



Managing Successful Programmes



Written by Chris Venning of Henley Change Management, Managing Successful Programmes (MSP™) author and specialist in delivering and rescuing complex change, the purpose of this brochure is to explain why the decision was taken to refresh MSP and to describe the main changes and improvements that have been made to the guide.

Why has MSP been refreshed?

MSP was first published by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) in 1999, when the concept of programme management was in its infancy in the UK. Since then MSP has undergone one major revision in 2003, to reflect the growing understanding and experiences of organisations using programme management. Following its initial and second version publication, MSP has received a great deal of positive feedback. The rising rate of take-up of Foundation and Practitioner accreditations reflects MSP being increasingly seen as one of the global standards for programme management (and very much following the path of PRINCE2™). However, the world of programme management has moved on since 2003.

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For example:

- Programmes of change are increasingly transformational (i.e. there is some marked 'step change' or 'break with the present' required in the future capability), with non-transformational change increasingly being delivered in the "business-as-usual" environment. MSP, designed for transformational change, should reflect this.
 - Portfolio management has grown and is increasingly accepted as a discipline that sits above the programme level to prioritise and co-ordinate change at the level of the organisation/corporate body. MSP needs to show programmes within this context.
 - Organisations operate in regulatory environments that demand greater transparency, for example driven by:
 - Combined Code on Corporate Governance 2006 (UK)
 - Basel II Accord 2004 (Bank of International Settlements, Switzerland)
 - Sarbanes-Oxley 2002 (US).
- MSP should reflect programmes operating within this environment.
- The OGC guidance on risk management (M_o_R®) and project management (PRINCE2) have both been further developed and updated. MSP is linked to both of these standards and, where possible, should be consistent with them.

Accordingly, it was felt that the time was right to undertake a thorough refresh of the guidance contained within MSP.

In 2006, OGC consulted with the programme management community, including programme, change and risk management experts, policy-makers and strategists, portfolio, programme and project managers and those who work in delivering the services and benefits to the organisation.

A Reference Group and Review Group were established to provide input and direction from the public and private sectors, from academia and industry; and a small, high calibre authoring team was established. The result of the collaboration of these three groups is the MSP 2007 edition.

What are the main changes to MSP?

Before addressing this question, it is appropriate to explain that much of framework of the second edition of MSP has been retained, even though much of the new guide may look and feel quite different.

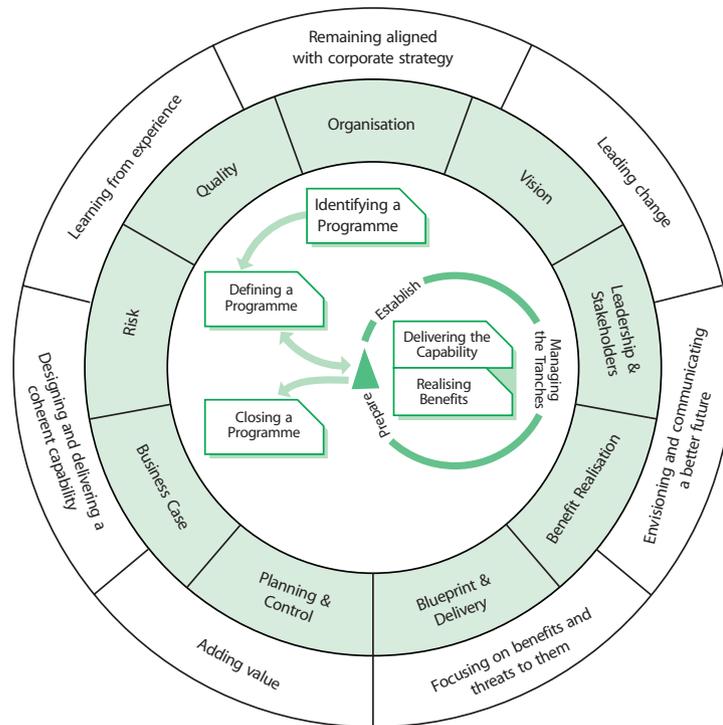
For example:

- The focus of MSP is still the delivery of benefits.
- "Ownership" and responsibility for the success of a programme still sit with the Senior Responsible Owner.
- The need to embed and review programme management is still seen as a key element of implementing an effective approach to programme management.

- The need to “define a framework”, with clear organisation and governance, within which programme management is to be undertaken is still a key message within the new guide.
- MSP still provides guidance on how programme management needs to be tailored to meet the needs of different types of programmes (for example where the goals may be very clear or highly mission-driven).
- Programmes still fit into a hierarchy (strategic, programme, project and operational) of inter-linked objectives for the organisation.



The main change has been to structure the guide around an MSP framework, which is based on three core concepts:



MSP Principles

This chapter has been restructured to around a set of seven universal principles that need to be applied for successful transformational change.

MSP Governance Themes

This section has been redefined and reinforced, reflecting the need for integration across the nine themes that underpin good governance.

MSP Transformational Flow

This section gives guidance on the process of delivering a programme of change.

How have the changes improved MSP?

Taking each of these changes in turn:

MSP Principles

The following principles have been drawn out as underpinning successful major, transformational change. Examples are given of where the Principles and Governance Themes come together to ensure the success of the Flow processes

The principles are:

- **Remaining aligned with corporate strategy** - A programme is a typically large investment that should make a significant contribution towards achieving corporate performance targets, maintaining good links with sometimes volatile corporate strategy.
- **Leading change** - In a programme, leading change includes giving clear direction, engendering trust, actively engaging stakeholders, appointing the right people at the right moments, and living with a measure of uncertainty
- **Envisioning and communicating a better future** - A programme is relevant where there is a need to achieve transformational change. And in order to achieve such a beneficial, future state, the leaders of a programme must describe a clear vision of that future and then communicate it consistently.
- **Focusing on the benefits and threats to them** - The programme should be aligned to satisfying strategic objectives by realising the end benefits. Thus the programme's boundaries, including the projects and activities that become part of the programme, are determined to enable the realisation of these end benefits and the effective management of any risks related to that realisation.
- **Adding value** - A programme only remains valid if it adds value to the sum of its constituent projects and major activities. If it is found to add nothing then it is better to close the programme and allow the projects to proceed, coordinated independently by corporate portfolio management.
- **Designing and delivering a coherent capability** - The programme will deliver a business architecture or final capability. This should be released into operational use according to a schedule delivering maximum incremental capability (and therefore benefits) with minimal operational impact.
- **Learning from experience** - A programme should review and improve its own performance during its life. Good governance requires managing the different themes with regular adjusting and adapting on the basis of experience and results so far.

The new guide considers these principles to be universally applicable in, and the foundation of, successful change. An effective ongoing test of programme validity is to check if the principles are

being met by the defined deliverables, Governance and Flow of the programme.

MSP Governance Themes

Governance is the control framework through which the programme delivers its change objectives and remains within corporate visibility and control. The new guidance emphasises the clear and open governance that allows the programme to negotiate the resource it wants, manage the resources made available to it, and adjust to changing organisational context(s) whilst delivering its agreed outcomes and benefits.

The Governance Themes chapters are:

- **Organisation** - This has been developed into its own chapter, reflecting the need for the combination of defined roles, clear responsibilities of each of these roles, and management structures and reporting arrangements that are needed to deliver the programme's desired outcomes.
- **Vision** - Also a new chapter, reflecting the need for a clear and articulated vision as a foundation and focus for the programme. The Vision Statement is the basis for the outcomes and delivered benefits of the programme, and a key enabler for the buy-in, motivation and activity-alignment of stakeholders.
- **Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement** - This chapter contains a considerable increase of information around the 'Stakeholder Management

and communications' than the previous edition. The need for, and nature of, leadership in transformational change is a focus. Stakeholders must be actively engaged with, and not just managed or communicated to, is also stressed.

- **Benefits Realisation Management** - This chapter has a greater focus on realising (as opposed to defining, measuring and managing there benefits) than in the previous edition's 'Benefits management' chapter. Also, the relationship between change and achieving benefits is made clearer by making explicit the need for active exploitation of project outputs and delivered capability to achieve benefits from outcomes. This chapter also demonstrates the use of benefits maps in benefits modelling and explicitly details the Benefits Realisation Process.
- **Blueprint Design and Delivery** - This is a new chapter, reflecting the importance of the Blueprint to the programme. Whilst the programme's Vision Statement provides early and valuable information as a description of the desired outcomes of the programme, it needs to be expanded and developed into a Blueprint. The chapter explores how the Blueprint acts as a measure and touchstone for defining the detailed deliverables of the programme, and also for the later assessing of the ongoing and periodic level of success of the programme delivery. The chapter also explores how intermediate Blueprints should be used as "markers" for tranche assessment and review. The chapter emphasises

the need for detailed documentation and assessment of the current state as a basis for successful Blueprinting.

- **Planning and Control** - This chapter has greater emphasis on managing cross-project themes (such as resources and dependencies) than in the previous edition. It also makes clear that whilst planning and control are both key to the success of any transformation programme, they should be seen as distinctly separate concepts and activities. There is also far greater discussion of managing transition to ensure successful adoption of the capability in a planned and controlled way.
- **The Business Case** - in MSP the Business Case provides the vital test of the viability of the programme. It answers the question: 'Is the investment in this programme still worth it?'. This need for ongoing viability of the Business Case is stressed. The relationship between ongoing commitment to the programme (with effective stakeholder engagement) and lifting the net benefit line is also explored in more detail.
- **Risk Management and Issue Resolution** - the chapter is aligned to the new edition of M_o_R, using risk response terms more widely accepted in the risk management field, namely:
 - Reduction
 - Removal
 - Transfer
 - Retention
 - Share.

It also introduces responses for opportunities, which are:

- Realisation
- Enhancement
- Exploitation.

The chapter also addresses the need for programme risks to be managed within the wider organisational context and to the organisation's risk management standards.

- **Quality Management** - This chapter has been expanded, beginning with the need to focus on the few Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that, if fully addressed, will ensure successful completion of the programme. The chapter also has a greater focus on the people and leadership dependent aspects of ensuring quality, i.e. the need for alignment between CSFs and stakeholders to make sure everyone understands the areas of critical importance that must be protected to ensure success.

Typical responsibilities are summarised in a table at the end of each of the Governance chapters.

MSP Transformational Flow

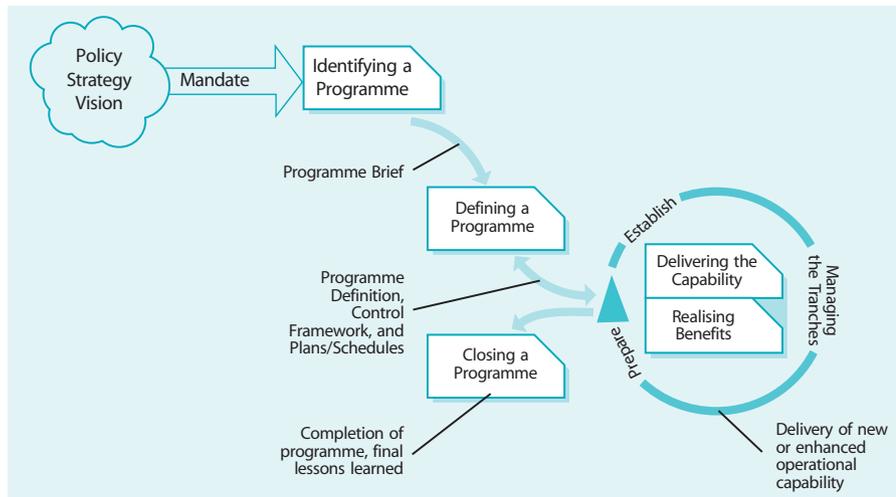
This section has been expanded, giving greater support to the need to balance delivering capability with ensuring benefits are realised. The processes within Flow are:

- Identifying a Programme
- Defining a Programme
- Managing the Tranches
- Delivering the Capability
- Realising the Benefits
- Closing a Programme.

At the start of each of the MSP Flow process there is a diagram summarising inputs, activities, outputs, controls, and roles.

The explanation of each Flow process has been greatly improved by describing their:

- INputs - the information that is transformed by the process
- Activities - the actions completed to transform the inputs into outputs.
- OUTputs - the information produced by the process



The Flow section brings out both the linear (time-based) and iterative nature of the delivery of a programme. The iterative nature is repeated at the process level within the Flow.

- Principal Controls - the reference points to ensure the alignment of the activity to programme strategy
- Key Roles – the main protagonists performing and responsible for the activities.

Additionally, typical responsibilities are summarised in a table at the end of each of the Flow process chapters.

Conclusions

A great deal of effort has gone into this refresh with a view to enhancing the guidance given, bringing it up-to-date with current best practice, and making it more accessible; whilst at the same time maintaining the strengths of the previous guide.

Has this been achieved?

Well, as Dr David Partington (Cranfield School of Management and MSP Reference Group member) said, 'OGC's MSP guidance has always been at the leading edge of theoretical knowledge and best practice in the emerging discipline of programme management. This updated guide provides a highly accessible framework for people in business and government whose work is concerned with the delivery of complex change. The enhancements delivered by the refresh will enable those who adopt the framework to improve their programme management capability and maturity and increase their ability to realise long and short term benefits throughout their organisations.'

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