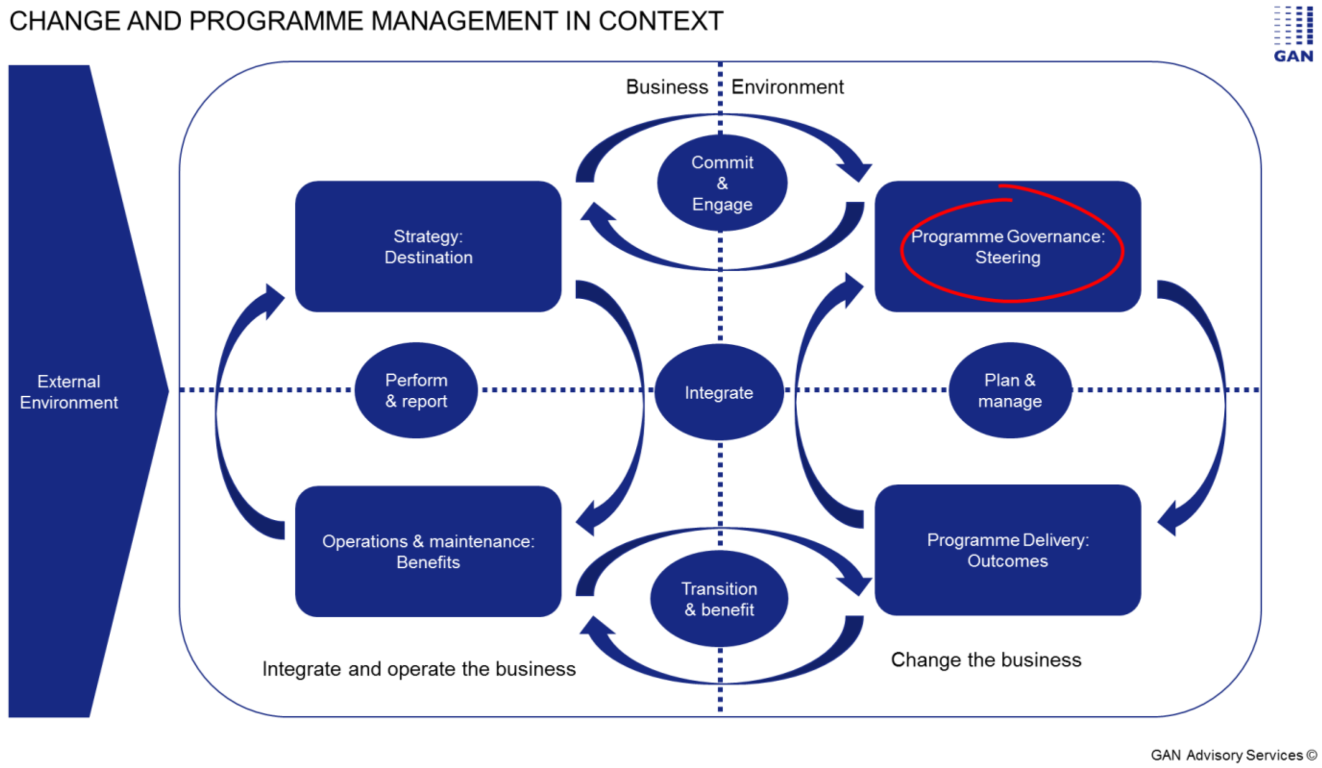
Governance of change and programmes: steering for success

This is the third post on the Change and Programme Management series.

Today, we are looking at programme governance - the top right corner of our model for successful change and programme delivery and integration in business as usual operations.



What's the difference between top performing and poor performing companies? Top performing companies execute better than their competitors. Through commitment, proper design and continuous improvement – outperforming competitors faster and innovatively.

Whether pre or post investment decision, it is critical to design a framework and structure helping executives evaluate the execution effectiveness of their organization and guide their change initiatives and programmes.

My definition for programme governance: Governance – from the greek kubernan – to steer – defines the structure, roles and responsibilities to set objectives, report and monitor performance in order to make decisions and to steer a programme towards the anticipated destination: the vision.

The governance of programmes will cover the following areas:

- Leadership and sponsorship, clear and documented roles and responsibilities,
- Strategic direction, a multidimensional roadmap to reach the final destination,
- Programme management methodology – set of policies, procedures and processes, to control programme trajectory against baseline,
- Integrated assurance – transparency and disclosure to all stakeholders via operational (Projects), functional (PMO, department) and compliance (Risk & Audit) lines of defences.

The terms of reference for a programme board will typically cover the following:

- Requirement - why
- Role - what
- Composition - who
- Conduct – when
- Proposed Delegated Authority – how / how much? Based on funding agreement and contingency allocation.

In today's global economy, joint ventures and partnerships are more and more common– the same approach and clarity in shareholder agreement and governance definition (co-governance) will enable better management efficiency / less frustration and loss of time and resources to deliver your programmes.

Are you clear about your programme governance, is it well-understood and communicated across your organisations? In our next post we will look at mapping the change and programme landscape:committing, engaging with your stakeholder environment and creating trusted relationships.

Some useful definitions to add to this post:

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) defines governance as a set of relationships between an organisation's owners, its board, its management, and other stakeholders. This provides the structure through which the organisation's objectives are set and the means of attaining those objectives and of monitoring performance, are determined.

OECD Principles of Corporate Governance 2004 www.oecd.org

The APM (Association for Project Management) defines governance of programmes and projects as follows: governance of programme management concerns areas of corporate governance that are specifically related to programme and project activities. Effective governance of programme management ensures that an organisation's programme is aligned to the organisation's objectives, is delivered efficiently and is sustainable. Governance of programme management also supports the means by which the board, and other major project stakeholders, are provided with timely, relevant and reliable information.

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