

10 Key behaviours of an effective Sponsor

An effective Sponsor can be a deciding factor in the success or failure of a project.

Review the key behaviours below, and answer the associated questions, to identify whether there are any areas you could work on to become an even more effective Sponsor.



1 Assumes single point accountability

- Do you take full accountability for project outcomes and realising expected benefits?
- Do you provide sign off for all plans, key deliverables, and the overall project?

2 Champions the project

- Do you act as a strong advocate for the project?
- Do you drive interest and support for the project through regular engagement and communication activities?

3 Aligns the project with business strategy

- Do you ensure the real business need is addressed and the project is aligned with strategy?
- Do you ensure the project priority is understood by all stakeholders and the wider business community?

4 Provides a vision

- Do you set a clear and compelling vision for the project?
- Do you support the project team in defining project success measures?

5 Sets the project up for success

- Do you ensure the project has the funding, the technology and the right people to get the job done (training/upskilling resources where required)?
- Do you act in line with the principles of the agreed project delivery approach? *E.g. not demanding a full, detailed plan at the beginning of an agile initiative.*

6 Actively governs the project

- Do you ensure appropriate (fit for purpose) governance is in place?
- Do you steer the project, review progress, remove obstacles and remediate project or benefit-realisation shortfalls?

7 Sets tolerance levels

- Do you set tolerance levels to enable delegated decision-making and effective escalation (exception reporting)?
- Do you allow the project team to make adjustments within agreed tolerance levels without interference?

8 Drives decisions and resolves escalations

- Do you act on decisions and escalations raised by the project team in a timely manner?
- Do you allocate time to resolve cross-functional issues that are out of the project team's control (e.g. conflicting priorities and resourcing)?

9 Verifies the continued viability and achievability of the project

- Do you own and regularly review the business case to the project remains viable, particularly when changes occur (to time/cost/scope)?
- Do you monitor the project to ensure it remains achievable within technical and resource constraints?

10 Ensures project assurance takes place

- Do you engage an independent party (e.g. risk team or 3rd party) to monitor the health of the project?
- Do you ensure the effectiveness of the project team and their working practices are reviewed - either internally by the team or using an external resource?