

Benefits Identification

The phrase “begin with the end in mind” couldn’t be truer than when we look at the success of an organisation’s investment in change activity. Identification of benefits and the realisation of value resulting from change activity, in whatever form that value takes, is the primary measure of success, not the delivery of the change activity itself.

This is why we should all be advocates of benefits-led change. Too often, the value resulting from an investment is only properly considered after the change activity has commenced. In benefits-led change, establishing clear purpose, and then aligning and incentivising your people in the execution of the activity to achieve that purpose, is the key to success. Executive leaders must articulate what value they want to realise before any project activity commences. Only then can an organisation be assured that the change it implements will be effective.

What does this mean in practice and how do we go about achieving it? Put simply, it’s about verifying expected and actual performance; developing meaningful metrics and indicators of value before change activity commences. Then it is using those metrics to measure performance throughout the cycle of change to manage the activity being undertaken.

Whilst traditionally we recognise the workflow of project outputs enabling operational outcomes delivering business value, we must start thinking from ‘right to left’. It is the identification and meaningful use of the business (e.g. financial, customer satisfaction, organisational agility) and operational (e.g. outcomes, KPIs and recognition events) performance measures which help ensure any change activity remains ‘on track’.

It is this ‘golden thread’ of performance monitoring which ensures that everyone in the activity value chain, from executive leaders through to business managers and project professionals, aligns the value to the work and is always thinking with the end goal in mind.