



Strategic Delivery Assurance (SDA) - managing risks and changing behaviours

SDA uses both quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess and manage the risk in programmes, but the key benefit is the way it directly and indirectly changes the behaviours in stakeholders and teams for the better.

While our proven methodology consistently delivers the insights and actions needed to deliver major projects, clients are telling us the real game-changer lies in the behavioural changes seen as a result of the process - which brings more sustainable value and benefit than the data itself.

REVEAL 'HIDDEN' RISKS

At its most fundamental level, SDA uses a language of positive assumptions rather than negative risks to identify threats that might never be identified by traditional means. Human behaviour drives people to be defensive or downplay risks which show themselves or their team in a negative light. SDA emphasises the positive assumptions required to deliver the objectives, rather than trying to capture the negative risks directly, shifting the language and behaviour towards a more affirming approach.

Most importantly, the cross-communication of the assumption and ratings ensures all viewpoints are captured and therefore critical risks that would have been missed are identified and managed proactively.

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SDA INTERVIEWS

The SDA interviews rigorously capture both the quantitative data (i.e. Brick estimates) and qualitative data (ie assumptions and ratings) to predict the programme outcomes. However, the interviews involve a high degree of emotional intelligence to ensure that the best possible data is captured from the nominated interviewee, in essence getting to the "truth" as they best see it at that point in time and ensuring that over-optimism and over-pessimism is avoided.

FOCUS ON PROGRESS NOT PREDICTIONS

While SDA uses statistical numerical techniques to predict outcomes, this does not mean that the value or success of the project depends on hard data to deliver results. For example, a predicted date of delivery does not need to be "accurate" or taken literally to be important and useful. The numbers are used to drive actions and ultimately change behaviours. Even in the unlikely event the predicted date is months out, if it focusses leadership to manage the underlying driving assumptions and achieve a better outcome, then the numbers have done their job.

SET UP RISK METRICS AND REWARD POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

People are used to being evaluated on metrics like revenue, profit, team management etc. Less often are they evaluated against risk management metrics and while direct cause and effect of risk mitigation to prevent risk can be difficult to prove, it is possible to measure how well your team is performing in the process of risk management.

Metrics such as actions overdue and average time open can be accessed automatically from the data. When targets are set for risk metrics, it becomes a performance measure and shifts the emphasis away from something the team may feel is administrative and simply for the benefit of senior management or audit/compliance, towards a culture of risk analysis driving accountability.

MAKING ADDITIONAL REVENUE FROM FIXING YOUR CLIENT'S RISKS

Over many years of applying SDA, one of the biggest benefits has been the ability to systematically add additional revenue by helping the clients fix the risks that they would find difficult to fix themselves - the so called Engagement Multiplier.

This happens as a direct result of applying SDA as new risky assumptions are identified that should be managed by the client team, but for reasons of resource limitations or skillset, the client struggles. The strategic partner is therefore able to offer to help by forming a team to mitigate the risk. Partners are thus motivated to apply SDA, not just to manage the risk to their engagement, but to systematically build more revenue with the current client.

SDA will always bring immediate value by using both quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess and manage the risk in programmes. However, the long-term value is realised not in the blind adherence to the numerical data but in the direct and indirect behavioural changes in stakeholders and teams for the better.