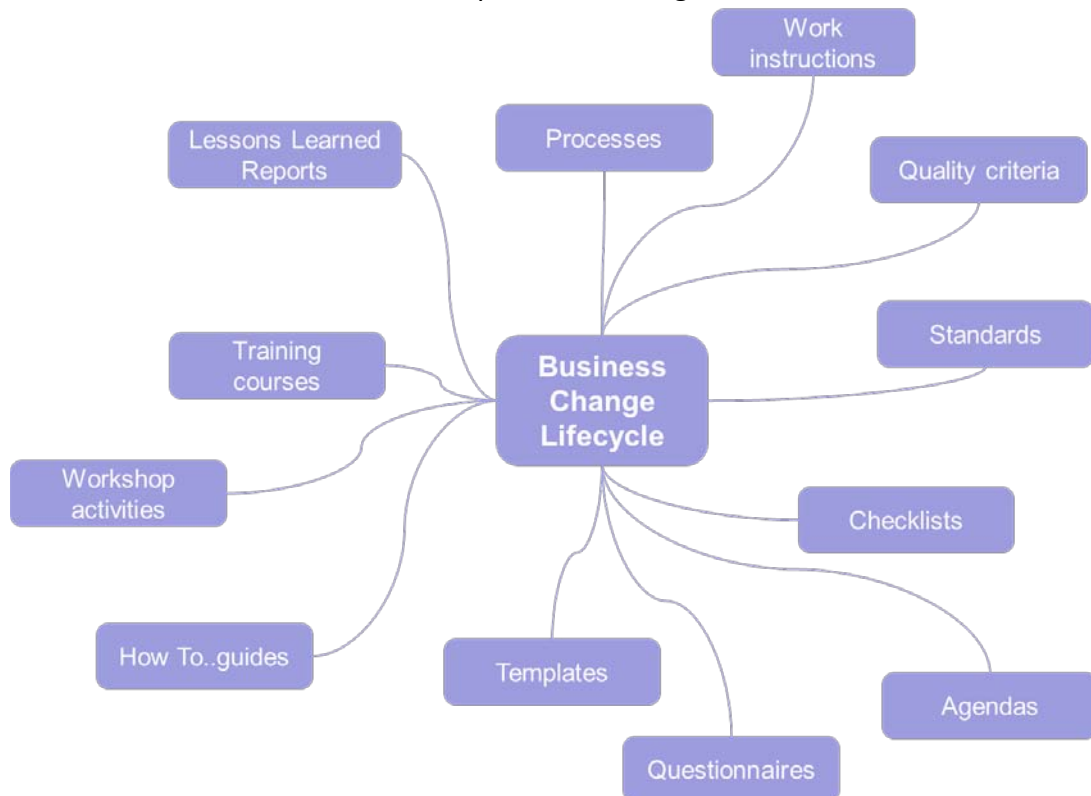
- Change is normal and requires a set of processes and standards to guide it, just like any other management discipline
- Implementing change is an important capability that is worth investing in
- We will not rely on luck to advance the goals of our organisation but will apply a systematic set of controls to ensure we realise the benefits of our innovations

For individuals the creation of a business change lifecycle offers:

- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities for making changes which builds confidence as people know what is expected of them
- Faster start to change initiatives as the steps to be taken have already been defined and supported with guides, templates and checklists
- An effective team of change practitioners through the shared learning of standard working practices
- Reassurance from knowing how to plan the work, clarity about the purpose of each step and knowing what comes next

## How to create a business change lifecycle

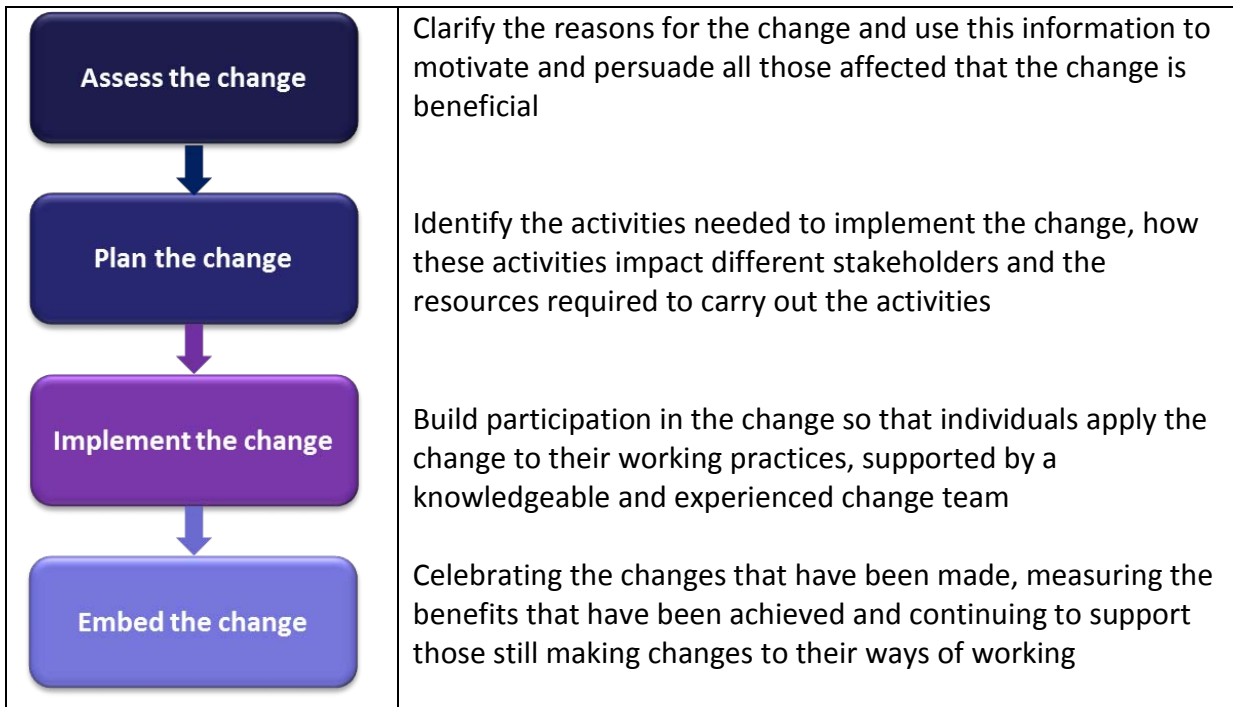
A business change lifecycle is essentially a change management methodology which is formed of a series of processes, each of which defines the activities needed to move a change through its evolution from initial idea to successful adoption, becoming the new business norm.



Many experts in change management have defined their own approach to this lifecycle including John Kotter and his eight steps which begin with developing a guiding coalition and establishing a burning platform, Kurt Lewin and his model of 'Unfreeze, Move and Refreeze' and William Bridges who advocates marking the endings, managing through the neutral zone and celebrating new beginnings.

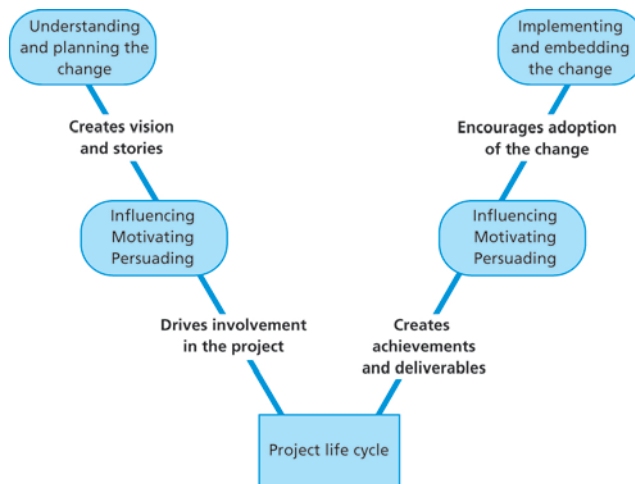
The UK Cabinet Office through its Managing Successful Programmes text has defined a three step process of pre-transition, transition and post-transition that details the analysis, delivery and review activities needed for effective business transformation.

Having applied all of these models (and more!) I have defined a generic four step model that can be applied to any type of organisational change:



## Applying the Business Change Lifecycle to your situation

A business change lifecycle does not operate in isolation from your existing governance arrangements. Operational governance establishes the measures, standards and control mechanisms that enable people to carry out their work in an 'approved' manner. Your existing project management framework needs to align to your business change lifecycle because it is through project management that we develop the new processes, systems and products that we are implementing using the change management steps defined in the business change lifecycle. As this diagram shows, the project lifecycle is not the driving force for the change. The project is a product of the initial idea for change and the project leads into the implementation of the change.



It is also important to recognise:

- The extent to which an approach to managing change is embedded within the organisation
- The perception that those working in or with the organisation have of the commitment to managing change
- The level of motivation that exists for addressing change management as a business issue

To gather this information use a maturity model to map the existing capability that exists within the organisation and establish how the business change lifecycle will increase this capability and over what time frame this improvement will be achieved.

## Conclusion

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A business change lifecycle gives your organisation greater certainty that the changes it needs to make to deliver strategic objectives and realise the benefits of change will be achieved.

Tailoring a generic model to fit the culture of your organisation communicates your belief in quality, getting things done right first time and a commitment to continued improvement and enhancement of the way in which you do business.

In the last year I have seen a dramatic increase in the number of organisations who have committed to putting as much effort into defining their approach to managing change and business transformation as they have previously applied to their approach to project management.

A common starting point is the recognition that whilst their processes for managing projects has improved delivery, with projects completing on time and on budget, the realisation of the benefits from the projects is still unstructured. There is too much reliance on the goodwill of those impacted by the changes to understand how the project deliverables can be applied to their working practices and to create the time to make these changes whilst continuing to manage 'business as usual'.

The current economic environment means that existing staff are already working to maximum capacity and that the integration of new systems, processes and products needs to be carefully planned if performance targets are to be achieved. The business change lifecycle sets out a structure for these plans and gives everyone a straightforward mechanism for embedding change alongside their existing responsibilities.





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