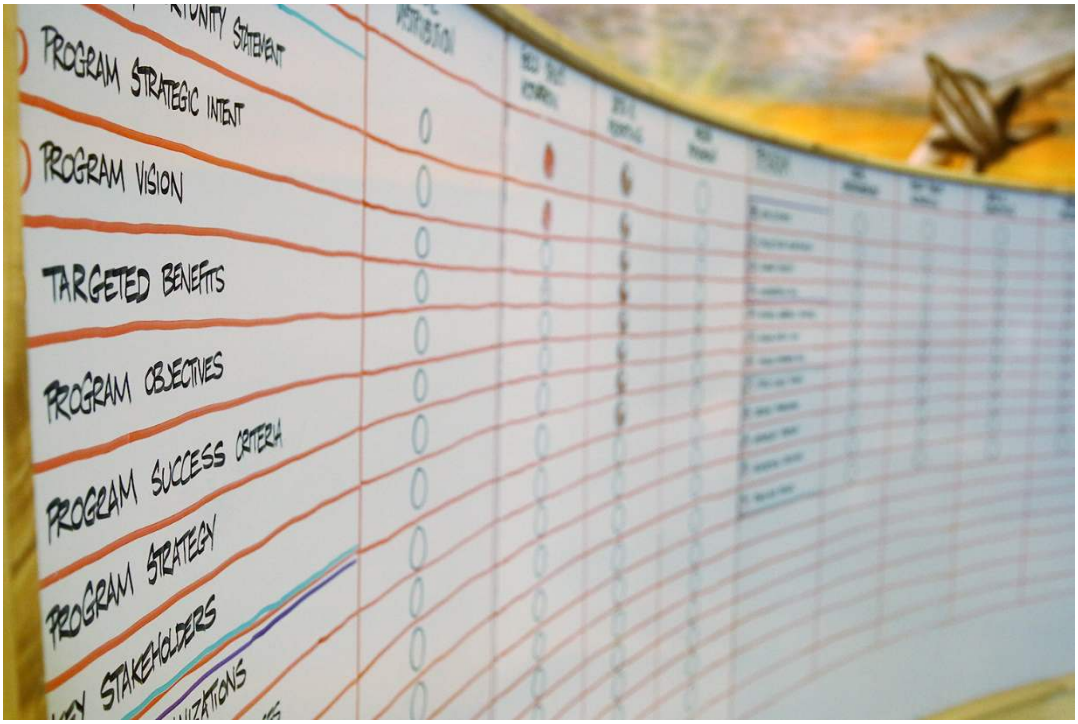
Breakthrough
Project Management



WHITE PAPER

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BREAKTHROUGH PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The literature on project management is deep and wide. There is one aspect of the project management BOK that has a special impact on your New-Growth Engine invention, acquisition and implementation. This area has to do with the difference between "routine" vs. "breakthrough" project management.

Some projects strive for incremental improvements to production. Other projects aim to enable the bigger production system they serve to achieve high performance breakthrough improvements. Other projects are local clean-slate innovation efforts in a developing country undertaken by a developed country company. These often focus, not so much on high performance product breakthroughs, but good enough performance with breakthroughs on the business model and low price side. New-growth innovation efforts require an acknowledgement of the differences (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Difference between Routine and Breakthrough Project Management

	Routine Project Management	Breakthrough Project Management
Mind-Set	• Past indicates the future • Risk averse • Business as usual • Today's constraints dictate • Breakdowns avoided • Best practices • Current customers set context	• Past not indicative of future • Risk tolerant • Business unusual • Tomorrow's possibilities dictate • Breakdowns welcomed and accelerated • Next practices • Lead-users or local customers (ECIs) set context
Methods	• Current systems work • Closed system • Usual conversations • Implementors and Optimizers involved • Current customers • Company playbook	• New systems needed • Open system • Critical conversations • Inventors and Outliers involved • Lead-user methods • Scientific method playbook

Breakthrough Project Management Requirements

BPM can be used anytime, anywhere, and with anyone. BPM can also be used for any new-growth tactic/strategy. As a rule, the Core Strategy that has to be followed for any idea/invention will require radical innovation for product/production system requirements. By definition, this almost always triggers BPM. In Chapter 2, the following definition of radical innovation was provided:

> Radical Innovation equals radical technology innovation (both componentry and architecture are different than competitors) plus radical business model innovation (offers produced and paid for are different than competitors).

Any time only one of the defining elements of either "technology" or "business model" exists, then such innovation is called semi-radical innovation. In either "radical" or "semi-radical" innovation circum- stances, the principles governing BPM apply. Any invention process that is not at radical or semi-radical levels is by default an incremental innovation. Even when small changes are the goal, BPM can still apply—it's all by choice. BPM is a mind-set and methodology that captures what it means to have the Core Behavior of "zealous discipline." BPM requirements separate into mind-set and method categories.

> **Mind-set Requirements**. Project members naturally suited for Breakthrough Project Management are Tier 2 people. Notwithstanding, Tier 1 people, when led by a Tier 2 facilitator, can still get the job done. (See earlier discussion under Values Systems Hierarchy.) Here are the mindset requirements for individual or group-based BPM.
>
> **Critical Conversations**—Team members need the skills to carry- on critical conversations. Just what is a critical conversation? Experts in the field have provided us the formula depicted in Figure 4.7.(17) Figure 4.7 clearly illustrates why BPM initiatives qualify for critical conversation status. Critical conversations play at the essence of transforming the routine information flows into meaningful dialogues. In turn, meaningful dialogues enable so many of the necessary "breakdowns" required for "radical" dialogues and decisions. Due to length of book constraints, the topic of critical conversations has to be left for your own investigation. Our purpose is served here by calling attention to its crucial role in the dialogue processes that permeates most elements of the Invention Playbook and Implementation processes.

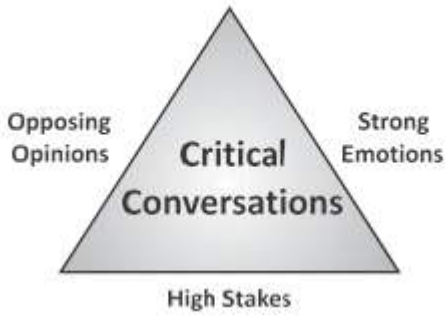

FIGURE 4.7: CRITICAL CONVERSATION FORMULA

The End-in-Mind has no Historic Precedent—Breakthrough innovations must have an extraordinary result without a historic precedent. Since they do not have historic precedents, break- through innovations cannot be planned based on past methods or practices.

Commit to in Advance—Just as John F. Kennedy launched the man-on-the-moon program in the 1960s, you have to be willing to have the courage to declare the breakthrough you want to see happen. You have to accept and be able to live with this proposition. To intentionally create a breakthrough, you have to take the risk of committing to a result you do not yet know how to achieve. The following questions must be answered in the affirmative:

- Are we willing to take the risk of putting our personal repu- tations at stake?
- Do we have a sufficient relationship and trust among the team to move into an unknown domain and face every chal- lenge together?
- Are we committed to each other's success?
- Are we committed to overcoming the inevitable breakdowns without giving up on our commitment?
- Are we willing to pull the best from each other to bring the breakthrough into realization?

Method Requirements. Breakthrough Project Management during new-growth discovery, design, development, and deployment is governed by the ideas outlined in Chapter 6—Invention Playbook. During the execution of your Invention Playbook many sub-projects come into existence. We'll leave it to Chapter 6 to provide the granularity.

But what happens when your firm has to initiate and/or manage simultaneously year-after-year 7 different new-growth tactics/strategies across three time-zone Horizons. This is a daunting challenge. I'll leave it to Part II—New-Growth Implementation to tackle the challenge and score the touchdown we need.

Putting both individual and institutional architecture to good use takes us to the next chapter: What to Build or Buy—Core Strategy and its Office. It introduces the "silver bullet" of the New-Growth Engine— the Core Strategy framework and the new office in the C-suite that quarterbacks the application of that Core Strategy framework.

Gist of the Key Ideas

- Individuals and their institutions invent and implement inventions. Having a common language about the nature of individuals and production systems of institutions is critical for organizing and planning quickly and correctly. This language is called architecture.
- Having the right people in the right seat during the three time Horizons of new-growth initiatives is critical for new-growth success. People are complex but hierarchy frameworks can help senior leaders decide on seat assignments for the three time Horizons.
- Institutions commercialize their inventions using three types of production systems—complex system, volume operations, and project flip. Organizing new-growth efforts becomes smart and fast using the architecture language of these three models.
- New-growth invention and implementation also takes place at a micro-level of process—project models. Some projects are very "routine" for your company. However more than half of the new- growth tactics/strategies require "breakthrough" mind-sets and methods. The architecture of breakthrough project management (BPM) is vital to understand if the Invention Playbook process of Chapter 6 is to be executed with zealous discipline by Tier 1 or Tier 2 leaders.