

Delivering Organisational Promises - from Strategy to Reality

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There is no greater buzz for a project professional than to be handed that high profile, huge scale, important strategic programme that will test the limits of your skills and experience.

By stepping through some of our learnings, those which could easily apply to other Project Managers working on similarly complicated initiatives, we intend to offer a guide to how such an organisational challenge can be successfully managed from inception to implementation within a coherent programme execution framework.

AXA Australia has publicly identified that the complexity of its legacy business leads to elevated business risk and high cost to income ratios. In 2007, AXA launched two parallel streams of activity to address this identified business need.

AXA's existing programme delivery capabilities were leveraged to :

- Develop a strategic roadmap that meets a high level organisational need
- Successfully manage transition from strategy to execution phases
- Deliver initial components of solution according to plan and realise expected benefits

AXA has an established programme delivery framework that encompasses an annual strategic planning cycle, roadmap development and funding allocation phase and PMBOK based project delivery lifecycle. Increasingly, a business architecture view has been integrated into this approach to develop a more coherent EPM approach to programme delivery.

Initially, key business and project resources were identified to lead the development of strategic roadmaps that would deliver quantifiable reductions in cost to income ratio for the two core groupings of AXA's legacy business – Financial Protection and Wealth Management. Key to success at this early stage were strong sponsorship and governance – these projects were highly cross functional – and access to core subject matter experts.

Learning lessons from past experience and leveraging the strong governance framework established in the previous phase have been key to successfully managing both the transition to execution and the initial execution phases of the resultant programme.

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