

Factsheet

Change Management: Common Problems and Solutions

Issue	Warning signs	What to do
You don't know what's happening with the project.	You haven't received an update recently – the team has gone silent. You don't know what milestones have been achieved, what benefits have been delivered and what budget has been spent.	Establish or re-establish regular reporting to ensure that you are kept up-to-date on major activities, milestones, benefits and risks.
The team isn't high performing.	You can see signs of team dysfunction (Lencioni 2002): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence of trust – people not genuinely open about mistakes and weaknesses Fear of conflict – inability to engage in impassioned debate Lack of commitment – team members don't commit or buy in to decisions Avoidance of accountability – unwilling to discuss performance behaviours Inattention to results – not focused on achieving the team's results. 	Work with team members to understand the cause of the dysfunction and build a high performing team. Depending on the situation and your relationship with team members, some useful interventions may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one-on-one discussion with team members to understand what is going on bringing the team together to build shared goals and actions changing the team composition holding teams accountable to your organisations values; the Tasmanian State Service South Principles & Code of Conduct.
The project has lost momentum.	Progress has slowed and you and/or team members and stakeholders are distracted with other things. It's 'fizzling'.	Set/reinforce interim milestones and celebrate their achievement. Review the stakeholder engagement plan. Revisit the case for change. Consider engaging people at local levels.
You're blowing your budget.	You are not on track to deliver on budget.	Review the original calculations and work with the team to determine what has changed. If the budget needs to be revised, make sure that the investment is still worthwhile before proceeding – does the outcome justify the extra expense? Are there ways you can deliver more cost effectively?
You're about to implement but the project isn't ready.	You suspect that the project hasn't been thought through or delivered thoroughly enough. You have conducted a change readiness assessment and there are lots of gaps.	Create clear go / no go criteria with the team, measure progress and understand the risks involved.

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Stakeholders are resistant.	You are getting negative feedback. Stakeholders appear defensive and are not adopting the change.	With your project team, analyse forces that influence change and revisit and revise your simple stakeholder engagement plan.
You have rolled out the project, but nothing has really changed.	People are still working in the old ways, perhaps even maintaining old systems in parallel. The anticipated benefits are not being realised.	With your project team, revisit your case for change, and the change impact assessment. Establish which of these change impacts have not been managed, measure the benefits of change and find out if all the activities have been completed and are successful. Develop a mitigation plan.
There is no strong sponsorship of the change in the business.	The nominated business sponsor is very hands off, does not advocate for the project. The project does not have the profile in the business it needs to succeed.	Assess the program against health/success criteria, including executive sponsorship. See checking the progress of your change for guidance. Share and discuss the results with the steering group, team and/or others to develop mitigating actions.
You're not getting the input that you need.	You, or your project team, can't get the required attention or time from people.	As project lead you might need to step in and help your team get time with key stakeholders. You may also have to look at the demands on people's time and design different ways to get the information you need or get your message to them.
Something has happened in the external environment that impacts on your project.	There has been a change to relevant State or Federal legislation or regulations. Community views, priorities and/or expectations have changed.	With your project team, revisit your case for change, change plan and simple stakeholder engagement plan.
Other projects in the organisation aren't aligned with yours, risking the outcomes of both.	You and your colleagues may be running projects with conflicting or overlapping purposes.	Meet with other project leaders to align your projects with reference to the overarching strategy of your organisation and State.
All of the above.	The Project is not on track. The nominated sponsor thinks risks not reported properly. Risks are high.	It may be useful for an internal and/or external body to undertake a quick review. A team of external practitioners can use their experience and expertise to provide timely, independent and confidential advice at key decision points regarding progress and likelihood of delivery success. For example: view the Gateway Review Process .

Reference: Patrick Lencioni in 'The five dysfunctions of a team: a leadership fable' (2002)