



Benefits realization management framework

Benefits realization management (BRM) provides organizations with a way to measure how projects and programs add true value to the enterprise.

- **IDENTIFY BENEFITS** to determine whether projects, programs, and portfolios can produce the intended business results.
- **EXECUTE BENEFITS** management to minimize risks to future benefits and maximize the opportunity to gain additional benefits.
- **SUSTAIN BENEFITS** to ensure that whatever the project or program produces continues to create value.

We have developed this BRM Framework to help organizations effectively manage and realize project benefits. It provides a set of questions and good practices that project, program, and portfolio management professionals and leaders can use to help guide the identification, analysis, delivery, and sustainment of benefits that align to the organization's strategic goals and objectives.

Glossary of terms

ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA: *Set of conditions that are met before deliverables are accepted.*

BENEFITS: *Value that is created for the project sponsor or beneficiary as a result of the successful completion of a project.*

BENEFITS SUSTAINMENT PLAN: *A tool to identify risks, processes, measures, metrics, and tools necessary to ensure the continued realization of the benefits.*

BENEFITS REALIZATION: *A means to ensure that benefits are derived from outputs.*

BENEFITS REALIZATION PLAN: *A document outlining the activities necessary for achieving the planned benefits. It identifies a timeline and the tools and resources necessary to ensure the benefits are fully realized over time. It defines:*

- Benefits and associated assumptions, and how each benefit will be achieved.
- Metrics, including KPIs, and procedures to measure progress against benefits.
- Roles and responsibilities required to manage benefits.
- How the resulting benefits and capabilities will be transitioned into an operational state to achieve benefits.
- How the resulting capabilities will be transitioned to the individuals, groups, or organizations responsible for sustaining the benefits.
- Processes for determining the extent to which each project or program benefit is achieved prior to formal closure.

BENEFITS REALIZATION MANAGEMENT: *Collective set of processes and practices for identifying benefits and aligning them with formal strategy, ensuring benefits are realized as project implementation progresses and finishes, and that the benefits are sustainable—and sustained—after project implementation is complete.*

BENEFITS REGISTER: *Collection and list of the planned benefits used to measure and communicate the delivery of benefits throughout the duration of the project or program.*

BENEFITS BREAKDOWN STRUCTURES: *Maps dependencies to achieve end goal benefits in a clear and easy to understand fashion.*

BENEFITS REALIZATION ROADMAP: *Visual illustration that shows when and how benefits are expected to be enabled for the business owner to then utilize for benefits realization.*

BUSINESS CASE: *Documented economic feasibility study used to establish validity of the benefits to be delivered.*

DELIVERABLE: *Any unique and verifiable product, result, or capability to perform a service that is produced to complete a process, phase, or project.*

OBJECTIVES: *Results to be achieved after a project concludes, such as a successful IT conversion, development of a new product or manufacturing process, or construction and staffing of a new facility.*



IDENTIFY

A look at the practices performed at the start of a project or program that enable organizations to identify expected benefits

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Are the benefits aligned with the organization's strategic goals?
2. Are the benefits—tangible, intangible, short-term, and/or long-term—explicitly defined in the business case?
3. Does the business case outline how the benefits will be measured and when benefits are forecasted to be delivered?
4. Are all project or program benefits documented in a benefits register and benefits realization roadmap?
5. Have key stakeholders signed off on the benefits realization plan?
6. Does governance take into account benefits management, including relevant acceptance criteria?
7. Are project selection and/or funding decisions based on the impact to expected benefits?
8. Have the benefits owners been consulted and confirmed?

GOOD PRACTICES

Utilizing the appropriate tools, such as a benefits register, benefits realization roadmap, and benefits breakdown structures.

Confirming that key stakeholders, sponsors, and customers have reviewed and approved the benefits realization roadmap.

Recognizing, quantifying, and understanding timing and life span of business benefits.

Incorporating benefits delivery (timing and dependencies) into the benefits realization roadmap.

Position the intended business results as criteria for determining the best project and program investments by:

Developing meaningful metrics and key performance (KPI) indicators to measure the actual delivery of benefits versus the planned benefits.

Establishing processes for monitoring and controlling progress against the benefits realization plan.

Ensuring the communications plan includes the steps necessary to report benefits progress to stakeholders.

EXECUTE

A look at practices that enable organizations to deliver the expected benefits

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Have the expected benefits been clearly communicated to key stakeholders involved with delivery?
2. Does the project or program team understand how project level outputs contribute to business benefits?
3. Is progress regularly reviewed against the benefits realization roadmap?
4. Are benefits frequently modified to reflect the most current information regarding changing business conditions?
5. Is effective change control being utilized to close gaps between expected benefits and actual benefits?
6. Is there a formal process to discover new benefit opportunities?
7. Is the project or program still relevant based on what benefits can be realized against unexpected events or changes to the benefits realization plan?
8. Are the benefit owners responsible, accountable, and evaluated for achieving benefit targets?

GOOD PRACTICES

Ensuring the project or program remains aligned with the organization's strategic objectives

Evaluating risks and KPIs related to financials, compliance, quality, safety, and stakeholder satisfaction, as they might impact the delivery of benefits

Recording progress and reporting to key stakeholders as directed in the communication plan

Ensuring the identified benefits realization dependencies, components, and related governance is incorporated into the standing governance process.

Prepare to capture and realize both intended and unintended benefits by:

Ensuring key stakeholders and beneficiaries have reviewed, understand, and act in accordance with identified benefit realization dependencies.

Incorporating the impact of the benefit into risk management, issues management, and change control.

Utilizing communication and stakeholder engagement processes.

SUSTAIN

A look at the practices that enable organizations to sustain benefits and achieve strategic objectives

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Have the benefits—tangible, intangible, short-term, and/or long-term—been optimized?
2. Have the benefits been transitioned to and approved by key stakeholders, including accountable operational/business owners?
3. Have project or program outcomes and capabilities been handed over to operational/business owners?
4. Are realized benefits being measured and verified against business and sustainment plans?
5. Are actual benefits being delivered within the timeframe of the benefits realization plan?
6. Were lessons learned captured and communicated?
7. Have unanticipated benefits been realized and captured for the future?

GOOD PRACTICES





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David Davis, PMI-PBA, PMP, PgMP, Project Manager, GE Brilliant Factory

Ruth Anne Guerrero, MBA, PMP, President of Ruth Anne Guerrero Project Management Consulting, LLC

Andy Jordan, PMP, President of Roffensian Consulting Inc.

Morten Sorensen, ITIL, PMP, PgMP, PfMP, PMI OPM Advisory Group

Grace Younes Madi, Head of the IT PMO, Bank Audi Head Office



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- 2016 Thought Leadership Series: *Creating lasting value: Benefits Realization Management*