

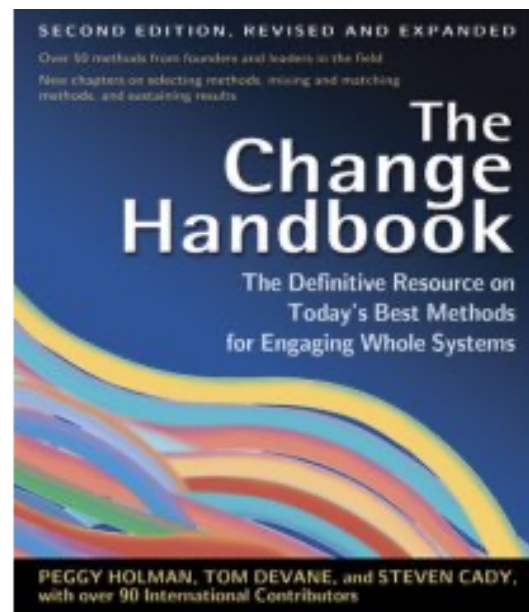
Rapid Results

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The Change Handbook:

The Definitive Resource on Today's Best
Methods for Engaging Whole Systems



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CH __: Rapid Results

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All life is an experiment

---Ralph Waldo Emerson

Accelerating Company Growth

In 2002, Avery Dennison’s CEO Philip Neal and President Dean Scarborough were searching for new ways to accelerate company growth. With revenues of just over \$4 billion and over 20,000 employees around the world, this maker of adhesive materials enjoyed enviable profitability levels, but it had grown less than 10% over the past two years. Plus, the company’s pipeline of new initiatives was mainly long-term, with payoffs at least 2-3 years out.

Neal and Scarborough decided that they had to find ways of growing more quickly using products and technology that the company already possessed. Three divisions in the Cleveland, Ohio area were selected for a pilot experiment using the rapid results approach.

In the pilot, the divisional managers identified 14 growth opportunities and assigned each one to a cross-functional team. Each team was then given the challenge of achieving a measurable new business result within 100 days — with the prospect that the innovation might offer much larger gains in the future.

The results achieved in this 100-day period were remarkable. One team designed and developed a product solution previously considered “impossible”—and got customer approval at a very good price. Another team closed within 50 days on a sales target that had been scheduled to come in over the course of 12 to 15 months. A third team not only developed certain automotive components that they would supply, but also started acting as a kind of coordinating broker—integrating the contributions of a number of other suppliers for a critical product line for one key customer. The customer solved an urgent problem and the team more than doubled sales of Avery Dennison components in this customer’s product line.

Late in 2002, the company’s top managers traveled from California to Ohio to hear teams report on their 100-day experiences. In addition to the impressive results, team members talked enthusiastically about how much they had learned; and the exhilaration of generating a real success. CEO Neal later described the meeting as one of the best days in his career.

Neal and Scarborough immediately decided to expand the process across the company. Using the rapid results approach, \$50 million in additional revenue was realized in the first full year from dozens of projects that utilized existing products, technologies, or customer relationships. From 14 initial US-based projects, the program quickly grew to 500 projects worldwide, involving thousands of employees, generating more than \$150 million in less than two years.

Rapid Results in International Development

In 2003, with the scourge of HIV/AIDS sweeping across Africa, Dr. Saleh Meke, Minister of Health for the tiny country of Eritrea, knew he was racing the clock to prevent a health disaster in his country of 4.5 million citizens. Although a five-year plan was in place to prevent the spread of the disease, Dr. Meke was not satisfied that the pace was sufficient.

Based on advice from the World Bank, Dr. Meke worked with a consultant to launch six rapid results teams in the central region of Eritrea. Each team set a truly ambitious goal—a result that would achieve a significant and measurable gain on one priority HIV/AIDS prevention theme in the five-year plan. However, instead of five years, each project goal needed to be achieved in 100 days or less.

Projects touched various components of the five-year plan, including school-based education, home care, and engagement with critical groups such as commercial sex workers and truck drivers. For example, one of the projects focused on one region (Asmara) aimed to increase the use of voluntary counseling and testing services (VCT) by 25% and achieving an 80% positive satisfaction rating from users, all within 100 days.

By project end, the weekly number of clients visiting VCT facilities in Asmara had leapt by 80% and the trend continued to rise. User exit questionnaires developed as part of the Rapid Results Initiative also showed a consistent 95% level of satisfaction with the quality of the VCT service.

To achieve the result, the team tried innovations such as opening three new VCT sites, training five additional counselors, distributing Rapid Test kits, procuring some new equipment and furniture (videos for waiting rooms, for example), and putting in place a systematic tracking and monitoring system. The team noted that these developments—and the result—were accomplishments they would never have thought possible before the rapid cycle project.

The other five initial projects had similarly positive results. At a two-day workshop held at the end of the 100-day project cycle, Dr. Meke was so impressed by the results and enthusiasm of those involved that the projects were scaled up and expanded to tackle additional challenges and dozens of additional projects were launched in other parts of the country. Since 2003, over 10,000 people have been involved in rapid results projects to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Eritrea – helping the country limit increases in the infection rate.

The Basics About Rapid-Results

The *rapid results approach* is a powerful way to “jump-start” major change efforts. It enables change leaders to achieve ambitious goals by stimulating action, experimentation and learning in the pursuit of dramatic results in critical focus areas. Rapid results projects are used as the essential building blocks for large-scale and long-term transformation.

Rapid results projects can be undertaken singly or in combination, according to the scale of the overall change effort. Such projects have clear attributes—they are:

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- Results oriented—work is focused on achieving tangible, measurable, bottom-line results (instead of activities, preparations or recommendations)
- Fast—project duration is 100 days or less
- Exciting and experimental—fosters innovation and learning
- Stimulating—participants gain new insights on implementation challenges and risks
- Empowering—teams set their own goal, and are expected to actively pursue it with considerable latitude;
- Cross-functional—teams draw together people who have front-line knowledge of the challenge at hand;
- Visible—projects are actively supported and valued by an explicit sponsor commission

When to use it?

The *rapid results approach* should be used when change efforts need to be unstuck, accelerated, and injected with a sense of urgency—and where it is necessary to engage and empower various stakeholders in the process. Since the *rapid results approach* is modular, it can be used either project-by-project or, by launching many projects simultaneously, as a vehicle for large-scale change.

Rapid results should *not* be used when there is a ‘pre-ordained’ solution to the challenge at hand, since this dissipates the characteristic empowerment and excitement mentioned above.

Probable outcomes

Rapid results projects have a dual focus on achieving results *and* generating learnings and insights into the process and dynamics of change in the organization. Each project is designed as a mini-organization development effort, both for individual and for team learning about change. Teams typically meet or exceed their rapid results goals. In those instances where teams are not fully successful in achieving their goal, the team’s experience is treated as a rich source of learning and insight, enabling future teams to focus in more productive areas.

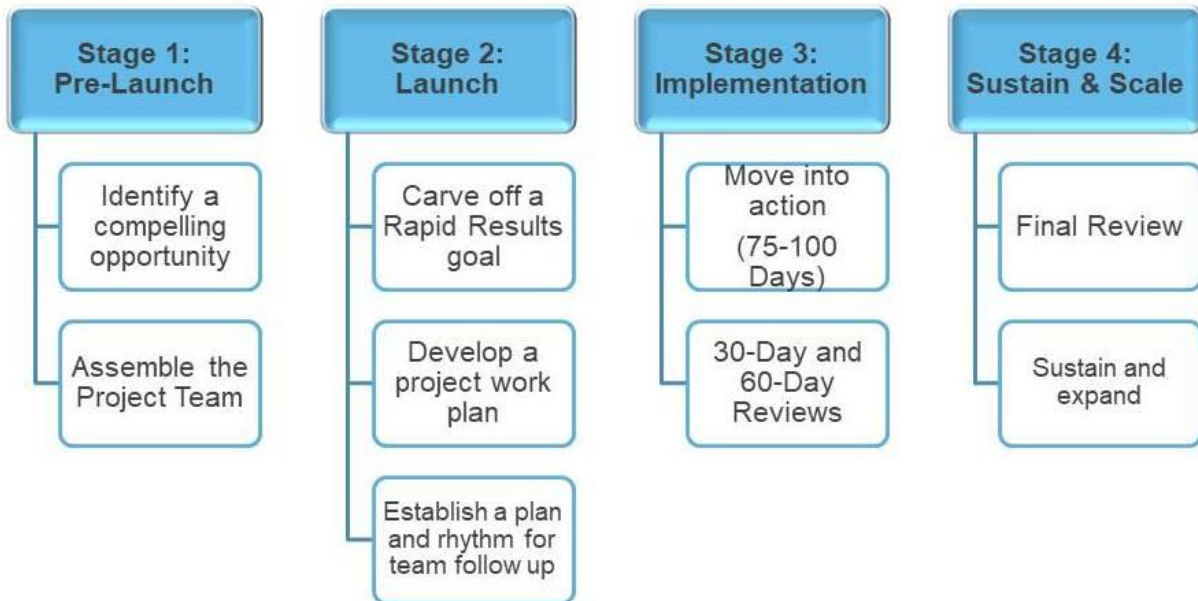
How does it work?

The life cycle of a single rapid results project is shown in Figure 1.

Rapid results projects follow a similar rhythm regardless of their duration. First is a short period in which change leaders, project sponsors and facilitators work together to define areas for focused effort. This could conceivably spring from earlier strategy development work using methods such as open space, WorkOut, or future search, or based on urgent and compelling priorities facing the organization. Sponsors define an executable challenge for each team, providing guidance as to where results are needed, and helpful intuition regarding the territory for discovery.

A major insurance business faced last quarter results well below plan. The CEO challenged seven senior managers to each launch a rapid results project that would deliver an extra surge of profitable growth by year-end—and lay a foundation for stronger performance in the next year. Each manager commissioned a team to deliver measurable results within 60-100 days.

Figure 1: Phases of the Rapid Results Process



The sponsors, team leader and team members are brought together at a formal launch event, usually lasting one day, at which they carve out their own goal and shape a work plan for achieving the result. The critical distinction here is that the team *sets its own goal* at a level that is challenging enough to stimulate innovation and experimentation. We use the “gut test”: the goal should create a slight feeling of anxiety as to how it will be accomplished. If the team is relaxed and confident that the goal is readily achievable using the current system, then it is not enough of a stretch. By encouraging the team to *push itself* into its own discomfort zone, ownership of the challenge and commitment to change is located with the team.

In one line of business, the sponsor called together a team in one office, to find a way to reduce non-value adding administrative work and significantly increase the amount of business being quoted. Having laid out the challenge, he left the room. The team of underwriters, technicians and support staff spent four hours deciding how to simplify the work flow, and quantifying how much more business they would aim to handle as a result. A facilitator encouraged them to aim high. At the end of the day, they reviewed the goal with their sponsor, calibrating their own perceptions against his, but ultimately basing their goal of increasing quotations by 30% on their own instinct about the challenge ahead.

After the launch meeting, the team is in the driver’s seat during the implementation phase that lasts 30-100 days. There are at least two major review points where the teams report on progress and results. Halfway through the projects, the teams meet for a mid-point review to check for traction against goals and team learning. At project completion, teams have a final review to report and celebrate final results, share the team’s learnings and share their ideas to sustain results over time.

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The rapid results team held monthly review sessions with the sponsor and facilitator, reporting out on progress in streamlining the workflow, occasionally asking for help, and tracking the production volume that was now being achieved. By the end of the project, they had transformed their workflow and exceeded their goal by another 50 percent.

Once the team’s work is done, sponsors and change leaders consider the scale-up opportunities, taking into account the teams’ insights. This can include turning fresh attention to a related challenge or a new issue thrown up by the team, extending the experiment to other locations or customer segments, or “snowballing” the best practice insights to other work groups for adoption or further development and discovery. Frequently, rapid results projects also reveal cross-cutting or supporting activities (such as training or system enhancements) that are needed across locations, which are commissioned as part of the overall portfolio of system changes.

Major organizations and communities have built large transformations on a foundation of many rapid results projects, spun out of large-group events such as WorkOuts, knitted together in waves or as an inverted pyramid where one project spawns multiples.

The rapid results team formally reported their innovations and results, sharing the new forms and checklists they had created. Other offices immediately started to adopt some of the changes. A few months later, the sponsor coordinated calls between all the offices to encourage uptake and further improvement. By year-end, most of the innovations had been scaled up, and all offices were sharing their improved results monthly.

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Table of Uses

Setting/Challenge	Example of Initial Project	Large Scale Impact	# of Participants/ Length of Project
<p>Avery Dennison US producer of pressure-sensitive materials; office products; and various tickets, tags, labels, and other products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase revenue growth from existing products 	<p>Launched 14 rapid results projects across three divisions.</p>	<p>Impressive early results led to global use of rapid results teams generating \$50 million of new sales in the first year with \$150 million in the second year.</p>	<p>Grew from 14 to 500 projects involving 2000 employees within two years.</p>
<p>Community Solutions US non-profit working to end homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing 100,000 homeless individuals in sustainable housing 	<p>The initial wave of projects launched in 13 cities. Each team committed to an extremely aggressive 100-day goal—often involving doubling its average placement rate. Different pain points were addressed. For example, New Orleans simplified paperwork needed to process a veteran’s application for subsidized housing and unified the process across regional and local agencies; Detroit and Houston each set up a one-stop shop so people experiencing homelessness could complete their support requirements in one day.</p>	<p>The <i>100,000 Homes Campaign</i> exceeded its goals—placing 105,580 people in permanent supportive housing.</p>	<p>In 2012, the initial wave of Rapid Results Boot Camps involved 13 participating cities. In 2013, more than 40 cities were engaged.</p> <p>“Rapid Results Housing Boot Camps” engaged community teams that included case managers and homelessness program managers from the local VA, HUD field officers, representatives from the Public Housing Authority, the local NGOs working on ending homelessness, and the mayor’s office.</p>
<p>Eritrea Ministry of Health Division of Eritrean government with the goal of protecting the health of all Eritreans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat the spread of HIV/AIDS 	<p>Six initial projects in Central Region of Eritrea included teams focused on: increased use of voluntary counseling and testing centers (VCT), increasing use of female condoms among commercial sex workers (CSWs), school-based HIV/AIDS prevention program.</p>	<p>Annual goal of 12,000 VCT in the Central region of Eritrea, considered ambitious in March, was shifted upwards to 15,000 in June after the first round of rapid results projects. The end of year results fell just short of 20,000 users after three rounds of rapid results projects.</p>	<p>Projects in Eritrea have involved about 10,000 people over two years.</p>

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Setting/Challenge	Example of Initial Project	Large Scale Impact	# of Participants/ Length of Project
<p>Grupo Industrial Saltillo Large Mexican conglomerate of automotive, industrial, and consumer products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve manufacturing performance 	<p>Reduce cost of top four common materials (safety supplies, pallets, packing materials, chemicals) by 25%.</p>	<p>Realized cost synergies of \$2 million in the first year from this corporate procurement project. Other projects undertaken in four other areas resulted in faster sales growth, new products introduced earlier, quicker start-up of new facilities, and significant cost savings.</p>	<p>This corporate-wide effort took place over a year with over 250 people involved in teams and steering committees. Also created and trained an internal consulting group of 12 to sustain and expand the process to other operational areas.</p>
<p>MeadWestvaco US based global packaging, paper, consumer and office products, and specialty chemicals company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition integration 	<p>In 1999, Westvaco announced the first of several acquisitions to grow and transform their business. Used rapid results teams as a means to quickly integrate and achieve desired synergies.</p>	<p>A succession of smaller acquisitions knitted into the larger corporation with rapid results projects enabled swift execution during Westvaco's merger with Mead in 2002.</p>	<p>In the course of 4 acquisitions and the merger of MeadWestvaco, dozens of teams worked on integration planning and execution that produced hundreds of millions of dollars (more than \$325M in the merger alone) in cost reductions and revenue growth. The integration teams over a period of three years engaged hundreds of people in carrying out the work.</p>
<p>\$4B Food Manufacturer US-based multinational food products company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build innovation capabilities (skills and processes) • Accelerate impact of innovative products on the P&L 	<p>Identified significant market potential of a promising food ingredient technology developed for a major customer. The rapid results team was challenged to accelerate development of the technology into viable product platforms - grounded in deep customer insight. In addition, the team needed to strengthen capabilities around customer need/insight identification, problem and concept definition, hypothesis development and testing, and prototyping.</p>	<p>Select results included: displacing competitive product at 3 major customers; gaining purchase commitment from 10 Operators; signing 7 potential customers to co-development opportunities.</p> <p>The organization developed conceptual understandings of the capability gaps upfront and the rapid results teams produced specific insights. Team learning sessions were designed to adapt these capabilities to the Rich Products' organization and culture.</p>	<p>During Year 1, rapid results teams engaged more than 50 associates in building capabilities and driving results to accelerate the growth of a major product category.</p>

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Setting/Challenge	Example of Initial Project	Large Scale Impact	# of Participants/ Length of Project
<p><i>XL Catlin Construction</i> North American division of global insurance company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch new business 	<p>Leadership developed an operational plan and launched 13 projects designed to put in place what was needed to hit the plan in the first year. These projects were complete within 90 days, leading to the official launch as a new business unit.</p>	<p>Use of a rapid results project-centric leadership, planning and execution model helped XL Catlin North America Construction become a \$1 billion business in four years and a \$2 billion business just 18 months later.</p>	<p>The operational plan was developed with just two employees—and more than 35 volunteers recruited from other divisions.</p> <p>Rapid results projects are now incorporated into the way work gets done in the division. Projects from the operational plan are launched to improve efficiency, create new products and services, address profitability issues, achieve growth in certain markets or segments, and address issues identified through metrics and operational reviews.</p>
<p><i>Zurich/Eagle Star</i> British division of Swiss financial services company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform financial performance and corporate culture 	<p>In the first year, over 30 WorkOut sessions (see WorkOut chapter) launched over 100 rapid-results projects that produced measurable savings in excess of \$10 million (US).</p>	<p>Rapid results projects facilitated rapid and successful integration of Zurich and Eagle Star's different cultures. The projects accountability and results-focus has strengthened the company's monthly and quarterly business reviews and built a sustained focus on achieving short and long-term financial success.</p> <p>Company actuaries verified savings from the projects to be in excess of \$100 million over four years with overall company performance shifting from significant losses to strong and sustained profits.</p>	<p>Over the first year -- hundreds of staff were involved, as well as dozens of internal facilitators. By year four, over 3,000 staff were involved in at least one of these sessions. 300 people were trained as internal facilitators, and another 50+ as designers of these efforts.</p>

Getting Started – The Fundamentals

The ability to calibrate a change effort to match organizational appetite (starting small, scaling up from demonstrated success) is one of the greatest strengths of the *rapid results approach*. If *the* readiness for change is small, start with local efforts based on a few projects that demonstrate the potential for change. The tangible results—plus the enthusiasm and energy that emanates from successful teams—become the fuel for scaling up into a larger effort. Stoking the fire in this way offers better payoff than trying to negotiate up-front for the big commitment of resources, emotional energy and organizational time needed to launch a huge change effort.

The rapid results approach is effective because it leverages the stability of whole systems to create cells for experimentation and innovation, below the radar screen and without the risks associated with shifting the entire system at once. Once rapid results experiments have proven their worth, change can be scaled-up across the whole system from a position of demonstrated value, rather than from a position of faith and guesswork.

Guiding principles

There are nine guiding principles that underpin both the *rapid results approach* and individual projects:

1. Focus on a transformational challenge
2. Carve out a stretch goal
3. Organize around short-term time horizons
4. Pinpoint clear accountability for results
5. Drive experimentation and discovery
6. Execute in a planned and disciplined fashion
7. Assess learning throughout
8. Design methods for the next round
9. Scale-up

Design Models

Often, rapid results projects adopt one of five designs:

Rapid Results Project Design	Sample Business Goal	Possible Rapid Results Goal
<p>1. Performance Improvement: Improve one dimension of performance to learn how to achieve similar improvement on other dimensions.</p>	Increase the satisfaction of customer Q served by three of our divisions.	Reduce the cost of service calls to the customer in one location by X% in 100 days by coordinating both the sales and service processes of the three divisions.
<p>2. Strategic: Do a small-scale demonstration of how to enter a new</p>	Provide a new type of security service to office buildings.	Prepare a description of a new service plan and get two customers to add it on

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Rapid Results Project Design	Sample Business Goal	Possible Rapid Results Goal
market, open a new line of business, or move in some other major strategic direction.		a test basis for the months of June and July.
3. Model Week or Month: Go after a specific level of performance for a week or a month, without making any commitment to continue to achieve that level.	Reduce errors and re-processing in customer invoices.	During October, reduce the error rate in customer invoices from 5% to less than 1%.
4. Process Redesign: Map and redesign one part of a larger process, to demonstrate how a more ambitious redesign can be done.	Increase profitability through reducing the cycle time from order to delivery to payment.	In X plant, reduce the time from when a customer receives a shipment until customer is billed from an average of 13 days to an average of 4 days within 100 days.
5. One-Location Pilot Test: Select one location to demonstrate and test a method intended for all locations.	Increase major account sales.	Increase major account sales in London office by 30% in 100 days.

Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships

The key roles and responsibilities are shown in Figure 2.

Sponsorship needs to come from a senior level manager who is prepared to place a significant “demand” upon a team—a challenge to achieve improved organizational results that cannot be done just by working harder. This should always be captured in a written sponsor statement.

In large-scale change, a senior level manager can sponsor a portfolio of rapid results projects—with other senior managers acting as champions for individual project teams. The sponsor works with the champions to decide how the overarching business challenge or strategic plan can be carved up into a portfolio of rapid results projects. Again, the sponsor communicates the context, the challenge, and the expectations for results *in writing*, to ensure that a consistent message is cascaded to teams by champions.

We have worked in organizations where one sponsor is from management, the other from a labor union. This works when there is joint commitment to results from both management and labor, for example in the area of improving worker safety.

Facilitators working with rapid results teams need to be focused on results, support innovation and learning, foster execution, communicate effectively, influence appropriately and be able to demonstrate adaptability.

Figure 2: Rapid Results Roles and Responsibilities

	Stage 1: Pre-Launch	Stage 2: Launch	Stage 3: Implementation	Stage 4: Sustain & Scale
Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select an opportunity/focus area for team Designate team leader and select team Clarify challenge in written note to team Align key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify challenge at start of launch event Review goal, challenge work plan, and close launch event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend periodic reviews Remove implementation hurdles for team Help distill team learnings Help plan for sustainability of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct final review to celebrate success and share learning Support changes required to assist sustainability Organize 'next wave' rapid results projects
Team		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data Set rapid results goal Develop a work plan to achieve the goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement plan Track progress and adjust as needed Prepare and present at periodic reviews Document learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement in/coaching of the next generation of teams
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with sponsor to help define challenge to team Prepare sponsor and team lead for launch Agree with team lead how to collaborate during launch and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate team through goal setting exercise and action planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data Set rapid results goal Develop a work plan to achieve the goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with sponsor to identify how results/learnings from previous projects impact the overall strategic context

Conditions for Success

Why it works

Rapid results projects work because they:

- Begin with action and results, not preparations
- Strengthen grass-roots implementation capability, building capacity and confidence
- Test large-scale change in low-risk ways
- Drive accountability lower in the organization—so that someone beyond management is lying awake at night thinking about what it will take to accomplish the result, and how to bring all the necessary elements together
- Are designed to replicate, in a calm and systematic way, dynamics that naturally arise during crisis—such as clear sense of purpose, sense of urgency, collaboration across boundaries, freedom to experiment. We call these the ‘zest’ factors.

What’s the ROI of rapid results?

The ROI of rapid results projects is two-fold: financial and developmental. Projects typically yield confidence-building pay-offs, process innovations, and the learning and development that expand everyone’s capacity to manage change. These outcomes set the stage for expansion and acceleration of progress. As each project is completed, it serves as a building block for larger scale change. In most organizations, the results achieved in the first few rapid results projects more than pay for the investment in the entire effort. In fact, this rapid payoff has spurred some

management development units that use the approach to consider themselves as profit instead of cost centers.

Theoretical Basis

The *rapid results approach* draws on diverse theoretical foundations:

- Kurt Lewin’s research demonstrated that the best way to change a system is to actually try tweaking it.
- Robert H. Schaffer pioneered the notion that adults learn best when actively engaged in the experience, which is consistent with David Kolb’s adult learning theory. Schaffer’s writing and practice showed that managers achieve success by actually experiencing what it feels like to touch, see, smell and live a small piece of the big result they are trying to achieve.
- The *rapid results approach* is also consistent with goal-setting theory, which focuses on the power of a sharp, clearly defined goal.
- Social identity theory illuminates how creating collective ownership among team members increases the odds of success, even of an ad hoc effort.

The insights of the *rapid results approach* are also born out by the empirical research of many scholar/practitioners, such as John Kotter and Dan Cohen (2002), Michael Beer (and co-authors) (200; 2003), and Theresa Amabile (2011).

Rapid results approach challenges the conventional wisdom

The *rapid results approach* challenges conventional wisdom in three ways.

First, we believe that involvement for involvement’s sake isn’t enough. We say that cultural and behavioral change in organizations is strongest when built on a foundation of actual results.

Second, the *rapid results approach* turns the “begin-with-preparations-and-wait-patiently-for-results” paradigm upside-down and begins at once with results. Managers do not need to wait for the final consulting report, or the full analytical market study. They can begin with actions that often yield more learning than any report or study.

Finally, we don’t believe that a large-scale change effort must involve the whole organization in a lock-step system transformation. Consistency is the enemy of creativity and social discovery. Conventional wisdom often holds that short term is “bad”. We say that short-term successes, built on local, small-scale, rapid cycle efforts, can be the fuel for learning and large-scale change.

History of creation

The *rapid results approach* was originated by Robert H. Schaffer and the firm he founded (now Schaffer Consulting) in the early 1960s. It has been documented in hundreds of articles and more than a dozen books. Over four decades, an international practice community including major corporations, government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and development agencies has validated the approach.

Sustaining the results

The results and learning from a portfolio of rapid results projects are embedded in an organization through attention to three dynamics: sustainability, expansion and scale-up. *Sustainability* refers to the capacity to maintain the particular results achieved during a rapid cycle project, in that area. As each project progresses, the team is asked to recommend any shifts that will be needed to lock in its results for the longer term. It might require training, systems changes, formal process redesign or targeted communication. For example, a rapid results team in a hospital operating room (OR) that has reduced the average time to prepare the room between patients by 20 minutes would ask itself what is needed to maintain that standard after the intense effort of the rapid cycle project is ended.

Expansion refers to a team's capacity to take the learnings from one project and leverage these into a bigger or related effort in the same domain. Examples include a team agreeing to take another crack at an even better result on the same issue or picking a related issue that could not be fully addressed in the previous project. In the case of the hospital OR team, this could mean trying to reduce turnaround time by another 10 minutes by targeting administrative errors or doctor delays.

Scale-up refers to the capacity to take the results achieved by a particular team and replicate them more broadly across the organization. Results in one unit, segment or region or with one customer are used to stimulate similar achievements elsewhere. In our hospital example, this could mean taking what was learned in one OR and trying to replicate the results on every shift and in every OR across the hospital system. This requires a careful balance between constantly reinventing the wheel and simply rolling out a solution in a command-and-control manner. The ownership of the goal and the opportunity for innovation remain core dynamics of change, even when a work team is being asked to adopt and build upon the ideas and learnings from a rapid results team.

Impact on an organization's cultural assumptions

The cultural shifts that arise from the *rapid results approach* are most noticeable in a few key mantras that play out in the organization:

- *The wisdom for change lies within.* Communities develop stronger capability to drive change when people realize that outside experts are not needed to make major change happen. We have noticed that in communities and countries facing development challenges, traditional “big fix” programs often stumble because of a lack of grass-roots implementation capability. Using rapid results projects, the “target population” ceases to be a target and becomes a driver for change, building its own experiences of successful implementation.
- *No more excuses.* Rapid results projects often smash organizational myths that serve as convenient excuses for lack of improvement. Teams often start with a conviction that a particular cause outside their control (such as a systems issue) lies at the root of their problems. However, the discovery process often uncovers many root causes that the team can

control, empowering the team to bring its full creativity and ownership to bear on the challenge. As Avery Denison's Dean Scarborough put it: "The 100-day deadline drove an incredible amount of creativity. When people hit obstacles, they did not come to management for help. They... did what they had to do to get over the obstacles. They took some risks."

- *Do it, just do it.* As more rapid cycle projects are carried out, there is more of a go-for-it feeling throughout the organization. Out of big, amorphous goals, short-term targets are set. Team accountabilities are specified. Work plans are developed. As projects succeed, participants absorb the learning and move on to more ambitious and sophisticated undertakings. And as implementation capability expands, so does the organization's capacity to master its strategic direction. The culture of the enterprise begins to shift even though the focus is on tangible results—not culture change.
- *Make tomorrow start today.* Achieving rapid cycle results enables organizations to shift to a faster, empirically based approach to strategic direction setting. Again, Scarborough argues that the *rapid results approach* "allows you to test big strategic concepts very quickly and in a very focused way... If you go out and test the idea in a small-scale 100-day way, you have some real solid data. We have been able to implement certain strategies much more quickly this way."

Burning question – Doesn't this simply exploit low hanging fruit?

While there is nothing wrong with accomplishing easy goals, the rapid results process helps people to carve up difficult, seemingly insurmountable challenges into achievable chunks. Each rapid results project should make a significant contribution toward achieving an urgent, compelling objective. If the rapid results goal can be accomplished easily—if it does not need the combined efforts of a team—then it is not worth the investment of the entire team's time and effort. The collective "gut test" should confirm that the team is aiming for a significant step-up in performance.

Some final comments

Key difference between this method and similar methods

Teams and task forces are commonplace within most organizations. However, most such teams are held accountable for little more than activities or recommendations. Rapid results teams are held accountable for achieving results through innovation, and for extracting learning and insights along the way. Taken together, these elements build enormous energy, as well as confidence and capacity to manage further change.

Common misconceptions and confusion about this method

The belief that a short-term focus is always bad. This universally accepted "truth" of organization management is exposed as fiction by the success of rapid results. This myth is the legacy of too many panicky short-term moves that have damaged companies—like cutting R&D or eliminating customer services. We have discovered that short-term thrusts can be powerfully beneficial if they are executed intelligently and if they are designed as stepping-stones toward

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major strategic gains. Short-term thrusts are bad only if they are poorly conceived or poorly executed.

How to leverage technology to support rapid results

While technology does not change the essence of the *rapid results approach*, it can be used to enhance it. Teams do not need to be co-located and can work virtually by using video-conferencing and team-sharing applications. Teams also can be engaged through webinars that provide information about the key issues and the methodology with interaction for questions – which allows participants to work from their desktops or mobile devices. Data analytics can also be employed to delve more deeply into the issues and uncover hidden patterns or anomalies that would not be obvious through more casual use of information. Technology however is not a substitute for the interaction of team members which is necessary for triggering creativity; nor is it a substitute for the creation of challenging demands by an impatient leader that wants to see results.

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Biography

This chapter reflects the beliefs, work and insights of the authors and their colleagues at Schaffer Consulting. The firm's consultants collaborate with clients from around the world to accomplish dramatic top- and bottom-line improvements and bring about far-reaching change. They have developed, practice and teach the high-impact consulting mode, whereby modest consulting inputs can be leveraged by clients to catalyze significant results.

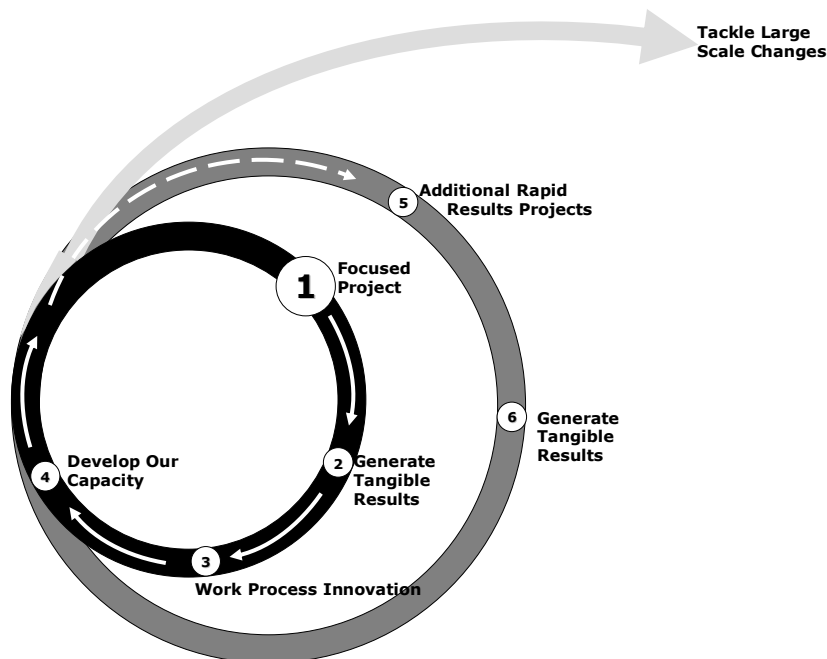
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Matrix Outline

Purpose, outcomes

- Build capacity for large scale change through the vehicle of short term projects

A pictorial representation of the process



Number of participants (a range of what you believe is a workable number to obtain a high-quality product from the method)

- Ranges from single teams (7-10 people) to 100+ teams (1000+ people)

Type of Participants (e.g., internal or external stakeholders, same function, multi-function)

- Any team composition where all members are committed to achieving results and learning
- Senior management sponsors prepared to be involved during the entire cycle

Typical Duration (pre-method, conduct of method, post-method follow-up)

- Shape: 2 weeks
- Launch: 1 day
- Implement: 30-100 days
- Scale-up: 30+ days

Brief example with results

- In Nicaragua, farmers using rapid results witnessed measurable improvement in their productivity (and income) in 100-120 days. The long-term national goal: Improve the productivity of 120,000 farmers by 30% in 16 years. Two years of investment and effort

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later, little had been accomplished beyond preparations. Within a few months of rapid results projects and using existing resources, daily milk production almost tripled among 60 producers; 30 farmers increased pig weight by 30%; and 30 chicken farmers' productivity increased by 20%.

When to use

- The most powerful driver of better performance is better performance itself. If you want to help an organization develop its ability to perform better, nothing is more effective than helping it to experience a tangible success on some of the dimensions it is trying to strengthen.

When not to use

- The guiding principles outlined in the “fundamentals” section are not present
- Senior management wishes to hand a team a solution to implement versus a challenge for the team to develop into a goal and then implement it
- Senior management/sponsors are not prepared to be involved beyond the launch of the projects
- The organization does not exhibit ‘readiness’ to move forward with the suggested approach

Impact on cultural assumptions of the organization

FROM	TO
Change as a special project	Change as an inherent part of the job
Each function works on its own tasks	Joint responsibility for shared objectives
Sequential work flow	Parallel work flow
Prove-it-first	Experimental, “let’s try it”
Diffuse accountability	Focused accountability
“More resources for better results”	“Better results with what we have”

Creator(s)

- Robert H. Schaffer and colleagues

Creation Date

- 1960’s

Historical context

- Lewin’s action research model of change through iteratively tweaking a system. Robert Schaffer’s insights into accelerating change based on actual experience – and the value of deliberately building in urgency and importance.

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Where to go for more information, resources

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Web sites/listservs

www.schafferresults.com