



Assessing the health of your change programme

Review the health of your current change programme using our six key indicators.



Programmes develop problems one day at a time...

Regardless of how well a programme is designed and mobilised, challenges can inevitably arise. An accumulation of issues can then jeopardise the programme's overall success.

Conducting a simple health assessment that examines key indicators across the programme serves as an effective means of identifying any emerging problems that threaten success downstream.

This concise checklist outlines the essential indicators of programme health, presented in a format that enables you to swiftly evaluate your organisation's change activity.

We recommend you review the statements shown overleaf and highlight in one colour those you know to be true and (in another colour) those you suspect to be true. The overall pattern will then highlight the extent to which your programme has issues and provide a set of actions that must be addressed in order to get things back on track.

A cautionary tale from a team member

Around 15 years ago, we travelled to the ski slopes in France. A few days into our trip, my mild yet persistent cough worsened. My wife wisely encouraged me to visit the local doctor in our small ski resort. When the doctor began examining my symptoms with a concerned expression, I realised that this was perhaps more serious than I had thought.

Despite considering myself healthy, I soon found myself on a hospital trolley, connected to an ECG. They decided to keep me overnight for observation, ultimately recommending a follow-up with a cardiologist once I returned home. After further examinations, we identified the underlying issue. Ignoring my symptoms could have led to serious consequences.

I've taken those lessons to heart (no pun intended!) and apply them to my work in programme delivery:

- *Just because everything appears fine on the surface doesn't mean there aren't underlying issues—remain vigilant.*
- *If something **feels** wrong, take it seriously; it could indicate a deeper problem.*
- *What seems to be the primary issue may not be the whole story. In my case, the cough was just the beginning, revealing other hidden concerns.*
- *Address challenges directly and seek assistance; neglecting problems often leads to bigger issues.*
- *Regular check-ups are essential. Preventative care is crucial in programme delivery, helping avoid serious complications later on.*
- *Remember, seeking a health check is not a sign of defeatism or weakness - it's about taking control of your programme's health and well-being as early as possible.*

Programme health: A simple self assessment



Cause for concern, needs action to prevent delivery getting out of control



Early indicator of 'drift'. Listen, monitor and resolve before position worsens



Positive indicator, affirm and communicate positive status

Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clear sponsorship or direction Too often people question <i>'why are we doing this?'</i> Stakeholders disengaging Ownership being pushed to the delivery team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing discussion and questions on whether delivery will achieve its goals Some stakeholders becoming 'quiet and passive' to the delivery team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders are all engaged Everyone is clear on the outcomes Stakeholders all take positive ownership
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagreements in Steering Group Issues starting to appear last minute, and with no warning Decisions and agreements are being 'unpicked' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing challenge to delivery status Too much time taken on issue resolution compared to forward plan Decisions and actions starting to mount up and not be resolved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Governance with the right challenges to delivery Steering group engaged and in agreement on status Decisions are made promptly
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for delivery is unclear Approach and strategy is continually being revised Major disagreements on how delivery will be achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders starting to question if approach will deliver the outcomes Plan and approach being modified 'on the fly' Increasing activity to address 'unforeseen' risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone is supportive of the strategy for delivery Approach is clear on how it will deliver the outcomes Risks are understood and addressed
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones are consistently being missed Repeated replanning, cycling through red to green to red Change requests are stacking up and not being applied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestones are starting to be missed Work is being de-scoped and pushed forwards Increasing amounts of parallel working to 'claw some time back' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone is confident that checkpoints and milestones will be met Previous delivery has generally gone to plan There is time to resolve issues
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs are escalating and unexplained Additional costs are mounting to address delays Significant unexpected and unplanned costs surfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some additional costs to addresses specific issues Spend starting to accelerate without a clear rationale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is being delivered within financial expectations Spend is in line with expected progress Little or no unplanned costs emerge
Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open disagreements among the team Churn of staff, particularly in leadership roles Repeated request for 'more bodies' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team is becoming stretched Frustrations are surfacing and not being resolved Management decisions and ability to deliver the plan openly questioned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team is working collaboratively Positive agreement on approach plan and 'do-ability'



We hope you found this article useful. If you would like to talk with us about it, or any other aspect of your change challenges, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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PiC Change Community on LinkedIn

Our Change Community exists to help professionals like yourself connect, explore and exchange views and ideas on any aspect of change and transformation. Additionally, it also provides opportunities for members to both seek and provide help to other members.

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