



A Benefits Focused Approach to Project Controls

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17th June 2010

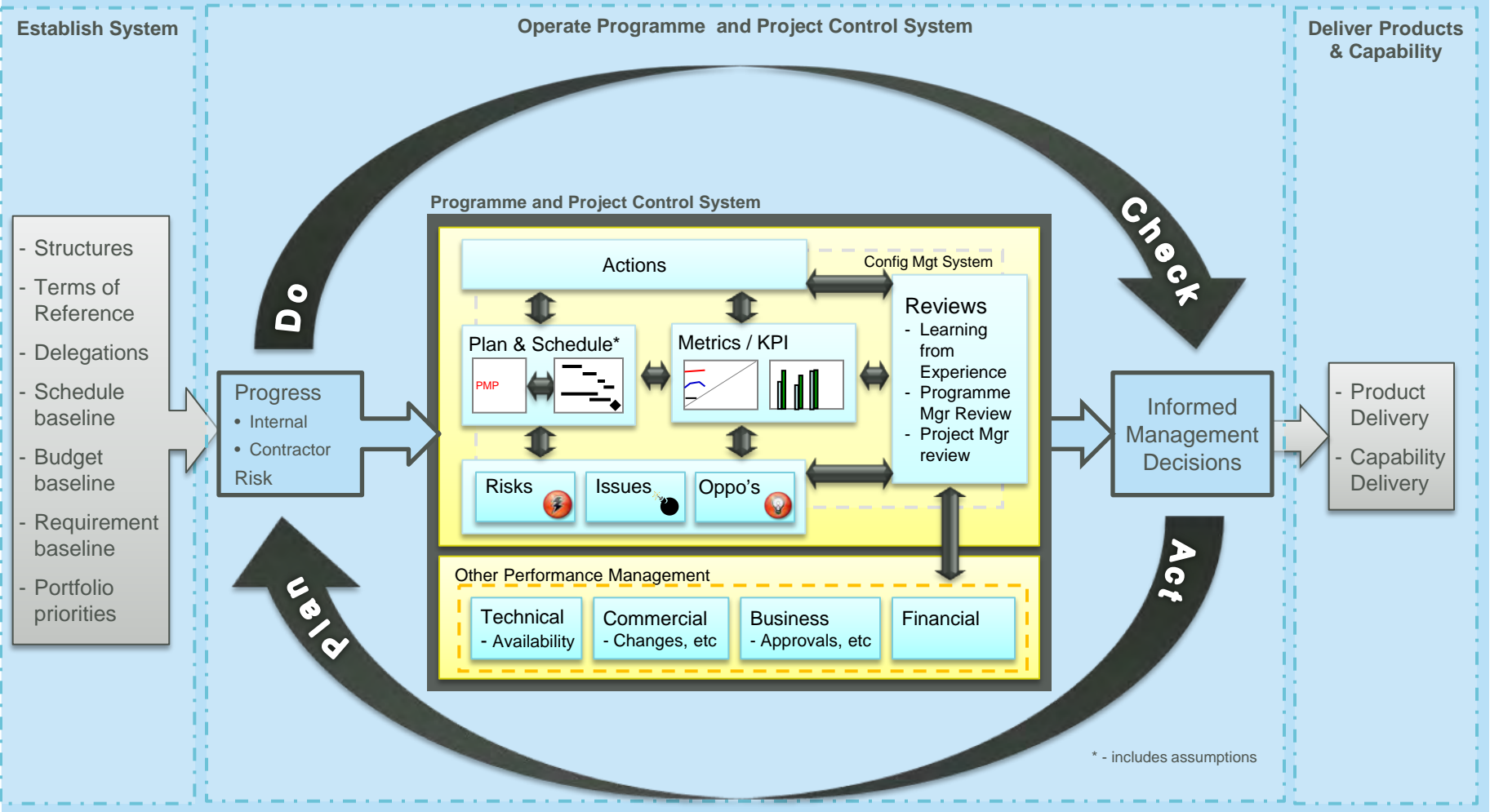
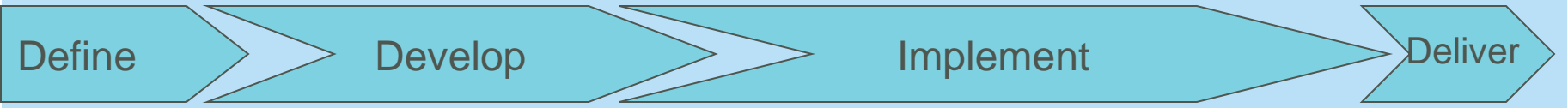


Introduction

- What makes a “good” Project Control System?
- Why do Project Control Systems fail?
- What is the solution?



A Textbook Approach: Project Control System

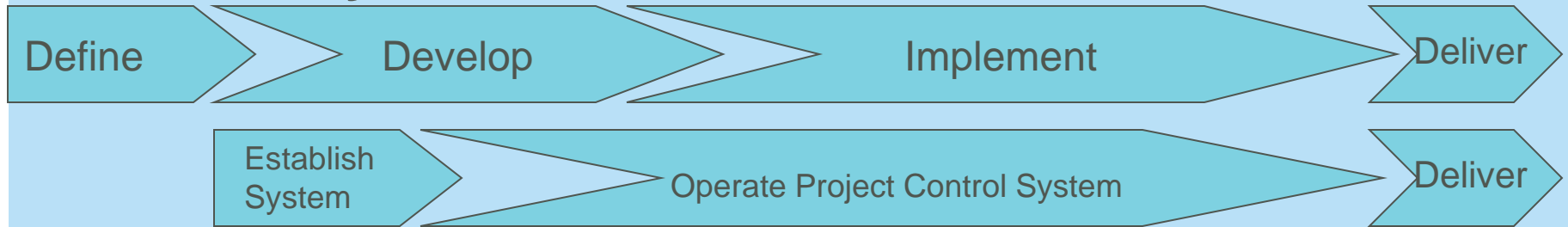


The benefits

- Provides indication of project “Health”
- Focuses senior management attention on problem areas
- Less “fire-fighting”
- Improved risk management
- Improved resource allocation
- Better ability to prioritise work
- Ability to better assess impact of new work
- A common approach across project teams



The Reality



- **Challenges for the Project Controls Team:**
 - Behaviours and personal ways of working have been established
 - People aren't used to being monitored
 - The project team are focused on the technical
 - Processes are not rigorously applied
 - Project management activity will be reactive not proactive

Expectations....equals resistance

- Change takes time work effectively
- Lack of communication of objectives
- Project Team views project controls as a mechanism for policing
- Threat to professional competence, fear of exposure
- Perception of imposition of a new system
- Change of culture – conformity to a structured process and way of working excludes personal ways of working

“What we attempt to do in any Project Control Environment basically is contrary to the very essence of human nature. Human beings, have an instinctive sense of freedom, really do not wish to be monitored or controlled, whereas, the entire concept of Project Control is to do just that” (Mehta, 2002)

Solution to Resistance – A Benefits Focus

1. Have a future 'Vision'

What does the future state blueprint look like?

- Governance Structure
- Organisation
- Purpose of process
- Business-as-usual rhythm

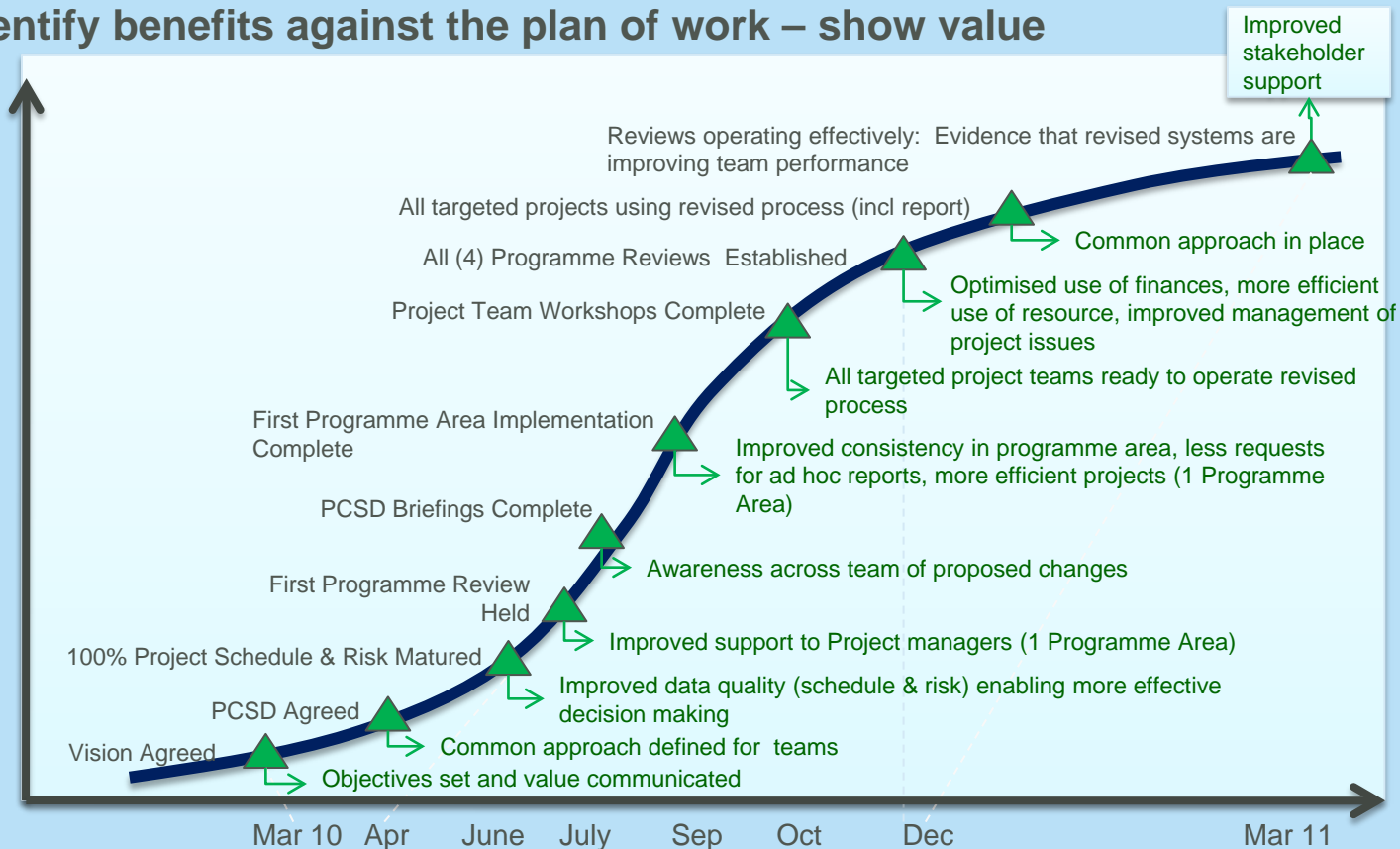


Benefits

- A vision will improve the way the PCS is perceived
- Combats the resistance arising from a lack of communication of objectives

Solution to resistance – A Benefits Focus

2. Identify benefits against the plan of work – show value



Benefits

- Reduces the need for ‘fire fighting’
- Combats the expectation that change will be immediate

Solution to Resistance – A Benefits Focus

3. Communications Planning / Marketing Strategy

Senior Management

- to communicate vision to team
- regular briefing by implementation team of products, change updates
- senior manager elected to be project controls or change champion
- management board as the change control board

Project team(s)

- practice what you preach
- clinics / briefings at all stages
- involvement in the design of the product to combat view of ‘imposition’
- visibility of implementation and timescales – marketing walls
- use of project team members as ‘champions’

Benefits

- Reduces resistance arising from a perception of the imposition of a new system



Solution to Resistance – A Benefits Focus

4. Build Relationships

- Advocate honesty and transparency
- Foster environment of openness and trust, not blame culture
- Understand the personalities involved
- Offer advice and guidance without judgement
- Listen and use discretion
- Be human – forming a open working relationship helps enormously when it comes to asking the difficult questions/applying a bit of pressure
- Become a team member
- Be reasonable – give sufficient time provide info, be mindful of competing priorities

Benefits

- Reduces perception that the PCS is a threat to professional competence
- Avoids a PCS being seen as a ‘policing’ mechanism

Solution to Resistance – A Benefits Focus

5. Have a positive answer for everything

Where are the tools to support?

Resource plan?

I'm reporting, not delivering!!

More project management work?!

I have no risks..

I don't need to plan my work, my supplier has a plan



Benefits

- Encourages the cultural change by leading from example

Summary

- The PCS may often fail even though the benefits of them are well understood
- A PCS is not implemented in a vacuum divorced from human motivations, personality and styles of work
- The fundamental human element comes before sophisticated EVM systems!

Mitigate the potential failure of a PCS

- Focus on the benefits
- Don't underestimate the skills needed in project controllers
- Make project controls accessible and inclusive of 'everybody'
 - use the benefits focus



Thank you

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