

Spotlight: Refining The Rapid Assessment

We developed the *Rapid Assessment* as a way of giving you, quickly, a clear view of your initiative's strengths and areas for improvement. We described it in a previous *Spotlight*, and outlined the way it assesses how your initiative is doing against the 10 *Critical Success Factors* for successful change.

Our *survey on the relative importance of the 10 CSFs* showed a significant difference between CSFs, with the top 3 factors making, in our respondents' experience, almost three times the contribution of the lowest 3.

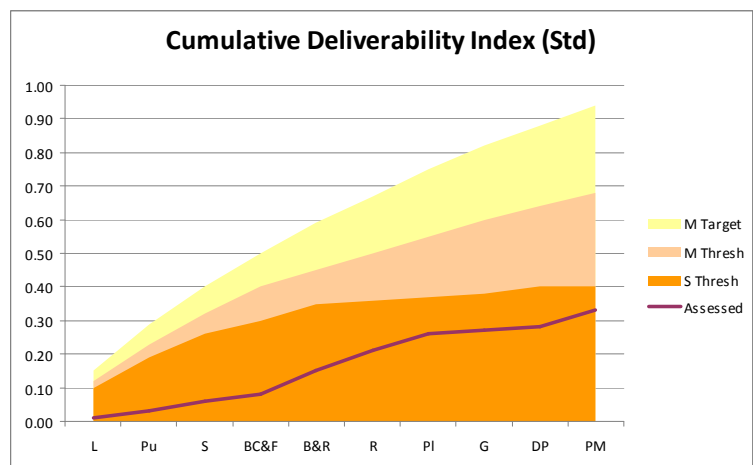
This suggested to us that the Rapid Assessment could be refined to leverage these results and help clients focus on the factors which will make most difference in their particular situation. This document summarises the refinements we plan to make.

Where to focus first: *Cumulative Deliverability*

The survey provides a clear ranking of which CSFs make most – and least – difference to an initiative's chances of success.

These can rapidly be translated into a picture of the cumulative impact of addressing each factor, prioritised by the relative importance of each factor – simply put, focussing on the most impactful factors first.

In the graph (right), addressing the factors to the left of the x-axis (Leadership, Purpose, Stakeholders) makes a large impact on the chances of success, increasing them by around one-third by the end of Shaping. Conversely, addressing the least important factors (at the right of the x-axis) increased the chances of success by only about one-twentieth by the end of that phase.

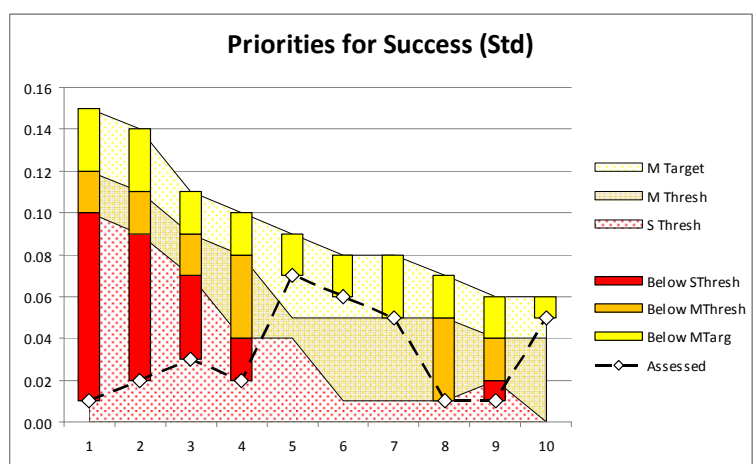


This difference is, of course, only partly a function of the relative importance as highlighted by the survey; it also reflects the fact that Leadership, Purpose, Stakeholders are particularly significant in the early Shaping stage of an initiative. Thus, the other factors play a relatively larger role in later phases, as shown by the Mobilised (M) areas of the graph.

What's required in your specific situation: *Priorities for Success*

The real power of the Rapid Assessment, though, comes from its ability to identify those areas which would make the greatest contribution to success in your specific situation.

We already compare your situation to typical 'thresholds' (i.e. expected minimum standards) for completing each phase. Now, by factoring in the contribution of each factor to your overall chances of success, we can more accurately quantify the impact of addressing each factor in your situation, and thereby give you a prioritised 'route map' to success.



There is a lot of information to consider here, so at first glance the graph above may appear a little daunting. However, it is actually both powerful and relatively straightforward:

- The starting point for each factor is the current ‘Assessed’ value, indicated by the dotted line
- The first uplift required is to reach the ‘threshold’ for completing Shaping, indicated by the Red bars
- The second uplift, to reach the ‘threshold’ for completing Mobilisation, is shown by the orange bars
- And finally, the uplift required to reach the target for completing Mobilisation is shown by the yellow bars.

In this example, the first two factors are the ones where reaching the threshold for Shaping would have the greatest impact on the likelihood of success (indicated by the length of the bars), while factors 5-7 and 10 are already well ahead of the level required for entering Mobilisation.

Thus, the first *Priorities for Success* here are Factors 1 and 2 above all, followed by 3, 4 and 9. (It’s worth noting that although factor 8 isn’t below the threshold for completing Shaping, it is well below the standard required for Mobilisation, and will need to be a major focus in that phase).

Adjusting the Model for your specific situation: *User Tuning*

The results of the survey were remarkably consistent across different industries, national cultures, initiative size and other factors – see our [Viewpoint](#) for more detail. Frankly, this surprised us a little - we had expected to find more differences.

It seems clear, then, that the survey’s results should therefore be applicable to a wide range of situations.

However, we recognise that some client environments will have genuinely unique features, and that these should be recognised in the Rapid Assessment.

To accommodate this, we have built in a ‘User Tuning’ capability, where the client can adjust any factors which they believe are significantly more or less important in their environment than in a typical one as represented in our survey.

- For factors which are ‘somewhat’ more or less important, that factor will be adjusted by 20% up or down from the normal model
- For those which are ‘much’ more or less important, that factor will be adjusted by 50% up or down from the standard value.

	Std Rank	Much less important	Somewhat less important	About right	Somewhat more important	Much more important	Your Rank
Leadership	1			x			1
Purpose	2	x					3
Stakeholders	3			x			3
Business Case & Funding	4				x		2
Blueprint & Roadmap	5			x			6
Resources	5			x			6
Plan	7					x	3
Governance	7			x			8
Delivery Process	9	x					10
Performance Management	9			x			9

This should help make the model responsive to a wider range of environments, but we always urge clients to recognise the remarkable consistency of the survey results and only use these adjusting factors where there is a clear and strong reason.

The Rapid Assessment has already proved to be a valuable way of helping our clients clarify their challenges and identify what needs to be done. With these refinements it should be even more effective in helping to focus on those factors which will make the greatest difference to your initiative’s chances of success.

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