

500 WORDS ON  
LEADERSHIP & DIGITALIZATION

# EXECUTION OF THINGS!

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Innovation teams should create full delivery plans  
to include the embedding process before opening the champagne.

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In this 500 words on Leadership and Digitalization, we asked Rob Kerner, Head of Innovation Strategy at RBS, about one of his most compelling Innovation take-away.

“Many innovation teams stop when things are delivered but not necessarily embedded; the execution of things is missing!

The big difference is that without embedding the innovation you quite often do not realize all those tasty benefits that are in your business cases.

The issue arises when innovation teams assume that there is some magic team in the organisation whose job it is to catch your new idea, product or company and make sure everyone buys into it. Innovation teams should create full delivery plans to include the embedding process.

Some things to consider:

**1) There normally are no magic teams that catch your ideas.**

As you package up your innovation ideas for delivery, ensure that you dust off that business case and make sure that you have thought through embedding those benefits.

This normally involves teams you may not normally engage with like HR, Comms and front-line managers. This needs to absolutely be part of the project plan and the project should not be signed off until it is fully embedded.

Ensure that you either find one these magic teams to do this work or continue to have the project team engage until it is done!

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**2) Ensure benefits and call to action communications are part of the delivery plan.**

As part of the delivery plan, be sure to identify the groups that you will need to engage with to make sure that they are clear on what you are doing and what they need to do.

As much as communications folks seem to crave more content, in reality there is normally a semi-locked down Comms plan 6-12 months out. You will need to get time on that spreadsheet. HR may also be very worried about any programs that effect the workforce (rightly so).

How many of our innovations launches speak about cost savings from reducing staff away from non-value added work? Engage them early as they will need time to think through the people strategy and start the stakeholder management.

**3) Look at new tools to improve the way you convey the messages, emails and webinars don't cut it!**

This where e.g. Horzn (or similar tools) come into the picture. I found these types of platforms and more importantly the knowledge of "what works with employees and customers" to be well thought through and an excellent fit for innovation projects.

These tools are able to provide employees and customers with the latest techniques to engage people the way they expect to be engaged today (think micro learning modules, badges, emulators etc.)

Also, the management dashboards allow you to control the roll-out on a real-time basis and adjust things that are not working as planned.

**4) Don't underestimate how hard this part of the project is to deliver.**

A normal day in the life of an innovation team in a large established organisation can be quite a slog. We are normally tasked with cultural change on top of all the normal challenges associated with finding, testing and delivering new innovation propositions. Careful handover planning should not be underestimated. You may even have to have the person in your team "keep going" with project to ensure no loss of momentum or muscle memory.

In short, as you deliver those pesky innovation projects, keep going to ensure you embed them, then sit back and watch the business case benefits come to life."

Yours,

**Rob Kerner,**

*Head of Innovation Strategy, Personal  
& Business Banking*

*Royal Bank of Scotland*

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