

Developing an Organisational Benefits Management Capability: Closing the knowing-doing gap

A Collaborative Applied Research Programme involving:

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Research continues to show that over 70% of Information Systems and Technology (IS/IT) investments fail to deliver the expected business benefits. The purpose of this new, applied research programme is to enable participating organisations to increase the benefits they derive from their IS/IT investments. This includes:

- changing the ways IS/IT projects are managed to ensure a focus on benefit delivery throughout the project life-cycle
- developing more appropriate business cases for IS/IT investments that more accurately identify the benefits that will be achieved
- selecting the investments that will actually deliver the most value to the business

The work will build on and extend previous developments of Benefits Management processes, tools and experience of their practical application. It will be designed to be applicable to all organisations, irrespective of their current level of satisfaction with the benefits they are realising.

Recent work by Cranfield has identified distinct levels or stages of maturity in organisations' approaches to benefits management. This Benefits Management Maturity Model (see figure overleaf) shows there is a clear link between the comprehensiveness of the management practices associated with IS/IT investments and projects and the success organisations have in delivering benefits. From this research a diagnostic tool has been developed that enables organisations to understand which aspects of their approach to managing IS/IT investments are least effective and how to change those aspects to achieve greater success.

Additionally the work will build on the results of new research at Durham Business School which has identified what inhibits organisations from adopting known good practices in how they manage their IS/IT investments: the 'knowing - doing' gap.



Aims of the Programme

The intention is that each organisation will be able to increase its ability to consistently deliver the benefits available from its investments, by both improving its knowledge of the practices required and by understanding how to implement those practices successfully. Specifically this will entail:

- identifying the key practices, and their organisational implications, necessary to improve the organisation's level or stage of benefit management maturity.
- identifying the governance and leadership implications of operationalising and embedding the identified practices across the organisation

An organisational action plan will then be defined to address the specific areas of improvement required. The effectiveness of these changes will then be tested by applying the new approaches to real projects and evaluating the benefits delivered, in comparison with previous or concurrent investments.

Suitable for Organisations with different levels of Benefits Management Maturity

For each organisation in the research programme, the diagnostic tool will be used to assess the current level of organisational maturity and identify the specific practices that need to be improved and how better practices could be developed.

For organisations with lower levels of BM maturity the work is likely to focus at the **individual project level** and will seek to improve practices relating to:

- the identification of potential benefits
- measurement and quantification to improve the quality of business cases
- benefit tracking during implementation
- investment evaluation and review and knowledge transfer to other projects
- integration of benefit delivery with IT implementation, organisational and process change plans and activities

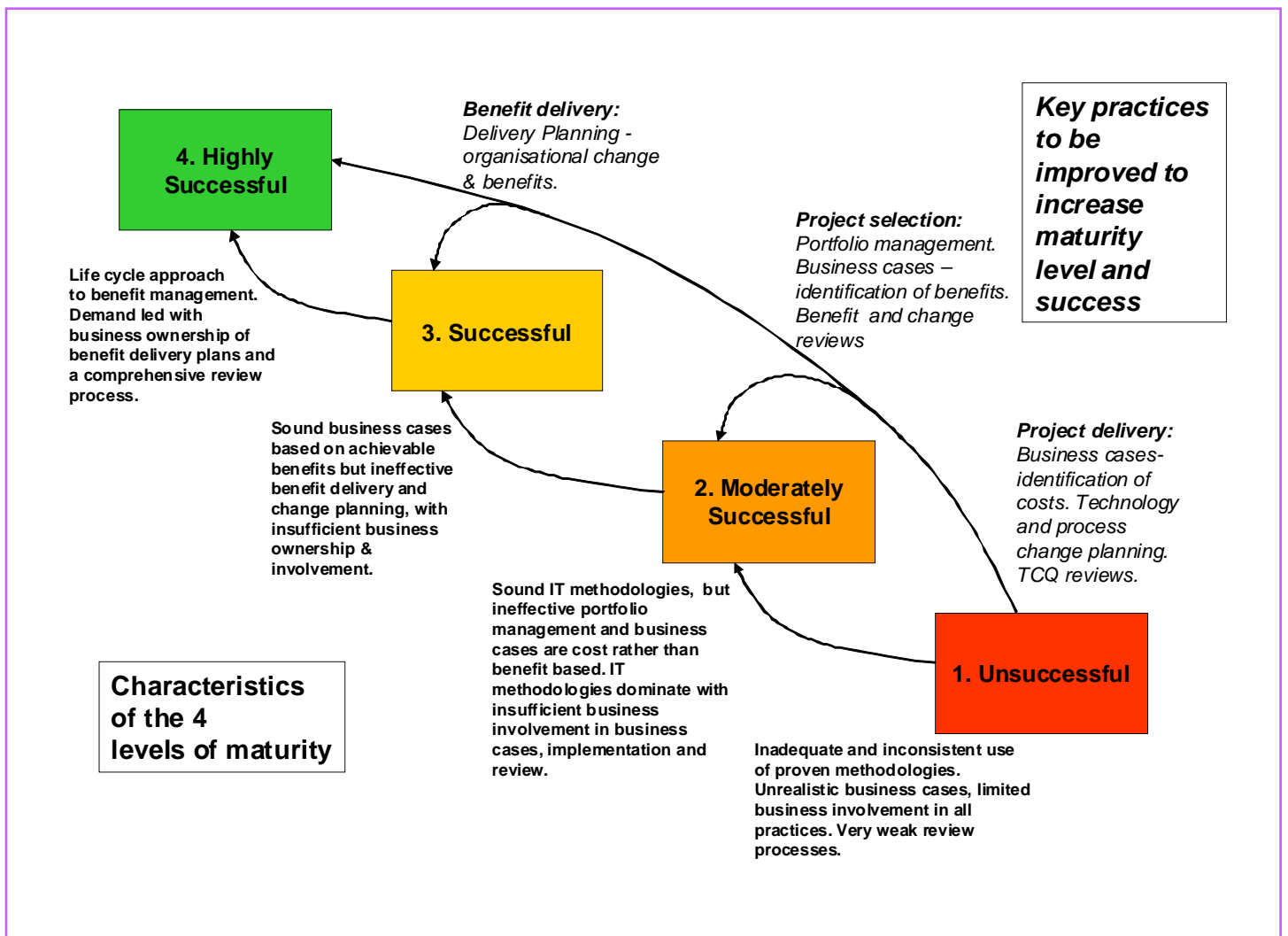
For organisations which already utilise the benefits management approaches within individual projects, the focus of the research will be at more at the **organisational level**. Attention will be paid to:

- the selection and prioritisation of projects
- the structuring and delivery of benefits from major IT-enabled change programmes
- the maximisation of benefits across the investment portfolio
- governance mechanisms for ensuring all investments are 'benefit-driven' and that benefits are sustained after implementation

How the Programme will Operate

Organisations taking part will have access to training and education in the tools and techniques required to improve their knowledge of current 'best practices' in identifying and managing benefits. In addition to having access to the research team throughout the work, there will be opportunities to learn from the knowledge and experiences of the other organisations involved in open workshops.

The research team will work with each organisation to define a plan to achieve the improvements identified. Progress against the plan will be monitored by the organisation itself and reviewed regularly with a member of the research team, who will also be available for advice and guidance throughout. At the end of the study each organisation will receive a report assessing the improvements achieved and identifying further development opportunities. An overall report on the findings from the work will be available to all organisations involved.



Project timetable and Fees

The research programme will be initiated through a series of workshops with interested organisations during July 2007. The work with each organisation will then start in the autumn and the project will last until the autumn of 2008.

The cost of participation in the programme will be £9,500 + VAT per organisation.

This cost will cover,

for each organisation, the involvement of the research team in:

- Applying the benefits management diagnostic tool to identify benefits management practices that need improvement
- Developing a plan to achieve the improvements identified through changing the key practices on live project(s).
- Monitoring progress against the plan and develop further interventions where necessary or further improvements can be achieved.
- Assessing progress made through the life of the project and providing an overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes in the practices.
- Identifying further changes that could be made to continue to increase investment success.

And for all organisations,

- Attending regular workshops, where experiences of participating organisations are exchanged and general lessons from the overall project will be considered.
- Ability to shape the work undertaken to address issues of immediate importance to the organisation.
- Final report summarising the lessons learnt and conclusions from the work plus 'best practice' guidance on how new approaches developed during the programme can be applied successfully.

Contact

If you have any queries about this project and how participation might benefit your organisation, please contact:

Professor John Ward or Maggie Bridge

ISRC

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Workshop Registration

We will be holding 2 workshops at Cranfield School of Management and Durham Business School to launch this programme. To register for one of these free workshops, please complete the details below and fax this page to **01234 752691**. Alternatively, email m.bridge@cranfield.ac.uk with the same details.

Please reserve me 1 2 free place(s) at the launch workshop on: **Tuesday 10 July at Cranfield**

Thursday 12 July at Durham

Personal Details, Delegate 1

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Organisation: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Personal Details, Delegate 2

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Organisation: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

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