



Copper Fox®

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The Essential Guide to Smart Business

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Commercial Intelligence for Better Business



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Content

- ❖ The drivers for change
- ❖ Commercial intelligence
- ❖ Typical Change Projects
- ❖ Project life cycle – 5 key steps
- ❖ Why Projects Often Fail
- ❖ How we can help



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The Drivers For Change



Disruptive influences such as Covid and others are always going to be around, so businesses need to respond, or ideally anticipate these disruptors. To stay competitive, businesses need to embrace change in order to become or remain agile with an adaptive mindset.

Those that embrace change are more likely to remain competitive, protecting themselves against the ever increasing presence of disruptive external influences.

For businesses that are growing, they have the added challenge of increased complexity. Some ambitious businesses suffer from “growing pains”, where old systems, structures, poor data and processes no longer fit the bill.

The volume of transactions, the depth and breadth of products or services you offer, forces changes to be made in order to cope. Automation and systemised processes often need to be introduced to replace labour intensive and ineffective ones.

If businesses don't change and adapt, their quality of service drops, damaging the customer experience to the point where some might go elsewhere.

Commercial Intelligence



What do we mean by Commercially Intelligent? Well in essence, its about having or acquiring the right skills, knowledge & experience, accompanied by the right systems processes and information, to be able to make more educated decisions, and convert them successfully into actions, that then lead you to operating better as a business. The benefit of doing this is an increase in the enduring value of your business.

Our involvement in Improvement Projects centres on this principle, encouraging the development of the business by investing in your people, processes, systems and structure, using our expertise and know how to bridge the gap within, that then allows your business to develop and grow both in terms of robustness, marketability and value.

It's why our focus isn't just on the numbers, but on strengthening all parts of your business.

Typical Improvement Projects



With challenging market conditions, increased competition and scarcity of resources, the need for change can impact all areas of your business:

- Processes – transition from old to new to deal with volume, quality & efficiency issues.
- People – recruiting the right people with the right skills to complement your existing culture.
- Place – sometimes you simply outgrow your existing workspace & need to upgrade, or you don't need as much as there are smarter ways to operate.
- Systems – as your business becomes more complex, systems need upgrading to cope & to allow for scale & flexibility with smart interfaces.
- Information – greater depth & timely analysis is needed to encourage more commercially intelligent decision making.
- Structure – growth & maturity often means adjusting your structure to better fit your future goals.
- Opportunities – position the business to be able to respond quickly & effectively to new opportunities.
- Threats – by the same token, being able to respond & adjust to threats & disruptive forces.
- Strategic – whether internally motivated, or externally driven, sometimes the strategic direction of the business needs adjusting for it to remain competitive.

Why Projects Often Fail



Even with a desperate need to make changes, there are still factors why projects fail to deliver the solutions needed. Here are some:

- A lack of leadership, accountability & responsibility.
- A lack of planning or understanding what the real problem is & best options to solve it.
- Failing to attend to a need "early on" creates more disruption later .
- A general resistance to change – the culture within the business being a big factor.
- A lack of technical or subject matter knowledge or skills to make the right changes.
- A constant change in requirements that increases costs & muddies outcomes anticipated.
- Staff juggling responsibilities with added workload. Mistakes happen & quality suffers.
- Costs underestimated and the opportunity cost of doing, or not doing something isn't properly considered.
- Too much time spent putting out fires instead of focusing on solving the real cause.

Project Case Study



Background

A NZ based manufacturer that exported 60% to Mexico, wanted to explore re-locating its manufacturing base to Mexico. It was a technically complex product whose materials were available in both New Zealand and Mexico. The business was highly profitable, however supply chain disruptions were impacting customer service and starting to impact future orders. The business employed 50 staff, largely involved in technical design, manufacturing, warehouse and distribution and sales functions, with an Exec Team of 5.

Our involvement

Discovery - We met with the Exec Team to understand the situation and determine how we could help.

Planning - It was agreed we would backfill 50% of the CFO's BAU role to free him up to project manage the feasibility study. The CEO assumed the role of Executive Sponsor. We provided Project Governance support in collaboration with the Manufacturing Manager and Client Director. The Head of HR / People and Culture were subject matter experts in relation to Mexican labour sourcing and deployment. We undertook some data mining to identify trends in customer purchasing activity as there was limited customer insights otherwise available.

Project Case Study



The Result:

The client decided not to proceed with relocating their Manufacturing base to Mexico. The reasoning was as follows:

It could not easily and affordably be relocated. The original supplier of the plant had since closed down & they also supplied the maintenance team. There were no feasible option for replicating the equipment.

The data mining exercise we employed identified that one client was responsible for the vast majority of the Mexican business and they were nearing the end of their contract and were also about to be sold.

It also highlighted that new international markets in Asia were tracking upwards. Orders were projected to surpass the Mexican demand within 12 months. Supply chain considerations were more straight forward servicing the Asian market.

Our backfill CFO identified a new structure and initiatives that would improve efficiency and profitability and stayed on in the business, part time. The incumbent CFO was re-deployed on a part time basis focussing on other business improvement projects.

Project Case Study



Our positive impact

Overall, our involvement enabled the Client to quickly scale up the required competencies to deliver the project, with insightful analytics and sage experience underpinning our recommendations.

Specifically

Our Client recognised the fresh perspective and contribution our backfilled CFO resource provided and that the role could easily be covered on a part time basis freeing up \$ for other applications.

Our data mining methodology that identified the trend of growth in Asian markets could be accessed ongoing for other timely and beneficial use on a low cost and high value basis.

Our project governance methodology including reports and planning templates were used as a standard approach for other projects.

How we can help



How CopperFox can help you:

We can help you develop an overall change management methodology to prioritise all projects, oversee the Project Discovery process on a new project, backfill key roles in BAU (Business as Usual) to free up key staff to work on a Project, or provide direct project resource – i.e. Project Managers, Project Governance, Subject Matter Experts, for your improvement projects.

While we are confident of supporting any improvement project, the following project types are examples of where our skills and experience have been successfully used in the past:

- JV's, Mergers & acquisitions, including the integration into existing structures
- IT systems & process improvement initiatives
- Capital raising & restructures
- New product or market opportunities
- Supply chain management
- Big data analytics

Contact details



For an initial discussion regarding your important Business Improvement Project requirements



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