Strategic questions

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Before starting out on your change management initiative - some strategic questions to ask yourself.

This list is not exhaustive but is intended as an aide-memoir to kick start your thought processes and to help you avoid the 70% failure rate:

(1) Have you thoroughly addressed the originating strategic review questions?

❑ Where have we come from?

❑ Where are we now?

❑ Where do we want to be?

(2) What is your vision for the changed company?

❑ How is this communicated to staff?

❑ Does your staff share this vision?

(3) How would you describe the company, its culture and core processes now - (key characteristics) - key issues (actions and behaviours) - major focus (areas of impact)?

❑ Have you defined some sort of cultural frameworks of your organisation - to show "this is what we look like"?

(4) What do you want the business to look like after everyone's changed - how will the specifics of the culture and core processes have changed?

❑ Where are the gaps between now and where you want to be?

❑ What steps are needed to close the gaps?

❑ What are the implications of this?

❑ Do you know the steps to be undertaken to get from: "where are we now" to "where we want to be"?

❑ Have you identified for each step, the implications, issues and exposures that have to be addressed to progress to the next step?

(5) How are you going to manage the transition?

❑ How will you know how you're doing?

❑ Have you analysed, categorised and prioritised the issues arising across all functional areas impacted by the transition?

❑ Are you using a structured methodology?

❑ Do you have the skills in-house to do this properly?

❑ Who is going to provide overall leadership and ultimate accountability for the initiative?

❑ Who is going to fulfil the role of day-to-day management of the initiative, its risks, issues, conflicts, priorities, communications, and ensuring delivery of the new capabilities?

❑ Who is going to fulfil the role of realising the benefits delivered by the change initiative?

(6) Do you have a clear blueprint that defines your organisation after the change?

❑ Is this Blueprint fully communicated to all staff?

❑ Is it going to be actively used in a structured manner to maintain focus throughout the duration of your change initiative?

(7) Do you have a clear definition and documentation for each specific benefit to be realised by this change?

❑ What is it and what difference will it make - where in organisation does it arise - how will its achievement be measured?

❑ Have you documented what differences should be noticeable between now and the close of the change initiative?

❑ Do you have planned processes to put in place to ensure that these benefits are achieved?

❑ Do you have a mechanism for measuring the improvements arising from the realisation of each benefit?

❑ Are these benefits communicated to staff?

(8) Have you documented the "stakeholder map" all those who have an interest in the change? And specifically how the change will impact them?

❑ Have you analysed the impact of the programme on their area of interest and the likely issues that will arise?

(9) Do you have a two-way communication strategy? Does it work?

❑ What are the feedback mechanisms and processes that are actually going to make this a two-way communication process?

❑ What are the processes that will ensure that your people are informed about the use of their feedback to influence the change initiative?

❑ What are the processes that will raise awareness of the benefits and impacts of the Blueprint?

(10) Do you have an issues and risk management strategy (for the change)? Have you identified what can go wrong and put countermeasures in place?

❑ What are the processes that will ensure that it is enacted effectively?

❑ What are the processes that will ensure that it gives you early visibility of issues and risks?