Management for Professionals

Matthias Kolbusa

Implementation Management

High-Speed Strategy Implementation

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For my wonderful wife from whom I have learned so much about life and am certain to learn more from.

Foreword by Dr. Werner Brinker

The energy industry is, without doubt, currently one of the most dynamic business sectors there is. Everyone is talking about the "Energy Revolution". Even before the nuclear reactor accident in Fukushima in 2011 it was the defining element of public and political discussion. In Germany climate protection regulations; instruments such as the Renewable Energies Act; the decision taken by the red-green coalition government to pull out of nuclear energy and technological developments such as combined heat and power stations and fuel cells have, for a significant period of time, been contributing to genuine changes across the entire energy sector. There has been a sea change in the industry's logic from centrally managed power generation to a decentralized system, which is still on-going.

The energy sector is, however, not alone in being confronted with growing demands and the necessity of reinventing itself within a short space of time. Ever more quickly changing market and competitive requirements are forcing almost every industry, be it telecommunications, trading, automotive, steel, etc., to reassess its business model and to continuously adapt to change in order to survive in the international and domestic competitive environment. The four megatrends of globalization; technological progress; demographic change and scarcity of resources are, in particular, a key factor in the accelerating rate at which business models change, meaning that companies are less and less able to rest on the laurels of previous success. They now not only have to learn how to cope with the consequences of these trends in the long term but also to interpret them less as risks and primarily as opportunities. More than ever before corporate leaders are having to adjust to handling an increasing degree of inconsistency, uncertainty and insecurity. The consequences are, among others, that strategies are decreasingly indicating a clear route over a number of years. Instead managers have to be prepared to seize the right opportunity at the right moment in time. Against the backdrop of decreasing life cycles the implementation competence to transform strategies into reality quickly and in a focused manner is, in particular, becoming ever more crucial. This implementation competence is thus developing from a skill into a decisive competitive factor. Only those management executives who are able to quickly lead new topics to success by reacting promptly and skilfully to relevant changes in their environment (politics, markets, etc.) in good time via the corresponding reorientation and adjustment of their own company will be among the winners.

This is exactly the context which Matthias Kolbusa presents so impressively in his book "Implementation management". He shows why—parallel to excellent management of operational business—it is so important to transform strategies and changes into reality as quickly as possible using the resources available and to skilfully avoid the pitfalls leading to sluggish implementation and often also to its failure. The key element in this is, from the outset of an implementation project, to always have the final result in view. It is only possible to build up the required speed if thought and work processes are consistently based on the results desired. Matthias Kolbusa takes readers through his detailed description of the issues required for successful implementation managers to achieve the confidence necessary to limit themselves to the key items contained within their implementation project. The author provides guidelines on how to think through, plan and execute the implementation of strategies or change programmes from the beginning to the end, thus achieving success. Guidelines which help to avoid a large amount of useless, unproductive work.

The book includes examples from the author's hands-on experience as a consultant to medium-sized and also large companies in a wide range of industries in the form of inspirational implementation case studies. Anyone who is responsible for corporate implementation management or interested in the subject will benefit from the challenges and implementation insights outlined by the author.

Look forward to an entertaining and stimulating book!

Dr. Werner Brinker
CEO of EWE AG
(www.ewe.ag)

Preface—Focusing on Results

There are an endless number of books on strategy work and also on the topics of leadership, implementation and project management, not to forget change management. Reading them, however, basically only communicates what I as a management consultant have myself experienced during many strategy and implementation projects—the main focus of practical work and theory is the “input” and not what really matters—the result. Management primarily concentrates on single issues and the corresponding plans and activities developed to address them and the majority of the relevant literature also focuses on individual questions or methods. The only thing, however, which matters with regard to the implementation of strategies and the success of changes are the results which they should achieve.

Viewed in this light the methods employed within the scope of implementation and change projects should also be understood as merely a means to an end; as instruments which exist not in their own right but rather which are used to achieve a specific goal. In contrast, most books, and also companies, frequently treat methods as guarantees of success which must be adhered to unconditionally and without any critical scrutiny—irrespective of the type of change process concerned.

In this book I would, in contrast, like to demonstrate why absolutely the only thing which strategy implementation or changes should concentrate on is their goal, from which everything must be derived. The path to finding this goal requires arduous consideration and reflection as well as also a significant degree of consistency within the scope of the course of action.

My book is intended to show you how to keep your focus on your desired goal and to arrive at unconventional solutions—in other words ones which have not yet been defined or implemented. The suggestions and stimuli which I would like to provide are, in the final analysis, intended to assist you in leveraging your implementation project’s productivity to a new level.

I wish you every success with your future implementation projects.

Yours

Hamburg, July 2013 Matthias Kolbusa

Contents

1 The Difference between Goal, Strategy, Tactics and Execution

Creating genuine success out of strategies and changes sounds good and also seems plausible. Strategies are developed to initiate change processes, which in turn lead to success. Simple! It is, however, legitimate to ask what strategies are and what distinguishes change. Are we talking about goals or processes aimed at achieving a desired goal? Are we moving within the framework of visions and missions, which first need room to develop their full potential before it is possible to gradually transfer them into a grid of terms? In my experience it makes great sense to consider the meaning of the key terms used before embarking on a change process. All too often I have experienced the confused discussions which can ensue within companies if there is no authoritative common basis of understanding. And, all too often, the result are incorrect decisions or the charting of false courses for the future, which in turn unnecessarily complicate the implementation of strategies or change programmes or even make them absolutely impossible.

As is generally the case for every discussion of a specialist topic we should thus first clarify the basic terms. Not, however, in the form of an abstract derivation and analysis but rather as an exact definition and delimitation. Because one thing my experience of accompanying numerous implementation projects has taught me is that in actual business practice there is a lot of talk about goals, strategy, implementation etc. without there being any recognizable uniform understanding of the terms. At strategy workshops you can thus often observe a lively to'ing and fro'ing between the strategy, tactics, planning and implementation levels, with the final result that nothing has really been thought through consistently. Inefficient implementation is thus practically pre-programmed. The precondition for meaningful, well thought-through strategic work and subsequent consistent implementation management is the absolute clarity and definition of the terms.

I will thus first present my definitions of terms, which are the cornerstone of my strategy concept. You do not necessarily have to follow these definitions to the letter in your own strategic work, however you must adhere to the principle that all participants must always be absolutely in agreement with your view, definition

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and use of key terms. It is only under this precondition that meaningful (effective), efficient work is possible.

I often encounter statements such as "We would like to expand our strategy of internationalization" or "We have to introduce more innovations". What, however, masquerades under the term "strategy" is, at best, a meaningful milestone or a measure for a strategy implementation project. So-called strategic discussions, as a rule, actually concern themselves with measures and thus, because it sounds so clear and "concrete", the "how" is almost automatically moved ahead of the "what" of the upcoming change—in other words the second step is taken before the first. Timely definition and delimitation of the terms used is also helpful in this context; contributing to the avoidance of confusion and misunderstandings and a subsequent unproductive hands-on situation. Based on the foundations of these terminological assumptions initial discussions should focus solely on what should be achieved for what reason. If, for example, during a strategy discussion the COO points out that the measures being discussed would mean that he has to relocate part of the production facilities he should be interrupted immediately since his (undoubtedly legitimate) concerns belong in the sphere of activities, i.e. must be discussed as part of the "how". Or if the marketing director would like to clarify whether the product developers' skills could be used for the marketing of innovations in order to leverage innovation leadership, he will also have to be patient, since this issue too would cause the discussions to drift away from the "what" to the "how". It would, furthermore, result in the activities being clarified before the strategy. When strategy is referred to, it is strategy in the sense of the agreed definition and everyone knows this and focuses on it. When goals are referred to, it is goals in the sense of the definition; etc.

My remarks in this book will confirm what many of you have probably always felt and subconsciously known—a significant part of the work carried out within the scope of implementation of strategies or change programmes is often superfluous or unproductive. As a rule of thumb the ratio of this work to the total effort will probably be about one third. One of the main causes is that thinking and working are not consistently based on the (desired) results. The precondition that there be a clear focus on results is, however, a solid foundation based on the one hand on the setting of goals and, on the other, on strategy or on a mixture of both, supplemented by a small amount of implementation planning or a few implementation measures.

The three greatest pitfalls responsible for implementation projects becoming slow-moving; stalling or even, in the final instance, failing are:

- Lack of clarity about the "why"
  The goals have not been precisely formulated in terms of content and have correspondingly not really been thought through. While it may be possible to measure a company's commercial success by its key earning indicators such as EBIT or turnover they are not, however, suitable for measuring the degree of implementation of an organization's overall viewpoint—i.e. its vision. (cf. Chap. 1.2).
- No real objective
  The goal has not been specifically defined. All too often only a few abstract core statements serve to provide orientation, however while figures, data and facts may

make people think they do not make them take action. This requires emotions which can be linked to the goal. (cf. Chap. 1.3).

- Confusion and uncertainty caused by premature action
  All too often we succumb to the desire to do something specific quickly. The price for this? Strategies and changes are not thought through in enough detail and the "What Exactly Does That Mean Phenomenon" (WEDTM Phenomenon) takes hold, resulting in inefficient implementation work (cf. Chap. 1.4).

Working along these pitfalls I would like to illustrate the "implementation dilemma" in Chap. 2 before discussing in detail the issues required for successful implementation projects in Chaps. 3 to 7 and, in Chap. 8, the options available to advanced implementation managers and how to establish a cross-company high performance implementation culture. Finally, in Chap. 9 "Overview—Quick steps to accelerate implementation", I will provide guidelines to assist you with the leverage of the ongoing implementation of your strategy, change or reorganization to a higher level, come what may.

In order to make my insights into implementation management as specific as possible I will regularly offer you examples from my own experience. In this context it is irrelevant whether the process concerned took place at an insurance company, a bank, a telecommunications service provider, a utility company, etc. The challenges in implementation; the resulting insights; the discussions and the methods can be transferred to companies of all kinds and sizes in all industries. I have applied my method in a wide range of countries and cultures; in global corporations and in medium-sized companies and in a diverse range of industries—the principle always remains the same.

1.1 Strategic Planning—An Oxymoron

Although widespread and frequently used in management in my opinion the term "strategic planning" conceals a fundamental problem. It brings together what should not be together, thus, viewed in these terms, proving itself to be fundamentally flawed. Starting from a defined position which a company wishes to achieve in the future, strategies describe the basic framework for activities, decision-making and structures, within the scope of which this goal should be achieved, while planning is concerned with issues regarding the exact measures required in specific situations to arrive at this position. Doing both things at the same time—i.e. planning activities while simultaneously considering where they should lead—is, put simply, nonsense. Imagine starting to walk, aiming to reach a place, realizing, however, that you don't yet have any destination whatsoever. While you walk you try to specify both your goal and the path to reach it at the same time—whether you continue straight ahead; turn left or go back is still irrelevant in this context because there is, as yet, nothing which could serve to point you in the general direction. This mixture makes your project extremely complicated and there is every indication that you will not complete it.

Strategic planning is an oxymoron and should be banished from strategic management vocabulary. Either you develop a strategy or you compile a plan which helps to implement the strategy—both at the same time are, put simply, impossible. After all, you would not discuss with your family whether to go on holiday by car, train or plane and what you need to take with you without having first decided on the destination—unless you are planning a “mystery tour”. Even though I am a great advocate of strategic management more frequently pursuing routes which are off today’s beaten track—because success does not happen by “being better” but rather by “being different”—as a matter of principle I always plead for well-thought-out actions since this is the only way in which you can live up to the entrepreneurial responsibility you bear to everyone. Planning without even having a clear vision about where you want to go will result in the determined production of pointless results. This is, however, unfortunately a frequently characteristic of day-to-day management.

To achieve successful implementation management it is essential that there is a clear differentiation between vision, goals, strategy, concepts, planning and execution. The nature of the goals concerned is irrelevant—i.e. whether they are of a personal, entrepreneurial or divisional nature. The direction of thought described and the related process, from the vision to implementation, must always be adhered to.

▶ **Vision** A vision describes the company’s mission, in other words its commercial purpose. What is its reason for being? What characterizes its specific contribution to society, apart from the necessity of earning money? Utility companies want to generate electricity; the raison d’être of a telecommunications company is to enable people to communicate with one another and a manufacturer of colour pigments sees his purpose as being to make the world brighter. Or take the example of success story Apple. Its vision is not only to sell technology but also “lifestyle”, thus making its customers feel better about their lives. Apple has, to date, not only operated better but, above all, differently from to its competitors. A vision determines a company’s fundamental self-image and thus the way in which things are viewed and the focus which is placed on value creation. Do not underestimate this! A vision must, as a matter of principle, be seen as long-term. Any change in the vision will be entail substantial reorientation and comprehensive change within the company. Nokia, today a telecommunications multinational and mobile phone manufacturer, is a good example of changing the vision. The company was established in 1865 to produce paper products; then expanded its activities to include basic commodities (such as wellington boots) before laying the foundations for today’s telecommunications giant in 1967 when it fused with a cable manufacturer and, led by the vision “Connecting People”, entered the mobile and smart phone market.

Visions can be either very distinctive and clear, as, for example, expressed in BMW’s slogan “Freude am Fahren” (Sheer Driving Pleasure) or Audi’s “Vorsprung durch Technik” (The Art of Progress). Or they tend to have a more down-to-earth, conservative focus, offering themselves as “Your partner in energy generation”. Their objective is, however, always the same—to encapsulate the fundamental corporate self-image in a nutshell (Fig. 1.1).

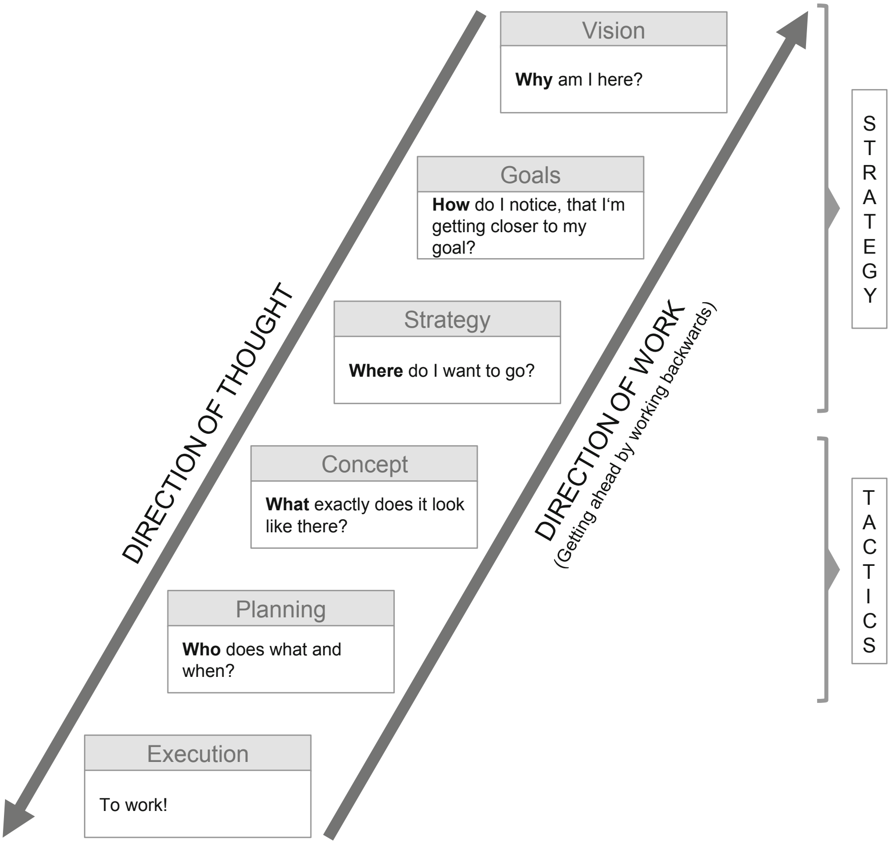


Fig. 1.1 The direction of thought from the vision to implementation

▶ **Goals** Goals are a fixed anchor which should serve to make it clearly recognizable whether a company is getting closer to its commercial purpose, i.e. the vision. I often find that companies have a confused array of financial goals which transform the vision into more or less of a farce. Earning money is, without doubt, a key goal, however EBIT, turnover & Co will not help you to identify whether you have got closer to your goal. How can the success of Bosch in getting closer to a vision such as "Create values—Live values" be recognizable from the turnover figures alone? They may be a benchmark for financial success, not, however, for whether the spirit of the vision, namely increasing the company's ability to compete in the long term by means of values, is gradually being achieved. This can be recognized by means of goals such as, for example, an eleven per cent increase in equipment efficiency or the proportion of recycled materials in Bosch products—in other words, goals which are located in a completely different sphere to the prerequisite financial goals and which, step by step, allow the vision to become increasingly specific within clear periods of time.

Strategy Strategy is, as already mentioned, the linchpin for true implementation success. It is the fundamental indicator for effectiveness, which, as is generally known, is at least as important as efficiency—in other words implementation productivity. Let's take a look at a typical understanding of strategy as I have often experienced it in companies. In the following case the CEO of an electronics manufacturer explains the strategy developed by company management for a corporate division to the Head of Corporate Development:

> In order to achieve our vision ("Our products increase our customers' ability to compete by allowing them to manufacture more efficiently and enter markets which they would never even have considered without our products") we will set up a market competence centre within product management. This, together with Sales, will result in a close collaborative partnership with our customers going beyond the products and make our customers successful. Parallel to this there will be systematic innovation management. We should consider not putting innovation management directly under my control. And, last but not least, we will boost the Service division in order to achieve intensified, improved customer perception and support new products. As regards the organization we will remove Service from Sales' responsibility and give it its own manager, who will report directly to me, allowing us to create a corresponding focus here and ensure that the right attitude prevails.

Is that a strategy? No! Such thoughts are, nevertheless, often understood and described as strategy. The activities mentioned by the CEO are, under certain circumstances, correct courses of action for the future; policies and activities which a company must or can turn to in order to implement a strategy. They do not, however, have anything to do with what characterizes a true strategy.

I conceive strategy as the description of a new, unique position which the company is striving to achieve. This strategic position specifies where the company will be in the future; names or describes the location to which the company will move (Kolbusa 2011). A strategy demonstrates the art of anticipating the future; of catering for it and ensuring that managers have a uniform and coherent overall picture of the future position aspired to.

In this sense strategies are "only" the means to an end in order to achieve one or more of the goals set, thus bringing the company or division that little bit closer to its vision. Strategy thus always also means change; means being ready to carry out changes! In order to get closer to the vision, as embodied by the new position, things must be changed—structures, procedures, roles and responsibilities. The bigger the divergence between the old and the new position, the greater will be the changes required. Based on the example given above a good strategy would, for example, sound like this:

> We will be clearly innovation-driven, concentrating on our customers' needs and not what is technically feasible when developing technical innovations. Our customers will be primarily located in the high end segment. Thanks to standardization and openness we will ensure that customers and suppliers integrate us into their processes and structures. By expanding our service competence we will achieve greater closeness to customers and offer 24/7 service using corresponding service partners. This service reliability paired with innovations will generate trust and positive feedback from our customers. Our selected product range will remain unchanged.

Concept development Building on a clear strategy with unambiguously defined cornerstones, the object of the next phase is to develop a strategic concept. It describes in specific detail what will change in the division or company as a result of the strategy; what will be added and what will be wound up. This is the only way to achieve the strategic clarity required for productive implementation management.

With what he believes to be a strategy the CEO of the above mentioned electronics manufacturer in contrast has not only delivered something which is completely useless in strategic terms, he has also simultaneously skipped a central step for successful implementation management by immediately instructing the Head of Corporate Development concerning precisely what needs to be done; where additional competences must be gathered and where and how the organization should change. In many companies these aspects would now be clarified with the participants and those affected by implementation in order to then draw up a corresponding change programme comprising possibly seven to ten individual projects and to ensure that the items are implemented correspondingly, thus transforming the "non-strategy" into reality. The desire of top management to make progress as quickly as possible by means of very specific measures always results in many of the participants not really knowing why they are supposed to do what where or what particular statements mean.

Even with regard to the meaningful strategy described above the Service division would, for example, have to, within the scope of various sub-projects, examine which services could be provided to increase proximity to customers; how the Service division would have to be expanded and which possible partners could be established to carry out the 24/7 service. The project manager for these three sub-projects would roll up his sleeves and seriously consider the options, identifying possible 24/7 partners; devising service models and giving them substance in initial contractual frameworks. Until at a certain point in time it suddenly became clear that this 24/7 service is actually only meaningful for certain products and certain customers. Uncertainty would spread; decision-making cycles with Sales commence, would, however, be concerned with other topics—namely increasing turnover—and friction would ensue. A mass of questions would have to be clarified, each of which, taken in isolation, does not represent a major problem, however as a whole are unnecessarily time-consuming. Time which could have been saved if strategy considerations had not hastily jumped from "Where do we want to go?" to "Now we're going to get started." "Think before you act" is the motto here! If there had been a clear concept specifying in advance how much sense the 24/7 service made in which of the areas the goal was focusing on and, in conceptual coordination with product management and sales, which services were really meaningful, then a lot of work would have been saved; the process would have been speeded up significantly and there would have been less friction.

Things become dangerous if the questions which come up are not even clarified, with sub-projects making their own decisions and, as a result, having increasingly less to do with one other and interlinking less and less. Once every sub-project starts trying to concentrate on its own topics and to comply with its own goal objectives and time schedules the inevitable consequence is that it seals itself off from the other projects. As long as time and effort for synchronization and coordination are not included in planning the situation will be dominated by individual projects; friction and individuals or groups sealing themselves off from others. Accusations of blame will do the rounds because everything is out of synch. In the end absolutely nothing will have changed except that things may have become more efficient and a new division has been created. The type of value creation will not really have changed and the company will also not have achieved any significantly better competitive positioning.

In contrast to this the conceptual procedure promises true success. As soon as the strategy, in other words "what" you want to achieve, has been specified, it must be careful consideration must be given to what the company or division will look like in this new location and how life together there will function. With regard to the goals it must be asked what is required to achieve them; what has to change, perhaps be wound up, and what new items have to be added—namely for each individual area.

In the case of the electronics manufacturer this would mean that Product Management, Service and Sales would each define what will be different, added or wound up in the future before specific measures are specified and that these results are subsequently compared. All three divisions could, for example, provide their assessment of the options for increasing customer loyalty and satisfaction and subsequently compare them, thus allowing the Service division to come to a conclusion about where and how the 24/7 service is truly meaningful. Or Service and Sales could structure the customers according to a uniform pattern (a previously determined conceptual standard) and subsequently compare these patterns, thus allowing the Service division to clarify and define which services it will employ in future to win over what kind of customers.

A well-thought-out concept allows you to firm up and detail the strategy as well as also to interlink and synchronize the individual areas. Without an "in-depth concept", which is the basis for high speed implementation because it supplies the required solid foundations, most implementation projects fail or take longer than required.

▶ **Planning** A clear concept immediately makes planning easier because it alleviates doubts about whether you are doing the right thing in the right sequence and taking into account the key priorities which would otherwise come up time and again. A strategically orderly concept is unambiguous about what exactly needs to be done and the interdependency of the individual elements. Only when, during concept development, it has been carefully considered what the company or also the specific department to be changed should look in its new location does it make sense to turn to the question of what precisely needs to be done to implement the strategy and the concepts deriving from it (for example organizational, value creation, leadership and steering concepts). It must be clarified how the "strategic gap", in other words the gap between the company's or division's actual situation and the target situation described in the concept's models, can be closed.

Has Product Management in the example above thought through carefully which strategy-related criteria it will employ to restructure the existing product portfolio; which filters—i.e. which criteria—will be used in future to decide which innovations and products will be developed, and has Sales arrived at a concept which it will use to structure existing customers; target markets and target groups in accordance with the strategy? How easy will it be for Service to gain the necessary security it needs; which additional services must be established for whom? Thus, what exactly are the 24/7 requirements and who do they have to fit? The product, sales and service concepts (jigsaw pieces) will, of course, not fit together when first compared and further synchronization will be required. Following the third round it will, however, be clear to every manager what exactly he wants to achieve and implement; what precisely the strategy means and why what has to be done. Instead of considering concepts for every product and every possible target group for the 24/7 service synchronization facilitates extremely systematic work towards finding a uniform solution.

Questions concerning required methods and tools; external support; implementation times; the implementation sequence; implementation structure; implementation reporting; etc. are answered during planning. One of the most central questions for successful implementation management, which is, unfortunately, not posed often enough within the scope of planning, is 'How can we tell if we making successful progress?' This once again illustrates how important it is to always focus on the result and not to link progress to activities or milestones (cf. Chap. 2.2).

▶ **Execution** Everything which has been developed during the concept development and planning phases (tactics phase) is now delegated to all the participants as work packages and serves as the basis for execution. The path from strategy to implementation is long because—as indicated by the oxymoron of strategic planning—strategy and planning are not simultaneously possible. Every attempt to take shortcuts results if not in failure then in unnecessarily long or tough implementation.

Successful implementation projects, high performance implementation, are distinguished by the fact that their work is not based on standards or best practices but rather on the "different" principle, in other words that they go further below the surface. The more imprecise the strategy and tactics phase is, the more problems will occur during implementation. Execution will be diffuse because uncertainty and lack of clarity will result in many things being done which are not really related to the strategy and then having to be corresponding corrected. This in turn will slow down the process and, in the worst case, block it.

To return to the analogy of the family trip—The clearer your vision is—the reason why you are thinking about the holiday in the first place—and the more precisely the goals which you are pursuing in the shape of the family holiday are formulated, the clearer it will become which destinations (strategies) come into consideration at all. It thus makes a difference whether your vision is "*We will lead a fulfilled life by seeing and experiencing a lot of the world and learning from it*" or "*By ensuring the necessary material security and economy I can enable my family to life a worry-free life*". Both visions give rise, per se, to completely different goals. Vision One will be reflected in the number of destinations, while Vision Two focuses more on the savings accumulated and continuous reduction of living costs. It thus becomes clear that the 'holiday' topic will have a different impact on the goals derived from it. The objectives already significantly narrow down the possible strategy options—whereas in the case of Vision Two the only real alternatives are “Stayhomia” or a camp site, in the case of Vision One Sri Lanka, Rome or Japan might come into question. Once the various strategic options are clear it is then possible to employ additional criteria to select the correct strategy: How much money have we got to spend? What kind of weather do we want? How much travelling time are we prepared to put up with?

Have you noticed anything? Up until now there has been no consideration whatsoever about what is needed for the holiday; how exactly the family are going to get to their destination; what vaccinations they may, under certain circumstances, require; what kind of equipment will be needed; etc. I have always had a lot of success when I have employed this metaphor with my clients.

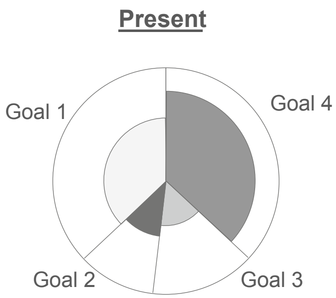
1.2 EBIT and Turnover are Not Goals

Invariably the financial goals are often—despite the balanced scorecard trend in recent years—the only ones which are seriously kept in focus by top management. EBIT and turnover are, in themselves, however not goals but rather merely express the result, i.e. the financial success or failure, of entrepreneurial activity. My intention in making this, admittedly somewhat overexaggerated, statement is merely to demonstrate to you that financial objectives cannot leverage a vision. They indicate whether you have earned money and were financially successful. They do not necessarily make it possible to recognize whether you have come closer to achieving the commercial purpose, the vision—what actually characterizes the raison d’être of corporate objectives—and promoting long-term successful competitive positioning. In an industry or environment in which the commercial purpose is, figuratively speaking, incorporated into the company’s DNA and matches market requirements, financial indicators can, without doubt, be sufficient as the only goals. As a consequence of globalization and increasingly blurred competitive boundaries this type of company or industry has, however, become increasingly rare. Let’s take cable companies as just one example. Their commercial purpose until well into the 1990’s was purely to supply domestic households with connections to the television network—a comparatively straightforward field of activity with, at that time, a correspondingly clear competitive situation. Today these companies have to provide homes with Internet and multimedia content and, as a result, adjust their vision to fit a completely new environment. This type of fundamental change requires clear targets which the entire company can focus on. Central goals for a cable company could, for example, be to keep customer fluctuation as low as possible and to increase the share of additionally charged multimedia content in total turnover to 25 %.

Let’s stay with the case of the electronics manufacturer already mentioned above and take a look at what meaningful goals could be:

> Based on the vision (“Our products increase our customers’ ability to compete by allowing them to manufacture more efficiently and enter markets which they would never even have considered without our products”) company management uses so-called ‘goal wheels’ (cf. Fig. 1.2) to define the following goals for the coming 18 months:

Goals	Relevance			Achievement		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
1. 60% renewable energy in the energy mix	10	5	3	54%	-	-
2. Four combined heat & power plants p.a.	3	5	10	50%	-	-
3. 30% increase in producer-customers	4	7	9	40%	-	-
4. EBIT increase by 4% p.a.	10	10	10	80%	-	-



Goals	Achievement Present
1. 60% renewable energy in the energy mix	54%
2. Four combined heat & power plants p.a.	50%
3. 30% increase in producer-customers	40%
4. EBIT increase by 4% p.a.	80%

Fig. 1.2 The regional municipal utilities company's goals in terms of their relevance over three years

- 20 % of our customers will no longer view us merely as suppliers but rather as business enablers.
- 30 % of our customers will have confirmed to us in writing (reference) that their production has become 20 % more efficient thanks to our products.
- We will have enabled four customers to enter completely new markets by rethinking their own value creation and restructuring it using our products ("flagship customers").

Good goals are the foundation of successful implementation management. Good goals are characterized by their provision of clear statements concerning what exactly should be achieved within a time frame of 1 to 2 years in order to come closer to the divisional or commercial purpose. They are the foundation of successful implementation management. Should, for example, the vision genuinely be concerned with sustainability then goals such as CO_2 emissions; social justice or international responsibility are an expression of the fact that more than lip service is being paid to sustainability. Should, in contrast, there only be financial indicators or other purely performance-based indicators such as market share or relative competitive strength, which are merely just effects, then it will be impossible to achieve focused strategic management and thus also high performance implementation within the company or division. The consequence will be entrepreneurial inefficiency in terms of the vision.

In order to avoid just this it is crucial to limit the number of goals to be achieved within the scope of a process. Together with my clients I try to arrive at a maximum of five goals, among which I set additional priorities. In practical terms this means that a maximum of two goals should be pursued within the space of 1 year, since the administrative "bubble" will increase exponentially in size the less you prioritize and the more objectives or, to use a new buzzword, "KPI's" you pursue. This is also the reason why a balanced scorecard, although a really good concept, does not work. At least, I am not aware of any truly successful balanced scorecard applied in accordance with the philosophy. The chief cause of this lies in the underlying complexity and the enormous administrative and management effort, which regularly result in balanced scorecard projects being begun with great enthusiasm but tailing off and, in the final instance, becoming nothing more than an canker.

Implementation Insight No. 1
Good goals are clearly linked to the vision and have a time horizon of, at most, 1 to 2 years.

Let's consider the vision of a regional municipal utilities company which was, until a few years ago, "*Electricity, water and telephone are our game*":

> As a consequence of the energy revolution in Germany and the increased ecological demands of consumers the municipal utilities company has to master completely new challenges. Reduced dependency on major electricity suppliers thanks to the company's generation of its own electricity and the generation of power by consumers are becoming increasingly important within the framework of providing regional services. Parallel to this the energy mix should place a focus on renewable energies. The company has thus altered its commercial purpose. The existing vision has been changed to "We will provide self-sufficiency and regenerative energies in electricity; clean water and established telecommunications services."
> The goals must now also be subjected to scrutiny. To date the focus has been on turnover and EBIT. The goals should now, on the one hand, take into consideration the changing value creation chain, in which both the supplier and also the consumer are increasingly becoming producers. In addition to this the goal "60 % share of renewable energies in the energy mix" should be promoted in order to increase the ratio of renewable energy. In order to leverage self-sufficiency the goal "Development of four combined heat and power plants within a year" has been formulated. The development of partnerships with customers with regard to the generation of own electricity is reflected in the goal "Increase of producer-customers by 30 % annually". In the coming years this will provide an indication of whether the company is getting closer to its vision. "Increase EBIT by 4 %" remains unchanged as a goal. The relevance of the four goals over the next 3 years is now determined. While in 2013 Goal 1—"60 % renewable energy in the energy mix"—together with Goal 4—"EBIT goal"—are weighted with a relevance score of 10, in 2014 and 2015 Goals 2 and 3 become more significant. (cf. Fig. 1.2).

Generally the rule when determining goals is that they should be measurable; have a deadline and be realistic—to quote Einstein: "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts" The central question is "Can I recognise from the goal whether I am getting closer to the vision?" A goal such as "media presence which is perceived by customers" may not be easily measurable. Should, however, it represent a crucial step for the company on the road to successful long-term development in the spirit of the vision it will be included and ways can be found to evaluate it. At the end of the day goals do not serve to satisfy bean counters; their purpose is to facilitate selection of the correct strategy; its adjustment and to guide the company successfully in the long term.

Goals not only serve to monitor whether the company is getting closer to its vision; they are the basis for developing, above all, focused strategies for success. Strategies for success which have nothing to do with the run-of-the-mill strategies which include everything and thus have no clear focus—only to (seemingly) satisfy all the participants somehow. Without clarity and transparency with regard to goals it is impossible to assess strategic options in an optimum manner. If, to use the family analogy once more, the vision is "to go on holiday together in a warmer place and be active" then it is possible to discuss and evaluate different destinations (strategy options) based on the various objectives—i.e. wishes concerning what the destination should offer (Goal 1: Warmth; Goal 2: Options for activities). Should Norway be suggested as a destination it can immediately be crossed off the list as being non-goal compatible because it is not warm enough.

Implementation Insight No. 2
Clear goals are the only means to select a sensible strategy! Because what is the point of a strategy? To achieve goals! Otherwise strategy represents nothing more than optimizing the status quo and, usually, a dissipation of energy.

1.3 Strategy—A Results Experience

In the course of my discussions with entrepreneurs and managers when I ask about their strategy I am often presented with PowerPoint presentations including figures, market shares and competitive advantages over other companies. So it comes as no surprise to me that in many companies no-one really wants to study strategy issues and their practical implementation in any depth. As intelligent and well-grounded as these strategy documents usually are, they are far too abstract to inspire people and motivate them to act. This is not necessarily due to the papers themselves; strategy is undeniably abstract and so not something which most people enjoy. In addition to this people think not in facts, figures and data or tables and pie charts but rather almost exclusively in images. Every manager studying strategy documents packed full of figures thus automatically makes his own associations and arrives at his own deductions and interpretations. Whether he wants to or not. So it is not surprising that, as a rule, the deductions originating from these intelligent, abstract strategy descriptions generate widely differing films of the future in managers' heads. The inevitable consequence of this are misunderstandings and wildly differing interpretations, which in turn result in the programmes and measures drawn up pursuing different objectives. The outcome is friction as well as also redundancies and idle performance in implementation tasks.

The managing directors of the electronics manufacturer mentioned above thus come to completely different strategy alternatives with regard to achieving the goal of no longer being merely a supplier to customers but rather a business enabler. (cf. Chap. 1.1).

> The CFO's image:
> In cooperation with two universities and making use of consulting experts the corresponding market competences will be developed in order to offer our customers products via a newly established product management unit and to integrate these products into customers' value creation chains. We will thus be viewed as a business enabler. The corresponding expertise which we develop will open up a completely new business segment, aiding customers in organizing their production more efficiently, both in combination with our products and as a stand-alone service. These competence centres will be organized in diverse locations.
> The COO's image:
> By completely reorganizing product management, which will then unite the cleverest employees from a wide range of corporate divisions (sales, service, manufacturing) and have complete responsibility for the commercial success of the products, customers will perceive us in a dual function—product manager and sales with bundled competence. In addition to the actual use of products the customer will be shown what he needs and we can generate even more business in other areas. We will thus become a business enabler. Following this we will attempt to expand our own manufacturing to generate further products.

The images of the future of two managers are presented here as examples for many others, none of which are synchronized and each of which represents a different strategy alternative. The skill in this regard is to make the strategic complexity controllable by deriving the decisive key factors in the images of the future and reproducing the corresponding possible options. Following this the various strategy options must be weighed up before selecting one of them and describing it in the form of an image of the future or a film of the future, thus ensuring an interpretation which is as uniform as possible; an identical understanding of the strategy. To demonstrate this Fig. 1.3 shows the range of strategic options a European internet provider has, including the corresponding options developed for the 11 key factors specified (target group focus; expansion policy; technology strategy; etc.) as well as the three possible future strategy options (Cautiously onto the Con-Sumer market; Technology expertise wins; Consumer conquest).

Work on implementation usually fails precisely because strategy documents are, as a rule, not tangible enough for employees. The head of a service centre, the sales or production director may understand these papers on a purely intellectual level; however feel themselves abandoned when it comes to the question "What exactly does that mean?" Since, in addition to this, the papers are in the main mere mathematical constructs consisting of purely quantitative information they are also interpreted differently from manager to manager. As long, however, as strategies are only linked to abstract things they will, in the final instance, not develop any driving force. Driving force is, however, important to take a company from its current position

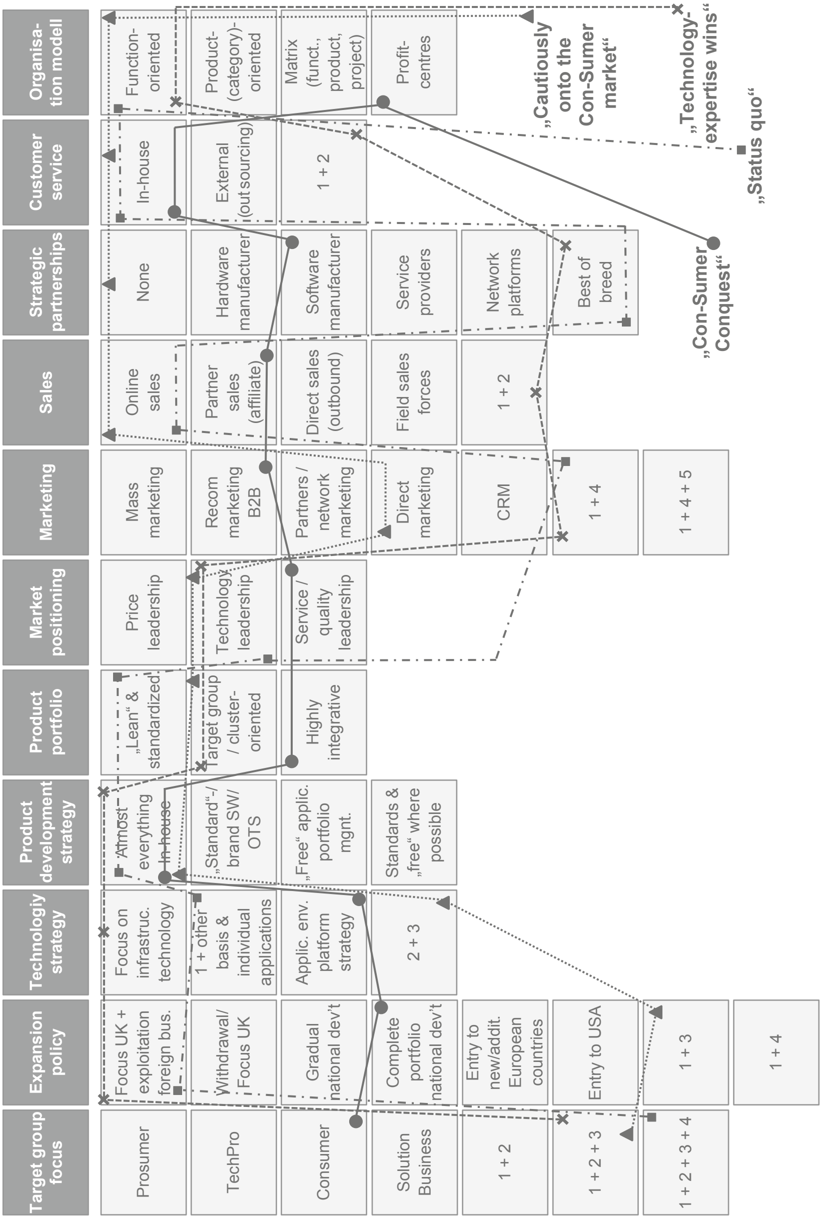


Fig. 1.3 A European Internet provider's range of strategy options

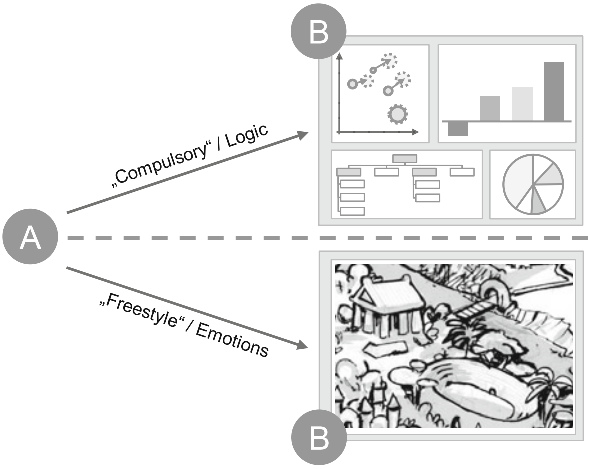


Fig. 1.4 Logic and emotions as strategy transporters

to its future one. And in order to develop this force a strategy must be attractive to the employees, both on the content level (logic) and also on the emotional level.

It is only then that a pull effect is created, with employees able to develop a specific idea and a feeling for what awaits them at their new destination, what makes it attractive. Out of this develops the desire and motivation to aid the process, to give all that this requires. Plain figures cannot achieve this; thus the missing motivation has to be compensated for by means of a motley assortment of methods providing the organization with projects, measures and actions as well as also controlling their completion. Push implementation is the consequence, which is always less productive than pull implementation. A systematic emotionalization of the strategy in contrast functions as the trigger for its own inherent momentum which accelerates the upcoming process rather than hindering it. The CEO of an automotive supplier was, for example, able to explain a strategy to his managers in the form of a film of the future derived from it: "Together with new partners we will develop technologies the like of which have never been seen before in a building especially dedicated to the purpose. I see how our engineers personally present these products to the managing directors of our customers and how they enthusiastically integrate our technology not only into our current target products but also in totally different markets." Communicating this kind of attractiveness generates a pull effect (cf. Fig. 1.4), a driving force, which makes the employees want to be part of the enterprise and make a contribution and also enables you as the manager to derive the required action.

Imagine finding yourself in a beautiful valley and your new location (strategy) is situated on a mountain. If you are only given the GPS data for the new location and, in addition to this, are told that you have to climb the mountain with a pulse rate of at least 170 while also taking a specific route you will probably be less than enthusiastic. You will only leave your valley if forced to, unless you happen to be a passionate mountaineer. If, however, the new location on the mountain is described to you and the surroundings sound attractive and

> appealing—a fantastic view; fresh, clear mountain air; etc.—you will be self-motivated, feeling a desire to get there. No-one will have to call on you to go, telling you exactly what you have to do when. You will know intuitively what you have to do at what point and the speed at which the journey must progress. Because you are your own best judge you won't have any problem accepting help where required. You want to achieve the result, in other words reach the mountain location, whatever it takes. Strategy thus becomes a results experience. Which is why there will also be very few discussions among you and your companions about the route to take during the climb. Because your fellow mountaineers have the same objective in their minds as you.

Abstract diagrams, models, parameters, figures and competitive comparisons cannot communicate a strategy able to "trigger" anything in anyone. On the contrary, you will have to explain a lot; exert a huge amount of persuasion and correct many things. Precisely because we humans think in pictures it makes sense to compose a strategy in images and films and to anchor these images and films in managers' and employees' heads. This creates a unifying vision; a universal image which—to some extent automatically—helps to pull the entire organization to the new location.

Implementation Insight No. 3
Facts, figures and data (logic) make people think but only emotions make them act.

There are two reasons why you should bid farewell to a one-sided, statistics-heavy method of strategy work:

1. Implementation becomes unnecessarily complicated and slow-moving
   Constant misunderstandings arise and must be clarified. A lot of effort has to be expended to safeguard the implementation of the strategy with a high degree of pressure needing to be maintained. The concurrent coordination and controlling mechanisms required produce unnecessary internal complexity, thwarting implementation.
   Overall intrinsic motivation is obstructed or significantly reduced, in turn depriving implementation of the opportunity to gain genuine momentum.
2. Not "better" but rather "different" results in success.
   If you merely attempt to do things better than others you will never become truly great. Aligning yourself in relationship to others and the drive to do things better do not result in long-term success. You will always be busy keeping up with the competition, not your vision!

To experience the implementation of genuine strategies for success you will require good goals; an emotionalization of the strategy through images. This will give you a highly accelerated pull effect within the scope of implementation. The consequences will be low complexity; efficiency; low stress and the desire to work. This in turn will transform rapid, purposeful implementation into a genuine competitive advantage in its own right.

Implementation Insight No. 4
Strategies for success, the basis for high performance implementation, are characterized by a "pull effect", reducing the "push management effort" from the onset.

After working together on a strategy project the board member of a technology sector company asked me how the resultant strategy could be passed on to the employees to anchor the strategy's emotional objectives in their heads.
We thereupon turned our attention to the company's monthly employees' magazine, putting our heads together with the divisional heads to create an issue describing what the company could look like exactly 2 years after successful implementation of the strategy. Including an interview from the future with one employee from each of the divisions affected by the strategy (sales, product management, manufacturing and customer service). The sales employee, for example, described how cooperation with Product Management had changed over the last 2 years and how proud he was to have highlighted specific product characteristics through his discussions with customers. Something which, due to the exclusively technological focus, would never previously have been the case. An employee from Manufacturing in contrast explained how much more efficient Manufacturing had become following the transfer of responsibility for costs to Product Management and how his fears that this would entail too much administrative effort had proven groundless.
Six months later the board member told me that implementation had gone well. All the participants had been committed to the topic and, in contrast to other implementation products, this time there was less questioning of the strategy or problem seeking. On the contrary, issues had been constructively solved in the interests of the goal.

Time and again I ascertain that companies and managers find it extremely difficult to emotionalize their strategy. I usually encounter only shrugging of shoulders and amazement when I request that participants take half an hour to write down how they think it will feel when the implementation of the strategy has succeeded and what exactly will be different to today. Without, however, considering such emotional factors in strategy work—and they do exist, even if we ignore them—it will be extremely difficult to assess whether the planned measures really are the correct ones and are meaningful. And, above all, whether top management's metaphorical interpretations and derivatives really are identical—in other words, whether it is clear that everyone always agrees at all times with regard to terms and content. By saying this I do not want to imply that the analytical level of strategy penetration is superfluous. The translation of the strategy into charts showing market shares; core competences, competitive portfolios; etc. is, as it were, the compulsory programme which has to be completed come what may. The translation of the strategy into images and emotions is the freestyle section. If only the compulsory programme is completed, then a high degree of implementation complexity; little acceptance and a low degree of intrinsic motivation on the part of the participants must be expected. On the other hand, in the fairly unlikely event that only the freestyle programme is completed, in other words, an appeal is made exclusively to the participants' emotions, while there will be a high degree of motivation on the participants' part

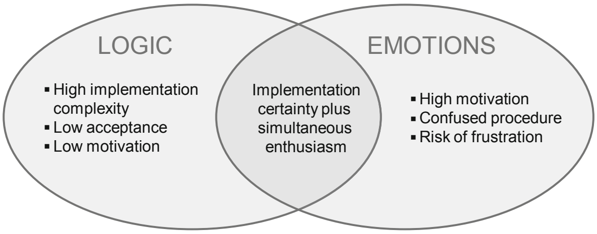


Fig. 1.5 Overlap as an outcome of strategy

the lack of guide rails is, however, fairly certain to also result in a confused procedure during implementation. (cf. Fig. 1.5).

The objective is to complete both the compulsory and the freestyle programmes with bravura in order to arrive at a genuine strategy experience and provide all the participants with certainty with regard to the why, the how and the where to of the strategy while simultaneously also inspiring them. Good strategists understand that while people may think about facts, emotions are the basis for their actions. And that generating this strategy experience requires time. As much as I may be a proponent of speedy implementation I still advise you to take your time during the process of emotionalization; when fleshing out the "images of the future". In general I believe that efficiency in processes, procedures and management structures is paramount, advocating that things are completed as quickly as possible. You should, however, be sure to invest time in what I call the emotionalization of the strategy; something on which management, by and large, spends hardly any or no time at all on. One of the reasons for this could be that there are not yet any guidelines for the execution of strategy emotionalization; a lack which the following section hopes to address.

The five strategy emotionalization steps according to Kolbusa

1. Yourself
   Implementation is connected to leadership. If you want to successfully implement strategies you must have a burning desire to achieve a goal. And an abstract goal will not ignite a burning desire in you—an emotional image is required for this. So spend 2 or 3 hour-long sessions writing down in an uninterrupted flow anything that comes to mind about how the achieved goal will feel; what people will talk to each other about and how they will do this; how you will treat your customers; what the structure of which supplier relationships will be… Describe life after the strategy implementation.
2. Breadth
   Get your top management colleagues or constructive sparing partners whom you would like to get on board to carry out the same exercise. At most seven individuals.
3. Comparison
   Go somewhere quiet with this team for a day. Work without overhead sheets but instead with a good moderator (either you moderate or you take part, but

you can't do both at once) and discuss your images. When doing so make sure that you compile a three to five A4 page continuous future text.

4. Translation
   Either yourself or delegated—Take a look at your established models which you usually use to describe your strategy. If there are none then grab your usual strategy tools and consider how you can use them to represent your three- to five-page future text in these models. This analytical penetration will produce insights which give feedback on your future text or film of the future and vice versa. You will have to go through this ping-pong game two or three times before you achieve consistency on both the emotional and the analytical level.
5. Depth
   Every manager presents this image to his next management level without using any aids and spends one day discussing these images—initially freely and spontaneously, then in a structured, methodical form.

Following such a cycle, which will be completed within 2 weeks and require only a few workshop days, you will have an emotionalization and genuine basis with which to work further. Managers who are not able to carry out this emotionalization of a strategy are out of place and must be replaced. The result otherwise will, in all probability, be slow-moving implementation, since it will be driven exclusively by details and push-mode measures. No driving force or momentum will be generated.

1.4 Tactics—Concept Development Is More Important Than Planning

Tactics comprises two elements—concept development of goal objectives and the plan covering how they should be worked towards. In contrast to strategy, which tells me where I want to go, the concept must describe to me precisely what this goal; the structures and processes there will look like. How detailed? So detailed that it is possible to reduce the participants' uncertainty to a bearable degree. In my experience the degree which is achieved, for which there is no exact benchmark, depends on two factors. Firstly on how experienced companies are at implementing new strategies and, secondly, on how well-versed they are in the handling uncertainty and blurring without producing the otherwise very typical effects such as withdrawal; accusations of guilt, negative policy etc.

In addition to the emotionalization of the strategy genuinely successful implementation requires a successful clarification of its contents which is as detailed as possible in the form of a strategy concept. If this is not achieved there is too much uncertainty and dissimilarity in the interpretation of the details—in other words concerning the issue of what exactly the strategy means for the individual divisions, departments and groups.

In many companies company or divisional management wants to embark on the implementation of a strategy as soon as this strategy has been decided upon. Let's take a look at the “Con-Sumer Conquest” strategy of the European Internet provider (cf. Fig. 1.3). The opinion that it is, without any ado, possible to commence planning and implementation on the basis of such a focused, clear strategy which, in this case, clearly describes the target destination by means of 11 strategy options, is still all too widespread. In actual fact, however, this strategy with its cornerstones does not yet provide any clear description of what exactly has to be done for implementation; it is thus also not yet possible to get started with planning, measures, projects and corresponding programmes. The managers responsible for the implementation must first be provided with specific information concerning what exactly will change in the individual fields of product management, sales, service etc. with regard to structuring, competences and cooperation in the form of corresponding models. This includes questions such as “How exactly are we going to structure product management?”; “How will Marketing and Sales and Product Development cooperate?”; “How will IT create value?”; “Do we need another sales model? Or can the whole thing be combined with the existing one?” and “Can we continue our organization and the interaction with the existing leadership and steering model or do we have to make changes to it?”

When honing the strategy you should, under no circumstances, begin by first searching for standards or best practices in the sense of thought or work templates. If you want speed in implementation you must provide focus and priorities. And this means that you and your team must develop your own models of thought and structures providing the answers to all these questions. Because if you use templates, for example an external sales model, for orientation the unavoidable consequence will be that you do things which are fully superfluous for your circumstances and lack many of the key elements which are central for you. Use your common sense! Penetrate the questions and clarify what the decisive factors are and what has to be resolved. What, in terms of the status quo, will change? Do you have to spend time studying the structures; does customer segmentation have to be re-thought or is it sufficient to rethink the cooperation model with product management in a new system? This is the element of strategy work which has the most critical success factor and thus requires the most effort.

Unfortunately the uncertainty generated by the change to be overcome causes the majority of consultants and employees in companies to spend far too much time seeking standards and best practices as role models. This desire for external orientation results in blurring, so that either “black holes” occur—i.e. issues requiring urgent resolution are not addressed—and/or unnecessary tasks are carried out because, for example, a leadership and steering model being used as a template demands things which are totally irrelevant for the company’s own strategy. Since every good strategy is unique it must also be possible, in conceptual terms, to penetrate it without the aid of standards and templates and communicate sufficient clarity and security to the team.

This intensity of occupation with strategy issues is, in the context of success, essential, which is also what makes it so difficult for most organizations to engage with it. Thinking through in detail and considering the questions “What will my new location look like?” (concept) and “How exactly do I get there to then be well-

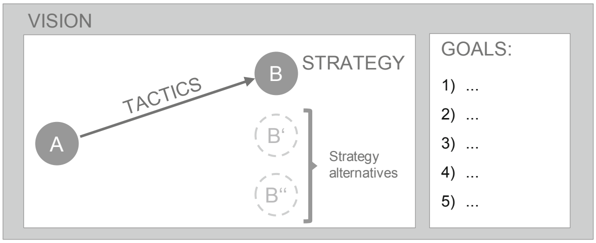


Fig. 1.6 Vision, goals, strategy and tactics

structured and able to do the right things the right way using the right competences?" (planning) is, without doubt, no trivial matter. The more specifically this is done, however, the greater the probability that all participants will have a uniform clear vision of what needs to be done and achieved. Well-thought-out tactics are there to create a secure basis for all the relevant participants to work on; to communicate a clear image to them of what exactly their field will look like in future.

In order to now understand why development of the implementation concept is of such crucial significance I would like to briefly recap the formal procedure for a change process again—the vision, i.e. the commercial purpose, forms the company's horizon, its fundamental focus. The (few!) goals describe the specific cornerstones which should be achieved on the journey to this horizon (1 to a maximum of 2 years). This framework of vision and goals marks today's Location A of a division or company. On the course charted based on the route from A to B, i.e. which provides the coordinates being aimed at, the company strives to attain its goals and vision. In other words, one strategy describes Location B, which the company or division would like to reach to come closer to its goals, before being followed by Strategies C, D, E etc. By this means the company gets ever closer to its vision without, however, ever fully attaining it (cf. Fig. 1.6). The task of tactics is to conceptually penetrate B, and later C, D, E etc., to such an extent that it is clear how the company or division will be structured and function there. What building, streets, connections, rules will be required; what competences; how will cooperation function; how will value creation be achieved; etc.? This is the conceptual element of tactics, within the scope of which it must be considered how the company must structure itself at the new location in order to be successful as defined by the new strategy. The planning element of tactics then describes how you get from your status at Location A to the status at B—i.e. how Strategy B is implemented. It shows how the strategic gap between A and B should be closed.

Let's take the example of building a house as an illustration. Imagine that for you and your family a fulfilled life includes the dream of your own house in the country (vision). You have resolved (goals) in the coming 3 years to put aside 50,000 euros and to find a plot within a radius of at most 100 km from your current work place without the assistance of an agent and to buy such a plot. Before, on the basis of your vision and specific goals, you set out to search for possible locations and building plots and begin to plan with your family and decide who's going to view which locations; who's going to drive around on which weekends to look for signs advertising such building plots and make the initial approach, you must first clarify who is going to do what in order to achieve the house building goals you have set (concept development). So, to begin with, everything revolves around the all-important questions of how you can successfully save the money and, following this, what needs to be organized and prepared for the search; the system according to which it should take place in the desired radius.

Translation: The clearer the concept, the more trivial the planning, which, as a result, will sometimes even take care of itself. The development of a good concept, however, requires you to think for yourself and ask the right questions.

1.5 Execution—Sometimes Precedes Strategy

Even though the heading may sound paradoxical, particularly since in preceding chapters it has been emphasised that, for the success of a change process, it is immensely important to stick to the direction from the vision to execution, strategy may sometimes also originate from implementation and, in cases of doubt, it may even be possible to derive a programme from it. During the course of my work I have occasionally experienced situations in which I couldn't follow the process described above. For situational reasons some clients are not able to arrive at good strategy options and their implementation during the course of a creative process. Reasons for this are:

- There is such a great need for clarification with regard to a whole host of issues on which there are a wide variety of opinions for the most diverse motivations within the company or top management that this need can never really be satisfied. Or all the strategy options are talked to death since all that can be seen are threats and reasons why something can't be done, not opportunities. It is difficult to get things moving when everything should be considered in advance with every probability, no matter how small, taken into consideration.
- The organization lacks the required drive and the right ideas for change.
- No real strategy development process can be initiated because the participants don't want change.

Should one of the above mentioned reasons apply to your own company or division you must pull the plug and decide without too much analytical fuss which direction to move in. Taking an idea or a mental image concerning what needs to be done instructions and work assignments are developed for, and given to, the team. Sometimes it's better to be active and put things into motion because this is often a source of the required energy and desire for the development process and the participants suddenly realize what the right thing is to do when they are active.

Imagine that you are discussing your next travel destination with your family. Your son rejects every suggestion, saying that he's not interested, and your partner sees the problems in every idea—illnesses; strenuous journey; etc. You yourself are, however, very certain that one of your suggested destinations will please everyone. Instead of enduring endless discussions why not simply ask your son to do some research on the Internet and make a list of everything your proposed holiday destination has to offer, including attractive hotels. And your partner should enquire at the doctor's about the health risks involved in the trip and what vaccinations might be required. The result is that during his research your son suddenly realizes that it's not such a bad place after all and that some of the hotels also offer an amazing choice of sporting facilities, while the doctor was able to reassure your partner that there is nothing to worry about. Suddenly everyone is committed to this holiday destination and can continue to plan together.

> The managing director of a member company of a group in the technical industry phoned me one day and was somewhat despairing. She said "I have to strategically restructure my division but I'm faced by the major problem that I can't manage to restructure my organization the way it should be. My attempts to initiate a strategy development process have all failed because my team lacks imagination. What should I do? At strategy meetings all I hear is "Why are we doing this?" or "But that's obvious!""
> I advised her to simply get started and to supply her team with clear assignments which she considered attractive, thus placing them in a situation which made it clear that they really did have to think about basics. One point was, for example, that all the managers agreed unanimously that it was possible to earn large sums of money with new products in the medical sector. The managing director thus stated that within the next 6 months she wanted to see clear product concepts and service models which would ensure that in the coming year 10 % of turnover was generated with new products in the medical segment.
> The statement had exactly the desired result. The managers were initially hesitant to approach this topic and realized that the product development units were not set up for the goal; the existing partners were not the right ones for this and also that the distribution structures would not function. In addition to this they would have to approach new customers. And suddenly there was the awareness and desire to go into the company's strategic orientation in detail.
> A short time later my client phoned me and told me that her team had delivered good ideas and was headed in a very successful direction. With the right impulse she had managed to get her division fired up and on the right road.

Strategies are, in the final instance, worthless as long as they are not implemented. Because they are only a means to the end of achieving the vision. So if you should become aware that you are not making any headway with your strategy and are faced with the threat of your vision stalling, it is helpful to initiate implementation without a pre-formulated strategy. Because both in the entrepreneurial and also the personal sphere getting things done is the thing which, it goes without saying, remains of paramount importance.

2 The Implementation Dilemma

If implementation management were easy then there would not be so many failed implementations. For a successful process it is important that you operate in a focused, effective manner within a clear conceptual architecture—in other words that you know precisely "Why (vision) do I want to achieve what (goals) how (strategy) and in what manner (concept) and using what procedure (plan)?" In addition to this, as discussed in Chap. 1, a differentiation must be made between the various components in theory and in practice.

There are, in essence, three things which hinder implementation projects or make them impossible:

1. Time and resources As a rule implementation projects have fewer resources (employees, money, etc.) at their disposal than they require while the implementation should, at the same time, be achieved as quickly as possible. In order to tackle this long-term conflict you must generate genuine implementation momentum.

2. Activities instead of results Since most people— particularly in group processes—operate in a manner which is more activity- than thought-oriented the key focus of implementation projects lies on the input side (activities, plans, etc.). The output, the desired result, in contrast usually quickly drops out of view. It goes without saying that the actions are the preconditions for results. Actions (plans; activities; reports; controlling mechanisms; risk management; quality management systems; processes etc.) are, however, nothing more than the means to an end (result) by which everything and everyone must be measured at all times. Only a self-imposed structure and discipline provide the opportunity to achieve the agreed goal.

3. Self-interest versus corporate or project goals Goals, strategies and their implementation always have something to do with change. "Yes, obviously!" you will say. So why do we sometimes behave as if the thing itself were the sole focus of interest, ignoring the organizational and thus very personal changes required for it? Because the greater the change in the thing, the less, paradoxically, implementation is concerned the thing but rather with the participants' self-interest and corresponding emotions. This third dilemma is the most difficult and, fatally, is the one which

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is addressed and managed the least systematically, whereby it can only be tackled by means of a well-thought-out, consistently applied implementation policy.
In the next section I would like to consider these three dilemmas in more detail with you and show ways in which they can be successfully managed in situations in which they cannot, because inherent to the system, be avoided completely.

2.1 Implementation Momentum—Between Frustration and Flow

Strategies and changes must always be implemented and managed parallel to operational business. As a matter of principle an organization is, for a start, focused on carrying out its standard processes like a well-oiled machine by means of its activities in the operational business. The better lubricated the organization is, the more professional and efficient and, as a rule, profitable and successful it is. Professionalism only originates through practice and deep in the DNA of the defined processes and opinions. This means two things—firstly, the employees are not generally bored and do not yearn for additional projects to implement strategies or changes. Secondly, the organization does not have a lot of practice in thinking about its well-worn paths, much less in carving out new ones or even changing the corresponding traffic rules. The resources and time dilemma is thus simultaneously a problem of mindsets and attitudes.

In companies which are inexperienced at dealing with change the task of reorganization is faced with extremely limited if not exhausted resources. Since, however, the shelf life of strategies and changes is already decreasing fundamentally, and the latter must, as a result, be ever more intensive and also faster, such organizations will increasingly find themselves in difficulty. The old corporate motto "If things are going well I concentrate on the operational business; if things are going badly I tighten my belt two notches and slowly start to think about how to keep the show on the road" is obsolete and no longer functions. Organizations must master both their operational business as well as also their further development or change simultaneously. There is no alternative. Clients of mine who have completed this process more frequently are now also more well-versed in it, i.e. faster and successful.

Because it is hard enough to accomplish operational business and strategy implementation at the same time it is even more important that the time and resources dilemma is met head on and from the very outset. In order to avoid investing an unnecessary amount of time and resources in things which have nothing to do with the result it is essential to create a basis for genuine implementation momentum. What is concealed behind implementation momentum? You will also have already experienced implementation projects which were uncomplicated. All the participants worked hard and were focused; the things which were developed interlocked; there was little friction and despite the enormous efforts which were undertaken almost all the participants experienced the entire process as not even having been strenuous.

The outcome was a really good result and people meeting in the corridors still say to each other "That was a great project!"

The element which carries these projects is something I call implementation flow. "Flow" conjures up the image of relaxing; feeling good and having fun. Do implementation projects have to be fun to be successful? No, absolutely no. What we're talking about here is achieving an implementation process status which psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2007) describes as "flow". Originally used in the context of high risk sports it is generally used to describe a status facilitating total immersion in a task, a kind of 'task high' during which highly focused work to achieve a prescribed goal takes place. Be it individually or in a team—feelings, desire and thoughts are focused on a goal in such perfect harmony that "effortless" but simultaneously absolutely purposeful action becomes possible. The object in this context is not subjective pleasure in things but rather an oblivious immersion in them while remaining highly concentrated and aware. In order to achieve this state of "flow" a procedure is required which provides continuous positive feedback and avoids any and all forms of unnecessary stress and "anti-flow". In addition to the actual event this flow must be at the heart of implementation management. In my experience this saves around one third of the effort and a high degree of unnecessary stress, no matter whether the matter concerned is strategy implementation, "change" or a project.

The decisive question in this context is "What makes the difference between frustration and flow?" Is it the goal? Is it the team? Does it have to do with top management? Is it dependent on time and resources? Is the pressure decisive? Or is it simply a matter of luck or coincidence? What I can, with certainty, tell you is that debates and generalizations will not move you forward. There are no best practices or standards on offer guaranteeing you implementation flow either. Rathermore it is your own competence; experience and self-confidence which are required at this stage. In addition to the precondition that you put more courage and trust in your own understanding and your team's skills I have, on the basis of wide-ranging experience of flow and also frequently of its opposite, anti-flow, I have been able to identify three principles which are key to successful implementation momentum:

1. Conceptual depth—think things through in sufficient depth
2. Objectives—focus on the result using attractive, clear visions
3. Implementation policy—Do not leave policy and emotions to chance

Very few implementation projects systematically devote themselves to these three principles. On the contrary—the majority, I call them "everyday implementation projects" (cf. Fig. 2.1), do not really take any of these principles into consideration.

In practice there is generally a mixture of depth and implementation policy which leads to a form of "push management" (Type C) within the scope of which more or less successful but not really sustainable implementation is achieved by means of corresponding, consistently employed programme or project steering and controlling mechanisms (pressure). Some of the most difficult implementation projects are those which remain stuck in a "change chaos" mode (Type D). This means working with a relatively motivated team which, based on a well-thought-out implementation policy, may even be very active but—because without conceptual depth—achieves little. You

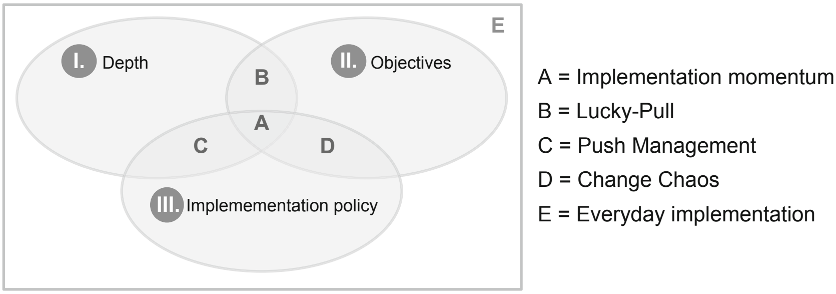

Fig. 2.1 The three key factors for implementation momentum

will only experience genuine momentum if you are to bring the above mentioned three principles together.

1st Principle: Conceptual Depth—Think Things Through Prevailing uncertainty is usually the reason why there is no implementation flow. This uncertainty can originate for two reasons: It is not really clear to the participants what exactly the strategy or the change aspired to should achieve. Or while the participants may have understood the strategy, the divisional heads; sub-project managers; departmental heads; etc. lack the detailed knowledge about what they must do or while they may have this knowledge for their area it does not match that of the others—i.e. the interpretations are too different.

Before planning and action can begin on the basis of a goal or strategy a well-grounded implementation concept will be required. This implementation concept portrays in a coherent, compact manner how the organization as a whole or the relevant divisions affected by the implementation project will function and be interlinked in future. The basis for true implementation momentum is thus a short but very intense phase during careful thought goes into what is intended for the individual process phases. Which interpretations and deductions are the correct ones? And how can you tell that you have really understood each other correctly? Within the scope of this process of formulation it is essential to work consistently from the end, from the result backwards. In most cases one individual has a very clear image of this result or it develops within the scope of discussions in a very small group which never consists of more than five to seven members.

The procedure in companies is usually different. Communication of the strategy by top management to operational management takes place within the framework of a kick-off meeting to get to grips with the business cases and implementation and mid-term planning based on the strategy; to discuss interim implementation goals; to define programme steering and to agree milestones. As soon as the individual projects have been defined things get started. Every sub-project has its goals and milestones and is ready to focus its activities on them. Everything is reported to the programme management. However in the process something occurs which is absolutely typical for such a project procedure. Over the course of time the projects increasingly have less to do with each other! They diverge ever more widely from one another; are increasingly viewed in isolation; are no longer interlinked and usually no longer even synchronized. The actual goal, the implementation of the strategy, disappears more and more out of focus. The programme degenerates into what is purely an efficiency enhancement measure. The cause of this is the fact that course has already been falsely charted at the kick-off meeting since the latter was exclusively "how" oriented. Instead of clarifying the "How are we going to do it?" immediately after the strategy and thus expending a much greater effort in terms of time and resources than required, what the implementation team actually needed in advance was a consistent "what" orientation. The key factor for efficient implementation is depth and this presupposes that you think and work consistently backwards from the result. And in detail.

2nd Principle: Objectives—Work Towards the Result Quickly and in a Focused Manner It is true that the conceptual basis, the required depth, provides security and clarity, thus creating the basis for productive implementation. However, because an implementation concept in the truest sense of the word is logical it also prevents implementation momentum from being generated. Logic gets people to think, however it is emotions which provide the required impulses for action. Really good implementation projects always have a powerful element. In other words, there is a clear vision of what should be achieved. And not on the rational or logical level but rather on the emotional level. The team is on fire for the project. It wants to achieve the results.

A high performance implementation project is only achieved if an emotional driving force is "grafted onto" the logic. There must, however, always be a conceptual substructure because otherwise you will create something which, as mentioned above, I call "change chaos". Actively provide emotionally charged objectives, "films of the future"— overall, for every division, for every sub-project or every department. The key individuals in your team must be able to recognise what the result will look like; what it will, metaphorically speaking, feel like; what will be different and what new. The Head of Sales must be able to see and feel what the abstract description of the new customer orientation means for himself and his division. Synchronised with the head of sales' vision the IT manager sees how what is described in the concepts will be filled with life in the future (in 2 years) and the Customer Services Director's film of the future fits coherently into this overall image. This does not happen by itself—you must actively take charge of the generation of these images, these films of the future. If, for example, the Head of Sales describes how in the future he will use his iPad to configure plant equipment when visiting a customer and also follow this up by "adding on" the corresponding service package in order to be able to make an immediate price calculation this will provide the IT manager with a completely different image than if the two of them embarked on a theoretical comparison of the sales and IT strategy.

Two challenges must be mastered when developing films of the future:

- Every individual with responsibility needs a clear and authentic film of the future specifically tailored to him for his division, his sub-project within the scope

of the implementation project. This necessitates systematic alignment of the participants' self-interest with the overall implementation project.
- The relevant film of the future, the relevant image of the future must fit into the individual with responsibility's conceptual distance. The average range of thought within the scope of which humans can anticipate visions of the future for intrinsic motivation is, in my experience, 6–9 months. Very few people are able to work with images of the future which are further in the future than this. The difficulty and thus also the art is that you have to help your people to create the films of the future which are right for them, i.e. which lie on pleasant conceptual horizon, and to implant them. Even better, you assist them in generating these visions themselves.

I have experienced two types of managers who successfully use objectives within the scope of their implementation projects—those who have a gift, a natural intuition, for providing their managers and teams with the right inspiration at exactly the right conceptual distance, thus creating the required basis for implementation momentum, and the majority, who have to follow this principle systematically. Steve Jobs, for example, had a natural talent or a knack of providing his managers and teams with the right inspiration at exactly the right conceptual distance, thus creating the required basis for implementation momentum.

3rd Principle: Implementation Policy—Do not Leave Policy and Emotions to Chance Let's turn to the last of the three aspects, implementation policy. Even if you have created the required depth using good implementation concepts and have used the right goal images to place the proverbial carrots at the correct distance, you may, in doubt, still only experience an everyday implementation project. Because the diverse ranges of interests of the individual participants; the contradictions; latent needling and, in some cases, destructive currents within a project can cause its progress to stall time and again. If you want to systematically induce implementation flow, a systematic implementation policy, whether consciously or unconsciously pursued, is also required in addition to conceptual depth and goal images (cf. in detail in Chap. 6).

Learn to pursue a systematic implementation policy. What is meant by this? The combination of Niccolò Macchiavelli's definition (ca. 1515)—"Policy is the sum of the means required to acquire power; to remain in power and to make the best use of power"—and that of Arnold Bergstraesser (1961)—"We understand policy to be the art of organizing and putting into effect the leadership of human groups"—expresses exactly what good implementation policy is all about. Parallel to this I would also like to consciously distance myself from the term "change management", which is used in an inflationary manner, since I more often encounter it in the form of an end in itself rather than as an effective means to implement strategies and changes.

People have their own interests and goals and that is a good thing. What is required is that they know and understand them. In addition to these goals and interests you should also be sure to systematically gain clarity concerning the participants' abilities and weaknesses as well as also their interrelationships. Because you want to conduct the orchestra consciously, not "by accident". Whether you able to succeed intuitively in this or you employ specific conceptual and structural instruments for this purpose (interest diagrams, political maps, sociograms, etc.) and think implementation through like a chess game is a question of style and your own competences. I myself cannot work intuitively, but instead have to proceed systematically, which, in the case of large projects, makes it easier for me to consider and coordinate implementation policy with the key bodies. What counts is that you think about the issue; make decisions and structure your implementation management in a correspondingly proactive manner. It could thus, for example, become clear to you within the scope of your implementation policy that one of the players must be sent off the pitch because implementation will otherwise never be truly successful. You will, however, only be able to successfully accomplish this if you are able to convince two members of the board of the necessity of the measure vis-à-vis the board's interests. Or you establish that it would be intelligent to designate the Regional Director North as programme manager because of his excellent network of relationships even though he does not have the technical competences of the candidate actually envisaged for the role. This can mean that you have to have a clear vision of your implementation policy in your head, like Steve Balmer (Microsoft), and that, as a consistent leader, you have to push it through correspondingly. Or you decide to systematically think through and write down the relevant aspects, making decisions within a small group. Or you feel more comfortable developing the implementation policy collaboratively in a team, like Götz Werner (founder of the dm health and beauty store chain), also adapting yourself during the process. There is, in this context, no single correct path; everything revolves around your style and system of values and that you consider and actively manage this third and last principle.

Implementation Insight No. 5
In order to overcome the existing conflict between on the one hand the lack of resources and, on the other, the pressure to execute the project quickly a genuine implementation momentum must be generated by formulating a well-grounded implementation concept (conceptual depth); by providing emotionally charged objectives with regard to the result (objectives) and following a systematic procedure to ensure that policy and emotions are not left to chance (implementation policy).

The following chapters discuss the above-mentioned three key factors to achieve implementation flow in more detail. Even though the majority of this book is concerned with exactly how implementation flow can be created there is, however, no guarantee that this will be successful. As a rule of thumb I would say that 50 % of the success of implementation projects and the generation of implementation momentum depends on the zeal and passion for leadership of a handful of key players. Because, in addition to all the methodology, technique and tactics, the passion and inner conviction of just a few managers can prove to be of crucial significance. They must be absolutely convinced of the goal and be fired up for it, not just seeing it as a task which must be completed. If you lack these genuine leaders then change the setting or, better still, do not even embark on the process in the first place.

2.2 On an Inappropriate Understanding of Planning and Monitoring

The firm conviction that the planned implementation result can be achieved by means of precisely defining activities, milestones and project plans can easily lead to the second implementation dilemma—focusing on activities instead of results. I myself also get sucked into this undercurrent time and again. You must constantly be on your guard against this input/activities and planning orientation since it is easy to fall prey to it. This is best achieved by means of disciplined, systematic consideration of results.

When projects are planned in great detail and with great precision at the outset, all too often the consequence is that things become more complicated and the process unfolds more frustratingly than necessary. Our fear of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity generates a pronounced planning attitude; we try to break topics down until we arrive at individual activities and believe that we know exactly what will happen how and exactly how we must handle it. This supposed process certainty makes implementation projects far more complex than necessary and, at the end, we discover that (a) everything turned out differently and (b) to how we expected. Chaos is the result and we spend all our time managing some kind or other of plans and reports which serve no purpose towards the goal itself. We lose sight of the result because of all these planning and control activities.

There are four specific risks in connection with this input orientation

1. Unnecessary complexity
   Planning and controlling a whole host of things requires time, resources and processes and a lot of input to make the planning "resilient". The frequent corresponding time and effort this involves, in particular also due to the coordination of individual resources and actors, results in unnecessary complexity.
2. Defocusing
   The effort outlined above places planning in the focus, not the result. The consequence is that the organization focuses on these plans; spends time studying them and, as paradox as it may sound, gives them precedence over the actual goal.
3. Justification politics
   Everyone views what has been discussed and planned as the rules—logically this also applies to any monitoring . This means that instead of focusing resources on what has to be achieved a lot of time is invested in clarifying why you are not on schedule. Your focus should, however, be on the future and the goal and the expected results.

4. Unnecessary activities
   Plans which have once been well-thought-out are no longer questioned, dictating the orientation. The result is often the pursuit of activities and milestones which are not really relevant. Because, however, this is what was planned this is what is done; the plan is above all else—a strange development which, however, I experience frequently.

The logical consequence arising from the risks above is that you should always focus solely on the result, consistently basing your planning on the short term, in other words not operating too far into the future. You can, and probably must, tackle the resulting uncertainty which you may, under certain circumstances, generate among stakeholders by means of consistency and a methodical approach (cf. Chap. 7.3).

The corresponding current activities and projects must be reviewed regularly with regard to the result to be achieved. Put another way—you must examine whether they are serving to get closer to the result, i.e. if you are operating successfully or not. Ask yourself how you establish that, and whether, your implementation project is really bringing you closer to your goal. You will certainly not clarify this by ticking off some kind or other of activities or milestones on a to-do list but instead will specify results which must be achieved. (cf. Chap. 4).

Implementation Insight No. 6

Don't fall prey to the input gremlin by launching yourself into your implementation project, focusing on details and activities, thus losing sight of the result you are striving to achieve. Instead allow the output angel more space and power, thus ensuring highly productive implementation management by stringently thinking through your actions from the end backwards and making the correct decision whenever the question comes up "What must I do to achieve a specific result?".

At a mechanical engineering company a large group met regularly, sometimes also at irregular intervals, to discuss the next activities within the scope of the "Neuland" (New Territory) programme. At the end these meetings were characterized solely by discussions about details. Topics included, for example, whether the type of process modelling used in the Service department corresponded to process standards; how the partner model for foreign business (a marginal issue!) could be developed; which regulations had to be complied with in corporate governance; who bore responsibility in specific roles; etc. Discussions were always heated and the actual reason behind the entire programme was totally forgotten! To tackle this I defined five questions which every project manager was required to go through consistently every week:

1. Am I taking the simplest, fastest route to the result?
2. Does what I am currently doing really make sense or it just input?
3. Which project meetings really bring me closer to my implementation success and which ones can I cancel?
4. Is the effort I am putting into project documents really required?
5. Will the method I would like to use really help me to achieve the result?

In this way all the participants learned to think through their all actions from the end backwards and make the correct decision whenever the question came up "What must I do to achieve a specific result?" Little by little a consistent "output philosophy" was established.

2.3 Brakes on Change—The Spirit Is Willing But . . .

We all have our own, different interests and goals which, it goes without saying, are not always the same as the interests and goals of the others. Such opposing interests are often what thwart the implementation of strategies and changes. A popular countermeasure to combat this is the change management 'battering ram', which, however, does not really have any significant impact. Countering existing resistance with coaching; team-building or change measures of any other kind does not do much to change the divergent fundamental interests of the individuals concerned.

I experienced this dilemma within the scope of the strategy implementation project of a multi-industry group with numerous member companies. The project was, among other things, concerned with realizing systematic synergy effects among the group's companies. For 20 years the managing directors of the member companies had concentrated solely on their own company's best interests. The objective of the new strategy was to bring the member companies closer to the group and thus also to one another. However, the implementation of this strategy was not making any real progress.

In the beginning I was surprised that there was no acceptance for the project and that it had stalled. From my point of view the strategy was undoubtedly advantageous for the member companies since there was certainly no shortage of genuine synergy effects, not just nebulous cost reductions, which would benefit the member companies and, in addition to this, would facilitate an improved transfer of know-how. There was also an authentic management commitment on the part of the central management board members, meaning that the majority of the measures would be centrally financed.

That this, put positively, would sow the seeds of mistrust was only apparent to me later when I became aware of the company's history and its previous leadership and steering. I recognised that I had not paid the attention required to the true individual interests which were also further reinforced by the management system, which had not undergone change. The "member company princes" were too concerned with not rocking the boat; not endangering their own results and also, from mere habit, not letting go of the status quo even if interlinking with the other divisions, supported by logical arguments, already made sense purely in terms of self-interest and they were committed to achieving it. So it was perfectly natural that they continued to try to exploit the interests of their own company ("principality") to the maximum and were not prepared to simply give up their own power. These fundamental interests are not, per se, bad and do not mean that the individuals are against the company or that the change or implementation could not be carried out.

After this became clear to me I confronted the interests of the individual managing directors and their worries, fears and goals decisively together with two members of the central management board, searching for, and finding, ways to identify the right intersection of interests. In order to lead the implementation project to long term success we eventually had to slow down the process and also to change the structure of the management bodies within the overall group dealing with decisive courses for the future so that the managing directors of the member companies were correspondingly represented and continued to have the feeling that they were equipped with the, from their point of view, necessary levers.

So if, as described in the example above, the spirit is not really willing the diverse methods used to help break down resistance and bring individuals together are of little use. Because all this does is to treat the input , in other words, the “how”. For this reason I believe that the majority of change endeavours to make employees open to, and willing for, change are a waste of time and effort. Or to put it overexaggerated terms—activities in the climbing park are undoubtedly fun, do not however have any effect on changing the interests and motivation of the individuals involved. The managing directors from the example who are still unwilling will indulge in a little more conversation in the corridor in the week following the climbing park excursion but this will not change the direction of their fundamental interests and the goals they pursue. This does not mean that change management methods are, as a matter of principle, pointless. It is, rathermore, about continuously asking ourselves searching questions about whether the method selected can really help us with regard to the goal. Because, just as is the case for all other methods, change management is also only a means to an end to implement a strategy. And a strategy is a means to end to achieve a goal. No matter what the methods concerned are, they should only be used if they can be relied upon to bring us closer to this goal.

Implementation Insight No. 7
People are either motivated or not. You cannot motivate them but rather at most identify their interests, attempting to coordinate these interests in such a way that something akin to a community of interests is created for a specific, authentic goal.

Skilful implementation policy is required to genuinely get to grips with the unwilling spirit. You must study the prevailing power political structures, self-interest and corporate interests. You will be well advised to anticipate them; to bring them together within a network and to manipulate this operational network as defined by the goal, by aligning—cf. the example of the managing directors—the interests of the participants and bringing them into harmony with the goal to be achieved (cf. Chap. 6.3).

You should, however, be on your guard against attributing every obstacle in the course of strategy implementation to the disruptive individual interests of the participants which are seemingly impossible to manipulate. Quell the impulse to speedily declare “the others” to be the scapegoat when examining causes while, at the same time, imagining yourself to be on the safe side, always knowing what has to be achieved. From this perspective the others are:

- The “opponents” with whom the entire project is, any case, never achievable,
- The “idiots” who simply do not understand what it’s all about or
- The “incompetents” who don’t know what has to be done.

As disruptive as they are said to be, these “others” can, on the other hand, be very convenient—as a welcome excuse for our own inability to get the team on board in time; to convince them or to manage them consistently. We hide our own lack of clarity, uncertainty and political interests behind them and their potential for disruption. These “others”, however, only exist in our defensive perception which anything but suitable for successful implementation projects; on the contrary which is usually detrimental to them.

2.4 The Panic Point—When Fear Gets the Upper Hand

Panic is a risky obstacle. Its emergence should be avoided at all costs in the course of an implementation project. Otherwise you run the risk of being caught in the inappropriate planning and control concept trap or by a brake on change.

How does panic arise? At the beginning of a change project the majority of the participants generally approach the project with a high degree of motivation and you hear enthusiastic exclamations such as “Yes, that’s what we’ll do!” At the latest, however, when recognition sets in that the project will, and must, change many things the participants start to panic. The reaction to this is either control frenzy, resulting in things being planned, clarified and executed down to the last detail—in other words, the classic case of an inappropriate planning and control concept. As a result implementation stalls because the participants are primarily in search of reasons to explain why something is not possible. Or a “change faction” develops which declares that the forces of inertia are too strong; resistance is too entrenched and the number of changes is too great—put succinctly which use the “others” as an excuse and justification for its own poorly thought-out work.

Depending on project complexity the panic point will occur sooner or later. In the case of very large, complex implementation projects this can already be the case at the beginning; in the case of more manageable projects when things start to get complicated and are additionally overcomplicated with an excess of concept, planning and control instruments. As soon as the panic point occurs uncertainty spreads. An increasing number of participants no longer know precisely what is being done why; start to shut themselves off and to secure the walls around the sub-project or their own division. The results are increasing idle performance; ever greater efforts at protection and policy which is not particularly goal-oriented. Overall project efficiency decreases significantly. Typical signs of the panic point are:

1. Progress is linked to activities, not results
2. Increasing uncertainty
3. Intensified demands and questions concerning plans and milestones
4. A decline in dialogue between divisions/sub-projects following the initial kick-off meetings
5. First accusations of guilt.

Chapter 4 describes how uncertainty and thus also the emergence of the panic point can be avoided.

3 The Quintessence of Implementation Success—Concept Development

As already discussed in Chap. 1, to achieve successful implementation it is imperative that the strategy is well thought through before implementation. Taking into consideration the defined strategic position an initial strategy concept must first clarify what exactly will change why and how things will interlink. This is the only way to have any chance of achieving the goal set within the scope of, and by means of, the implementation project. Because the more intense the conceptual phase, the greater the probability that all the participants will share a uniform clear vision of the issue at hand and operate on a reliable basis. Your implementation project will thus experience momentum which is characterized by speed and efficiency.

In the next section I would like to show you, without wanting to define and formulate standards by doing so, a possible sequence of concept development work as a model and provide you with advice about how you can establish that the participants in your implementation project may perhaps still be uncertain and how you can eliminate the blurring responsible for this in the individual divisions in order to subsequently address the synchronization of the divisions "focused on".

3.1 Procedure During Concept Development—Some Guidelines

Once the strategy has been developed the next step must deal with the question, linked to the goals, of what exactly is required for the new target position; what has to change, perhaps be wound up; and what new items have to be added—namely for each individual area. You will rarely be able to fall back on standards and best practices for this "honing" of the strategy; this necessary conceptual detailing since, just like every strategy, every current corporate situation is unique. The logical consequence is also that the "strategic gap", in other words the distance to be covered to arrive at your strategic target position, is always very specific. The raison d'être of concept development is to describe this specific strategic gap precisely. You cannot thus fall back on any templates for this conceptual development work or dig out the

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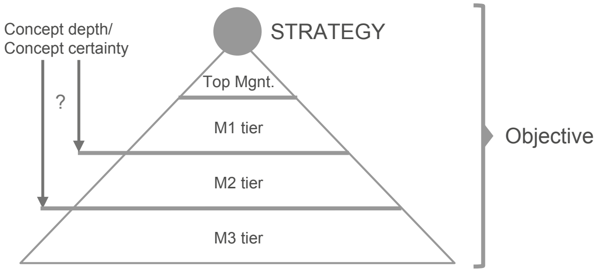
documentation from the last strategy implementation project three years ago. The conceptual phase requires you to give a lot of thought to what the new position will be like. In my consulting capacity I experience time and again how difficult the majority of organizations find this step in particular—be this because of a lack of confidence in their own conceptual skills or because of a lack of experience in the development of a strategic concept.

Thinking through in detail and considering "What will my new location be like?" (concept) and "How exactly do I get there to then be well-positioned and to do the right things in the right way using the right competences?" (planning) is not the work of a few moments. I would like to use the guidelines below to illustrate to you how I tackle this conceptual phase together with my clients:

1. Conceptual Depth Before you begin you must consider how far down the management hierarchy and in which divisions the objective ("What is the new location like?") must be broken down and/or conceptual clarity must be achieved in order to plan sensibly and experience speedy implementation. I sometimes hear the statement that every employee should know what the implications of the strategy are for him or her. Apart from the fact that, as a rule, by the second management tier at the latest this demand is no longer complied with and is more a management platitude than anything else, I also believe it to be completely absurd. In less complex business models such as, for example, steel trading it is usually fully sufficient for top management to discuss and clarify the strategic changes with the next management tier down. In the case of the implementation of a new strategy by an opticians company with a chain of stores it is also fully sufficient in conceptual terms to enter into conceptual development of the required changes with a handful of key bodies, thus, for example, to clarify the restructuring of channel sales and the procurement structure with just two heads of division. In the case of more complex business models such as a reorientation of a multi-industry group which, in addition to this, is planning to establish shared service structures for synergy reasons it will be necessary to include the entire second and also parts of the third tier of management into the process so that, for example, the head of the service centre in Munich knows and understands what will change for him in future in the scope of interlinking with the other divisions such as, for example, the new central sales body in Berlin. Also in this case it would be completely out of place to demand that every single employee should, in the final instance, have understood why what will change how. The motto in this context is again—the result to be achieved dictates where and how much certainty is required. It must also be asked down to what level in which divisions genuine management certainty must exist with regard to the structures and changes to be achieved. The answer to this specifies who will be included in the process—no further and no fewer individuals. What is important is that you can be sure that the downstream process will take care of itself at all the levels which are involved in the implementation project. (cf. Fig. 3.1).

Concept depth means concept certainty and it is your decision down to which level you want to create this certainty. The deeper you go, the greater effort will become, namely an exponential increase. You should thus include as few individuals as possible and only as many as necessary. Working on the assumption of an average

Fig. 3.1 The correct concept depth for the objective



span of control of ten employees per manager, in the case of two to three managing directors or board members approximately 20–25 heads of division will be included the conceptual phase. Also bear in mind that teams are at their most efficient when they comprise at least four to a maximum of seven members. In larger companies or more complex structures requiring more team members a working group architecture should, where applicable, be installed below the selected team to ensure that the optimum group size is maintained.

Despite all of this a certain degree of blurring will always remain. In addition to this it is sometimes not possible to answer, or answer precisely, the question "What does this mean for the future?" Since blurring comes with the territory you must learn to live and deal with it. What is important in this context is that blurring is not confused with uncertainty, thus irritating the process.

2. Key Questions One procedure which I have developed is the principle of core and key questions. These questions help to identify which topics and divisions require particular attention within the scope of concept development. To all intents and purposes the core question puts in a nutshell the overall strategy from an individual division's point of view and is at the centre of attention. This core question is surrounded by three to seven additional key questions per division or sub-project which have to be clarified using corresponding models. Provide this process with a clear structure which will, above all, ensure that things proceed in a purely results-oriented manner instead of prescribing the strategy and then simply delegating responsibility for the issues to be clarified as defined by the conceptual certainty for successful implementation.

> The top management of a tourism group decided that the future lay with cruises; local recreation and Internet trading, describing it clearly in the form of several strategy cornerstones. It was obvious that all managers down to the entire second tier of management would have to be included in the concept development work since all the divisions would have to change significantly if the strategy was to succeed. Following a brief communication of the strategy every divisional head was requested to formulate what he wanted or needed to clarify for his division using a well-thought-out concept as defined by the strategy. This formulation should take the form of a single question (core question). In this context the IT Manager thus formulated his core question as follows—"What IT architecture will we use to facilitate the new business models?" Following the formulation of this core question every manager was asked to pose from four to a maximum of seven key questions arising from it and which needed to be answered by the concepts. The IT Manager asked:

1. Which IT value creation topics will we still handle ourselves in future and what will we outsource?
2. What competences must be made available and developed for this?
3. What will the technological interfaces to our partners in the new business models be like?
4. What do we have to provide for the new service processes in terms of technology?

Similar questions were presented the heads of the Sales, Service, Purchasing, Conditions Management and Marketing divisions. This procedure ensured that everyone was able, and had, to bring to the table exactly those aspects which required clarification to arrive at a well-thought-out concept.

Core and key questions are thus an excellent platform to pose, compare and discuss crucial issues working consistently back from the end result. Not only does this result in a more pronounced understanding of the strategy where the process of dialogue is usually more valuable than the result; the correct priorities and anchors for results with which to clarify the concepts are also specified. The limitation to a few crucial questions is key in this context. Ensure that participants are disciplined in this regard.

3. Selecting the Required Models The key questions provide information about which answers are important for the implementation concept and successful implementation. The models serve to provide these answers coherently and compactly; to depict how the organization as a whole will function in future. In other words, how things will work at your new strategic location. They are, to some extent, the new "town centre" around whose periphery all the corporate divisions with their divisional concepts will subsequently arrange and interlink themselves. The following models could be relevant in this context:

- The *corporate model*—What is the fundamental business understanding; the corporate mechanism or logic like, based on which the company will work in future to achieve the strategic position aspired to? The business model of a telecommunications company, for example, thus shows how infrastructure and network and technology options currently still prescribe the focus and how the future philosophy should be based on customer needs and products should no longer be oriented to what is technologically possible but rather to what the present and possible future needs of customers are.
- The *value creation wheel* —What are the future core and supporting processes and what will the interfaces between them be like? In the case of the radical change to the telecommunications company's business model is absolutely clear that value creation must also function in an altered value creation sequence. Where previously technology defined which fields would be developed next, the Product Management department will, for example, now consider products and pass them on to the Technical department for realization. Resources and funding responsibility will thus be relocated correspondingly.
- The *organization model*—How will the company be organized in line with the new corporate logic and restructured value creation? To stay with the example of the telecommunications company—there is not yet any Product Management division below the top management tier, so the organization model will have to help clarify where this division will be installed; what the interlinking of this new

division with the other divisions will be like; what degree of competences this division will require; etc.

- The *leadership and steering model*—How will the organizational units, i.e. the future corporate divisions, be orchestrated and steered to ensure that everything interlinks with the correct priorities and that the corporate model and also the value creation wheel become reality? In the case of the telecommunications company mentioned above in the past the success of the Technical Division was, for example, measured by the extent of network expansion and how many areas were connected annually. In future it should be measured in terms of how well the specifications given by the Product or Sales divisions can be met. Time-to-market will play a role and, to this end, the budget will also have to be adjusted. The leadership and steering model thus clarifies who, in future, will be measured according to what parameters as defined by value creation and what the system of goals will be like.
- The *sourcing model*—How must the manufacturing depth change in strategic terms, working from the value creation wheel's core and supporting processes? Depending on the change in value creation it will be necessary to clarify which issues the company would like to handle using its own core competences in future and what it makes sense to buy in. While, for example the telecommunications company's customer services have, to date, been outsourced it may now prove necessary to bring them back into the company since the more complex products and customer retention are viewed as a competitive factor which the company has to serve with its own core competence. The case may be different for network operations, to date viewed as a core competence and now classified more as a commodity, now recognizing that there are service providers who can provide this service far more cost effectively.
- The *competence model*—Based on the value creation wheel which competences will be required in the individual divisions? Which roles and functions represent the most skilful means of ensuring they are available? And what are the key value and effort drivers which can be used to create a well-thought-out quantity structure to define the size of the organizational units?
- The *cooperation and values model*—Must there be changes to the kind of cooperation and dialogue? This issue concerns the company's unwritten laws—i.e. its culture. While, for example, in the telecommunications company's Network Technology department it has, to date, been de rigeur from employees to moan about the cumbersome specialist divisions the future cooperation and values model will have to specify that the specialist division must be understood as a partner and customer who is the only one who knows what is required.

The first four models described above are indispensable for a concept; whether you require the other models specified above or possibly even additional models (for example location and partner models) depends on your strategy. After having discussed his core and key questions with the other members of the concept development team and comparing them to identify a common understanding the IT Manager of the tourism group, for example, thus decides to answer his first key question—"Which

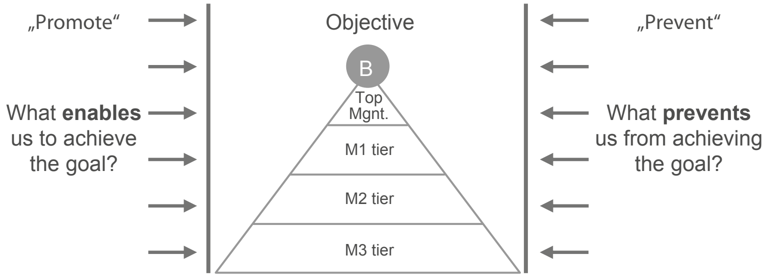


Fig. 3.2 The promote/prevent model

IT value creation topics will we still handle ourselves in future and what will we outsource?”—with the aid of a sourcing model.

4. Concept Development of the Required Models The models which are relevant for each implementation project must now be developed. When doing so you have must always the reason why the models are being developed and their sequence in your mind’s eye. Development of the models should not become a scientific exercise but rather, on the contrary, should be kept as lean as possible. The purpose of selecting models is to give operational management certainty with regard to the changes to be initiated. The models must be broken down to the level for which there should be clarity. This conceptual depth has already been defined in the first step.

The IT Manager of the tourism group thus decides that he will clarify the sourcing model in cooperation with just two colleagues from the third tier of management and that the Development and Production divisions, which will be principally affected by these models, will not initially be involved in the formulation but instead will be integrated later. The situation is different in the Architecture division, where he puts together a larger team comprising all divisions or systems which will be affected in future. Taking the emotional aspects into consideration it seems to him that it is wisest and, taking the existing interlinking and the complexity of the topics into consideration, necessary to make all the relevant and affected individuals into participants from the outset. This process is correspondingly time-consuming; a price which will pay off for him in the end.

The “promote/prevent model” can, among other things, be of assistance during this so-called *drill-down* (cf. Fig. 3.2). Within its scope the question is posed “What enables me (promote) to achieve my objective, what can prevent it (prevent) and what can be done to counteract this?” This method enables you to expose all the issues causing uncertainty in operational management. The existing corporate culture could, for example, be a promote factor while the leadership system could represent a prevent factor.

When it comes to the central presentation of the key question the rule is that the corresponding question is not answered by means of written text but using graphics. Think up a model. Since the interdependencies are very large you will not be able to develop your models successively but rather iteratively within the scope of answering your core and key questions. The competence model is thus significantly influenced by the sourcing model and both, in turn, have an effect on the organizations and leadership and steering models. The only thing with which you can begin and finish in one go is the value creation wheel.

5. Loops for Model Synchronization The models and the answers to the core and key questions will not immediately interlink coherently, neither within a division nor between the divisions. You must thus coordinate the models with one another in the course of several loops. It can thus be the case that the Head of Sales and the Head of Service of a telecommunications company establish during the first round of coordination that their opinions with regard to the customer classification required for the corresponding future models do not match because they have interpreted the strategy differently. And in the IT division it becomes apparent that the nature of the architecture planning results in additional complexity drivers for the competence model.

Every division must be absolutely clear on what its own strategic contribution to the implementation of the corporate strategy will be like; how it must organize itself to do so and what the master plan for achieving the relevant status as described using the future models will be like. Once this has been clarified the required degree of maturity has also be achieved.

6. Iteration (Until Clarity has been Achieved) The goal of concept development is to generate a clear image of the future for the operational management personnel who are responsible for the implementation project concerning what the new strategy should achieve. In other words, the objective, which initially only exists in the form of images and ideas in the heads of the company's top management must now be transferred into the heads of operational management, and namely in a far more detailed form. The drill-down must take place within the scope of concept development until this goal has genuinely been achieved. Otherwise during the planning phase it will become difficult to clarify who has to do what by when and the result would be the spread of uncertainty which would make implementation inefficient and slow-moving.

3.2 Focusing—Combatting Uncertainty

While in my first years as a consultant for strategy development and the accompanying of implementation and change projects I was of the opinion that changes fail because of insurmountable resistance, I have learned from a multitude of strategy implementation projects that this assessment was, in the final instance, based only on selective individual perceptions. Popular literature on corporate change and so-called best practices and case studies, however, invariably represent these individual perceptions as absolutes, taking them as the foundation for procedural decisions. Based on my viewpoint and experience implementation projects do not, as a rule, fail because of resistance—the willingness of operational management and employees to change is often even more pronounced than that of top management—no, implementation projects usually fail because of insufficient concept development and planning on the part of top management.

Top management or the programme steering body often allow themselves to be induced to avoid the, admittedly, strenuous concept development phase and rounds of coordination, leaving interpretation of the strategy and the necessary deductions to other participants. The assumption that there will immediately be consensus and clarity following formulation of the strategy and that implementation can begin is based on the fact that, just like most of us, the management executives assume without any further consideration that their understanding of things corresponds to everyone else's. In other words, by briefly communicating a strategy which they have not usually developed themselves but left to assistants and consultants top management views its task as having been completed and takes the assumed understanding on the part of the participants to be clarity and certainty about and in the thing itself. However, this clarity and certainty at the outset of the project usually evaporates very quickly when attention is turned to the crucial questions of detail. The consequence? Operational management reacts uncertainly to the options for orientation and action which arise or is not able to translate the desired results into its own structures. This is why concept development which ensures that the individuals with responsibility are already provided with advance certainty for the formulation phase is so important.

Poorly or insufficiently thought-out implementation projects always and without exception generate uncertainty on the part of the participants. Normally this uncertainty is accepted and work continues in a haphazard fashion. Only in exceptional cases are there a handful of brave souls who are prepared to say openly that they don't really know what they are supposed to do and even more rarely does such criticism fall on the ears of top managers who are able to accept it and say "You're right! Let's get together and go back to the drawing board." Because that's where, with a little discipline and common sense, it would be possible to identify where what certainty and clarity needs to be established and subsequently explored in intellectual and conceptual terms before being set in writing.

Implementation Insight No. 8
People need clear conceptual structures and schematic instructions which they can use to develop the detail for upcoming topics. It is also true for implementation projects that this is the only way to generate the necessary certainty which, itself, is a precondition for genuine implementation momentum.

Implementation projects which are characterized by uncertainty on the part of the participants generally progress along the following lines (cf. Fig. 3.3):

1. Initial clarity
   Once the goals and strategy have been established a kick-off meeting takes place during the initiation phase of and a raft of discussions on the topic of how the project environment should be structured take place. The task is clear and understood; motivation is correspondingly high.

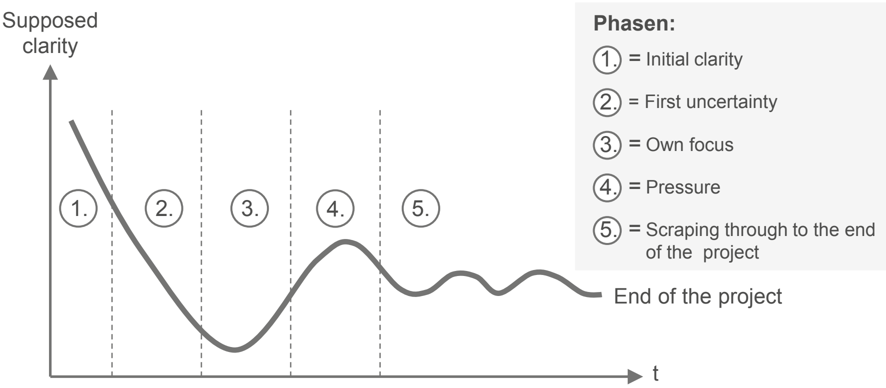


Fig. 3.3 A typical WEDTM progression

2. First uncertainty
   As soon as attention turns to the specifics of implementation, i.e. the actual tasks at hand, the WEDTM phenomenon (What exactly does that mean?) begins to rear its ugly head. The greater the uncertainty becomes, the more dramatically the original high degree of supposed clarity mutates into tangible disorientation within the individual sub-projects.
3. Own focus
   The most common reaction to this first uncertainty is to concentrate on your specific sub-project task; to further isolate it from, and to establish borders to, the other projects. The individual elements of the overall implementation project have ever less to do with each other; motivation decreases to the same degree as the feeling of uncertainty increases and questions start to be asked about whether the entire enterprise still makes sense. The queasy gut feeling of not really being synchronized with the others also becomes stronger and more threatening.
4. Pressure
   The time pressure which will, sooner or later, occur forces participants to face the decisive misunderstandings; lack of coordination and conceptual deficits. Depending on the implementation project this will still be achieved within the planned time frame or the process becomes ever more delayed. If the participants are then able—which is generally the case—to successfully clarify the relevant issues and eliminate the decisive lack of clarity certainty and clarity will even out to an average level which may seem practicable but does not, however, allow the project to gather any speed. At this point in time substantial effort, time and money have already been expended—far more than would have been the case for a well-thought-out, repeatedly harmonized concept.
5. Scraping through to the end of the project
   If the participants are successful in managing to get out of this dead-end it is generally the case that the usual management rites quickly regain the upper hand and uncertainty once again increases. Project progress becomes a rollercoaster

ride. Over and over again time and management pressure as well as also possibly assistance ensure that results are more or less ideal, however cannot achieve really good implementation performance.

The following five symptoms will tell you whether your project has fallen victim to the **WEDTM phenomenon** or if the problems and difficulties being experienced fall within the standard range of every implementation project standard range:

1. Acceleration Fatigue The initial enthusiasm quickly evaporates. If everyone was still fired up at the kick off meeting because they believed the reorientation to be fundamentally convincing and if, following this, little activity takes place in the sense of proactive coordination and clear agreements concerning the next steps then this an unambiguous sign of emerging uncertainty on the part of the participants, not however of reluctance and resistance.

2. The Hedgehog Syndrome The participants hold onto the topics for which they are responsible, spending their time exclusively on issues which concern them specifically. They begin to shut themselves off within their sub-projects—a completely natural behavioural pattern if you are looking for certainty and something to hold onto. When questions come up such as, for example, "What exactly are we supposed to do now?" and lack of clarity within participants' own (sub-) project topic is shored up with hypotheses and assumptions which should actually be coordinated with other sub-projects or divisions then you know that the participants have become hedgehogs, rolling themselves up into a tight ball.

3. The "The Others" Symptom (the Myth of the "Others") If topics within a sub-project or also overall are not really progressing then one of the most frequently heard diagnoses is "It's the others' fault". Responsibility for failure to progress is always sought among the other sub-projects since the individuals concerned are, of course, always giving one hundred per cent to the tasks in their own division (the hedgehog syndrome). While this isolation may have given rise to clarity concerning the group's own topic—which is also perceived as such—it has contributed little to the overall topic. The spoken and unspoken accusations of blame cause the problems to become more entrenched and the process starts to stall. The positive alternative is a healthy culture of mistakes providing the room to continue learning throughout the entire process and to make mistakes, to finally succeed in the end. This attitude is a distinguishing feature of the cooperation between sub-projects in high performance implementation projects.

4. Crisis of Purpose Particularly in the case of implementation projects with a longer time frame or which are more extensive it can occur during the later stages that the individual sub-projects completely lose sight of the correlation to the strategy or the change which is aspired or that it is consciously suppressed. A utility company, for example, which had committed to a new strategy within the scope of the energy revolution experienced a situation in which the Sales sub-project developed a life of its own, causing it to become increasingly detached from the strategy. After the links to the "Energy Generation" sub-project (focusing on renewable energies); the Customer Service project and the IT project had become ever more detached, the Sales sub-project focused achieving the structures envisaged; re-orienting the goal system; further developing the behavioural change training programme for sales staff; etc. The activities came to the fore; the "why" was increasingly forgotten, with the result that uncertainty on the part of the participants steadily grew. Because it became increasingly unclear how, for example, the energy mix originating from the "Renewable" sub-project and the projected results originating from the "Customer Service" project should be meaningfully reflected in the work of the Sales department. If even only one of these four items is the case for an on-going change process, then you can assume that it has been infected with a virulent WEDTM phenomenon ('What exactly does that mean?'). If you establish that the WEDTM phenomenon has infiltrated your implementation project then you must decide the points at which you need to create clarity within the organization in order to be able to drive forward implementation with the required certainty and speed. To overcome uncertainty the following five point programme should be completed in the order given below (cf. Fig. 3.4).

Kolbusa's 5 step programme to eliminate the WEDTM phenomenon

1. Future Script Ask everyone in your team who bears responsibility for part of the implementation project to write a two- to three-page script for the film of the future for your sub-project or your division, alone or in a group. Based on this future script every area of responsibility should formulate what will change for them with regard to the business; to value creation (nothing else is of interest) and what will be new or wound up. This can also be carried out in the form of fictional interviews taking place in the future. An employee in Service, someone from Sales, etc. imagines themselves in the company's future and talks "retrospectively" about the current situation. He or she describes what life used to be like in the division; what difficulties were encountered along the way; what has changed. This retropolation anticipates the result aspired to, describing the situation as it could be following a successfully completed implementation project. It cannot be repeated often enough—think primarily about what characterizes the change and how it presents itself and less about what needs to be done to achieve it—that usually takes care of itself. In general we all have a tendency to think in terms of the next steps, plans and actions when we want to move forwards. In this context the path is much easier if we first think backwards, beginning with a clear image of the future; a result to be aspired to; a desired goal status.

It is important that the films of the future have the right range of thought and focus. Experience shows that it is not particularly productive to work on the basis of a time frame of five or even ten years. Even two or three years are usually too long to be able to keep a genuine overview. If the objective is to generate something akin to an emotional attachment to the visions of the future, a genuine connection, then the range of thought should not exceed six to nine months. Very

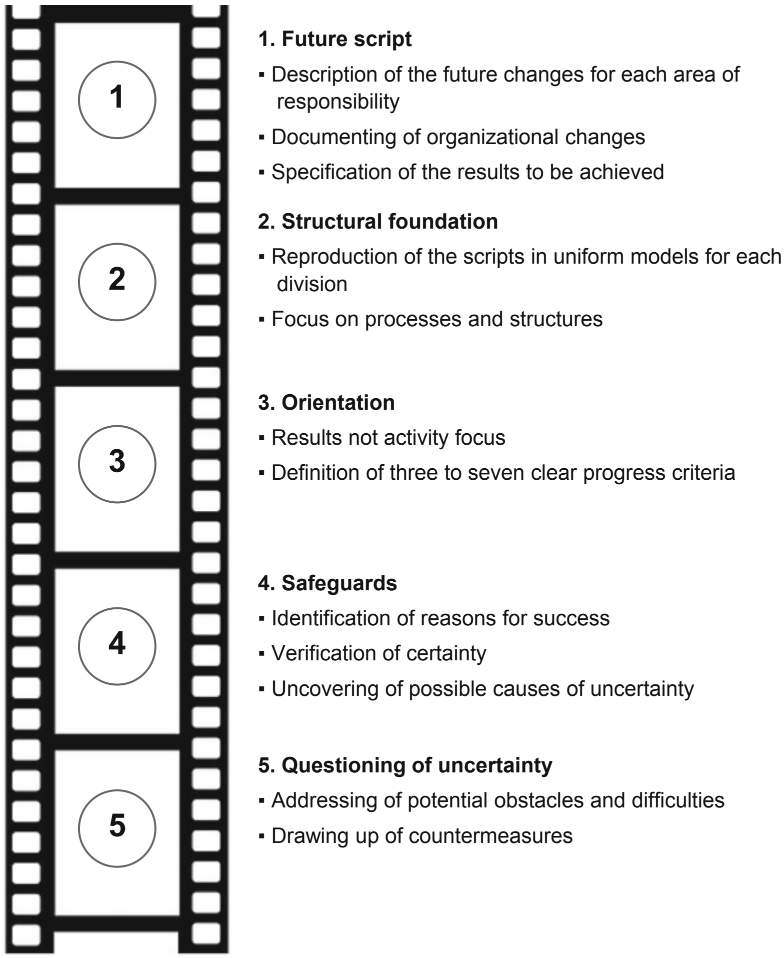


Fig. 3.4 Overcoming the WEDTM phenomenon

few people are able to look so far into the future for themselves—or also for a company—without losing any emotional connection to it because it is "too far away" and, in the best case, is viewed as theoretical possibility. You will be well advised to operate within this time frame, since you otherwise run the risk of becoming too abstract and divorced from reality and, as a result, will not be able to generate any genuine driving force within the team. The shorter the time span you are looking at the future, the more detailed and focused your image will also be. In this way you can ensure that the film gets good reviews.

The objective of this exercise is to achieve clarity in and for the individual divisions, without already synchronizing them. This would be too much complexity at once and you would not be able to control it. I am not a great fan of the "put-the-whole-system-in-one-room" principle—at least at the outset; it creates more chaos and confusion then clarity. The outcome of the clarification in the individual divisions will only be further developed and combined in the puzzle management phase. In this regard it is more reliable and easier to work up from the details to the whole.

2. Structural Foundation Working from this "emotional backbone" you can now move on to the factual or technical level. This is where, metaphorically speaking, the script for the divisional future film is given a structure foundation—i.e. the ideas put down in writing must now be systematized and structured. This is carried out using models which create the required clarity and thus certainty in exactly the right places and with the necessary depth. You can, of course, use existing models to orient and inspire yourself, however you should also consider things for yourself—what should be formulated in detail and why? What does this benefit the result? Based on the diverse models, for example value creation models; process models; product portfolio representations; value contributions; etc., each division systematically describes for itself what the formulated image of the future will specifically represent following completion of the implementation project. This demands that the programme's leaders in particular consider these issues and work creatively. The attempt to transfer best practices or templates from other projects when doing so always results in more effort and confusion, not in positive effects. If, for example, the script for the above-mentioned service division described how in future 85 per cent of enquiries can be solved during the initial contact then the issue to be clarified is what the central issues in this regard are and what the models giving clarity will be like. It would not be of any assistance to consult the service models for other companies, divisions or past projects since the corresponding preconditions are too specific, in other words too different.

The head of the Service division, for example, must first outline the basic interrelationships on a piece of paper. These include the IT environment; the legal and confidentiality issues, in particular in the case of the integration of external service providers, and in between them the encryption issues; then there is also the routing concept for forwarding calls to the right departments; the interface issue with regard to the contractual and legal departments and the restructuring of incoming and outgoing mail. He clarifies the existing interdependencies for each topic and outlines schematically in a model for example the IT architecture; in another the cooperation model with the other divisions; how this will change in future in relationship to the other divisions; etc. In addition to this he uses a complexity driver model to think through for himself how the structure will probably have to change in accordance with the goals set and the new strategy. In an initial competence model he makes a note of which roles with which abilities he will need for this. He considers all these issues as targets, working back from the results, using this model to depict the status quo—how big is the competence gap which needs to be closed? How major is the change in cooperation with the other divisions and what form will it take; etc.? On a scale of 1–10 (minor to massive change) he notes intuitively how great the degree of change will be; what will be wound up; what new structures will be added; which core competences will be required; what will support the goal models and what will contradict them. This schematic description serves to provide the structural foundation for what has already been outlined in the future scripts. He reduces things to their essential elements to work out which are the truly decisive factors which must be paid attention to.

It should be clear that these models are of a totally different nature if the service division described above already has multi-level service, in other words initial contact processing and corresponding forwarding to specialists or if a portal solution for the integration of key information is already in place. So be sure not to give in the spontaneous inclination to immediately search for templates and options which will relieve you of the conceptual work.

The same of course also applies to all other corporate divisions. The new sales steering model may, perhaps, only have to be altered to a slight extent if the customer structure understanding for specific criteria already exists or it may have to be totally transformed because customer structuring has, to date, been purely regional. You should thus consider which aspects in your future model are crucial to you; outline only these aspects and think about what the "conceptual gap" is like and describe it as clearly and plainly as possible for each division by examining the following three aspects:

1. What will be added tomorrow,
2. What will change and
3. What will be wound up

Do this in the form of an outline diagrammatic plan without text. Only by this means will you—together with the film of the future—achieve the necessary orientation for yourself and your team.

To facilitate this structuring the contents of the individual scripts must be prescribed by programme management in the form of a fixed template structure. The models primarily deal with structures and processes such as, for example, forms of cooperation. It is important that all divisions make the same structural specifications , i.e. the same templates. This is the basic requirement for puzzle management. The amount of detail in which you develop your structural specifications depends on the question of how much uncertainty and abstraction your organization can bear. The motto for specifications is also "As little as possible, as much as required". The structural specifications for a programme to launch a new product (a new development) in a multimedia company, for example, do not have to go into much depth since the organization is experienced at bringing new products to new markets at regular intervals and is well-versed in dealing with a high degree of blurring. The situation is different in an energy company which has to date not gained any significant experience with the launching of new products or the development of new markets. The structure of the change aspired to must be broken down into far more detail and the templates include many facets to describe the pieces of the puzzle precisely.

3. Orientation Once you have successfully described the conceptual gap to the current situation using the film of the future and the structural foundation you should then specify a small number of criteria to show whether the implementation process is actually approaching the target status. You should thus ensure that every division or sub-project is clear on the criteria for ascertaining whether they are really getting closer to the result. To this end three to four criteria should be developed on the basis of which a regular monitoring process will clearly demonstrate that or whether progress is being made toward the result.

An energy service provider who wanted to reorient himself within the scope of the energy revolution had committed to establishing long-term, trusting relationships with customers and partners as the primarily strategic driving force. The following were noted as progress criteria : (1) Customers must be segmented according to needs and no longer according to their volume of consumption; (2) Sales will be organized by industry and the first regular industry meetings will take place and (3) initial regional sales responsibilities will be introduced. When considering this example you will notice that the process was far removed from classical KPIs or other stringently evaluated and extremely pragmatic. I cannot value the significance of this aspect highly enough. These progress criteria are your key to success for focused and speedy implementation since all further activities will be precisely oriented to them. If you are uncertain because too many progress criteria occur to you—on no account should there be more than five to seven per division (I always try to focus on just three)—then use an operational network analysis to identify the key factors.

A progress criterion for a service division could, for example, be that service provider dialogues are conducted according to a very specific first solution quota model. Because this kind of dialogue can only be conducted if you have conceptually structured your own division and have an unambiguous vision of how first solution issues should be handled. Likewise external interfaces must be correspondingly transparent and encryption or legal issues must be clarified. The criterion thus clearly shows you whether you are making progress. A further progress criterion for the service division could be that the number of applications which a service employee has to run in parallel is continuously reduced. You will have noticed what this is all about—taking the desired status aspired to as your starting point, which you have described using the film of the future and structured with the assistance of a number of models, ask yourself which areas show specific evidence that you are on the right road.

4. Safeguards Fourthly it is essential to clarify and document what makes your team confident in the long term that it can achieve the results outlined and what may possibly give cause for concern. The last aspect in particular is very important and must be clarified in order to give the team the conviction and certainty that the desired objective really can be achieved. Do not be satisfied with simple answers but rather probe into who really believes in success and why. One reason for confidence could, in the example of the Service Division, be that most of the employees have a great desire to change the division. The leadership shortcomings of the Service group managers could be a cause for concern.

Often sore points will often initially be mentioned in response to your question about what worries your team—for example cooperation with the IT division; the long implementation times or, to refer specifically to the example of the Service division, the suitability of the telecommunications system. Should you be forced to assume that additional issues, which people are reluctant to mention, will hamper achieving the goal then you should try to probe further. As is usual in such situations only unsettling factual or technical issues will be cited. Where there is genuine openness, in other words the willingness to also talk about issues at the personal and relationships level, self-critical statements and issues concerning cooperation and leadership will also come pouring out. Defining these aspects at this point in time is crucial for success!

You should thus ask your team to imagine a catastrophe rather than trivializing or ignoring issues. Better a catastrophe in the image of the future than later one in reality. Persist in asking whether all the difficult issues really have been discussed.

In some cases I have experienced a situation in which I have not been given any answers to my question about the factors which make people confident or sceptical about achieving the goal. There are two possible reasons for this:

1. Corrective work is required
   It is still not yet clear what should be achieved. You can clarify this relatively quickly by posing more detailed questions. The WEDTM phenomenon pervades discussions and you repeatedly hear "What exactly do that mean now?" or "I can't imagine that". In this case you must go back to the future script and work on the objective.
2. Motivation or competence problems
   The second reason is less edifying because, in that case, you have either a massive motivation or competence problem. Whereby the former is generally a consequence of the second—in other words, your team lacks the factual understanding of the issue to be able to ask the right questions or, closely intertwined with this, the required imagination to do so. In this case you must make sure that you re-staff your team. And don't make the mistake that I have made occasionally and work with "the best alternatives". It's pointless!

5. Questioning of Uncertainty Should the participants' uncertainty persist then you must probe into your team's worries and difficulties, listing them in detail. Also make use of the promote/prevent image (Fig. 3.2) to do so. Be sure to practice a culture of openness when trying to overcome the problems; ask which aspects should be addressed to whom in order to identify the impeding factors.

The Head of Service Division's team, for example, had three concerns with regard to successful implementation. Firstly, it saw leadership shortcomings where the group managers were concerned; then it had insufficient contractual knowledge and, finally, there was a problem of motivation in individual service groups. Two additional models were used to consider how these issues could be tackled. With the assistance of a bridging operational model the small team turned its attention to the issue of how to prevent operational daily performance during the implementation becoming markedly worse and, with the assistance of a leadership/competence model, it outlined what requirements the future objective made on the employees; what competences were required to what extent to this end and what options there were to close the existing competence gap. Bit by bit the team began to feel more confident because all the critical aspects had been clearly addressed and thought through using corresponding structures and, in some cases, also very simple but effective sketches. The management basis for genuine implementation momentum had been created.

Within the scope of this five point programme at least two, generally three feedback iterations will be required until the individual future scripts have been firmly established. Support must be given in this regard since genuinely penetrating the implementation project with all participants is not part of the daily business of those responsible for the implementation project.

Once you have undergone this process and given uniform models for the development and structuring of the future to all the divisions involved you have the option of using the existing scripts to create one coherent film of the future. If, however, you work with differing techniques on differing models the end result will be incompatible film material. The scripts will have differing formats; will in some cases, be in colour or black-and-white; and some will be with sound, whereas others will be silent films.

3.3 Jigsaw Puzzle Management—Synchronizing Films

Since companies are not composed of co-existing “Islands of Happiness” following focusing of the image of the future a comparison will be required for the individual divisions. Each of the divisional or departmental scripts represents an individual piece of a jigsaw puzzle which provides information about one implementation area and every one of these jigsaw pieces has tabs and blanks which must interlock precisely during the comparison. This again illustrates just how important the prescription of uniform models and structuring templates is during the focusing process. Otherwise the result will be jigsaw pieces which, metaphorically speaking, are three-dimensional while others are made from rubber and yet more others from cardboard. You will never be able to form a congruent overall picture from these totally different pieces. To remain within the metaphor, the jigsaw pieces must be made from one and the same material. It would thus be of little assistance if the Service Division used a different model to describe its competence gap or its sourcing to the Production or Product Development Divisions. The comparison and management of the implementation project overall would be significantly complicated by this, with misunderstandings pre-programmed. It is thus an important step on the part of programme management or the implementation manager to accompany the process of focusing and equip the teams with the correct models as well as also to ensure that the identical models are also used at points where models overlap.

Kolbusa's five steps for successful jigsaw puzzle management

1. Linking Organization Charts and Pieces of the Puzzle Even if they are repeatedly cursed and viewed as being superfluous—organization charts are important! They clearly communicate to every employee where his/her home is; what he/she is responsible for; who he/she has to report to and with whom he/she must coordinate his/her work. Value creation does not, of course, take place on organization charts but rather within the scope of cooperation between individual employees. Value creation does not thus take place from the top down (hierarchical) but rather from left to right (procedural) and even this is still idealized. It usually takes place within the scope of a positively intended, no longer penetrable interaction between a very complex operational mesh of individual employees. For this reason it is best, both from the point of view of the participants as well as also based on the considerations to be met, to initially formulate the pieces of the jigsaw (future scripts) within the scope of an implementation process in isolation from the organization charts. Within the scope of jigsaw puzzle management the organization chart now serves to integrate the individual pieces (future scripts) into the organizational structure. The organization chart is, so to speak, tipped into the jigsaw pieces. As a matter of principle it can be said that any kind of value creation can be operated using any kind of organizational structure—only that it can be more complicated and time-consuming using the one than the other. Organizations should thus ideally be tailored in such a way that as little unnecessary complexity—i.e. time and effort required for coordination and interfaces—as possible is generated.

With regard to the above mentioned Service Division of a telecommunications company this means, for example, that the existing organizational structure, which is arranged according to individual regions, will no longer be sustainable and instead will have to be based on first and second solution teams. The situation is similar for the Sales Division. The new sourcing model also demands other competences and structures than previously here. It uses the images of the future which are still focused on the existing divisions to sort them into new jigsaw pieces corresponding to the future organizational structure.

2. Clarifying the Jigsaw Pieces' Blanks and Tabs Once the individual jigsaw pieces have been identified the services which the responsible divisions require from the other divisions in order to make their own implementation successful must be clarified. If services from other divisions are drawn on, they create blanks in the division's own jigsaw piece and, vice versa, the tabs, which protrude into other divisions, represent the services to be provided. Illustrating this graphically provides the participants involved in the implementation project with a clear image of the structure to be lived in the future.

The Head of the Service Division, for example, notes for himself that he will, in future, no longer require region-specific customer reports from Sales but rather that a data structure based on needs criteria will be required. With regard to the Contractual and Legal Department he defines which contractual elements will really be required for the Service division's work. And with regard to IT he summarizes the applications which are required most frequently in the context of an initial contact and examines which element of the information originating from the individual application will be required. Bit by bit he thus describes the parts of his jigsaw piece which interlock with the other divisions.

3. A Relationships Operational Network for the Jigsaw Pieces Once each division has considered its input and output relationships (the tabs and blanks) a jigsaw comparison is made. It is used to determine which division has what expectations from whom and what hypotheses each division is using for its own divisional concepts. This is the point at which you receive the pay-back if, as already mentioned above, you, as the implementation manager, have made sure that the individual divisions are working with similar specifications or templates, at least in the case of the central models (often value creation model, sourcing model, competence model, leadership and steering model). During this comparison it is helpful to use an operational network to document the individual relationships in order to identify how value creation could perhaps be simplified. This operational network is, furthermore, an important instrument for the next step since it shows very clearly which divisions have necessary relationships—of whatsoever kind—with each other and, within the framework of bilateral comparison meetings, will have to carry out further coordination.

4. Bilateral Jigsaw Comparison—Tailoring Once the operational network has revealed the relationship of the jigsaw pieces to one another it is time to determine which division will clarify what with whom and in what order. The models developed during focusing are used to this end.

5. Jigsaw Puzzle Progress Using the outlined jigsaw image the criteria showing how progress can be made towards the result must be determined. Time and again these progress criteria will the overall implementation project as a means of monitoring project progress in terms of results. These criteria have also already been formulated during focusing and can be used here.

Figure 3.5 shows the procedure to compile an overall picture, in other words the synchronization of the individual jigsaw pieces (scripts) and their combination (film of the future), as an overview.

As the implementation manager you will thus always have an eye on the overall picture, accommodating for the fact that the heads of division will, of course, focus on their own divisions and assign them, not the overall picture, the highest priority. And, using a corresponding system and structure, you will ensure that the same language is spoken at alignment and coordination meetings and that there is mutual understanding based on the same logic and model structure.

You should also take care to lead the participants through both the process of focusing their division and also the synchronization process of the individual jigsaw pieces very quickly. There are two reasons for this:

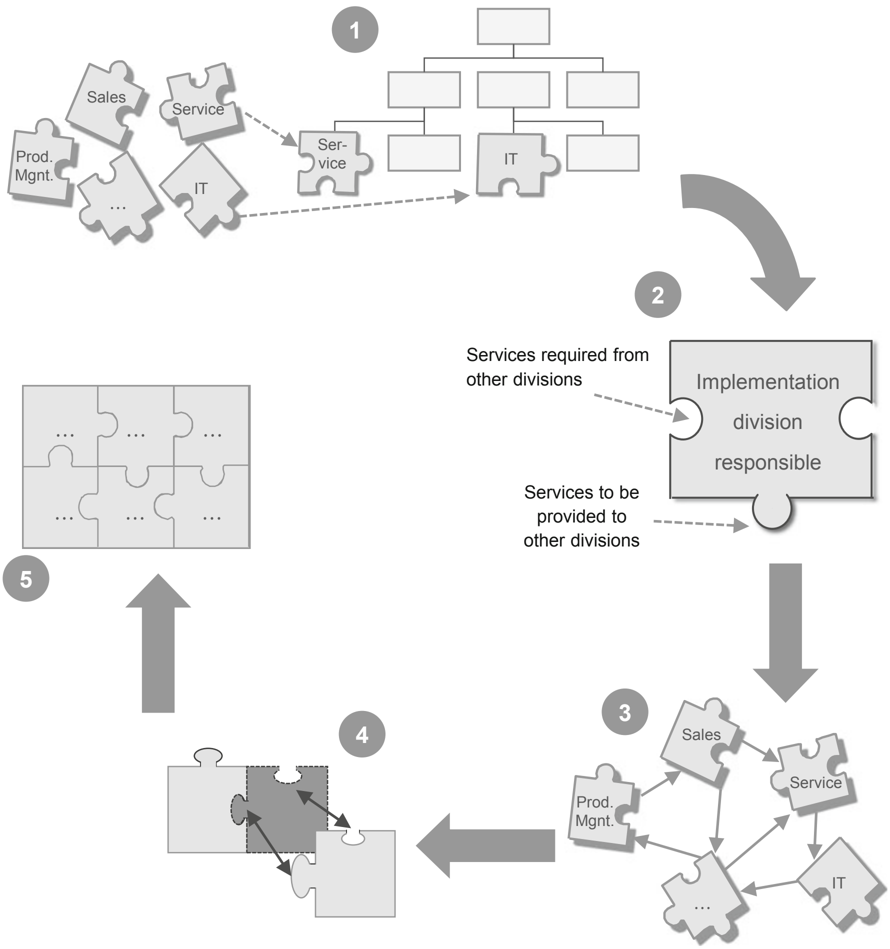


Fig. 3.5 Jigsaw puzzle management procedure

1. If people are to penetrate and clarify complex facts you must do this at high speed because the interrelationships will not otherwise be clear.
2. The more time you spend carrying out comparisons the more side issues will be discussed. And, as you now know, successful implementation management is a matter of concentrating on a few key factors. The rest will take care of itself.

Implementation Insight No. 9
Good concepts develop within the scope of an iterative top-down approach. The results and structural specifications are effected top-down; handling and specification of the details of these concepts is from the bottom-up. The insights gained from this flow into the revised or additional models from the top down. The entire process requires three to four cycles.

Once the five steps of jigsaw puzzle management have been completed your implementation project will again be able to gather speed since uncertainty and lack of clarity have been eliminated.

The fewer jigsaw pieces there are, the more quickly the jigsaw puzzle comparison will proceed. You will, however, have to make some concessions with regard to jigsaw puzzle depth. If there is a very large amount of uncertainty and lack of clarity, then many scripts (= jigsaw pieces) will be produced during focusing and the effort required for jigsaw puzzle management will be correspondingly high. If possible you should initially bravely proceed with larger pieces, before looking to see if there are divisions which are still uncertain despite the completed jigsaw puzzle comparison. If this is the case then you will have to go into more depth again. To this end the jigsaw piece will, depending on the existing uncertainty, be broken down into smaller pieces again—i.e. the future script will be given a sharper focus—before once again being harmonized with the other divisions.

4 Method Cancer—Diagnosis, Elimination and Avoidance

Methods are fabulous. They help us to structure things; gain clarity; filter out what is correct and important and to communicate appropriately in this context. This is why, quite rightly, they are appreciated and I myself am also a big fan of methods. There are numerous really helpful methods precisely for strategy development, for implementation and for the management of change processes. However, as helpful as they can be you must be very careful not use them as a matter of habit—according to the motto "What was good once is always good." Or "Lots helps a lot". Because a method which has been declared a panacea, which is used time and again regardless of the exact circumstances, cannot fulfil its actual purpose. Because special interrelationships logically demand special methods, procedures and conceptual and decision-making models. In other words, another context, another method. The fixation on exact adherence to a method is also not conducive to finding a solution. Because once the method has become an end in itself the actual mission to find a solution will, in cases of doubt, be lost for too long in the obsession with accuracy for it to still be possible to save it. And, finally, the application of methods which have not been understood can also result in a lot of damage. The fact that, in some cases, even text books and best practices describe methods and their application incorrectly is already a clue that this is by no means an uncommon phenomenon. Specialist literature, for example, frequently presents the SWOT analysis as an instrument for strategy development, which is absurd. A SWOT is a snapshot of a specific situation. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are, however, only crucial with regard to an exact strategy option, since otherwise the assessment of a factor as a strength or weakness can be completely misinterpreted or meaningless. The context is decisive. Or it is suggested in all seriousness that, to achieve the highest possible degree of acceptance, as many of the individuals affected by an implementation project are included in the planning process as possible although this will, in many situations, effectively strangle the process.

Methods thus demand a significant degree of competence and knowledge and should never become an automatism or an end in themselves if you want to complete a project successfully.

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I would thus like to motivate you to consider your employment of methods and your requirements on them by asking yourself:

- Where does the method really produce the desired results?
- Is there are shorter route to this point?
- Where does methodology take precedence over the requirements prescribed by the goals?

I refer to a situation where the choice of methods proves difficult; the application of methods is carried out more experimentally than confidently and the corresponding complications inevitably occur, in turn requiring ever more resources, as method cancer—tumours in implementation which consume a great deal of energy; paralyze things and prevent true implementation momentum.

In this chapter I would initially like to discuss the causes and effects of method cancer in more detail before showing you how to identify it in time. Because as a general rule method cancer remains unrecognized at the outset of an implementation project, however is already draining a lot of energy. When it erupts in its full-blown form because the project is hardly making any progress at all the elimination of the causes may still be possible, however only by taking radical decisions for which the courage is often lacking. Because the cause of method cancer is, in the final instance, uncertainty, which can only be overcome by using the correct methods—and with it logically also the method cancer. At the end of this chapter I will, finally, be discussing the levers for generating speed if—which is frequently the case—a process is only progressing sluggishly.

4.1 Causes and Effects of Method Cancer

Within the scope of a strategy, change or implementation project methods are, to all intents and purposes, always employed according to the same pattern—the managers responsible fall back on methods which they either know and/or have already used before (1st choice) or of which they have heard and which have been recommended to them (2nd choice). Should, for whatever reasons, it not be possible to come to a decision within the group responsible for this then a consultant will be called in to offer assistance and will then make the 1st or 2nd choice, usually according to the same principle. Whatever the case the individuals concerned either fall back on a tool kit equipped with (actual) standards or employ best practices from similar projects. Whether the models selected are really up to the job—in other words, match the desired results and aid speedy working—is unfortunately examined all too seldomly. Instead everyone is content with the simple conviction that these models have already worked somewhere else and, in addition to this, has to take into consideration a raft of corporate specifications which—no matter whether meaningful or not—set guidelines for the structuring and management of a project.

This results in a patchwork of methods and procedures which are located more in the field of “competitive” or “distinct” (cf. Fig. 4.1) and expand iteratively (seldom decrease) during the course of the project. The methods are oriented to standards and

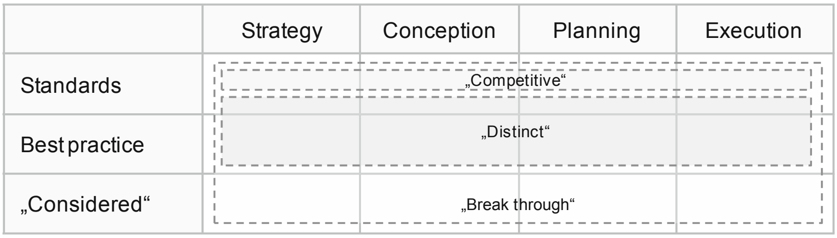

Fig. 4.1 Methods think tank in various phases

competitive levels, put in a nutshell to the mediocre, with the effect that all that can also be expected is mediocre implementation performance.

You will, in contrast, only experience genuinely high performance if you operate outside of standards and best practices within the scope of your implementation project and, following careful consideration together with your team, select the most suitable methods and models for your project or even design and specify them yourself. In this way you will arrive in the "break through" field. Since every project with its challenges and options for the team, the company and the market is unique and thus not, put plainly, comparable with others, it also requires procedures which have been specifically tailored to it.

From my point of view the multitude of best practices is not the best argument in favour of the comparability of projects, from which, in turn, the generalizability of certain methods is derived. Rathermore it represents a reaction to the sluggishness and indolence of human nature, which loves to have a sense of security and so gives preference to "valid" standards or "correct" procedures. They do, however, offer a good way to compensate for uncertainties and fears and even help to achieve a result. In other words, the unconsidered use of methodological standards may make you "Competitive" and by using additional best practices it may, under circumstances, be possible to differentiate yourself from other companies ("Distinct"). This does not, however, have very much at all to do with a successful implementation project worthy of the name.

It is only possible to speak of a high performance implementation project ("break through") if well-considered methods or best practices which have been adjusted to meet your own requirements are employed in all phases of a strategy and implementation project. When an implementation project makes real progress; is characterized by unfamiliar clarity and enthusiasm then this is mostly a result of methodological innovation—i.e. the combining, transformative adjustment of already existing methods and templates to meet your own requirements. This, however, requires no little practice; the search for stable templates; standards and the abandonment of tried-and-tested procedures in favour of developing a custom-fit methodological structure.

In **strategy projects** it is sufficient to work with a few models—generally four to six are enough—which interlock logically, addressing the strategic challenges. This saves competitor evaluations; business segment analyses; scenarios; value chain analyses and whatever the world of models has to offer. As a matter of principle I myself, for example, dispense with any kind of competitor evaluation within the scope of my strategy projects since, in any case, they only serve to optimize the status quo and are backward-looking.

The selection of methods should also, or particularly, be well thought through in the case of **concept development**.

> In order to develop a concept one of my clients had fallen back on models from the very successful implementation project of a company at which he was previously employed. The individual divisions were requested to think through the value creation using a very complex overall model; to consider and design the relevant leadership and steering system; to use a model to examine and document the sourcing model; to describe competence gaps in the form of a model and, last but not least, to employ an organization model to represent the restructuring of the organization. A Herculean task for all the participants. Numerous models were totally superfluous for the project and, in return, a key model was missing. Because upon closer inspection it became apparent that the strategic challenge actually demanded focusing on the technological changes and the consequences in the individual divisions and, with regard to this, merely thinking through the core competences and the sourcing model. So, we backtracked; outlined a model and used it to present the seven key technological drivers in the form of arrows pointing to the individual organizational units. Building on this the individual divisions were asked to derive the corresponding resulting effects for themselves and the consequences they would entail. A simple model but it put in a nutshell what needed to be penetrated.

In other words—concepts and models are not synonymous with complicated and time-consuming. Far more important is the question which (few) elements really have to be penetrated and clarified. Once this is clear prepare the results in the form of a simple graphic, model-like presentation, however never as a written text. Data can be gathered in the form of text; viewpoints and opinions can be recorded and structured. It is then essential to sort through everything and represent the relevant dimensions and aspects in a model-like form facilitating discussion, such as field matrixes, profiles or cross diagrams, so that the key interrelationships as well as the actual and target circumstances are always quickly and clear tangible.

The same applies for **planning**. There can hardly be a project planning tool which I haven't seen, starting with some kind of Excel planning sheet to project planning software right up to complicatedly distributed, data base-oriented management systems. At the risk of generalizing it is my experience that these tools are more trouble than they are worth since they require a huge amount of time for purely input-related activities and thus do not match the planning philosophy required for high performance implementation projects (cf. Chap. 5.3). In addition to this their technical implementation, explanation and communication requires as much energy as does the monitoring of, compliance with and use of the instruments. When considering any planning or management tools ask yourself 'Does it really bring us closer to the result we are aspiring to in the sense of gaining insight or implementation speed and, if yes, how?'.

In the case of **execution** you should, as a matter of principle, proceed according to the principle maximum responsibility; decentralization in the form of small teams and extreme pragmatism. Let go of perfectionism! All that matters is success and not

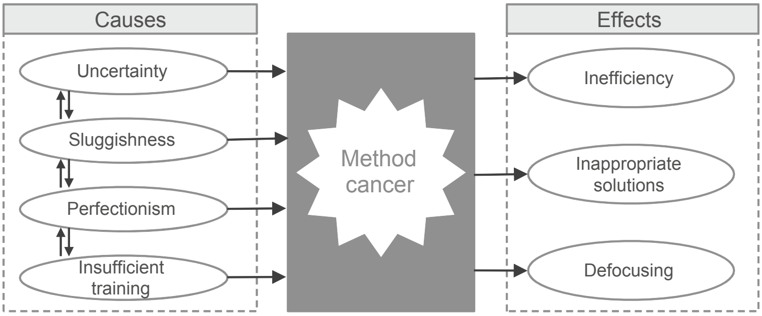

Fig. 4.2 Causes and effects of method cancer

perfect presentation. Why do presentation sheets have to be compiled again? What is the point of your presentation? Could a flip chart be good enough? Focus your methods on results and content. In other words, play less attention to the form of execution and rather always to the result you aspire to. Look back from this point at the process and you will recognize that many activities, meetings, workshops and presentations can be completely cancelled or significantly abbreviated.

Success within the scope of implementation is thus always based on working with methods in the correct manner. Figure 4.1 provides you with a pattern to help you document which methods you employ in which phase of your implementation project.

Inefficiency; inappropriate solutions and defocusing are generally signs for the presence of method cancer, i.e. that methods have taken on a life of their own and become removed from the goal (cf. Fig. 4.2). In its advanced stage this method cancer results in demotivation of the participants, who, when carrying out tasks, constantly ask themselves one single question—"Why are we actually doing this?" This is what had happened in the case of the client mentioned above, who had called for implementation concepts, almost all of which had proven to be inefficient in terms of the goal. The heads of division involved in this project were also asking themselves about the raison d'être of the tasks which had been assigned to them; felt uncertainty with regard to the expectations and the exact execution.

A good implementation management team ensures that all participants at every meeting, workshop, steering committee meeting, etc. are always clear on why exactly the corresponding methodological effort is being expended.

Implementation Insight No. 10
In most cases methods inflate implementation unnecessarily, making it complicated and sluggish. In addition to this they engender doubt in the participants and cost energy and motivation. For a high performance implementation project it is crucial that methods are only applied in a considered, results-oriented manner and that, in this context, only a modest number of methods is selected.

The causes of method cancer can be attributed to four elementary factors which you must confront if you want to experience a high performance implementation project:

1. Uncertainty
   The chief cause of method cancer is the inherent uncertainty which lies within us humans or, put more precisely, our inability to admit and consider it. One of the unwritten laws in most corporate cultures continues to be that anything which has not been understood, is unclear or creates uncertainty should not be openly mentioned. Somehow or other work goes on and precisely the constructive disobedience which could help to dispel uncertainties and also eliminate the superfluous is not practiced. So the attempt is made to overlay uncertainty with planning, suggesting that everything has been prepared and that is clear what will happen and how it will happen. Since, however, no-one really knows what will happen how inefficiency is the inescapable consequence because the dominant problem, solution or implementation uncertainty is not reacted to using the appropriate methods. The result? A lot of work is done and little is achieved.
2. Sluggishness
   Sluggishness is both a symptom of method cancer and, as paradox as it may sound, simultaneously a cause. If, within the scope of an implementation project, lots of questions have to be asked; tasks are only partially completed; agreed goals are not adhered to; if overall motivation decreases and the implementation projects starts to slow down, this is a sure sign of method cancer.
   If, in contrast, the required implementation spirit or will is lacking and extensive methodological analysis, planning and evaluation of all possible aspects constantly delay actual implementation the sluggishness becomes the cause of method cancer. A lot is done but little is achieved. The customer structure, for example, is once again analysed from top to bottom; the market is again evaluated; the attractiveness of the business segments is calculated from yet another perspective. This type of implementation sluggishness is usually very closely linked to a lack of belief in the success of the implementation.
3. Perfectionism
   Perfectionism is the enemy of success. The issue is not perfectionism, the issue is success. The issue is to move closer to the result quickly. In other words, if you have the feeling that 80 % of the correct, less decisive issues have been thought through; logically outlined in your models and put in a nutshell, then you should get going! And quickly. As you will remember—speed is as important as content. What sounds like a contradiction to my statement that most strategies and changes fail because they have not been correctly thought through is, to a certain extent also a contradiction which only you can resolve at the end of the day. What must be thought through for the change (a consideration which plays absolutely no role whatsoever in most change processes)? Consider this as intensively and in as much detail as necessary (80 %!) and then get started. Where does this 80 % mark lie? Be honest—it is usually achieved much earlier than is generally claimed. If everything has to be planned down to the last detail and analysed precisely then the project will lose speed. Simply because, for example, a method specifies a dependency analysis this does not necessarily dictate that it must be investigated

in detail which activity will result in what result effect. It is also not necessary to report everything which is listed on a reporting chart template. When methods are used to plan everything down to the last detail they rob the implementation project of the required momentum. Method cancer manifests itself in the form of slowness and an obsession with planning. 80 % clarity is sufficient to get started. Perfectionism does not always prove to be a virtue in this context either.

4. Insufficient training
   As a matter of principle there is no other way—we only learn by making mistakes. It took me a long time to understand how SWOT tools can really be employed; how the attractiveness of a strategy can really be assessed using scenarios; what the pitfalls of a value chain analysis are or how pointless it is to look for the critical path at certain points. In practical terms this means one thing—if certain methods appear an attractive means of achieving your result then get hold of people who really know how to handle these methods. Shorten your own learning curve and remain efficient and fast. Under no circumstances should you, however, delegate the tasks to external consultants but instead should facilitate systematic methods and know-how transfer by always leaving responsibility for the result in the hands of an internal employee. And only your internal employee should present the results and lead the corresponding meetings. Ensure that your team receives training.

4.2 How to Diagnose Method Cancer

The difficult thing about method cancer is that it is initially not even perceived and only combated when the strategy or implementation project has already stalled or threatens to fail completely. In addition to this during the fight to combat it the mistake is made of only tackling the effects (inefficiency; inappropriate solutions and defocusing) instead of attacking the actual causes, namely uncertainty, sluggishness, perfectionism and insufficient training.

Hardly any implementation project escapes method cancer, making it even more important to study the diagnosis in detail in order to ascertain the form in which the above mentioned causes have an impact on the strategy, tactics (concept development and planning) and implementation phases (cf. Fig. 4.3).

1. Uncertainty
   In the strategy **phase** uncertainty generally manifests itself as problem uncertainty or goal uncertainty. It is not clear what the actual problem is or what exactly should be achieved. A Head of Corporate Development for example asked me to provide a brief assessment of strategy development which was already underway. Together with four managing directors and representatives of corporate development we inspected the work of the corporate developers—the assignment of the business segments to relevant competitive portfolios and the corresponding presentations of opportunities and threats which were reflected in the corresponding development paths for the business segments. A lively discussion broke out

Phase / Causes	Strategy	Tactics	Implementation
Uncertainty	Problem / goal uncertainty	Solution uncertainty	Over-integration
Sluggishness	Conceptual sluggishness	Slowness	Obsession with planning
Perfectionism	Responsibilty uncertainty	Love of detail	Control mania
Insufficient training	Insufficient conceptual tools	Creativity deficits	Lack of experience

Fig. 4.3 Primary causes of method cancer in the various implementation phases

concerning the opportunities, challenges and difficulties which would occur during these developments. Shortly before we turned our attention to deciding on further development and methodological penetration I applied the brakes. "What exactly do you actually want to achieve with your strategy?"; "What goals do you want achieve with your strategy and by when?"; "What has priority?" The further discussion quickly made it apparent that what we were talking about here was strategy opportunism, which meant a lot of work and effort and would result in anything but a systematic, unique strategy. Following this we discussed a number of drivers before coming to the conclusion that the strategy should be weighted less to innovative products and quality leadership but rather dictated customer service leadership if the company was to survive in the competitive environment in the long term. Based on this clear goal focus it was also possible to clarify the methods which should be used to achieve this.

Problem uncertainty or goal uncertainty in the strategy phase can have fatal consequences insofar as it generates enormous inefficiency within the scope of the process. Failing to recognize the problem which should actually be solved by the strategy or the goal which should be achieved can result in the opportunistic examination of a whole raft of things without really making any progress. In order to avoid any misunderstandings—strategic opportunism—in other words lying in wait and being prepared for good opportunities—can, without doubt, be meaningful. If, however, you are planning a strategy project then it should be clear what you want to achieve with it.

Existing problem uncertainty furthermore reinforces uncertainty in subsequent phases. If, for example, a company believes that the causes of a product's current sales problems lie in its technical characteristics then a new strategy will not be of much assistance if the true problem is a service division which is unstructured and lacking in goals. The implementation project will become a frustrating experience because the problem cannot be solved and the sales problems continue unabated.

One cause of method cancer in the **tactics phase** can lie in uncertainty about the conceptual solution of a problem—no-one knows exactly what the strategy should be like and what has to be done to facilitate it. In order to remedy this imagination and creativity are required in addition to methodological knowledge. If, when developing their new strategy "Con-Sumer Conquest" (cf. Fig. 1.3), the managing directors of the European internet providers described in Chapter 1 had moved straight from the strategy directly to planning without developing a concept solution uncertainty would have arisen relatively quickly. Because despite the very focused, honed strategy which clearly describes where the company wants to go via its eleven strategic strategy options questions regarding the exact structuring of product management or the cooperation between Marketing and Sales as well as Product Development; etc. would have suddenly come up. The lack of methodological planning would have caused inefficient implementation or led to inappropriate results.

During factual **implementation** you can identify uncertainty by something which I call "over-integration" and manifests itself in too many meetings or regular conferences and in workshops with too many participants. This effect originates from the participants' uncertainty that they may miss something which they should know during the implementation project or from their lack of trust in the implementation management's methodology. Method cancer thus sucks up the participants' energy and time during implementation.

2. Sluggishness

   Within the scope of strategy **development** things always become sluggish when strategy does not become a results experience (cf. Chap. 1.3) but rather the strategy team is bored and frequently confused by a vast number of models because it is not integrated into the strenuous conceptual work. In my experience strategy projects could be effected much more quickly and in much less time if the participants identified for themselves the few key questions which need to be clarified and attempted to genuinely penetrate them using simple models. Strategy has far more to with intuition than analysis and models.

   Method cancer within the scope of **tactics**, i.e. the development of the concepts and compilation of the implementation plans, is usually caused by slowness. Far too much time is taken with everything! In particular during these phases the principle applies—work takes as long as the time you allow it! When I was able to accompany an industrial company during the implementation of a cross-company synergy project covering several business divisions I requested that a complete concept compiled under the primary responsibility of internal employees and concerning how the individual divisions would be organized in future and responsibilities would be reassigned be completed within two months. Criticism and resistance were stirred up—you would have to plan in detail before being able to say how much time is required and, in any case, precise analyses would first be necessary; etc. All in all reactions which demonstrate that organization are not used to work from the result backwards but rather move forward from the status quo—an attitude which is particularly fatal during the concept phase. Luckily my client was completely of my opinion and we pushed my specification through.

Be prepared for the fact that, in such cases, you will have to put up with a lot of resistance and head wind. You will, however, reap the rewards which I reaped in this case. After two months the concepts were on the table and thanks to the pressure everyone had focused very effectively on what was genuinely relevant and only to the extent to which it was necessary. In the end the entire Team was very proud of itself. The only way to generate speed and thus also the necessary focus is to prescribe a corresponding speed.

Sluggishness within the scope of actual **implementation** always arises when the intervals between periods of reflection are too long; the "salami slices" to be mastered are cut too thickly. During implementation projects I usually proceed by having results lists, which should be completed regularly compiled at intervals of at least two weeks in order to make focused, effective progress step by step. In my experience anything time planning which exceeds this is a reason for sluggishness in implementation. Because an overabundance of planning, reporting and controlling methods results in the implementation project progressing only sluggishly and saps its momentum.

3. Perfectionism

   Perfection, and thus method cancer based on responsibility uncertainty, regularly spreads during the strategy **phase** of a project. The more unclear responsibilities are, the more methods, analyses and evaluations I regularly discover within the company. If the purpose of the strategy has been clarified in advance; what the key drivers behind it are and which critical issues this will give rise to then there are also clear responsibilities concerning who is responsible for what content and, in the final instance, this also helps to achieve genuine methodological efficiency. Instead of using all possible methods to try to consider, underpin and present in a multitude of derivatives anything which could somehow be interesting or relevant within the framework of the business, the Head of Corporate Development from the example above must first identify a clear goal. In the case of the goal of achieving customer service leadership the Marketing Director would have had clear responsibility for stating what the company's current status in terms of customer service was; what the causes and levers for this were; what the strategic target position within this framework will be in future and which required derivatives had to be made. Perfectionism within the scope of the strategy process is fatal since the diversity of issues and possible methods is infinite. Responsibility uncertainties within the organization—and strategy is top management's responsibility—are often masked by consultants and teams due to their wrongly practiced results responsibility and perfectionism.

   Within the scope of **tactics** it is usually love of detail—attractively presented plans and concepts based on sophisticated presentations or overview posters—which is responsible for method cancer. Be on your guard against an overexaggerated love of detail and train your implementation team to always have a results-based mindset. What provides us with clarity, short cuts or new insights and ideas for implementation project? Anything which fails to make a contribution to this will not be executed, be it the project management tool which you have to can; be it the detailed, work-intensive cost driver model which will foreseeably only make a modest contribution to achieving customer service leadership. Dispense with sophisticated presentations and formulations; concentrate on content. What is particularly droll—I have, many times, experienced clients who had more or less verbatim minutes taken of every meeting! What for? Imagine the time and effort and what contribution should this make to achieving results? I quickly learned that this serves only one purpose—in cases of doubt to identify the guilty party for something or to take someone "at his word". I have seldom experienced a more inefficient input orientation. When meetings conclude you should summarize who is going to do what and enquire about this at the next meeting—everything else is nothing but procedure. And in cases of doubt and in the interests of achieving results you can even adopt Konrad Adenauer's attitude—what do I care what I said yesterday. Success requires openness, trust and a healthy culture of mistakes. To ensure that you don't experience any unnecessary method cancer within the scope of your implementation project you should, firstly, be able to estimate what your team is really capable of achieving and, secondly, you must establish a genuine culture of trust. Taken together both result in clear, achievable objectives and liberate you from any form of control mania. This means in reverse, that implementation projects without any genuine implementation momentum display forms of control mania. Employees must deliver project reports; record their time using some form of tool; listen at status meetings to who is lagging behind in which plans and why; etc.

4. Insufficient training
   Knowing a wide range of methods and never using them is the best precondition for escaping method cancer! What I mean by this? It helps to be familiar with methods because this develops conceptual and structuring abilities. These abilities in turn have a synergetic/innovative effect on solving the actual problem and structuring it into in procedural and results types. In other words, the best method is the empty sheet on a flip chart or a desk which is used to outline how the problem should be methodologically addressed, structured, solved and approached. But, however, only by means of the indirect use of everything you may ever have read, studied or may even also have applied. As a successful implementation manager you must be clear on the following principles—firstly, good solutions are only founded by genuinely thinking them through. Secondly, thinking is strenuous and requires time. Thirdly, just because it is strenuous thinking should never simply be delegated. And in the case of thinking for once the principle applies; a lot helps a lot. So train on your own in order to be able to reciprocally imagine the results in a team. Thinking together does not work. Vision, feedback and suggestions in a group are valuable. A joint conceptual process always results, in my experience, in suboptimal solutions and, often, strange compromises.
   Within the scope of the strategy it is essential to acquire conceptual tools which enable you to penetrate complex issues from varying perspectives. Whether you use operational networks; scenarios or even electronic tools is irrelevant in this context. All that matters is that you are well-versed in looking at, in particular, complex problems with the optimum cognitive detachment without losing the context.

In **concept development** it is crucial to penetrate the relevant conceptual content and, following this, to put it onto paper in the most creative manner possible. Grab one of the books which provide a good description of how to prepare information in a graphic form and train this skill. A set of 20–30 basic models allows you to model a huge number of conceptual challenges so simply and clearly that you will subsequently have wonderful models for group discussions concerning the really crucial factors. This allows you to provide yourself with the equipment required for the necessary creativity.

Training your thinking processes combats problem uncertainty and, using the correct know-how and methodological experience, solution uncertainty can, in the final instance, be eliminated. In the case of implementation projects, in contrast, experience or management competence play the primary role—in other words, thinking for yourself.

Within the scope of developing and setting up a new call centre I put together a "treatment regimen" consisting of the stated aspects together with a service manager.

> We called all the sub-project managers together to clarify in an open, only slightly structured discussion in a laid-back, relaxed atmosphere where they felt uncertain or had a bad feeling. It was only thanks to this open, honest discussion atmosphere that it became evident that some individuals in certain divisions did not really trust the concepts and believed that they could not be realized. The uncertainties were addressed by means of clear measures and responsibilities were assigned with a significant increase in productivity once uncertainty had been eliminated. We countered slowness with very clear prioritizing of issues. The goals was to drive forward many issues in parallel and to this end other aspects initially had to be put on hold. The goal was to have completed the five key tasks by the end of the month. The pace accelerated considerably. The issue relating to love of detail was not a major problem and, in the case of the creativity shortcomings, it became clear that certain concepts could be kept much simpler and, within the scope of sub-contractor steering, could be clearly defined.

The development of method cancer is a creeping process, the symptoms manifest themselves gradually. This is why, as an implementation manager, you should be particularly aware of your intuition. Since the individual causes are intertwined it is not easy to identify them clearly. Uncertainty, for example, usually only becomes apparent during factual implementation because corresponding signals were ignored or played down during the strategy or tactics phase. With active intervention existing uncertainty will not, however, simply disappear but rather will be reinforced. Uncertainties can also be triggered by lack of training in the handling of methods. Because the result is then that incorrect methods are often used, with problem or goal uncertainty promptly making themselves felt in the strategy phase as a consequence. Or lack of experience hampers the identification of a self-developed method of working or the appropriate methods which are required to generate the necessary speed for solution clarity and goal-oriented implementation.

There are four basic principles to tackle the causes of method cancer:

1. First and foremost and over and over again you must devote yourself to uncertainty—no matter where, no matter whom—with openness and understanding, using the right methods to overcome it. An uncertain team will never generate the momentum which is indispensable for a high performance implementation

project. As the implementation manager you must deal with your own uncertainty alone but must help your team to address this issue.
2. The certainty gained is the basis for increased self-confidence in implementation which will enable you to turn sluggishness into speed. Because once it has been understood what exactly should be achieved it will also be possible to take up the sporting challenge. Assuming that you ensure that there are genuine priorities in this regard. Remember—if everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. I try to keep the focus for the individual phases to a maximum of three topics.
3. The speed will result in rapid successes, depriving perfectionism of its basis to become a cause of method cancer. Perfectionism cannot develop where there is no time for the superfluous and useless.
4. Once you have set these levers in motion the required training will fall into place almost by itself and can truly be experienced as "training on the job". Prescribe specific models or the methods required to engage with these models at the right points in the process to ensure that they can then be put to one side and that the individuals concerned can then consider the defined progress criteria and outline on a sheet of paper how the relevant upcoming issues can be penetrated in conceptual terms.

"Over-integration" is a typical reaction to try to compensate for existing uncertainty. However, what it actually does is merely reinforce the effects of method cancer. Only when the causes of these effects, in other words uncertainty, sluggishness and perfectionism, have been overcome can "over-integration" dissipate in favour of self-reflection (fail forward).

Implementation Insight No. 11
Cautious, focused use of methods, which does not allow the superfluous and useless or any "blind spots" resulting in uncertainty to occur, is the basis for genuine implementation momentum. Openness and creative thinking; the conscious, systematically rational penetration of problem and solution options result in clarity and stable certainty, which in turn facilitate speed, thus helping to avoid unnecessary perfectionism.

4.3 Why Thinking Is More Important than Management—Concept Development

When, following careful consideration, management is able to arrive at an appropriate strategy for an upcoming change, it not only prevents the emergence of uncertainty in a team as a result but rather can also release itself from the so typical and often not really helpful "obligation" to lead and supervise. It can distance itself from the push management which is unfortunately still all too common and move towards pull management. The team will be drive by a clear objective, operating in the certainty of being able to achieve what it has resolved to do. Any isolated emerging uncertainty will immediately be reacted to constructively within the scope of the process.

Implementation Insight No. 12
Most implementation projects never really gather pace because they have not been thought through sensibly. This results in constant uncertainty both with regard to *what* should be achieved and *how*. In order to avoid this you must achieve problem clarity in the strategy; solution clarity in the tactics and implementation certainty in the execution.

Instead of perceiving uncertainty in the team as a helpful signal and possible indicator of incorrect development, the general reaction is to try to overpower it within the scope of a massive methodological battle or by exerting a huge degree of pressure. To make sense, methods should, however, only be applied if, even if they cannot really dispel it, they can help to reduce uncertainty to a bearable degree. Should incorrect development arise because of, or after, the use of methods the reason for this is often:

1. Inappropriate use of methods
   If, for example, a SWOT analysis is used as an instrument for strategy development before a specific strategy option exists the result will be a completely wrongly interpreted or meaningless assessment of a factor as a strength or weakness. Focusing on activities relating to a new form of organization although it is clear that it is cannot leverage change is also a trip down a methodological blind alley.
2. Insufficient use of methods
   The heart of the problem may be identified in terms of the issue, however the bearable degree of uncertainty for the team will still not have been achieved as a result of this. An automobile club, for example, took the recognizable changes both in people's mobility behaviour as well as also in the significance of cars in connection with demographic developments as the basis to examine its business sectors in terms of their attractiveness for the future plus new services which could be required in future. The scenario management method was exactly right here. After two strenuous workshop days the twelve-strong team recognized that in future combined services would have to cover private cars; rental cars (or city car sharing) and rail transport. However there was still too much uncertainty in the issue of what exactly the timescale of this development would be and what exactly it would mean for the future business sector structure. The issue of how this would affect international partnerships and the three countries in which the automobile club was active was also unclear. As a method the scenario management should have been interlinked with a business segment analysis and work on the time axis should also, for example, have been carried out in three very clear separate time horizons.
3. Overexaggerated use of methods
   Perfection can be never-ending. Which is why it should only be employed within the scope of an implementation project until uncertainty has been eliminated

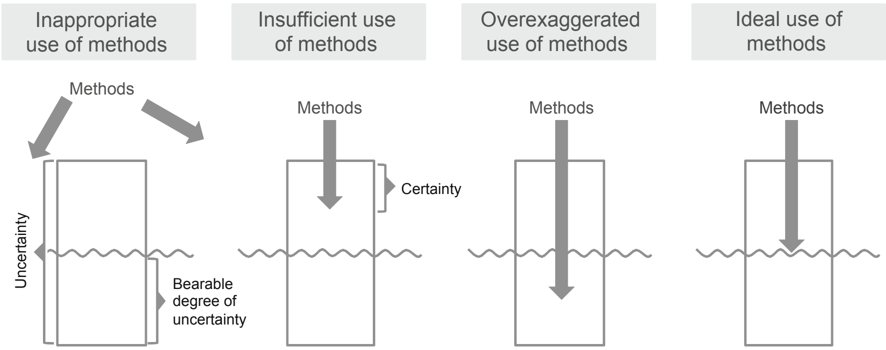

Fig. 4.4 Methodology—Reducing uncertainty to a bearable degree

and/or reduced to a bearable degree. In the above mentioned example the trend observations and feedback to the club's own business sectors could thus also have been supplemented by competition scenarios and technology scenarios could have been employed to consider which technological trends would move the automotive industry in which direction. All very interesting questions which would perhaps also have served to provide still more clarity at one or another point but which were, however, irrelevant for the automobile club's core question and challenge. Overexaggeration generally takes up too much time; generates inefficiency and often also even increases uncertainty.

Figure 4.4 shows the interplay of the use of methods and the reduction of uncertainty. By using the correct quantity of methods uncertainty is reduced to a bearable degree—in other words, it is located directly below the water line which marks the level at which uncertainty is bearable.

I cannot, unfortunately, provide you with an overview of the methods which are ideal for change processes because none exists. This kind of methodological overview would also not be helpful because it would—like it or not—idealize the world. In order to establish whether your use of methods lies far below or far below the level of what is bearable you must continuously focus on the goal which you want to achieve. Methods must help to structure the image and, like the links in a chain, interlock; should not have any weaknesses and every participant must know exactly why a method is being used at a particular point in time. When it is clear that the sales strategy needs to be changed then why do the four P's (product, price, place, promotion) have to be thought through? Or if the process could be streamlined simply by means of the central cost drivers then why is a detailed observation of the process still required? So always keep a critical eye on what you are doing and be sure to monitor the output. Methods are nothing but input, means to an end! As soon as the clear, beneficial relevance to the result is lost—stop the activity and deploy the valuable resources elsewhere.

Implementation Insight No. 13
Methods are input and generate effort in order to achieve a result (output). The chain of methods used is, to some extent, a suspension bridge which takes you to the other side, where your result is located. The methods used to this end must interlock neatly and be meaningful and stable otherwise no-one will accompany you across the suspension bridge. Always make sure that every participant is clear on the reasons why you are using which method in what order (input), and what you want to achieve with them in the end (output).

With regard to the strategy and implementation management phases this means specifically:

- The use of methods in the strategy phase serves to clarify which is the most attractive solution to achieve the goal. To this end conceptual tools are required which broaden your own and your team's horizons; liberate them from prisons of experience and show options which they have not previously identified. The methods described by Gomez and Probst (2001) and Vester (2002) for problem solutions and handling complexity are helpful in this context.
- In the tactics phase concept formulation serves to provide the certainty for the implementation of the strategy, in other words, the drill-down so that everyone knows with regard to their own issues what exactly needs to be formulated (elimination of uncertainty). The subsequent planning using the corresponding methods clarifies who will do what where and how as regards the concept.
- Implementation is all about using the correct methods to make rapid progress within the scope of small units of time; not to plan too far in advance and to maintain the required flexibility—not to be forced into any tight planning structure. It is, nevertheless, essential to ensure the degree of clarity required as the precondition for productive action.

These phases are effected in series, one after another, and within the scope of this logic there is no parallelization. Every phase concentrates solely on achieving the goal as defined by the focusing. In order to be successful in implementation management methods and concepts must be employed in a strictly goal-oriented manner and only formulated to the extent that they serve to provide a safeguard and protection against errors or criticism. They can thus bear a certain degree of blurring.

A pharmaceuticals company planned that innovation management should play an important role in future. As a result the managing director of the Corporate Development division was pushing for a comprehensive analysis to be carried out on how other companies had structured their innovation management. While this type of analysis may possibly provide supposed certainty among the managing directors, it is, however, pointless since, to all intents and purposes, this analysis cannot play any real role for the result—the implementation of innovation management in the managing director's own company. Gathering competitive data and orienting yourself to the competition is generally as waste of time because the findings they produce are history and based on assumptions and decisions which cannot fit your own company and the situation which you happen to currently be in. The better procedure is to gain clarity on what you yourself want to achieve via innovation management; what the critical factors for success are and what the key levers and processes are for this. Different not better wins!

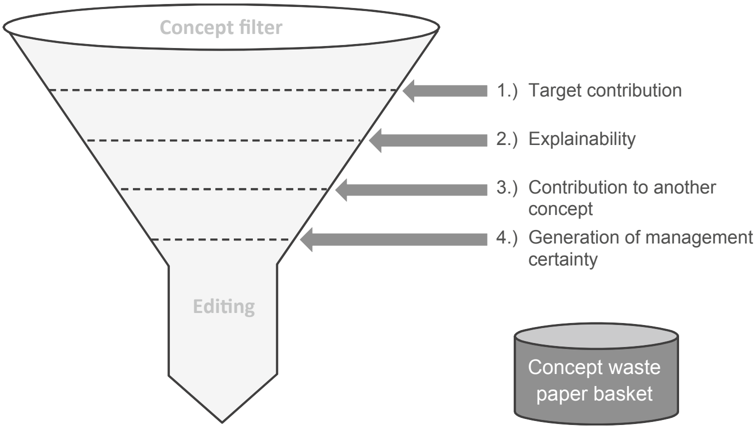

Fig. 4.5 Kolbusa's concept filter

In order to identify or scent out pointless concepts the right questions must be asked when gathering evidence. The concept filter can be of assistance in this regard (cf. Fig. 4.5).

The concept filter examines every concept or every method based on the following four criteria:

1. Target contribution
   Is there is a clear connection to a goal, in other words is there either a clear contribution (concept) which outlines the result to be achieved in terms of a type of result or an indirect contribution in the sense that the method delivers more attractive options, routes or short cuts to the result aspired to? If, for example, work is carried out using the methods of process documentation; value/cost drivers and a roles/responsibilities model in order to arrive at a more efficient process then it will quickly become clear that process documentation does not deliver any real efficiency knowledge but, however, entails a large amount of effort, while the other two methods make a major results contribution. So always pay attention to what the method can deliver with regard to the result aspired to and whether the benefit and the effort are in proportion to one another.
2. Immediate explainabilty—"Why am I doing this?"
   If you cannot explain at the drop of a hat why you are using value chain analysis; want to develop a business sector portfolio or want to see the current service provider structure evaluated within the scope of a sourcing model, then it is a fair assumption that the application does not make much sense or is not tightly linked to the other methods within the scope of the individual methods' chain of results. If it cannot be clearly explained why a concept is being formulated and what connection it has to the goals then the concept should be discarded. Why, for example, should a value chain viewpoint be employed if the uncertainty is contained in the issue of how sourcing should be structured within the scope of implementation?

3. Contribution to at least one other concept
   Does the concept or method only stand alone or does it also provide a contribution to other concepts? An isolated concept is not particularly helpful. If a leadership/steering concept is not married to a well-thought-out organization concept and neither provides the other with a corresponding value then it is legitimate to ask whether the correct means have been selected at all to achieve the goal.
4. Generation of management certainty with regard to implementation
   Does the concept help the responsible managers to carry out the actual implementation more easily and reliably? If, for example, the implementation manager of a telecommunications company notices that the responsible heads of division find it difficult to arrive at new roles/responsibilities models for each of their divisions he could, as an aid, develop a detailed business logic model and have it completed. The model includes, among other things, a comprehensible presentation or how the business logic will change. The philosophy and modus operandi are no longer based on "Network and technologies" but instead focus on the customer. Working from this over-arching model the individual divisions will then find it easier to specify and describe the required roles in their area.

The concept filter places all the concepts which do not meet at least one of the criteria in the waste paper basket. There are three aspects to take into account in this context:

1. Which concepts are required? (Unnecessary concepts immediately end up in the waste paper basket).
2. Which of the required concepts are missing?
3. How detailed do the concepts need to be?

With the aid of the concept filter you can limit the number of methods required to edit the concept, which means making the uncertainty bearable.

4.4 Using Speed to Reduce Complexity

Sluggishness during the tactics and implementation phase is a common cause of method cancer. The countermeasure? Speed is the name of the day here. This does not, however, always meet with approval "What about quality and the risks?"; "The risk of overlooking something is too great" or "Things have to be coordinated and that takes time!" My experience tells me that the Pareto principle has also infiltrated implementation—80 % of results are achieved with 20 % of the resources and in 20 % of the time which implementation normally takes. So why don't we simply work faster? The reason is, once again, uncertainty—about doing the wrong thing; not working correctly or thoroughly enough, etc. In other words, the same old suspects. If you ensure speed at this juncture there will, logically, be less time to think about why things are not possible or particularly difficult, possibly even demanding.

Implementation Insight No. 14
The longer things take, the more difficult and “bad” they become. Implementation complexity can only be overcome if all the participants are pushed through the process at high speed.

My day-to-day experience is that things have to be completed quickly in order to avoid all the associated unnecessary problems and uncertainties. Because why do projects end up taking so long? Because in larger organizations in particular there is a marked tendency to have to protect yourself and to have considered and planned everything in detail. This is, however, not the way to successfully implement strategies, changes or projects because:

1. The longer we think about something or discuss it, the more reasons, options and risks occur to us why things are not possible. Is thinking about things, however, not the only way to ensure that you do the right thing? My observations tell me “No”. The only way to find out if something is right is to do it. Speed thus also helps to prevent the emergence of uncertainties and generates solution clarity. To this end it is, however, also necessary to have the freedom to fail and to actually fail over and over again, in other words to develop a culture of “failing forwards” (cf. Chap. 8).
2. Our “gut feeling” generally tells all of us exactly what we need to do and how. We must simply learn to trust ourselves and then get and stay moving. We must also learn to talk about things that we have misgivings about and to handle them proactively—the longer things are put off, the worse they become.
3. Work only takes as long as the time we allow it. Working according to this principle results in enormous productivity because we force ourselves to focus on what is really important. This applies to both the small and the large issues. It is often amazing just how much we can achieve in a short period of time.
4. Since there is always a direct correlation between length of time and number of participants the rule is “The more people who are involved, the tougher the process will be”. Yes, I know that participation, involvement and empowerment are important but it is often the case that there is simply just too much of it.

If you drive fast you will have less opportunity to be distracted by all the possibly interesting things which lie to the left and right of the road. You are fully focused on the result, your travel destination. And your passengers will not have any opportunity to suggest new routes; to discover a place where they would like to get out, etc. You are travelling at “full speed ahead” with your team. So decide for yourself the speed at which you want to “drive” your topics. I can only say from my own experience—the faster the better. But, be careful—this only works if you stop for breaks; reward yourself and other; consciously take the time to be proud of yourself. Otherwise you will burn.

Imagine you are riding a motor bike. This may allow you to accelerate to the maximum extent, however, you will only be able to take one further individual with you. Things are different where a Porsche or Ferrari is concerned. If you want to take a large number of passengers with you then you will need a bus or a tractor with a trailer and your progress will be correspondingly slower. You will be faster and more efficient if you start out with ten sports cars instead of a bus. However, speed costs strength, energy and money! And you have to make investments for it. Namely in the right attitude (gears); the right engine (motor) and the right fuel. And you can also only drive a limited number of routes at this speed. High performance implementation projects are made up of a sprint, a break, training, a sprint, a break; etc. not of marathons which become slow-moving and emaciate you.

Many of us approach our strategies and change projects in a tractor with a massive trailer, embarking on a marathon. Wanting to take everyone with us and from the very outset is, however, the wrong approach. It is not the strongest person who wins the race, but the fastest. You will be more successful if you decide on a rally with lots of all-terrain vehicles instead of expending a lot of energy to work your way slowly through impassable terrain with a tractor.

Implementation Insight No. 15
The faster you want to be, the fewer people you can take with you. Because all the passengers have to have understood the goal and purpose.

Kolbusa's Speed Principles

1. Number of passengers
   Think very carefully about how many people you really need to take with you in the car. It is usually fewer than you think.
2. Choice of vehicle
   Chose the fastest vehicle available to you. But one which you are also trained to drive! If you have only ever driven a bus it is pointless to suddenly want to embark on a journey with ten Ferraris—the risk of an accident is too great.
3. Maintenance intervals
   Ensure that on-going maintenance, rest and training take place continuously. The faster you drive the more maintenance the motor will require. It must be given plenty of opportunities to cool down.
4. Time targets
   Work takes as long as the time you allow for it. Think carefully about how much time you give your passengers to complete the distance to be covered.
5. Allocation of the team
   Break down the topics so that clear packages of responsibility, not packages of work are delegated. Every passenger should be given a clear responsibility for results which he or she can focus on fully.
6. Knowledge of the team
   You should obtain clarity about what your organization is capable of in order to then ensure that you are travelling at the right speed. In this regard the rule is that your team can generally achieve more than you think and, in particular,

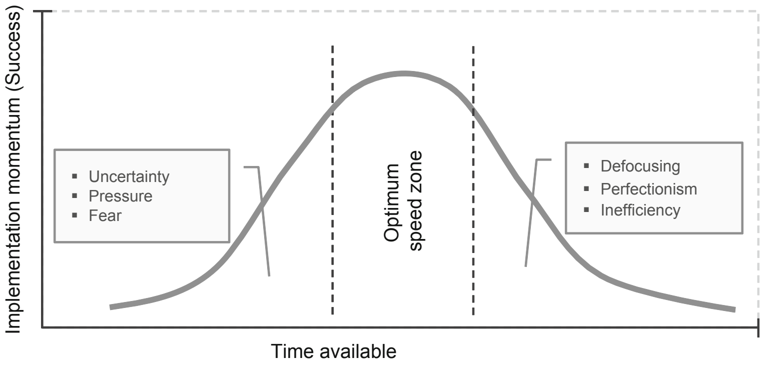

Fig. 4.6 The optimum speed

more than it thinks it can. Steve Jobs' employees said that he was surrounded by something called the "reality distortion field" (Isaacson and Walter 2011). He specified seemingly impossible time targets and they were still met. These impossible time targets ensure clear focusing.

7. Preparations for the race
   Make sure that everyone knows the route—what are we going to do in what sequence? How are the various methods and concepts interrelated? There must be absolute certainty and clarity in this regard—not necessarily for the entire route but most definitely for the next section.

Do not drive too fast when carrying out your implementation—your motor will over-rev and you will end up in the red zone. Uncertainty, pressure and fear will take hold of your project. If you specify too much time and not enough speed the result will be inefficiency as a result of defocusing and perfectionism. (cf. Fig. 4.6).

The cause of defocusing is, as shown in Fig. 4.7, that an incredible amount of time is taken at the beginning of a project, with things being handled in a "laid-back" manner (1) only for the project to come under increasing pressure to succeed and experience hectic operational activity with all its consequences (2). The speed and demands are pushed to the limits of the participants' abilities. A high speed corresponding to the performance capabilities has, however, not yet been established by management—the project "over-revs". Once an important milestone has been achieved management, which knows what the team is capable of achieving, usually allows the speed to decelerate to an unnecessary extent (3), before the cycle begins all over again (1) until the next milestone is achieved. The optimum speed zone is thus consistently avoided. It can only be reached if a clear picture of what the team can achieve without stress but with healthy sportsmanship exists; the speed is kept consistent and an implementation flow is generated within the scope of which everyone accomplishes a lot but without perceiving this as strenuous.

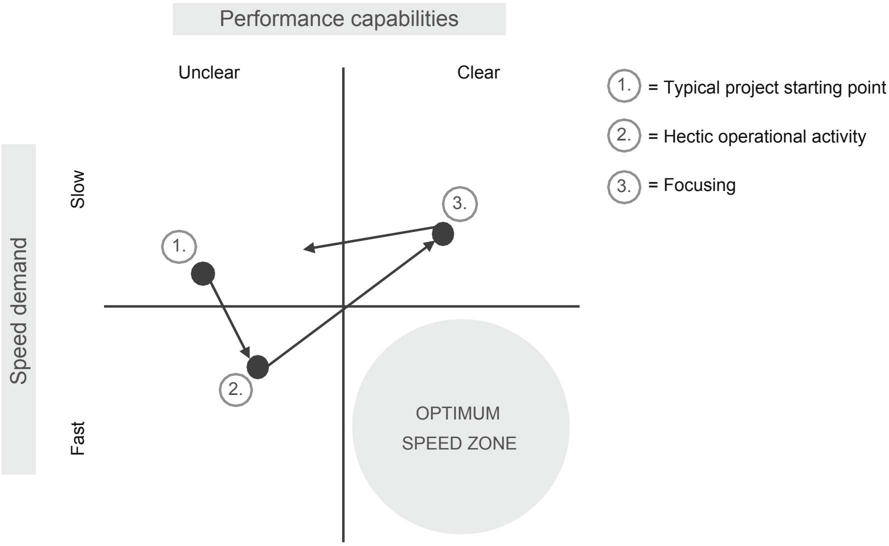

Fig. 4.7 Unintentional avoidance of momentum

Implementation Insight No. 16
Most organizations work around the optimum speed zone, never entering it, because they do not demand sufficient speed in implementation or never develop a truly realistic feel for their organization's performance capabilities, thus either over- or under-revving the implementation motor.

In order to enter the optimum speed zone from the outset a number of specific issues must be clarified in advance:

The Path to the Optimum Speed Zone

1. "Calculation of the optimum speed range"
   In order to enter the optimum speed range for yourself and your organization you must clarify the following—what performance can I achieve? What can be done within what time spans? What is my team, my organization capable of achieving?
   Think this through systematically. Break the concepts and results to be delivered down into pieces and locate them on the time axis. Calculate the resources which are actually available and allocate them to the individual pieces. Even if the results should be sobering, which they often are, this is the only way to attain a realistic starting point.

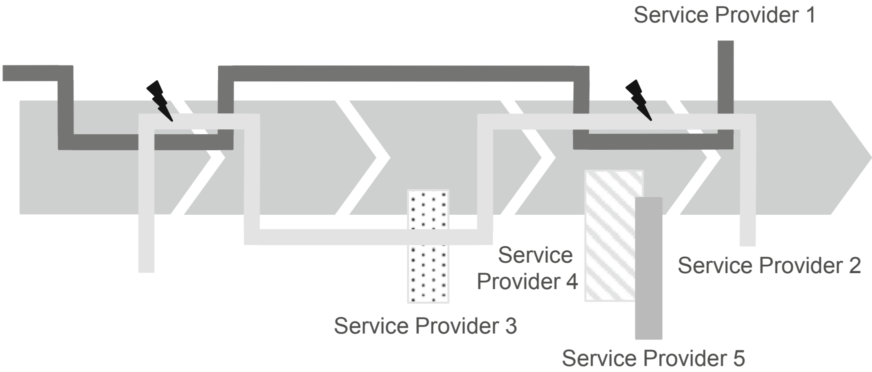

Fig. 4.8 Example of graphic presentation of service providers within the scope of a process

2. Define the formulation goals
   Once the questions posed in Step 1 above have been answered you should not work with to-do lists or plans but instead, without question, with results lists and in clear, short intervals of one to a maximum of three weeks. This is the only way to keep the feedback cycles short enough to provide your team with the required momentum and inherent enjoyment of the project. Activities, time or effort have a counter-productive effect in this context.
3. Organization of progress management
   Project/progress management and the corresponding reporting should also be structured in such a way that you are only interested in results, not in activities which have been completed or in plans which have been adhered to. You could, for example, ask “Where are we at with regard to the organization concept; how far away from the final result are we? Can we bump up the degree to which the result has been achieved to 70 %?” Only agree how much the degree to which the result has been achieved should have increased by the next meeting and what the team believes must be done to achieve this.
   If you are in the concept development phase of your project, it is essential that you work according to the principle of “quick and dirty quality” (Scherrer 2011). If you ensure that overall drafts, which can still be very inadequate, are completed very quickly you will arrive at good results more quickly. On no account should you proceed incrementally.
4. Graphic presentation
   Ensure that all concepts and papers for decision-making are compiled using images and graphics. In other words, no epic long discussions on the description of a concept or a decision which is required. Educate your team to think in models, graphics and images. Instead of, for example, explaining in detail what exactly the problem within the scope of the new sourcing is, the team presents this problem in graphic form. (cf. Fig. 4.8)
5. Application of the concept filter
   Unnecessary concept formulations also decrease speed. The concept filter should thus be applied here to ensure focusing. Less is more!

6. Use of resources
   Resources must be focused on whatever the result should be. A consistent orientation to results is thus required.

If, despite the application of these speed rules you cannot generate any momentum then you may perhaps still not yet know exactly what you and your team are really capable of achieving or your results packages may still be unclear because they are too large.

How Not To Be Confused—Mastering Complexity

5

It seems simple at first glance—the reorientation of the company; the implementation of the project; the introduction of a change in culture. As soon, however, as you go into detail and pay more attention to things they immediately begin to become complicated, may even perhaps prove to be complex. Why is this? It's very simple—the factors which become obvious and play a role within the scope of detailed attention to the task increase numerically with every further addition of detail. The risk of losing your eye for the basics is great; interdependency tends towards no longer being manageable and the result is a loss of what researchers call the optimum cognitive distance to the problem. We humans are, as a matter of principle, not particularly well-designed to handle complex issues. According to the most recent findings we are not, as was long supposed, capable of dealing intellectually with seven but rather only with four things at the same time. Given the several 100 or even 1,000 factors which play a role in a more complex project this discrepancy does not, however, make any difference at all.

So what is mastering complexity all about? To begin with it is about making a decision. Since you can only work in one direction you should either focus on the truly relevant factors and play them through at various levels of abstraction. Or you should place the focus on a selected issue and work it through to the end. So, genuinely set one priority and do not, as is all too often the case, declare everything to be a priority. Because there is hardly anything you can do to change your abilities to handle complexity, which are, as a matter of principle, limited—no matter how many Sudokus you solve or how much brain training you do. You must employ conceptual tools to assist you—also for structuring reasons—in identifying the decisive factors or issues for your project as skilfully and quickly as possible and to assist you in handling the experience and conceptual pitfalls. The most attractive solutions are not generally those which are suggested by our experience and habitual viewpoints.

This chapter's goal is to communicate a feeling for this complexity and to generate a sensibility concerning what you have to watch out for. In order to understand complexity it is first important to know the dimensions of the complexity and its fundamental drivers. Following this I will break down complexity in implementation management; state the three most common pitfalls which cause unnecessary

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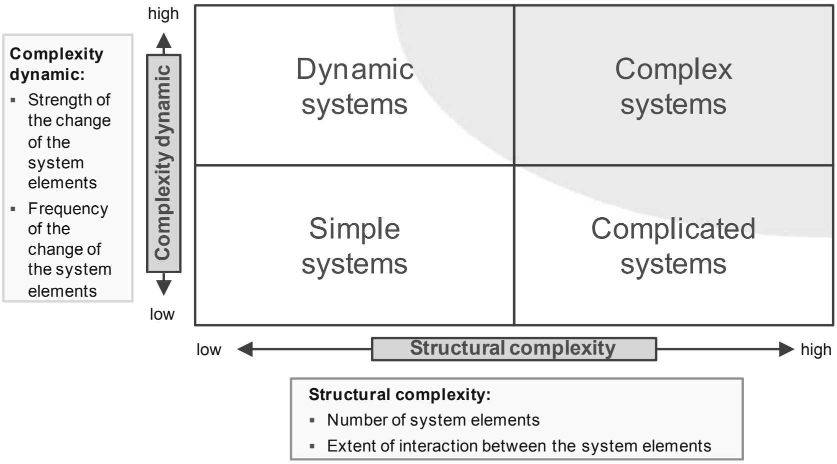

Fig. 5.1 Describing complexity

complexity in implementation and give you advice on how you and your team can avoid them. In addition to this I will show you how to avoid unnecessary complexity in planning and what the key principles of mastering complexity in the fields of concept development, planning, emotions and policy are as well as also what the corresponding challenges are.

5.1 When Things Become More Than Complicated

Even though it is not always easy—complexity should not be confused with complicatedness (cf. Fig. 5.1). Something which is complicated is convoluted or intertwined such as, for example, a task which is difficult to solve and can sometimes only be completed with help from the outside. However, it can be solved if you have the correct knowledge. A book-keeping system can, for example, be very complicated—a wide range of entry ranges and clients with convoluted interrelationships—but has a stable structure functioning according to an internal logic.

A task, in contrast, whose individual components which are interrelated in such a complex manner that they are ambiguous—even if you have all the necessary information on them—and that the task most certainly cannot be solved or described using simple linear rules is, quite rightly, termed complex. The method in which a complex system or interrelationship functions may perhaps be recognizable, does not, however, as a result automatically become controllable or, possibly, in some way reducible. Whereas complicatedness can be solved using knowledge, the many layers of complexity mean that reliable, unambiguous answers cannot be provided. A route planer which should only show the route from A to B may, perhaps, be complicated. If, in addition to the linear route, it should also continuously take road works, traffic jams and other information such as attractive landscapes; the weather; etc. into consideration the calculation becomes complex. The number of interdependent influencing factors increases, making planning complex. In the case of the "most attractive route" priority it is a fair assumption that the proposal given will be a result which is consistent in the mid-term, as it were, a "stable" result. The priority "fastest route" will, however, already be heavily dependent on the conditions at that moment in time, which it may be possible to calculate—road works, diversions, traffic jams—but which will, however, make it impossible to make an absolutely reliable statement. The weather conditions; current levels of traffic; diversions set up at short notice; etc. can all influence each other so heavily as interdependent factors that time required to calculate the fastest route is significantly greater that the time which is available for calculation.

There are four indicators of complexity respectively four complexity drivers:

1. Flux
   What complexity researchers like to call "flux" describes the high degree of change for the relevant elements which can emerge over time before disappearing again. A continual rapid changeover of key factors, for example, makes it impossible to predict a company's future, let alone to control it. A short press release about poor pay for workers in low cost production countries or about poor environmental protection measures in the factories can cause a sudden consumer boycott, quickly resulting in financial distress for the company.
2. Interdependency
   There is a high degree of interlinking among the key factors. Everything is linked to everything and everyone, be it in economic, social or political terms. Everything which a company does or does not do has an influence on the conditions under which it operates. If, for example, a discounter drops the price of a product, the other discounters may possibly do the same. Because, as a result, the pressure on the suppliers of the product increases it is essential to look for ways of increasing the margin.
3. Inconsistency
   If there are a variety of possible interpretations for one and the same set of facts; information is incomplete or cause-and-effect relationships are unclear then the scenario is dominated by a lack of clarity. As, for example, a utility company before the Energy Revolution you could only have hazarded a guess as to how energy policy would develop. Or as the provider of a new communications platform you may be convinced of the added value of your product and also see this confirmed during the course of market research, however you cannot foretell whether you really will achieve the acceptance of users and exceed the critical number of users.
4. Diversity
   Regardless of the kind of problem, process or decision concerned—there are always differing voices, perspectives, opinions and thus disruptions, obstacles and limits. And they always originate from different quarters because companies not only have customers but also competitors and employees and are influenced by governments, shareholders and other interested parties. So diversity not only

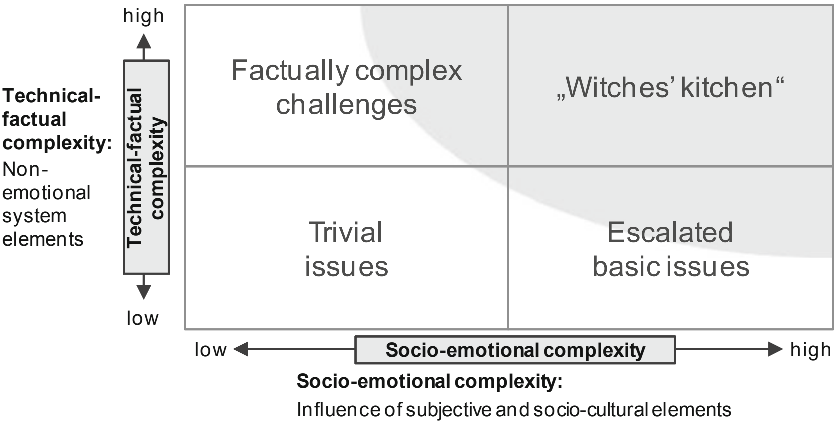

Fig. 5.2 The two dimensions of complexity

means that there is more to bear in mind but also that there are various issues to be borne in mind with regard to this 'more'. If, for example, your competitor launches a new product onto the market this can mean that your company loses customers and for some of your employees it may mean that they are made redundant because of the lower utilization of capacity. Parallel to this your shareholders will exert pressure since they are no longer satisfied with profits.

As a rule these four complexity drivers do not occur in isolation but rather together.

Implementation Insight No. 17
One of the greatest errors is to believe that you can reduce complexity. This is impossible because complexity either exists or it does not. Complexity can, however, be controlled by identifying the few key levers and focusing yourself and others.

What the example of the dynamic route planer system illustrates is something I call technical-factual complexity. This challenge, which is difficult in itself, becomes even more explosive under the additional influence of the human factor. And, like it or not, strategy implementation is not possible without managers and employees. In the case of change processes we are thus faced not only with a multitude of interlinked, variable factual factors but also with a wide range of viewpoints and ways of reacting on the part of the participants to this and with their differing and personal. Even just the collaborative development of only 8–12 factors which are decisive for implementation can be anything but easy if there are 10 different opinions. If, in addition to the various experiences and viewpoints, widely divergent ranges of interests as well as positioning and profiling requirements also come into place, the result is what I call socio-emotional complexity (cf. Fig. 5.2).

In the case of trivial issues both the technical-factual complexity and also the socio-emotional complexity are low. In other words, agreement can be arrived at quickly. The challenge becomes greater if the technical-factual side can be classified as complex, if, in other words, a great deal of factual knowledge and depth is required before the insights gained can be applied to concept development or planning. Implementation management becomes a "witches' kitchen" if not only the material is very demanding in factual terms but there are also significant variations in the strength of individual interest groups' viewpoints and attitudes.

Implementation Insight No. 18
The actual implementation complexity is caused by the human factor, whenever complex factual interrelationships converge with differing worlds of experience and ranges of interests. Even though it may frequently appear not to be the case and the opposite is claimed—people never behave rationally during implementation processes.

In the course of an implementation process the degree of complexity increases more or less continuously until it reaches its climax in the final step, the execution—work on the vision proves to be comparatively low in complexity. The focus is on the handling of a few, very long-term issues concerning meaningful structuring of the commercial purpose and there is not yet any direct feedback to own goals and interests. The reaction times on own ranges of interests are only latent and the participants' own room for manoeuvre still appears unaffected so that the various players will not yet be "difficult".

The same applies for the **goals**. The objective is to crystalize the key four to five factors which, as a general rule, can quickly be agreed.

In the case of strategy the number of relevant factors already has a tendency per se to the infinite. They affect, for example, product design; the most diverse kinds of competition; the sales structures; innovation management; etc. In this case it is thus already necessary to handle complexity by focusing on eight to twelve key strategic cornerstones. Socio-emotional complexity can also increase within the strategy team, if, for example—although an obstacle from the perspective of the overall company—every manager is concerned to strengthen and protect his own business division and thus his interests.

Technical-factual complexity decreases again in the **concept development phase**; things are merely complicated. Following the selection of correct target concepts and their design in what is, for implementation management, a usable cascade the primary objective is to gather this information, which is relatively static, and/or to think it through. You will, however, experience the highest degree of socio-emotional complexity during the concept development phase, which is also why, unsurprisingly, this phase is so difficult to steer. In addition to new structures and leadership and steering mechanisms roles and responsibilities are also reassigned. For many of the participants this is thus the often quoted "moment of truth".

Planning in contrast is again characterized by more technical-factual complexity. It is concerned with crystalizing the sequence and parallelism in which target concepts should be initiated while taking into consideration the various options and interdependencies. Depending on the degree of change socio-emotional complexity also increases—the more contradictory the individual ranges of interest are, the more violent the escalation and potential for conflict. The correct degree of flexibility is, particularly here, decisive. This is why I always warn against over-detailed mid- or long-term planning. It damages the project more than it benefits it because it not only unnecessarily sucks up resources and energy but also obligates the organization to things which may possibly be irrelevant tomorrow.

Complexity experiences a truly dramatic increase during **factual implementation**. Factors, experiences and insights multiply and are interdependent. There is no other choice than to continuously adjust to this flux and its inherent inconsistency. In order to successfully achieve this adjustment it is imperative that all relevant decisions are made during the concept development phase, in other words, prior to execution. There is, for example, little point in turning to execution after taking the strategic decision to set up a shared service centre across a number of companies without having defined the new key roles and regulated the power structures. This would carry emotional complexity into the technical-factual complexity of the execution—the result would be an exhausting mixture of completely different factors; implementation performance would be, at best, mediocre in assessment terms.

Implementation management is inevitably characterized by complexity—complexity of a technical-factual nature as well as of a socio-emotional nature. And—this cannot be emphasized often enough—you cannot reduce this complexity but rather must engage with it. I would like to use the following example to illustrate why this insight is so important.

An insurance company which wanted to structure its back office and field claims adjustments procedures more effectively and accelerate them in the interest of the customer had, in this context, only considered the issue of how the IT environment would have to be altered. The assumption was that it was too complex and the key to success lay in simplification. Independent of this assessment as a first step I had the participants in a workshop analyse the possible causes for the lack of efficiency including its effects in the form of an operational network (cf. Fig. 5.3). After a short time it was apparent that the IT system environment played only a minor role as a factor in achieving in more efficient claims adjustment processes. The true levers were to be found in the training of office and field staff as well as also the simplification of the diversity of products and tariffs (cf. Fig. 5.4). Because, however, 4 years previously it had been possible to accelerate things using the IT lever the feeling was that it should help to achieve success this time round too. A trap which many of us fall into—without thinking, let alone examining the facts, we lock ourselves into our experience prisons by employing the same solutions over and over again as if they were valid for all of eternity. Following analysis of the operational network the insurance company was forced to recognize that no changes whatsoever needed to be made to the IT systems. Rathermore the claims adjustment processes were significantly simplified by means of a "smart" training system consisting of job rotation and regular job shadowing plus simplification of the tariff structures.

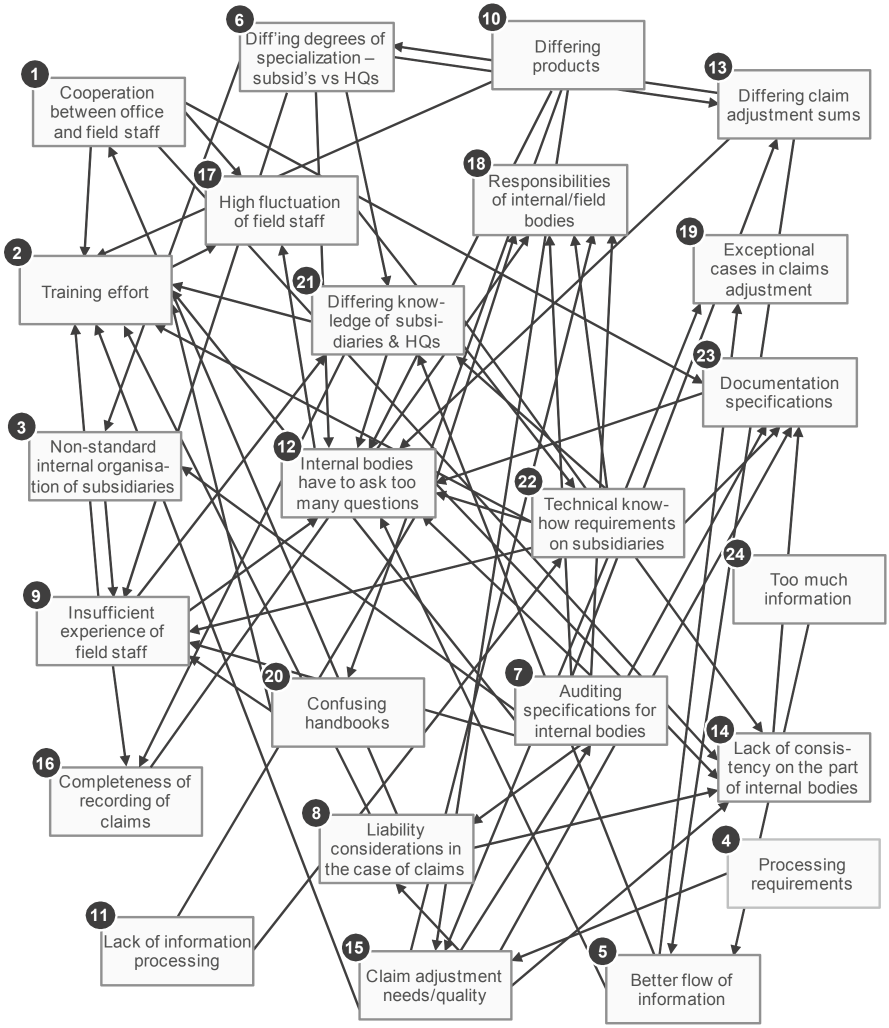

Fig. 5.3 Operational network for the analysis of causes of inefficient claims adjustment

If the focus is reflexively placed on what appear to be obvious factors, in this case the IT system environment, you run the risk of the actual problems and their effects and causes remaining hidden. The focus must be placed on the crucial issues in order to then go into depth while taking the relevant factors into consideration and to allow clarity to emerge. In other words, the reaction to complexity is to concentrate on the key levers and not orthodoxly or according to personal subjective opinions.

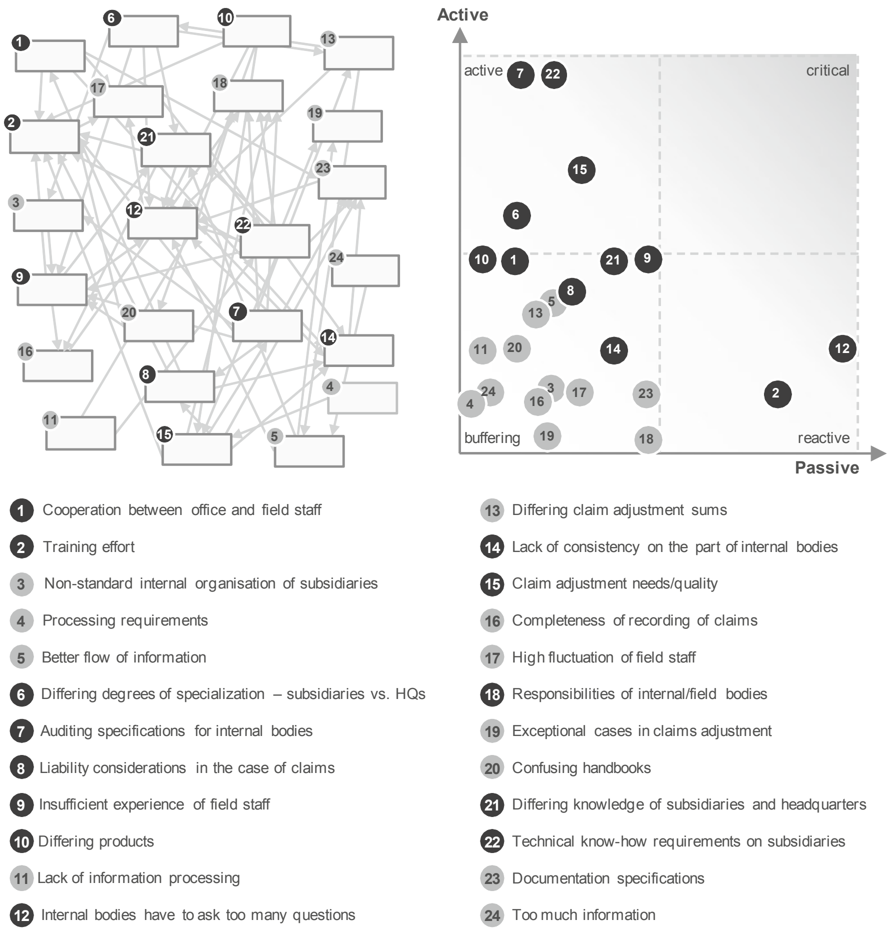

Fig. 5.4 Evaluation of the operational network using an active-passive matrix

> **Implementation Insight No. 19**
> Things have to be simplified in order to control complexity. The danger in this context is that we simplify things on the basis of experiences or spontaneous inspirations. Both should be mistrusted and, instead, the key factors should be identified using a system of effects and causes. The factors should be concentrated on to structure them effective, efficiently and quickly.

I have also frequently experienced that while an operational network may have been compiled, in the end the well-meaning ideas where still given space as "empirical values". A huge number of issues were immediately brought up; the scope of tasks became larger; complexity increased; the process slowed down. There is a risk that too many aspects are brought into play out of uncertainty but, in the final analysis, are meaningless for the issue at hand. This impulse must be resisted by means of iron discipline and, instead, the agreed course must be consistently adhered to.

5.2 Mostly Pre-programmed—Unnecessary Complexity

Since a greater or lesser degree of complexity must be expected for every implementation project, you should do everything in your power not to increase this degree even more. This is, however, exactly what happens—even if involuntarily—often particularly with regard to technical-factual complexity. This is often increased unnecessarily by falling back on poorly thought-out patterns which, over the course of time, prove to be the wrong ones. The only thing left to do at this point is to back track; take the first step—the analysis—again and revise all the decisions and courses for the future which have already been taken—with all the consequences such a correction entails. Complexity can also increase if, to satisfy the planners' own needs for certainty, master plans and detailed project planning are employed which also prove over time to be inappropriate. The first reaction to this? An enormous, time-consuming effort at justification before correction again becomes unavoidable.

In contrast to the technical-factual side it is my observation that much less attention is paid to the emotional side of complexity. Instead the principle of hope is followed, under the motto "Everything is going to be ok." The emotional aspect tends to be ignored and, if not, is accessed on a purely intuitive basis. If, however, you want to generate true implementation momentum the exact opposite should be the case. Engagement with emotional complexity must be intensive and take place openly, whereas the planning side can more easily be given "free rein". What, however, prevents handling of the emotional side? The flux driver of this complexity is enormously high and appears unpredictable. But this appearance is deceptive. Because closer observation will, similarly to technical-factual complexity, reveal the most relevant drivers, relationships and diversity of interests very clearly. And in my experience it is exactly the skilful handling of these levers which contributes, if not leads, to implementation success, since none of the participants any longer has to be driven, controlled or persuaded to do things which he or she does not actually want to do. Chapter 6, which discusses the treatment of emotions in implementation processes, outlines what this handling can be like.

At this point in time the primary issue is where and why implementation management so often makes the world more complex or complicated than necessary. In order to illustrate this I would like to revisit the example of the insurance company.

> If, as initially planned, the decision had been taken to change the IT system environment in order to structure the claim adjustment processes in the internal bodies and the field more efficiently, then a lot of time would, in all probability, have been spent, among other things, on the following preparations:
>
> - A process analysis of claims adjustment to identify potential for efficiency

- A system consideration and assessment of the IT architectures in order to discover consolidation options for acceleration
- A consideration of the assignment of roles and competences in order to realize opportunities for acceleration by bundling new responsibilities
- A consideration of the resources assigned to a diverse range of process sections in order to reduce the waiting time of a whole range of cases.

In actual fact, however, the team very pragmatically first established the link between the effects (how do we notice if we are too slow or involved?) and possible causes during a brainstorming session (cf. Fig. 5.3). As a result new factors were brought into the equation which had not previously been apparent within the scope of the selective consideration of the problem, such as, for example, the differing responsibilities or the sizes of the subsidiaries.

Thanks to this network it became clear that there were two central levers for the collective complexity effects—the reduction of product/tariff diversity and improvement of the training and competence, in particular of office staff, in order to facilitate central processing of the majority of claims (cf. Fig. 5.4). Since it was not possible to reduce product/tariff diversity at short notice an initial project was drawn up to promote training as defined by the new objective. In the end the length of a claim adjustment was reduced by 30 %. When, 2 years later, the product/tariff diversity was reduced, a further 25 % reduction was achieved.

So instead of turning too quickly to the obvious areas such as process analysis and consideration of IT systems using analyses and assessments and thus not only generating complexity but also putting in a lot of effort without really being able to remedy the problem as a result, the company first employed a cause-and-effect network to crystalize what exactly the cause and effect were and how they were interlinked.

The following aspects are the essence of dealing with complexity:

- No simplification
  During the initial phase you should not oversimplify the world but instead must exert yourself. When does it become strenuous? Whenever you have to consider issues which you have not yet seen or experienced in such a form. This also protects you from falling back on experience and old patterns of behaviour too quickly and without consideration. Use networked structures to crystalize the issues which you really want to use to define the problem or goal to be achieved (in the example it was reduction of the time required for claim adjustment). What are the effects? What causes can be assumed? How do the effects and possible causes ("levers") influence each other—which one, in the final instance, drives the other—positively or negatively? What results do you want to achieve? In this context the objective is, again, to consistently work backwards from the end result.
- Concentration on the levers
  Parallel to this you must, however, take care not to overcomplicate the world. It is important in this context to always maintain direct feedback to the goal. Just because it occurs to you that other factors could play a role in addition to the central levers this does not mean that it is worth also considering all of these potential possibilities and inflating implementation to monstrous level. This only serves to generate an unnecessary amount of planning complexity.
- Examine experience critically
  You must pay attention to your own experience and that of your colleagues. Always bear in mind that just because something was once the reason and lever for

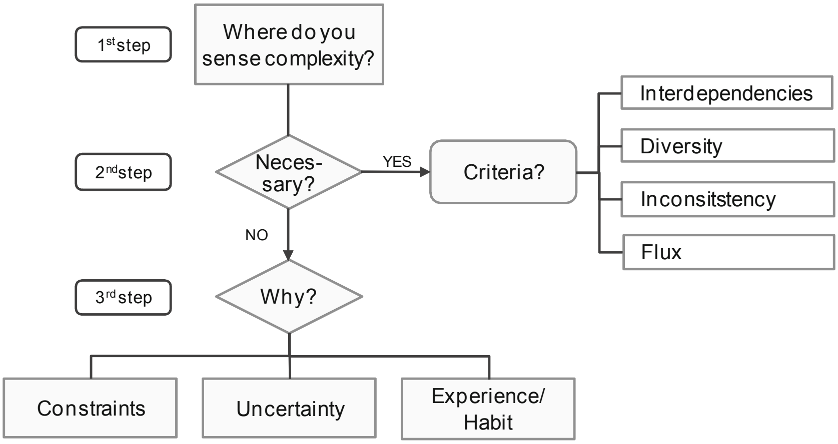

Fig. 5.5 Unnecessary complexity in implementation management

the solution of a problem this does not mean that this aspect is always relevant. Take the example of the insurance company—while 5 years ago the claim adjustment process was revolutionized using IT systems the levers are now located elsewhere. Pay attention to your own thoughts so that you can stop these kinds of considerations in good time.

- Concentration on basics
  You will need a large amount of courage and just as much discipline; the last in particular is in short supply in most implementation projects. The temptation to also take other interesting and, under certain circumstances, relevant aspects into consideration is just too great and then suddenly everything is important again. And, as you know, if everything is a priority, nothing is a priority anymore. Concentrate on the really crucial aspects which you have defined and agreed upon and consistently ignore everything else. Otherwise you will be engulfed by complexity and become very inefficient.

So it's about learning to differentiate between those areas of an implementation project which are structured more complicatedly than is necessary and where there is genuine complexity requiring skilful handling.

Implementation Insight No. 20
Avoid unnecessary complexity by first really engaging with the problem and not being fooled by the most obvious solution or believing that you have work according to the motto "A lot helps a lot".

If, within the scope of an implementation project, you get the feeling that you are overcomplicating the world, it is worth completing the process outlined below (cf. Fig. 5.5).

Step 1 "Where do you sense complexity ?" If things appear too complex or too complicated first develop a clear feeling about what you can use to identify this complexity. As a rule you will very quickly arrive at a coherent result using your intuition and gut feeling. Drum up a diverse group of seven to at most 20 participants and ensure that there is as much expert knowledge on the issue as possible. You should, on no account, try to avoid friction but instead should intentionally include participants who view things differently to you and the other participants. Use either an electronic networking tool or a meta-planning board and gather answers to the questions "Where are we overcomplicating things?" or "What the issues and factors where we sense complexity?" Your current implementation stage is irrelevant in this context—it can be concept development, planning or even already execution. The questions are always the same—where could we be placing the wrong emphasis (focus) and what, under certain circumstances, could we be doing which is unnecessary?

Step 2 "Who are the people behind the people who are behind this?" The next step is to interlink the issues with each other. What influences what and is this influence positive or negative? Since, in the first step, you have mainly gathered effects, include further additional factors in your model which reinforce these effects—the drivers. Consider in this context whether these factors may not have further consequences for other effects and also how they determine the drivers among themselves. The result will be an operational network which is similar to the one in Fig. 5.3. Depending on the implementation project these operational networks can, by all means, be made up of 30, 40 or even 50 factors. This allows you to crystalize the key levers which are described by the most relevant drivers. In my experience even in the case of very large operational networks you will, in the end, only arrive at five to seven truly crucial levers. And it is not uncommon for factors to suddenly come to the fore which you would not otherwise have seen in this relevance. And what is now required is the focus and discipline to actually engage with these factors. Less wins! Trust your own considerations that all the other factors, as you have thought them through and modelled them in the operational network, will be addressed within the flow of your implementation project without you having to explicitly concern yourself with them. This is one of the key characteristics of high performance implementation projects.

Within the scope of these considerations always be aware of the following four complexity drivers and question what could, under certain circumstances, be dispensed with within the scope of your implementation projects:

- Interdependencies
  Ask yourself which project or implementation topics are interdependent and who, as a result, has to liaise with whom and to what extent and/or who has to take care of what. Things are usually so strongly interwoven that it seems if everyone should be involved in, and be informed about, everything. When disentangling everything the concept filter from Chap. 4 can help to uncover redundant concepts, thus eliminating the superfluous.
- Diversity
  The more diverse the circus, the more entertaining it is. Your wide range of stakeholders, be it within the scope of your implementation project or more on

the fringes, will have a diverse range of demands. What is now required is a results philosophy. Never talk to your stakeholders about activities or things which must, should or could be done. Only ever talk about results and what is used to perceive, sense or concretely measure if you are successful.

- Inconsistency
  It goes without saying that you will discover inconsistencies in this circus of diversity. And not all of them can be truly clarified. You will have to live with this kind of inconsistency. The means of choice? Transparency and clarity. Simple sketches and relationship diagrams can help to at least keep the inconsistency in view. Do specific sub-areas of your project display a striking lack of clarity and is this due to true complexity or is it rather because the concepts have not been crystalized in enough depth, allowing inconsistencies to develop from uncertainty?
- Flux
  Do you, in terms of the goal, really need the certainty of anticipating the future exactly or is the existing degree of blurring acceptable and can you work with it?

With the aid of the four complexity drivers you will be able to established which of the issues you have identified are inherently complex and cannot be controlled or, in terms of the goal, do not need to be controlled. Leave these issues as they are. If, however, there are topics which are overcomplicated, then include them in Step 3.

Step 3 Why unnecessarily complicated? There are, in my opinion, three reasons for this phenomenon: constraints, uncertainty and habit.

- Constraints
  Should there be unavoidable political, reporting or also corporate constraints which cause implementation complexity you should handle them using the most simple, direct and non-time consuming methods available to you. Invest as little time and resources as possible in reports, workshops and meetings of this kind. During the concept phase of a cross-group restructuring project, for example, is it really necessary for all the sub-project managers to present the current project status to the managing directors of all the group's member companies at regular weekly meetings requiring the attendance of management executives from all over Europe?
- Uncertainty
  If uncertainty is the reason for complexity, then it is time for a thorough analysis of the causes. As a rule steering committees, superiors and other participants want a clear picture concerning how the implementation project will progress; what could go wrong and what can already be done now to get foreseeable problems under control. Sounds absurd? Yes, it is. It is, however, reality. The only thing which helps to combat such absurdities is learning to bear uncertainty. You must, of course, be certain that you taking action in the right places; that you are using the right concepts to detail the few crucial factors and then begin implementation. You do not, however, have to know from the outset how exactly the process will be structured and what exactly you have to do how. Bear this uncertainty and also help your stakeholders to handle uncertainty. You will only move forward successfully if you iterate forwards piece by piece. Should, however, uncertainty genuinely

originate from the strong influence exercised by one or more complexity drivers then, with the assistance of the above mentioned 2-step model, work must be carried out to crystalize where the focus should be placed and how the complexity drivers can be combatted by penetrating more deeply into the topic.

- Habit
  This is the most dangerous reason for implementation projects becoming complex. Because whether we want it or not, we are all conditioned to do things the way we have always done them, because routine and experience are guarantors of certainty. In the case of well-established, reoccurring processes this is precisely the right behavioural pattern. Implementation projects, however, always bring something new with them, just as every strategy is always unique. Which is why you should also be on the alert with regard to yourself and your team, showing a red card every time you hear comments such as "We've always done it that way" or "It won't work like that" or "That's obvious". This is the greatest factor for unnecessary complexity. Particularly with regard to the simple example of reporting I ascertain time and again that companies use standard templates and structures for all implementation projects, regardless of their dimensions. It is never questioned whether the expected tasks benefit the current project or if the prescribed reporting interval is really meaningful.

Particularly in the case of large implementation projects there is a danger of complexity either not being recognized, since everyone is only paying attention to their own sub-area and does not perceive interdependencies or things are made overcomplicated out of fear of losing control over the project.

In the course of my consulting career I have identified three complexity traps which ensnare more or less all implementation projects with the result that more effort is required than necessary.

1st trap: Not facing up to the complexity monster early enough

Particularly in the strategy or concept phase, in which complexity can best be combatted, many managers are prone to taking refuge in abstractions and simplification in the hope that everything which is required will somehow come to pass. And it will, somehow, however too much work will have to be carried out in too many places, resulting in increasing frustration, and implementation efficacy will, in the final instance, not be particularly satisfactory. Do not fall prey to this initial negligence but rather force yourself and your team to think things through in detail at the outset and make clear decisions.

2nd trap: Avoiding the depths

During consideration of concept development and tactics the desire and nerves are often lacking to engage with what are, in the final instance, unfortunately the crucial details. For example with what exactly value creation in the Service Division will be like; which competences will be required for this and what exactly the new interlinking with the Production Division will be like. Such issues are all too often only considered when the project is already in the execution phase. The desire to finally become specific and do something is given in to too quickly. It is, however, exactly this type of opportunistic operational actionism which, at the end of the day, produces more work than necessary. I may also say that speed is as important as content, however the principle always applies that you have to devote yourself to the right content at the right time. So think things through as intensively as required at the right points in time, giving yourself as much time as you require to do so. Otherwise you run the risk of requiring an unnecessary amount of coordination with an unnecessary number of people concerning issues which are still unclear just a short time later. Clarification has to take place at the outset, even if this entails time and effort. If you make things too easy for yourself here you may possibly be giving away competitive advantages with having to.

3rd trap: Allowing yourself to be defeated by the creature of habit

"Good" is the enemy of all that is "better". Put another way—experience is all too quickly touted as a supposed recipe for success without having been scrutinized—no matter what the project, true to the motto "It worked back then, so it will work today!" The effect of such decision-making is either using a sledgehammer to crack a nut or, inversely, putting a lid which is far too small onto a pot which is far too big—in any case operating in an inappropriate manner. Singing the praises of habit has, in more or less every case, the consequence that unnecessary or wrong things are done which make implementation time-consuming and complicated. This powerful creature of habit can only be overcome by means of intensive thought and scrutiny since intellect prevails over habit.

Taking a project as a whole greater intensity when thinking, conceptualizing and anticipating does not necessarily mean more effort. If the concept development phase clearly defines who has to coordinate what with whom why and how and the corresponding methods and models are provided to this end then there will be no implementation complexity or chaos during factual implementation. So clarify what needs to be thought through and what insights should be arrived at (results type) and then ensure that this is carried out quickly because otherwise you run the risk of getting lost in the detail. This is particularly true for concept development work.

An implementation project becomes easier if every participant knows from the outset what he has to do and with whom he has to clarify what how. In order to generate this clarity and escape the complexity traps the greatest attention must be paid to implementation tactics. The result will be a dramatic reduction in effort during the implementation project since a large amount of time and effort spent on coordination, uncertainties, the "hedgehog" syndrome, redundancies, low synergies, etc. can be avoided (cf. Fig. 5.6).

Implementation Insight No. 21

The larger the implementation project, the greater the danger that programme managers or those responsible for implementation will try to ignore complexity by "re-delegating" or "re-defining" (Was there an issue there?).

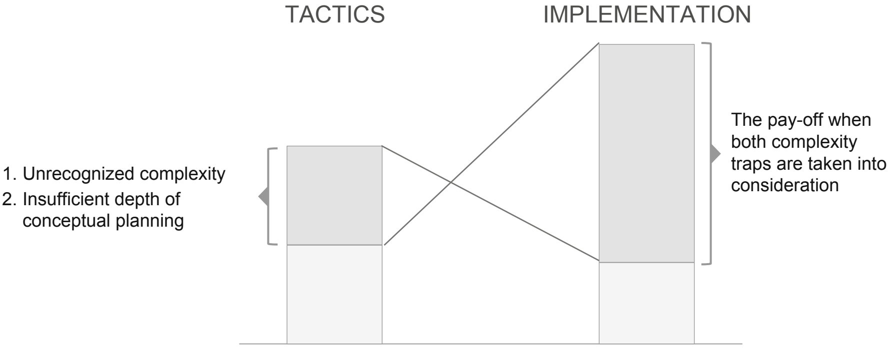

Fig. 5.6 The conceptual pay-off of tactics for implementation

5.3 Decisive: The Uncritical Path—Planning Complexity

In contradiction to the wide-spread belief that farsighted action is a sign of intelligence and responsibility I assert that it is nothing more than the attempt to compensate for feelings of uncertainty and to suggest that reality can be controlled. Plans are based on idealization and this is precisely the reason why it is so often impossible to adhere to them. They awaken false expectations and focus on input, on activities, milestones, short-term results. So, once again—in order to set implementation projects on a successful course you must bring the result, the goal being striven for, to the fore, only reporting on progress criteria which document that you are getting closer to this goal. While additional effort in concept development primarily has a positive effect on execution and makes for significant productivity, speed and momentum, the statement that "planning reduces effort" is not, in my experience, correct. The exact opposite is the case. Overdetailed implementation planning does not make for productivity, it destroys it.

We must bid farewell to the notion that plans can predetermine reality:

- The thinking through of long-term plans (more than 1 to 3 weeks) automatically results in the focus being placed on activities and the reason for the plan, namely the result aspired to, being lost from sight.
- Where activities come to the fore, additional, supposedly necessary, activities occur to the participants over and over again—an unpleasant snowball effect because it devours resources.
- Where activities are planned they will also be carried out; what was discussed and agreed will be implemented. This, in itself laudable, attitude unfortunately often results in unproductiveness because incorrect planning is also adhered to with the same consistency—even when it has been recognized as such. The result for the implementation process? Unnecessary content-related work and a lot of superfluous effort; a loss of time and energy and stress.

- Things which are planned are, sensibly, also monitored. The two negative effects of this are—planning takes a lot of time, as does monitoring. In addition to this the monitoring generates a justification attitude which is oriented to plans and to results. A false implementation culture is created which blocks and does not motivate.

Implementation Insight No. 22
Planning is only complex when it is made complex. Plan in short cycles (1 to 3 weeks) and base all discussions and reports on the results aspired to instead of plans.

When changes are imminent most people would like to have a plan to hand. So, since the implementation of strategies is not, as general rule, plannable in the more specific sense of the word, other orientation aids are required. True to the motto "The path is the goal" you should always keep your eye on the goal as the guideline for all steps that you will have to take during your project. Always sail by sight—particularly in the case of planning—even if it feels unfamiliar and generates the odd uncertainty. Try to orient yourself according to the following principles:

- Good implementation management has a clear vision of the procedure and always sails by sight during planning (activities designed in a weekly or bi-weekly rhythm).
- A good implementation manager answers questions about the exact procedure as follows: "I don't know either. What I can tell you is how we can identify and/or measure that we are making progress and what the next steps will be to achieve this." Because no-one can foretell what will happen in 2 months. The procedure must be thought through; be structured and systematic and have three to five selected criteria which show if progress is being made towards the goal or not.
- Progress monitoring is based on these criteria and not on the ticking off of activities on a list. Use a maximum of five criteria to continuously monitor your project's progress and establish whether you are still headed towards the general goal or if you are about to get lost in the detail.
- This type of focusing and effectiveness demands a high degree of flexibility. It makes it possible to handle blurring and uncertainty professionally and provides the required confidence in the management of dynamic plans and decisions.

Implementation Insight No. 23
Strategy implementation and change projects are not managed according to plans but according to a well-thought-out and manageable series of steps including continuous comparison with the goal agreed.

Time and again I experience a situation in which precisely stakeholders, steering committees, etc. must first be convinced that not milestones but results must be achieved. I thus believe that it is very important for management to clearly define to stakeholders when the implementation project is successful and what criteria will be used to establish progress. This demands a very different type of management and monitoring to the one practiced in the usual regular project management meetings, at which every sub-project manager reports on what has been achieved and what not within the scope of his or her project.

Within the scope of a change project which was concerned with increasing internal customer appreciation in the next 5 years a detailed communication plan was developed, which specified precisely what content would, in future, be communicated to whom and in what form. The sub-project manager responsible for communication ensured that the activities specified in the plan were carried out and ticked them off as they were completed. The result? The employees felt that they had been left out of the loop by management (involvement) and not reached, despite communication. Not an uncommon occurrence in companies! The same phenomenon occurs over and over again—concentration focuses on well-meaning plans and activities and not on the result aspired to.

The Communication sub-project manager should—this would have been the better alternative—have reported his progress based on the following criteria:

1. Degree of coverage of feedback from managers ⇔ communication
2. Emotional feedback from employees (target group)
3. Factual feedback from employees (target group)

In his report on how progress would be made toward the goal he would have noticed the communication deficits and could have looked for ways to eliminate them.

The only thing which is absolutely essential in a change project is a small but clear number of criteria which are able to show whether progress is being made as defined by the goal and also in practical terms. These results criteria should be defined as specifically as possible. Even such a vague statement as “Meier and Schulz have the feeling that we are making progress” can be helpful as you now know who you have to focus on and need to ask the two of them what the reason for their positive feeling is. The following statements are perhaps somewhat more precise—“Employee satisfaction is increasing” or “Cooperation between Divisions A and B is exhibiting less friction” or, very tough, “The cancellation rate has decreased by 8 %”. So the issue is not just hard, verified facts but also authentic, honest estimations as indicators of implementation progress. Do not overcomplicate the world! Stick to the principle of goal-oriented lack of planning and focus continuously before and during the implementation project on what is truly important—the result.

Implementation Insight No. 24

In cases of doubt plans can suggest a false sense of security—namely the security of working according to plan. A plan is only a good plan if it allows the freedom to adjust to unforeseen developments instead of sticking to the plan, come what may. A plan reacts to reality, not vice versa.

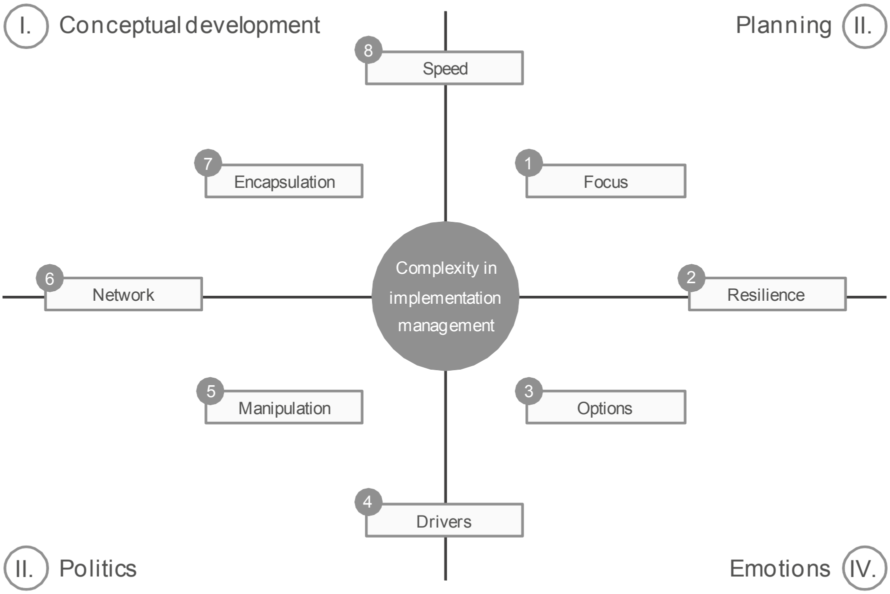

Fig. 5.7 The four complexity dimensions and their eight central principles

5.4 Handling Daily Complexity Chaos—Principles and Tools

Regardless of the context concerned—it should always be everyone's interests to avoid unnecessary complexity and control existing complexity or—in the case of companies—even to transform it into competitive advantages. The following are complexity dimensions for systematic complexity management in implementation management:

- Concept development—Use the correct models to firm up how the company or division will function in its new location;
- Planning—Define the sequence and the key priorities for the implementation steps and specify the success criteria for planning progress;
- Policy—Discover the participants' range of interests and their network in order to handle them correctly as defined by the goal;
- Emotions—Take into consideration the fundamental emotional attitudes—in other words pay attention to goals, values, interests and fundamental emotions (interest, pleasure, fear and envy)

must be addressed in a differentiated manner. During the course of numerous strategy and change projects I have been able to identify eight principles which can be used to tackle this complexity or to make it controllable (cf. Fig. 5.7).

The Eight Principles for Mastering Complexity

1. Focus Principle
   Focus allows you to avoid unnecessary planning complexity and achieve output-oriented focusing of your resources using genuine priorities. It is not activities, milestones and tasks which are the centre of focus but rather results. These results are achieved step by step by not planning too far in advance but instead by moving forward successively and in a focused manner, “sailing by sight”.
2. Resilience Principle
   Train your resilience by letting things take their course from the outset, also in terms of conceptual thinking. In other words, do not fixate on specific developments and imagine possible catastrophes over and over again so that you do not experience unimagined catastrophes. This does not mean that you should become a pessimist but that you are prepared. And avoiding looking for certainty within the scope of planning. Manage the moment! This has a positive effect both on your planning efficacy and also on the management of your project’s emotional complexity. Ask yourself “What is the worst that can happen? What makes us certain? What uncertain? And what can we do to counteract uncertainty?” This prepares the team and provides a good sense of what is essential for successful implementation projects.
3. Options Principle
   Always think, work and discuss using options. An attitude which offers no alternatives only serves to create barriers. You should never have “the” solution or “the” procedure for a problem or a result to be achieved. Make it a culture or habit for everyone in your team to always present three options without being recognizably in favour of one of them. These options will be decided on without conducting “winner-loser” debates and “either-or” discussions. This is the only way to avoid the emergence of entrenched fronts where compromises are the only option left in order to achieve a solution. Compromises are, as is generally known, the worst options. Instead of presenting only one option for the new approach to customers a sales manager offers three options to Product Management three options, explaining their advantages and disadvantages. Together with Product Management he discusses the options and decides on the one offering both divisions the best solution. This precondition is the basis for content-related discussions instead of merely well-camouflaged positional debates which lead to nothing.
4. Drivers Principle
   You are certain to be familiar with sentences such as “Let’s stick to the facts” or “Let’s focus professionally on the issues at hand”. Without wanting to appear disillusioned—it’s never about the issues! There are per se no corporate interests. Companies are made up of people; they have their interests and if these overlap sufficiently and there are a large enough number of similar objectives and values systems then the result will be something akin to corporate goals or interests. So you will be well-advised to devote yourself explicitly to the

interests, worries and fears of the participants. If you want to achieve implementation momentum then you will have to connect with emotions. The more systematically, explicitly and professionally you do this, the more effort you will save yourself during implementation. The operational network method of networked thinking can also be used here.

The programme manager of a comprehensive change process, for example, charted the interrelationships of all the decision makers and other relevant individuals in an operational network, asking herself "Who influences whom how strongly? Positively or negatively?" By doing so she recognized who the drivers were; who was "caught between two stools" but is critical for success and who would, in the end, go along with what happened. She linked the highly personal spheres of the decision makers to the programme's goals, thus recognizing that the goal could not actually be achieved with the Head of Operations and that the bonus system for the implementation period, the transition, would have to be structured differently to avoid the Head of Sales and others losing their entrepreneurial courage.

5. Manipulation Principle

   In contrast to its everyday use the term "manipulation" has positive associations when used in the context of this principle, which refers solely to the political dimension. Manipulation helps to smooth the path to achieving the goal by bringing about the corresponding power constellations and relationships. Thanks to her work according to the Drivers Principle our programme manager knew the "buttons" she must press for each participant in order to get them to "function" as defined by the goal. It thus became clear to her that she would only be able to persuade Product Management, which did not actually want to restructure itself since its Head saw no necessity for doing so, by showing it the possibilities ensuing from the consideration of new business segments (curiosity/desire). So the topic of "new business segments" was included in the options even though the content was not required.

6. Network Principle

   In the context of the "policy" complexity dimension the Network Principle ensures that the political interests and positioning and/or goals of the participating individual and interest groups are seen in their context and that it is possible to recognize whether they have a direct or indirect effect on the overall system of an implementation project. This can, in turn, be carried out with the assistance of an operational network. Within the scope of the concept development dimension the principle, in contrast, concerns networked thinking which considers the crucial factors and options, thus helping to control complexity in the course of downstream implementation.

7. Encapsulation Principle

   This principle is about breaking down complexity into clearly delineated units (capsules) without reducing it and clearly resisting the tendency to somehow include all the participants everywhere, since this too results in complexity. So instead of giving a very broad conceptual task to the strategy implementation team the Head of Corporate Development of a utility company proceeds by orienting overall concept development to the strategic cornerstones "Regional Partner Model"; "Product/Service Portfolio" and "Proximity to Customers" (not based on organizational structures!); assigning them in clearly separate individual conceptual projects (encapsulation) and with five to seven progress and results criteria, saying "This is what your concept should supply; it should include exactly these things in order to focus each capsule specifically on what is really important." One progress criterion for the concept development project "Product and Service Portfolio" could be increasing the profit margin per customer.

8. Speed Principle
   If correctly applied, when used in both concept development and also planning the Speed Principle facilitates focusing and control of complexity since your team is not able to spend as much time thinking about complexity. The imperative is to work in clear, small units of time.
   Our Programme Manager thus specifies a clear time scale—the concepts for the individual cornerstones must be compiled within 2 weeks intentionally using the "quick and dirty quality" principle (Scherer 2011); will again be discussed once in a larger group before being revised following the feedback and then discussed for a final time 2 weeks later. The reaction to this was, of course, almost universally negative—the time frame was much too short; didn't allow enough room for market research; etc. The Programme Manager reacted to this by demanding that hypotheses, assumptions and, where necessary, options be used which would have to be discussed and, in cases of doubt, confirmed. She also, however, said "You know more than you believe! Why don't you just try to do your best." And, surprise, surprise, after 2 weeks concepts had been developed, even if they were still somewhat vague in places and were also based on one or two shaky hypotheses. Overall, however, the end result was resilient, good concepts achieved in 6 weeks without a consultant.

Each of the principles of speed, resilience, drivers and networks applies in differing types for two complexity dimensions. The Speed Principle, for example, relates both to concept development and also planning. The principles of focus, options, manipulation and encapsulation each refer to one single complexity dimension. You thus have three principles at your disposal per complexity dimension (concept development, planning, policy and emotions) in order to systematically manage the complexity of your implementation project.

The Million Dollar Question—What About Integration? 6

The following question is of great significance for a change project—no matter whether it concerns the complete restructuring of a company; the introduction of a new product or the consolidation of processes and system environments—"Who do you integrate when and how in order to achieve good results in the quickest manner possible?" Where integration is concerned the following principle applies for every phase of implementation—as much as necessary and as little as possible. Because the more participants you integrate, the more time-consuming and worse the solutions will be because they are riddled with compromise. The fewer participants, the greater, however, the risk that individuals feel that they have not been integrated and put up the corresponding resistance. So you must consider carefully who you integrate when and what is the most intelligent way of doing so. As trivial as this question sounds, the more difficult it can be to answer. Because if no genuine clarification is achieved at the outset of a process then progress will prove to be all the more difficult and unproductive. When answering the question you are therefore making a decision about whether you make speedy progress, experiencing genuine momentum within the scope of implementation, or the project becomes a tough struggle for every metre.

In the best case the perpetuation of the "team myth" thus helps to avoid a decision but not the efficient progress of an implementation project. Only in the fewest of case is it right and sensible to get everyone on board. In most cases it must be carefully considered which individuals can be meaningfully involved. Since, like all people, employees and managers follow their own interests first and only then, in the second step, team interests and, thirdly, corporate interests these individual points of view as defined by the implementation project must first be skilfully brought together and combined to make one whole. The type and sequence of integration also determines whether speed is achieved and implementation progresses.

For this reason I will provide you with some basic rules concerning organizational integration in the implementation phases and the combination of individual interests and their coordination with the goal. Because only where the goal interests of an organization can also be combined with self-interest will work be carried out with passion and thus speed and high productivity. Without adjusting the goal systems to

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the existing network of interests you will, correspondingly, only experience "9-to-5" jobs and not achieve any long-term results.

Thanks to the identification and elimination of negative behavioural patterns and their causes which goes hand in hand with this adjustment the implementation process will be freed from blocking emotions. If the correct levers are then used to successfully achieve positive emotionalization of the implementation project, then a high degree of productivity and speed is certain to be the result. So it's all about finding the correct balance between emotionalization and de-emotionalization.

This includes taking into consideration the participants', in some cases, divergent interests; thinking them through; combining them into networks and, finally, adjusting them to match the implementation project's goals. You can achieve this by obtaining a clear picture of your friends' and opponents' interests in order to thus actively steer events.

6.1 The Team Myth

All the participants involved in implementation processes perceive the corresponding changes in their own way. Both individuals as well as also teams experience consequences with widely varying effects.

> The introduction of a CRM system (customer relationship management system) in a textiles manufacturing company primarily affected the Marketing, Sales and Service divisions, since they would actively use this system. In addition to this IT was indirectly concerned since they were responsible for the implementation and functionality of the CRM system. Each one of these divisions perceived the change differently. The employees in Sales feared the increasing transparency, which would reveal weaknesses in Sales caused by poor advice or the handling of unprofitable customers more quickly due to the complete documentation of their work. Others, in contrast, saw it as a helpful tool to identify their customers' wishes with regard to colour and cut preferences in more detail. Marketing was, to some extent, pleased about the CRM system as it had previously always been subject to accusations from Sales that its advertising campaigns and choice of media were poor and its measures would now be more measurable and easier to plan. Some Service employees were afraid of improved monitoring of service processing while others believed that their successful complaints and problem-solving rate would finally be documented.

A change, due to its nature, always has "winners" and "losers". Even if the factual circumstances are identical you will have more winners if your company has a greater number of opportunity-oriented thinkers than if the pessimists, who see everything as a danger, are in the majority. The relationship of winners to losers is thus defined less by the issues themselves than by the attitude of the participants. Individual perception (personal impact) defines whether a change is viewed more as a potential threat or a potential opportunity. And this perception is always purely subjective. Either you ignore these perceptions or you engage with them by supporting them or attempting to correct them as defined by the agreed goals. Just becoming conscious of this interrelationship is already sufficient to generate effectiveness in implementation, so you, as an implementation manager, should thus train your empathetic skills, placing yourself in the position of the very different individuals who are involved in, and affected by, the process. In this context you should engage with the following three aspects:

1. Personal impact Depending on the number of individuals who exert an influence on the implementation project or change, outline the extent to which either every individual or—in the case of many individuals—of the correspondingly relevant corporate divisions or groups are affected by the change, either personally or as a division/group. You will thus be considering the issue of how great the relative impact of the change is.

2. Perception of impact In a second step examine whether single individuals or groups perceive the change more as a threat or an opportunity. In other words, try to identify the fundamental attitude of those affected to personal further development and progress. There are people who, due to their public and personal spheres of interest, would like to push ahead with things, while others reject exactly this, viewing corresponding changes more as a threat.

3. The political operational mesh of relationships Within the scope of the last aspect the individuals (groups) identified must be examined with regard to the current mesh of interests which exists between them. In this context individuals (groups) can be identified which have a strong influence on others while also being "fired up" for change since they see great potential personal opportunities for themselves. These are the relevant individuals whom you must integrate into your implementation process. You may, perhaps, be surprised how many individuals there are with whom you do not need to concern yourself and that your KSPs (Key Success Persons) sometimes originate from less obvious areas.

> The implementation manager entrusted with introducing the CRM system had outlined the change effect for the individuals concerned as well as their own perception of it. He recognized that the IT director (Individual 2) without doubt represents an active lever since he had great influence on both Sales and also Marketing. The change did not, however, have any great influence on him personally. He would integrate the CRM system into the existing IT environment in accordance with the specifications provided to him and did not view this as any great challenge. The introduction of the CRM system would change a lot for Ms Schulz, the Head of Service (Individual 3), since every activity carried out in her department would now be documented and could be specifically related to an individual. She, however, viewed this as a great opportunity to be able to better analyse customer complaints and investigate their causes and wholeheartedly supported the project. Even if she herself had only limited influence on the other individuals concerned and only had a good relationship with the key account manager (Individual 4) the implementation manager most definitely wanted to include her or one of her allies in the implementation team. A team member of this kind would ensure the required drive. In contrast to this, Mr Gross (Individual 1), Head of Sales, viewed the change as a major threat. His sphere of influence is very large since he has good relationships with his employees, in particular the account managers, and, in addition to this, is also friends with the key account manager. In accordance with top management's instructions the implementation manager must include three individuals from the Sales division in his implementation team and selects the individuals who show

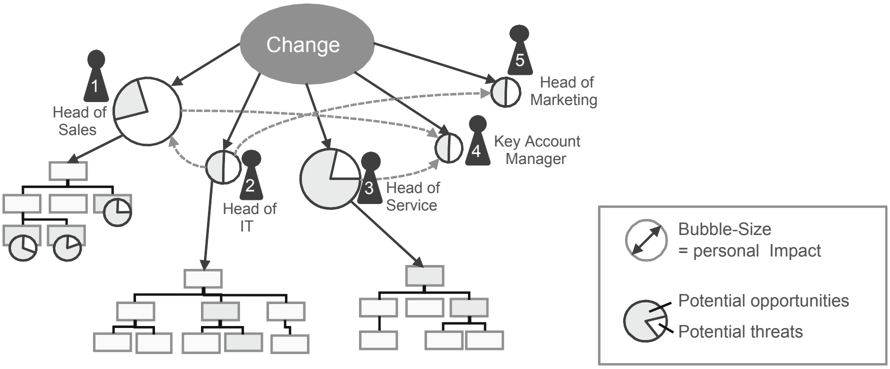

Fig. 6.1 Individuals' degree of influence and perception of changes

> openness to the project. Parallel to this he considers which of Mr Gross' personal interests he must satisfy to avoid him blocking the project or destroying the planned systems potential with his objections. To this end he plans two measures—firstly, he suggests that Mr Winter, the Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, joins the steering committee in order to participate in the considerations concerning the CRM system's product strategy requirements now and, secondly, within the scope of the goal system he includes a bonus for Mr Gross and key sales personnel for realizing process efficiency within the sales cycle.

It is popular to view implementation as being identical to "change" and implementation does, indeed, also involve change. This should not, however, mean that the individuals affected should, per se, be turned into participants and as many as possible of them should be integrated into the process as early and intensively as possible. Wanting to include everyone does not mean that implementation automatically proceeds better—the opposite is rather the case. In my experience it not only becomes significantly more unproductive because this provokes unnecessary resistance in the first place. It costs a large amount of time and energy to involve a lot of individuals and takes the speed out of the implementation process. In addition to this, it generally results in solutions which are bad because they are compromises, since everyone is fixated on their personal contribution and/or their status quo. In this case habit often plays a more important role than common sense—in other words, a lot of effort is put into keeping everything the way it is, particularly when changes offer no personal benefits. For this reason it is essential to integrate individuals who are in a position to give the project sufficient drive. It is helpful to model the relevant individuals (groups) in a corresponding interests map (cf. Fig. 6.1). When selecting the individuals to be integrated you should not only consider the upper echelons of the hierarch but, particularly when you are manning (sub-)projects, pluck up the courage to also take a look at the second and third tiers. Thinking and action in these tiers is usually more strongly focused on establishing new, innovative structures. The selection of such individuals will, by its nature, result in irritation and resistance from the higher levels—you must withstand this.

Only a few of the individual interests are of extreme importance for the overall process. However, only if you succeed in transforming these few individuals—no matter what their status—into implementation heroes will you develop a dynamic which will genuinely advance the project. You will, of course, very rarely experience the ideal situation when it comes to putting together your team but you can, at least, get close to it.

Implementation Insight No. 25
The integration of any many individual as possible is not required for the successful implementation of changes but rather the integration and skilful interlinking of a few, truly decisive individuals.

Kolbusa's Rules For Staffing Implementation Teams

- Not all individuals but instead the right ones
  Do not, in accordance with the blanket principle, attempt to convince as many employees as possible of the benefits of your implementation project or even to integrate them into it. Consider who the handful of truly key "players" as defined by implementation really are and how you can bring them and their personal interest spheres together with the implementation project's goals and requirements.
- No compromises
  Compromises when manning in implementation teams always result in poor results. Even if someone is not presently in a position to take on (partial) responsibility you should still take him or her along for the ride, but without giving them responsibility, so that this individual has an opportunity to develop. Do not, however, assign individuals to whom you are not wholly committed or about whom you feel uneasy to projects or sub-projects. Do not fool yourself in this regard or try to sugar-coat a bitter pill. I have experienced this myself during a project—During the establishment of a shared service centre the choice fell not on the company's most competent programme manager but on an HR manager who was extremely competent in his field. The whole project developed into a fiasco because the manager neither understood what was being discussed nor was truly familiar with the management process for such a project. He lacked the leadership experience and specific functional competence which was essential to advance the project. The result was uncertainty in leadership; lack of clarity in the structure and thus tensions within the project. The HR manager also experienced more damage than benefit from his involvement in the project.
  Do not make compromises when choosing the individuals to fill your key roles. Scrutinize everyone until you are convinced that you have assembled

the right team. In cases of doubt it is better to deploy external resources to compensate for shortcomings which cannot be overcome, whereby you should take care that responsibility for the results remains completely in internal hands so that interest in the implementation remains undiminished. Too much external compensation is not ideal but better than internal compromise solutions.

- More potential opportunities than threats
  In most implementation projects more risks than opportunities are identified. As much as these doubts and this scepticism can also be a driver and be used correspondingly, you will be well-advised to ensure that the handful of relevant players is opportunity-oriented. Offer the prospect of specific recognition if the implementation is successful—the MBA degree; the six-week training course at Harvard; the position as head of a specific division. This provides certainty and creates genuine incentives. What you should, in any case, stop doing is to work with bonus payments. In my experience people cannot be bought. Financial incentives have only a limited appeal and are often counterproductive, particularly if they offered as a prospect in the run-up to the project. It goes without saying that the grudgers will be quick to come to the fore. If, however, you dispense with this procedure you are leaving success to chance and creating a culture of uncertainty which will not really move the implementation project forward.

I have experienced implementation projects which initially had virtually no support whatsoever within the organization but which were moved forward by a very few but confident individuals, not least thanks to the incentives described above. They contributed so much drive to the process that the majority of the workforce concerned suddenly accepted the change, supporting it even if they were not always enthusiastic. For all intents and purposes a completely normal process if skilful interlinking of the right individuals has taken place in the run-up to the project.

> During the restructuring of a service provider I was concerned that a key account manager would not support the new structure since he agreed with neither the new management constellation nor the new sales steering system, seeing no potential opportunities whatsoever for himself in the implementation of these new structures. Due to his lack of leadership qualities it was clear from the outset that there was no question of giving him a management role in the new structure. The risk that he would take a key customer with him if he moved to a competitor could not be allowed to thwart the numerous advantages of the new structure and the corresponding opportunities for truly key individuals. The consequence? The key account manager was given immediate paid leave and, with the support of another senior account manager and top management, the customer was gradually transferred to this senior account manager and actively integrated into the implementation process in a contributing role. This transformed a threat into genuine customer loyalty which the customer very much appreciated. The learning curve? Wherever you see a catastrophe looming you should take action yourself as soon as possible and try to turn its inherent energy to your own benefit. This is almost always possible if you make a real effort to consider the options.

Successful implementation management presents itself, among other things, as a balancing act between purpose, power and fear. In German companies it very often strikes me that even experienced managers persist in believing that they only have to

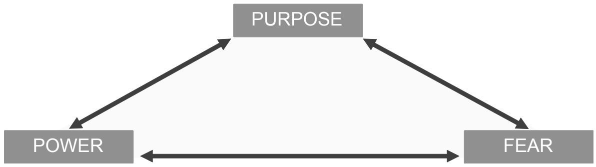

Fig. 6.2 The three core elements of implementation management

explain the goal and substance of change (purpose) to their team in order for things to progress. In the case of my customers in the USA things are different. There, power (money, resources, etc.) is awarded in conjunction with the demand "And now go do it!" The managers give themselves over to the belief that everything will then progress according to their wishes. And in Japanese companies the "fear" dimension is of extreme significance among managers. If success is not forthcoming they will be "beheaded". Such extreme characteristics have no chance whatsoever of generating high performance implementation projects. All the factors, i.e. purpose, power and fear, must be brought into the various phases of implementation in differing degrees of significance and in a well-considered manner. In my opinion you have no other choice but to bring the fear or pressure factor into play because "where nothing happens when nothing happens nothing will happen".

Once the expectation has been clearly communicated to the participants you must equip single individuals (take note, not the team!) with the power or the possibilities, i.e. the resources, the time and the means, to achieve the specifications (fear/pressure). Having thus aligned the interests of the decisive individuals with the implementation goals you should consider how, using the trinity of purpose, power and fear, you can provide these single individuals with the necessary momentum to execute the implementation project in a highly productive manner and at high speed. (cf. Fig. 6.2).

Implementation Insight No. 26
Changes cannot be implemented merely by decree (fear/pressure) or by explanation (purpose) or by simply giving the employees free rein and providing them with all the freedom, time and resources in the world (power/possibilities).

People, and thus organizations, only change if they understand why something should be done; are made to feel the consequences, in particular of inactivity, personally and see a realistic opportunity of having the possibilities to be successful—so there is no reason to give up. Depending on the organization and situation, the timing, intensity and weight given to the relevant "levers" (dimensions) of purpose, power and fear will differ.

Time and again I experience that managers responsible for implementation fall back on their standard programme. One only explains; another delegates, giving free hand and the third continuously cracks the whip because this is all he has learned. Reflect on your own behavioural/management pattern at regular intervals.

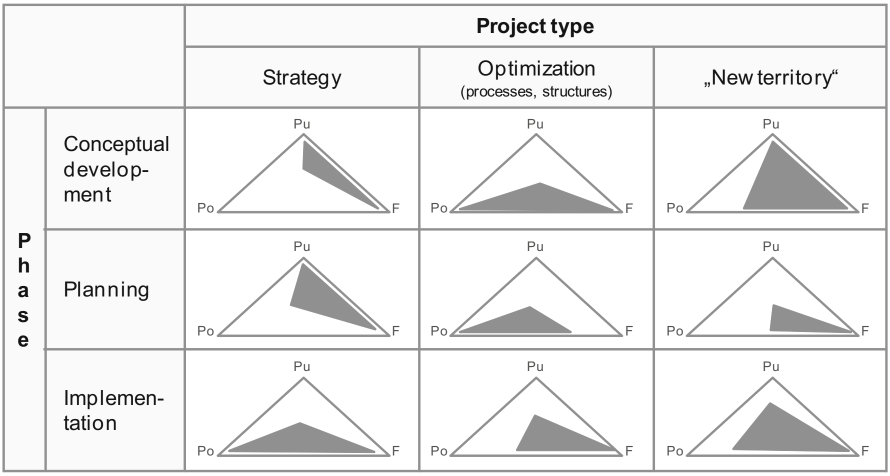

Fig. 6.3 The relevance of the purpose (*Pu*), fear (*F*) and power (*Po*) dimensions according to the project type and phase

The process will be far easier; less stressful and faster if you think about when, how and with what intensity you apply these three levers. The type of use will depend, on the one hand, on the corresponding project (strategy, optimization, "new territory") and, on the other, on the corresponding implementation phase (cf. Fig. 6.3).

In the **concept development phase** of a strategy project it is primarily the purpose dimension which needs to be addressed. The participants require a very clear vision concerning what is behind the division's or the company's new strategy and what exactly the strategic position aspired to looks like. Concept development always has to be effected under great pressure (fear) so that everyone concentrates on the key issues. In this context, always specify sporting objectives. If this is not the case there is a risk that the concept development team will increasingly become lost in details, finding a multitude of reasons why the strategy cannot be implemented in this form. The dimension of power is hardly addressed since very few resources (money, manpower) are required to compile good strategy concepts.

The situation is very different for **execution**. In this case no-one any longer needs to be told the whys and wherefores of the strategy implementation or why it is being executed as it is. It is far more important to main the degree of pressure or fear at a level which is high enough to ensure that execution does not grind to a halt while simultaneously equipping the participants with the, for them, relevant possibilities (power) to successfully complete their task. Since the greatest resistance can be expected during this phase, consistent pressure is crucial. The implementation manager employs this attitude to orient him- or herself to what the implementation team really requires in order to work successfully.

If you are moving into **new territory** with your type of project because you want to launch a new product onto the market or have to shoulder a new system implementation project, then the **concept development** phase also has to be conducted with a strong emphasis on power and fear. In contrast to strategy implementation, however, the power dimension is also brought into the equation. Because without the corresponding capability there will be no chance whatsoever of arriving at the right ideas and approaches and developing the foresight to conceive anything. Things are different during **planning**, when the purpose is no longer decisive but rather the transformation of the concepts developed into meaningful planning is the primary concern.

Implementation Insight No. 27
In order to generate implementation momentum you must, depending on the project phase and type, steer the interaction of purpose, power and fear.

6.2 Implementation Structuring—Better a Sports Car Than a Bus

Implementation structuring concerns itself with the structuring of the team in the strategy, tactics and practical execution phases. It considers issues such as which field team members should be drawn from (member companies of the group, divisions, departments, etc.) and how they should be organized to move implementation forward with the least possible amount of management, steering and control effort as well as pressure and generate momentum via the intrinsic motivation of the participants. To this end specific organizational principles must be adhered to during the various phases (cf. Fig. 6.4).

Kolbusa's Structuring Principles For Strategy, Tactics And Execution

- Strategy phase
  Ideally you require individuals characterized by market and competitive expertise; an entrepreneurial mindset and creativity plus strategic methodological competence for the strategy team. The composition should be on an interdisciplinary basis, in other words, from different divisions and different tiers of the hierarchy. What matter is that all participants are able to achieve the same level of abstraction—in others words are able to handle abstract topics and not just at home in the daily operational business. This is an absolute criterion for exclusion. Make a point of ensuring that there is friction and controversy. Teams made up of more than ten individuals are no longer able to work effectively because it will only be possible, if at all, to reach consensus on the assessments and decisions which are key to the strategy phase with great effort. Delegate facilitation to a competent assistant or advisor because you cannot participate in the discussion and lead it at the same time.

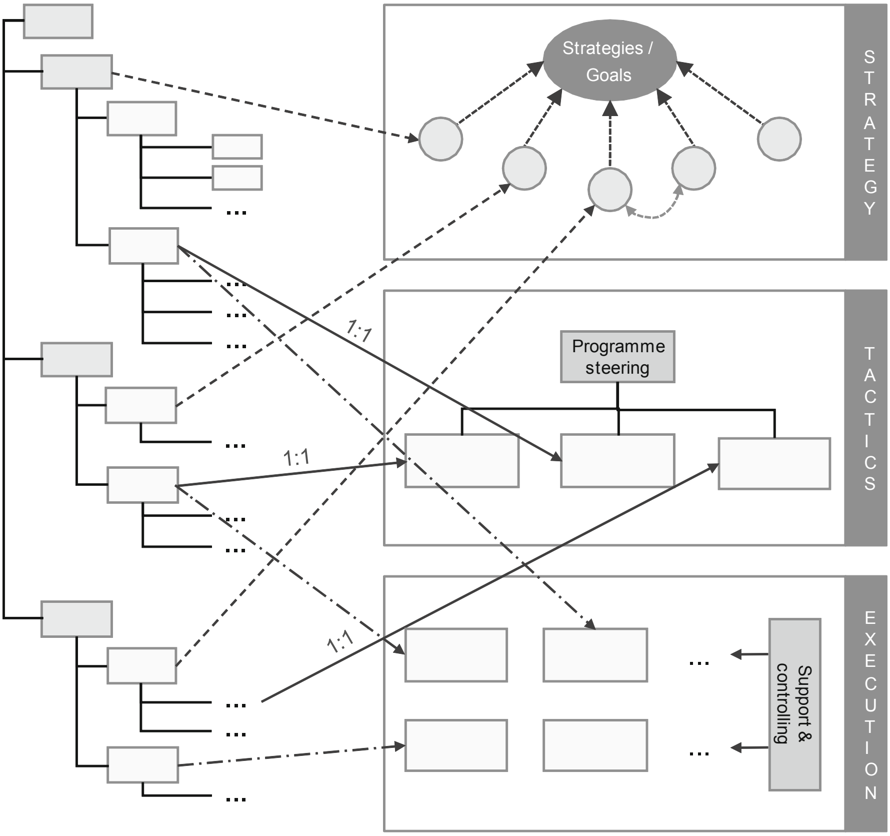

Fig. 6.4 Team composition during strategy, tactics and execution

- Tactics phase
  Other qualities are required for the concept development and planning team. In this case the task is to break down the strategy using operational know-how and develop new structures. This requires individuals who are able to imagine the situation following completion of implementation and have the courage to question the status quo—in other words true agents of change, who not only know what others should change but are also prepared to start with themselves and their own area. There are, admittedly, not very many such individuals.
  In addition to clear programme steering which has an eye to the overall concept and the methodological tool box to hand for the drill-down you should also apply the buddy principle. Every head of department, division and group has a "buddy" from another division, either an adjoining one—someone from sales has a buddy in product management—or from a management division. Give the "couples" time to get to know one another and you will see that it can result in a very enriching, cross-divisional cooperation, during the course of which

the participants automatically develop an understanding of issues outside of their area. This principle has proved its worth particularly in the field of classic points of friction such as between Marketing and Sales or technical divisions and IT as it generates more mutual understanding and the solutions are more resilient.

- Execution phase
  As soon as the practical implementation phase is entered you will require "doers"—i.e. individuals who are used to implementing things and move them forward. However beware—there is a big difference between a manager who gets things done in his operational job and solves or pushes forward issues reactively and one who creatively and proactively pushes things forward to achieve a set goal. I have thus experienced operational doers who, for example a purchasing manager whose task it was to negotiate a difficult contract or a location manager who had to solve difficult problems, have performed excellently. But whose behavioural patterns meant that they were then completely out of their depth when asked to proactively address a fairly abstract goal and find creative ways and options to achieve it before going on to consider who should be integrated when and how. They were positioned in a too one-dimensional manner for this. So one doer is not the same as another. Over the years I have thus also discovered that there is little point in introducing implementations and changes bit by bit or even establishing them in parallel in the form of a project or some other kind of parallel organization but instead that it is essential to entrust the line organizations with this task as quickly as possible. This also applies to structure, insofar as it is not necessary to change the line organization. If it has to be changed then do this quickly and painlessly and live with the fact that it will take some time for the new organization to grow together. By doing so you will avoid losing a lot of energy in what are otherwise slow-moving, long-drawn out change processes, during the course of which well-thought-out concepts are called into question over and over again and chipped away at and during which negative politics have to be dealt with. Implementation responsibility is line responsibility. In other words, as valuable as it is to work on an interdisciplinary basis with a high degree of friction during the strategy and tactics phases, since the procedure enriches these processes, the more important it is to work with clear responsibility which is anchored in the organization during implementation. Because while thought processes and concept development work can function across organizations execution functions best in clear structures. Say goodbye to models which aim to operate change or optimization in parallel or as a matrix structure connected to the line—I do not know a single programme which has been truly successful using these methods.
  Ideally successful mapping will take place from implementation sub-projects to the defined groups, divisions or departments. In Fig. 6.4 the sub-projects have been assigned to specific individuals with line responsibility. In addition to this the programme steering body established during the tactics phase now takes on the role of programme support (support & controlling). It now only assists the

line in implementing projects and monitors success; responsibility lies with the sub-projects, to which clear line responsibilities have been assigned.

If, during the scope of tactics, a change in the organizational structure was decided than this change has categorical priority, with additional issues such as, for example, restructuring of value creation; the product portfolio; etc. only following after this. Old structures keep old ways of thinking alive. Only in the rarest cases have I experienced that the new spirit required for reorientation has been able to assert itself in existing structures. Let's stay with the example of the telecommunications service provider already mentioned above, who no longer wants to base his business logic on network/technology options but instead on customer needs. He will not be able to establish the new spirit required for this unless he first restructures his organizational structure correspondingly. Product management, for example, must become an independent division, separated from Marketing; given budgetary sovereignty over products and with a profit and loss responsibility for these products. The Technology and Operations division must be correspondingly reoriented to this. If this is not done then you can be sure that the best concepts and most intelligent market considerations will not be realized. Managers avoid this move out of fear of the confusion, chaos and lack of clarity which can be caused by the restructuring of the organization and then inevitably end up in the situation they fear. Based on numerous small and major changes I can only give you the following advice—complete structural changes quickly and painlessly, before giving the organization the time required to grow together again. Say goodbye to any kind of step-for-step process or evolutionary organizational development. It does not bring much benefit but instead causes more damage because productivity between the "old" and "new" is torn apart over time.

Implementation Insight No. 28
Turn the old into new does not work. Within the scope of implementation projects provide organizational and personal clarity as quickly and soon as possible and then pass on implementation responsibility to the new structures. Say goodbye to the fear of total chaos. It will occur for a short period of time but is much easier to bear than the latent continual fear and uncertainty concerning new structures, which will suck productivity and energy out of you and your organization.

When putting together a new goal organization it is key to have the right people and less important—and this is often given far too much attention—that you have a perfect organizational design. At the end of the day it is all comes down to leadership and, in this context, the rule is that, to all intents and purposes, any type of value creation can be operated using any form of organization. This is somewhat easier with some kinds than others, however in my experience this is not really important. It is far more important that you have clearly defined the right people and responsibilities with regard to the goals to be achieved.

Implementation Insight No. 29
Successful implementation projects do not take into consideration the rule "Structure follows processes" bur rather act in accordance with the motto "Structure follows interests and competences", which is then followed by "Processes follow structure".

I consider organization charts under the aspect of entrepreneurial value creation to be superfluous since they provide no information whatsoever about how things are interlinked and how value is generated. They are, in contrast, insofar indispensable as they provide clarity to the individuals within the organizations concerning issues such as "Where is my home? Who will tell me in cases of doubt what my priorities are?" Organization charts satisfy the human need for clarity and clear assignment of responsibility and decision-making competences. Nothing more but also nothing less.

6.3 No Results Without Changed Goal Systems

Goal systems serve to focus decisions, and thus actions and priorities, in the various corporate divisions as defined by the strategy. If they are drawn up correctly they will provide the necessary focus in daily thought process and action. If, for example, the company's goal is customer service leadership then the complaints rate or customer churn rate are sure to play a role as the targets for the corresponding divisions. If changes take place in the organization and the structures, no matter whether for a department, a division or an entire company, then the existing goal systems must be called into question and restructured. Restructuring in this context means, above all, not simply adding additional items but rather removing the superfluous and reducing it to the lowest possible level. Most of the goal systems which I know are far too bloated and, as already mentioned elsewhere, where everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. By not translating entrepreneurial expectations into focused objectives you will be missing the key level for the long-term success of your implementation or change.

If you follow a strategy then your company or division will change and your goal system must then, logically, also change, at least in terms of content and often also of structure. Because your previous strategy will have used other levers to those which you now require. As a result your goal system will display shortcomings because the required levers are lacking—the existing goal system was based on another structure. If you are interested in the long-term effectiveness of your implementation or change you should consider and quickly establish a corresponding goal system for the company and its individual divisions.

Good goal systems are clear, simple and focused if you following two questions:

1. How well does the current goal system fit my strategy implementation?
2. How do I restructure the goal system with regard to my implementation?

1. Consideration of the Current Goal System Working from the results orientation, which I have highlighted several times in the previous chapters as being fundamental, you will be able to use very specific criteria to define and describe whether and how you are progressing with your implementation project. You are working and thinking from the end backwards and, based on a few criteria, can determine how well you are proceeding with your implementation project. You must thus consider you goal system with regard to whether the criteria it specifies:

- Make a contribution to precisely these results/progress criteria for your implementation project
- Or make no real contribution to them
- Or are even contrary to them.

> The management executives at an American insurance company worked exclusively on the basis of their job descriptions. The existing goal system was based on assessing and demanding turnover growth and customer retention. When two smaller companies were acquired to reinforce the market position the INTEGRO programme for the integration and restructuring of the organizational structures was initiated. The goal was to implement a new product strategy and a new profit and loss responsibility based on this strategy. Instead of first turning attention to the content-related and structural aspects within the scope of the project, following a summary procedure a decision was made on how project manager responsibility would, in future, be distributed to the regional and central structures and what the goals for the new organizational units should be. It was decided that the profit and loss responsibility would now rest solely with the regions. The regions' goal weighting was placed to 60 % on turnover growth; to 20 % on customer retention and to 20 % on simplification of the product structures and product diversity. These goals were carefully adjusted for central product management to achieve an intelligent mesh of interests and goals—60 % of the goal weighting for central product management lay on to what extent the product portfolio was reduced and tariff diversity was limited and 20 % each on customer retention and turnover growth. Thanks to this new intermeshing of the regional and central goal structures effective implementation of the product strategy was achieved.

The goal system must thus always be examined in terms of whether and how it must be restructured to provide effective support for the strategic goals. The greatest difficulty in this regard is to actually throw existing elements overboard.

If the current goal system clearly runs contrary to the results/progress criteria then the issue of restructuring the goal system must be passed over. If, in contrast, elements of the goal system have no influence on implementation then it is up to the implementation manager to decide to what extent change should be forced by means of a supporting goal system or if it is possible to work successfully with the individual profiles which originated out of political considerations.

Within the scope of a mechanical engineering company's restructuring of its customer after-sales service it was planned that employees would, when visiting customers, now no longer just carry out repairs and deliver spare parts but also actively seek existing customer needs and possible sales opportunities, reporting these to the Sales department. This required a change in behaviour since the customer after-sales employees now had to learn to recognize customers' existing sales potential and also to enquire directly about this potential. If only customer satisfaction with service and the time taken to solve problems are anchored in the goal system then this implementation measure will hardly be internalized.

There are, however, not only—as described in the example—written, administratively anchored goal systems, which are monitored semi-annually or annually using established mechanisms, but also another type which is, in my experience, far more influential—the "unwritten" laws.

These unwritten laws, which I also like to call reward and punishment systems, are characterized by, and internalized from, corporate culture or represent a division's or company's culture. While formal goal systems stand in direct, programmatic communication between managers and employees, culture function indirectly, representing the overall organization's self-image. No-one can elude it. I am always amazed by how little these two systems, the formal, written goal system and the unwritten laws, depend upon each other and how strong the belief is that formal goal structures can also influence culture. A formal goal system can be examined to ascertain what influence it has on the success of the implementation project and whether it needs to be restructured. This is more difficult in the case of the crucial informal reward and punishment system. It takes a different form in each organization and must first be recognized. In other words, you must, for example, ask yourself "When is your standing in a company or division good and when not?"; "When is gossip in the corridor about someone positive?"; "When do people moan about someone over coffee?" "Are the people who arrive early and leave late the ones who gain approval or is it more the people who speak their minds in meetings and support others?" and "Is 'being different' seen as a good thing or is conformity the desired norm?" As a general rule an organizational unit's unwritten laws, its reward and punishment system, always revolve around the twin elements of recognition and status. You must thus establish what generates recognition and status and what results in rejection and loss of status. This knowledge provides you with a strong lever to employ within the scope of implementation.

Implementation Insight No. 30

Successful implementation projects are characterized in particular by their systematic addressing of the unwritten laws. Formal goal systems must be adjusted to ensure the focusing of resources. Genuine implementation momentum is generated via the unwritten laws.

One of my clients was sure that the productivity of his organization was being impaired by the fact that too many individuals were taking part in all kinds of regular meetings or project coordination groups. Not only was a lot of time being lost as a result but a large number

of activities and agreements were being made which were not or any real relevance for the achievement of the goals defined. An initial investigation confirmed that this gut feeling was correct. It became apparent that both the structures and the responsibilities would have to be restructured. Value creation had to be restricted and smaller, closed teams had to be formed which would only operate via clear service/delivery relationships.
Inspection of the unwritten laws quickly revealed that we were dealing with a fundamental problem within the scope of the existing reward and punishment system. Because employees in the organization were highly regarded if they had contact to many colleagues; were party to as much information as possible and voluntarily provided assistance to as many instances as possible. There would have been little point in approaching this behavioural pattern in purely structural terms and via a formal goal system. Rathermore we had to consider how we could tighten up and use these, to all intents and purposes, positive attitudes in the interests of value creation. So, while the organization may have been restructured, the introduction of specific roles such as, for example, the Chief Gravitation Officers (CGOs) established orderly interaction between the individual divisions. The cultural values and recognition mechanisms continued to be used, however the resulting productivity deficits were eliminated. The CGOs' task was, without completely disregarding the established "laws", to become involved in active cross-divisional events and to structure the forms of cooperation so that they were more efficient and reacted more quickly.

2. Structuring of the Goal System If, in the initial step, the decision has been taken to change the established goal system then a changed goal system can be developed for each phase. In the case of the two first phases these will be temporary goal systems, while the goal system for the implementation phase is more long-term in order to achieve sustained change.

Let's first concentrate on formal goal systems. These can best be used to provide long-term support for implementation. In this context it should be borne in mind that, under no circumstances, should goal systems be made up of rules concerning bonuses. It is a myth that people perform better if you offer them the prospect of more money for doing so. In my experience the opposite is often the case.

Within the scope of restructuring the managing director offered his heads of division the prospect of substantial bonus payments if they showed successful commitment. These financial incentives proved, however, not to hold any real appeal. Together we considered the personal spheres of interest of the individual heads of division; brought them into alignment with the new structure, which was slightly adjusted, and based the goals on the divisional heads' personal objectives. In the Development division, for example, a technology competence centre was set up to this end, which, while it may not have been previously envisaged, was, however, intended to meet this divisional head's openness for innovation. In the case of successful restructuring the Head of the Production Division, who had never been truly satisfied with his role, was promised the successor position and assistance with the process in order to then take on a mentor role 2 years later and be able to devote himself to the optimizing of the processes. Implementation momentum was only generated when we brought these insights together with the business-oriented goal agreements. This example is also a good illustration of how building organizations around individuals is not a fundamentally bad approach. In my experience this can in certain circumstances, on the contrary, be very enriching and a genuine basic driver of successful implementation management.

Fig. 6.5 The dynamics of emotions

6.4 The Emotionalization and De-emotionalization of Implementation Processes

Emotions are, and I have already discussed this too, the crucial factor in implementation concept development and, in particular, in the implementation of strategies, changes and projects.

Everyone knows from their own personal experience that a project can only really be moved forward with intrinsic motivation; with passion and from emotional conviction. And you will only be motivated if you can see the meaning of a project for you personally and know that it will satisfy your personal goals and interests. These demands are usually not of a financial nature but have something to do with your own development, self-realization and desire for recognition and status. I experience this connection on a daily basis and, as an implementation manager, you should recognize it and take advantage of it to achieve the entrepreneurial goals which have been set. The participants' intrinsic motivation speeds up implementation processes and protects them from destructive emotions which can, at the least, have a blocking if not an annihilating effect.

Implementation Insight No. 31
The sooner you confront emotions, in the best case during the phase of concept development and drafts, the better. And don't be afraid of conflicts—they will, in any case, occur sooner or later, but will, however, then be more difficult and strenuous.

So in order to bring more momentum into the implementation project you must look into both dimensions—emotionalization and de-emotionalization (cf. Fig. 6.5). In my experience the best place for emotionalization to start is with the primary emotions of pleasure and curiosity, which must be sought out among the key participants and, as defined by the goals set, promoted and utilized. In the case of de-emotionalization you must confront the primary emotions of fear, envy and frustration.

Emotionalization

- Curiosity
  Exploit the curiosity of individual participants for your implementation project—who can hardly wait to create an image of the future of the new partner

model? Who has the right attitude to specific procedures ("I don' know exactly how value drivers and the reduction of complexity works but it sounds interesting!"). Consider each of your players, asking yourself who is curious about what. Individuals who are willing to change will be characterized by far less fear of the new. Utilize this curiosity by assigning corresponding tasks or sub-projects with a high degree of freedom to these individuals and you can be sure that something good will come of it.

- Pleasure
  Look for the committed individual in the team. Which of the participants display an obvious passion combined with competence in specific areas? Where and how can this passion be utilized for the implementation process? Many implementation projects criminally neglect this resource-oriented mindset. In one implementation project, for example, we had an IT Group Leader with such a passion for sales that we assigned him to a sub-project in the sales division. Not only are such measures wonderful opportunities to bring out an organization's dormant resources and abilities, they also generate genuine momentum.
  Take the time to think through these issues and consider how you could structure the implementation project making use of these emotions and, in cases of doubt, contrary to existing rules or expectations within the organization. Whether you then do exactly this is your decision. It is certainly worth considering.

De-emotionalization

- Fear
  Within the scope of implementation fear is generated in particular by the threat of lack of recognition; insufficient opportunities to participate or an imminent loss of status and expresses itself in tendencies such as withdrawal, defensive behaviour and standstill. The paradoxical thing about this is that most fears are unfounded, insofar as they are based on the negative unknown which is perceived as being threatening. An experienced implementation manager can transform fear, particularly where it is grounded, into positive implementation energy by taking away the power of this strong emotion. An intervention which is simpler than it sounds. Many implementation managers, however, appear—to put it plainly—too cowardly to confront it. Where orderly conceptual preparatory work has been carried out you will gain an overview of which areas of company will change and how they will change relatively quickly. And there will, of course, also be losers in this game. There is no point in pretending anything else, although this is frequently done, evidently in order to keep motivation levels up and to calm emotions. This calculation never adds up; fears remain and continue to absorb energy since everyone knows that something will change. For this reason, where you are 80 % certain about who will be affected in what way, positively or negatively, you should tell it like it is so that the individual it concerns has the opportunity to come to terms with it—both with the positive and the negative

aspects. Avoidance strategies here will neither aid the upcoming process nor the negatively affected individuals—on the contrary. I am, of course, aware of all the topics brought up workers' councils in this respect and have been confronted by them many times over. That's also why I say confront these issues as early as possible, integrate the workers' council at an early stage in the interests of the company and ensure that there is a common implementation culture.

- Envy
  Envy can, on the one hand, lead to hostile, destructive behaviour and result in negative, damaging politics during an implementation. On the other hand it can produce the impetus to achieve a specific goal and be extraordinarily productive. The same rule goes for envy—engage with it. Where positive envy potential exists, which is generally the case for younger managers (even among equals), establish corresponding mentor partnerships so that these developments are promoted. Where envy results, or could result, in negative politics you would be well advised to combat it proactively, compensating for it with corresponding recognitions or assignments of status. If this is unsuccessful or impossible then you have no other choice but to disperse the situation. During an implementation project we thus had a constant "envy war" between Corporate Development and Corporate Controlling which it was impossible to get to grips with so that, in the end, a new Head of Controlling was intentionally appointed from within the ranks of Corporate Development. You cannot afford to give space to negative politics.
- Frustration
  Frustration always occurs when energy is invested but does not produce any result. In an implementation project this either means that you are not making progress and, as result, are experiencing a lack of energy for further progress. Or you may be making progress but no-one is interested.
  If you work according to the principles described above the lack of progress will be based solely on being overburden, which is not always avoidable. It is a mistake to exert more pressure at this point. You must consider how you can compensate the frustration and eliminate it by means of altered framework parameters.
  The second aspect is, as a matter of principle, avoidable in implementation management—frustration occurs because no-one is interested in the energy invested. Put in simple terms this means—lack of recognition and rewards for progress. In German companies in particular the principle often applies "Not moaning is praise enough". A fatal error of judgement. Every small piece of progress must be rewarded, however not in monetary terms but instead with recognition, genuine interest and integration into topics which appeal to, and interest, individuals emotionally or in terms of content.

It is helpful to visualize the five emotions in the form of an emotions map for the key individuals (generally no more than between five and twenty in large implementation projects). "What does the relevant individual fear; what are they envious of; what frustrates them? What makes this individual curious; what pleases them?" You will gain valuable insights from such considerations and be able to assess who you entrust with what things and in what way during the implementation project as well as how you assign roles and responsibilities.

Implementation Insight No. 32
Emotions are either true implementation accelerators or the most powerful brakes. More than enough reason to engage with them in the context of single individuals and their interactions and to utilize them.

Depending on the relevant context there are a variety of options to arrive at either emotionalization or de-emotionalization. You could, for example, achieve positive emotionalization by means of a team meal with the board of directors or the presentation of project results giving rise to an increase in the project manager's status. It is possible to have a de-emotionalizing effect by forestalling imagined catastrophes, thus reducing the fear which exists. Fear, envy and frustration can also be diverted in such a way that they can be utilized as emotionalization factors. Fear can generate an unbelievable power to achieve things which would otherwise be impossible.

6.5 Implementation Policy—Controlling the Interaction of Forces

I understand implementation policy to be the systematic intermeshing of the participants' individual interests as defined by the goal to create a well-functioning overall political structure. You should thus also spend time considering this dimension intensively and not, as is unfortunately often the case, leave it to chance. Pursue issues such as this: "Who has what interests for what reasons? Where are there overlaps? Where do the individual spheres of interest diverge?" In this context the same rule as always applies here—thinking this through from the outset and addressing it proactively can ensure an accelerated and, in this case, also relaxed working atmosphere within the scope of the implementation project.

Implementation policy becomes all the more relevant, the more intensive the change caused by the project is and the greater the number of individuals directly affected. And it is never too late to liberate a project from unnecessary resistance by means of a systematic implementation policy, providing it with renewed momentum. Strict consistency is, however, required in this context which, while not necessarily meaning severity, does however include the one or other decision which appears tough to the outside world. Consistent implementation policy is only possible if you have the courage to make clear decisions.

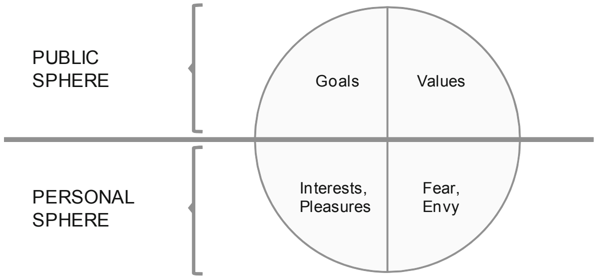

Fig. 6.6 The public and personal sphere

Kolbusa's Implementation Policy Programme

1. List the relevant individuals
   List which individuals you are dealing with within the scope of your project. Relevant individuals include everyone who plays a key role for the implementation project such as, for example, stakeholders of all kinds; project sponsors; project drivers; project managers; management executives from the most diverse divisions or departments; holders of key competences; etc. Take a sheet of paper and write down all the relevant individuals.
2. The Powermap—Identify attitudes
   Engage with each one of these individuals with regard to the public sphere—What goals and what values are associated with this person? (cf. Fig. 6.6)—and with regard to the personal, emotional sphere—What interests and pleasures play a role for them and what worries them or makes them anxious and what, under certain circumstances, makes them envious?
3. The Powermap—Visualize the diversity of interests
   Link the spheres of the single individuals in the form of an operational network based on the question "Who influences who?" Stronger influences can be represented by thicker arrows and you can also differentiate between positive and negative influences. (cf. Fig. 6.7)
4. Understand the political landscape
   The operational network can be evaluated and interpreted with the aid of an active–passive matrix (Vester 2002). The goal is to identify the factors or individuals which are relevant to the question "Who exercises the great influence, either positively or negatively, in my implementation project?" An individual has an active effect if they influence other individuals either directly or indirectly and the more powerfully they do this, the further up the matrix they are located. The more passive an individual is, the further right their position is. An individual is reactive if they are influenced or drive, while buffering individuals neither strongly influence others nor are strongly influenced themselves. The easiest way to generate the active–passive matrix is to use software. You can, however, otherwise also transfer the individuals and their corresponding positive or negative influences into an influence matrix. The matrix illustrates the active and passive scores, transferring them into a system grid. If your oper-

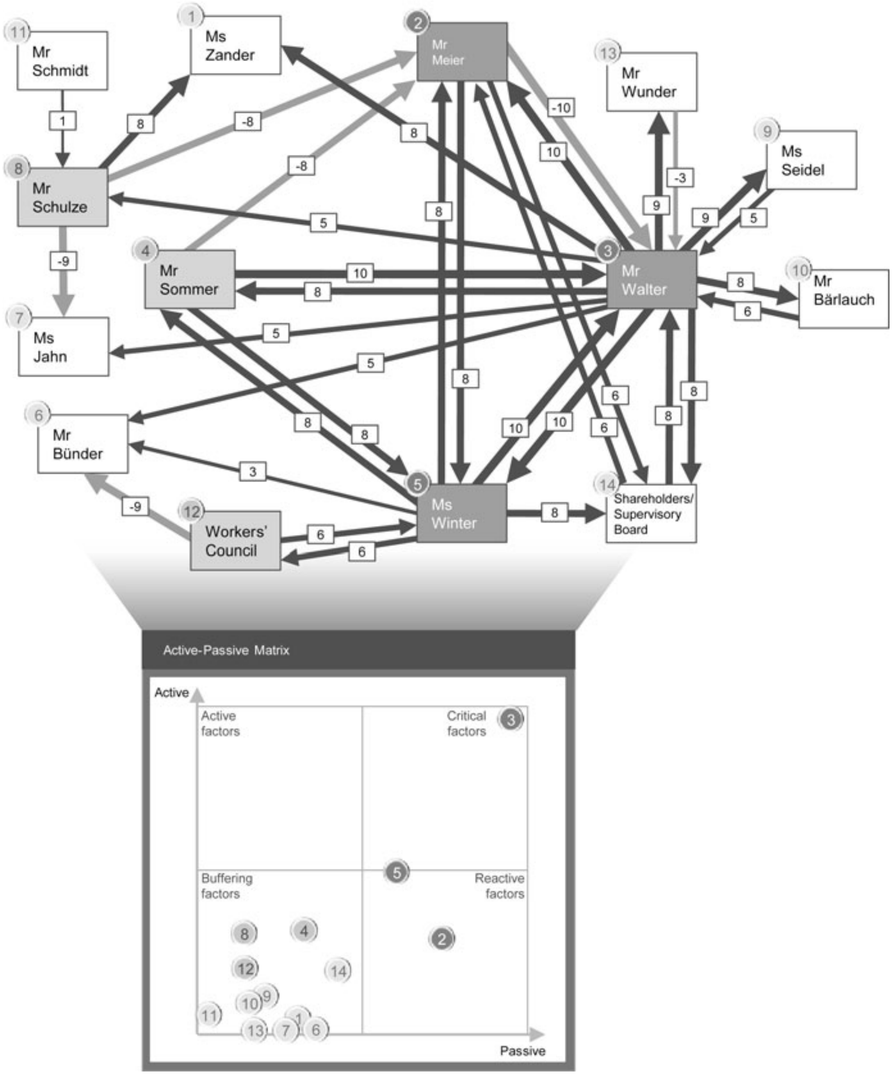

Fig. 6.7 An example of an operational network for interests with an active–passive matrix

ational network is relatively straightforward the individuals who are either the direct or indirect cause of resistance can be identified without an active–passive matrix or system grid.

In the sample matrix (cf. Fig. 6.7) Mr Walter (No. 3) is a critical factor. Critical factors have both an active and also a reactive character—in other words Mr Walter has an extremely strong effect on all the individuals who are relevant to the implementation project, is, however, himself also either directly or indirectly strongly influenced. He can be utilized as an accelerator and generator of a positive mood in the implementation project. Careful attention must, however, also be paid that he is not negatively influenced, thus causing the project to fail. Mr Meier (No. 2) and Ms Winter (No. 5) are, in contrast, very strongly influenced but themselves have no great effect on the other participants. They are well-suited to function as good indicators of the current mood in the project.

5. Analyse the results
   Based on the findings you can now draw diverse conclusions for yourself and your implementation project and initiate the corresponding measures. The following questions will be of assistance in this context:
   a. What are the decisive success drivers for your implementation project? How can you combine or establish them in the form of one or more bodies within your implementation project?
   b. Are there individuals who, based on the insights gained from the Powermap, you will never be able to get on your side because they will never be able to bring their personal interests and goals into alignment with the implementation goal?
   c. Can you bypass these individuals or do you have to attempt to manage implementation project with the knowledge that this resistance exists and how can you break down this resistance as soon as possible or intentionally escalate it?
   d. Are there individuals or groups of individuals who are currently working against your implementation project but whom you could get on your side by means of actively influencing them? Who are the most influential individuals in this context and on what emotional level do they influence others?
   e. Are there groups or alliances which actively support the overall goal? Can you get additional individuals into this group?

These quick steps will help you to make your implementation project's political situation transparent. Because only when you know your friends and enemies and have gained a picture of their corresponding interests can you actively steer events. That's implementation policy.

7 Staying on the Ball—Consistency Instead of Severity!

Many implementation projects do not succeed as planned because the towel is thrown in too quickly when difficulties arise. The necessary consistency in action is often lacking, both where the results to be achieved and also the time frames in which things should be completed are concerned. Since the course for successful implementation momentum is charted at the outset it is very difficult to turn things around once something has been drawn up incorrectly. Over the course of the project, and particularly in the final phase of the process, the composure and calm of the outset become an (in actual fact) unnecessary, inefficient hectic pace. The resistance and difficulties which occur and are anything but unusual quickly dampen the original expectations. The participants settle for less and are happy to have achieved a reasonable final result despite the increasing pressure toward the end of the project.

Consistency is crucial, particularly in the case of strategy implementation projects. It is already difficult enough to execute implementation projects parallel to daily operations; a significant amount of energy is also required to tackle the resistance of single individuals or entire organizational units which occurs. Successful implementation projects, according to my observations, are all characterized by an enormous degree of consistency. Please note—consistency, not severity. The required consistent action can be described using a few rules which apply for the way in which you handle both yourself and also the implementation team. It is important to bear the difference between consistency and severity in management in mind as well as also to establish a corresponding culture—I will be giving you some tips on this issue.

Conventional implementation reporting, which is based on milestones and activities, is not really focused on the management of progress vis-à-vis the goal status aspired to or the result. As a result, over the course of the project it reflects reality less and less, thus proving itself time and again to be what I like to call a "colour miracle". No matter whether the status of certain aspects at the sub-project level is reported to be "yellow" or "red" the overall project status is, amazingly, always "green". In this context it is again essential to be consistent and clear and not to fool yourself but, if necessary, to correct things in order to be able to demonstrate genuine progress and success to the team.

M. Kolbusa, *Implementation Management,* Management for Professionals,
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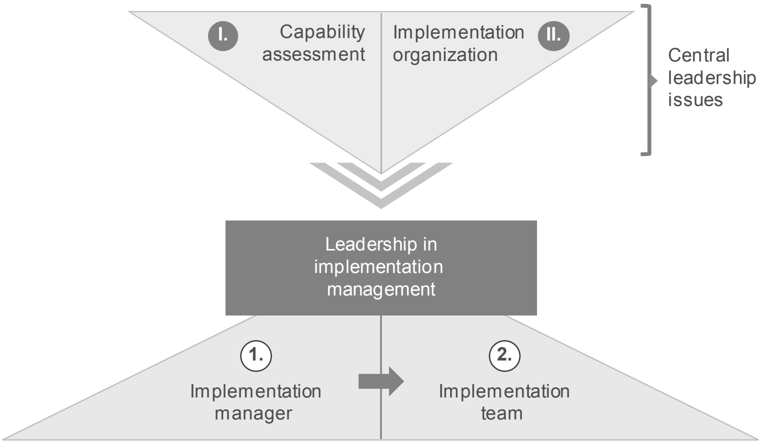

Fig. 7.1 The central elements of leadership

7.1 Leadership—No Compromises

Even the best results orientation and methodology can do nothing to change the fact that—in my experience—implementation success depends to more than 50 % on leadership—in other words, the ability and will to manage in a results oriented manner. And this ability can, at least to a great extent, be learned; in other words leadership is a trade and not a black art. In the final instance it is about imposing the correct principles on yourself and implementing them with the required consistency, discipline and resilience. A strategy and concept are only worth the paper they are written on when they become reality. And this reality requires consistent leadership which becomes a true art if you are able, by emotionalizing the participants, to succeed in getting out of the push and into the pull mode which makes implementation, as it were, a foregone conclusion.

In this regard two aspects are of key significance for leadership of implementation projects (cf. Fig. 7.1):

1. *Capability assessment*
   You must compare your demands and expectations concerning the implementation process with your own abilities and those of all the other participants—in other words consider the question "What can we realistically achieve?" These two poles, namely demand and reality must be brought into a productive relationship of tension in order to achieve implementation momentum. The question of what is feasible and bearable must be answered realistically but not defeatistically—"Nothing is possible anyway". It is not particularly meaningful to resolve to give a lecture in Spanish in three months if you do not yet speak a word of Spanish. It is, however, equally as absurd to take two years to push through a 10 % increase in productivity in a company or division. The aspiration to achieve a strategically

meaningful and desirable 20 % increase in market share in the next twelve months will hardly succeed if the sales organization with its established processes and structures has, to date, only achieved a maximum of 3 % per year. If, however, the proportion of internal to externally supplied employees is currently 2:1 why should it take over twelve months to increase this ratio to 3:1 or even 4:1?

Good implementation management sets sporting, ambitious goals, however with the clear knowledge of existing structures; useable resources and the potential available—in other words of the possible limitations. This requires experience and a clear, unafraid perspective. There is no point in resolving to do things which cannot result in anything. At the personal level this only results in depression and at the organizational level in frustration. On the other hand, you should also not underperform, not daring to take up the challenge of a fast process. Because experience teaches us that as a general rule far more can be achieved than originally assumed.

2. *Implementation organization*

   If you are able to assess the implementation team's basic ability and willingness to perform, then the next step is to consider how you can arrive at the new, planned and developed structures, processes, habits and competences and how you must organize yourself, your team and the target organization to this purpose.

   In order to still be able to give the talk in Spanish you could, for example, resolve to attend a two-week intensive course and/or to practice your linguistic skills for 30 min every day for a year. Or the sales organization could, perhaps, facilitate the targeted changes with the aid of changed goal systems and corresponding sales training in individual teams or develop a so-called "band of heroes" which tries out completely new sales methods, before multiplying them in train-the-trainer mode. It must, however, always be possible to accomplish such changes parallel to unchanged daily operations, which in turn means planning well. In this context the rule again applies—Do not use either methods or templates which have worked before or any kind of best practices. This can be enriching, should, however, not be decisive for your project. Run through multiple variations before making a decision. I intentionally carry out certain facets of each implementation project differently. I do, of course, sometimes worry that this won't work but as a general rule it results in excellent solutions. Mistakes which occur in this context are corrected and the process then continues—namely faster and more smoothly than if I had implemented blueprints or established procedures on a 1:1 basis. Think through things for yourself and you will always find the shortest route.

The greatest risk in this regard is, in cases of doubt, you yourself as the responsible implementation manager, who, just like everyone else, is always in search of certainty and a solid foundation. And these are—as discussed—always, as a matter of principle, sought in established procedures; clear plans and experience. This is why it is so important that your assessment of the abilities and the implementation organization also and, above all, first concerns you yourself and only then your team and the organization.

- The implementation manager
  You should consider your personal management system thoroughly in order to arrive at a results oriented, in other words a non-input oriented, style of leadership which also includes the emotionalization of the participants.
  There is no one and only correct procedure in this context, no one and only correct "style". We are all too different for this to be the case. Your style must only ensure that:
  a. You always and at all times have a clear picture of *what* you want to achieve not *how* you want to achieve it! Most people unfortunately cling to the "how" instead of turning their attention to the "what". While questions such as "How do we communicate?"; "How do we carry out reporting?"; "How do we structure the sub-projects?"; etc. are important this is not necessarily the case at the outset. The rule of thumb is to remain calm with regard to the "how".
  b. Starting with this picture you always know how to recognize if you are moving forward; stalling or if parts of your implementation may even be in the process of moving backward. You should have developed a few, clear progress criteria.
  c. You do not necessarily have absolute methodological clarity concerning the entire process—a conviction which can, incidentally, even be counterproductive. Why do something using which methods? What exactly is the purpose? What is the contribution to the result? You will only be able to generate certainty, satisfaction and motivation if you have this clarity.
  d. Depending on the type and size of implementation you carry out a review with all the sub-projects every two to four weeks. Clarify where you stand in the individual sub-projects and what the status of the interlinking and contribution to the whole is. You will thus prevent a situation whereby, despite perhaps many good individual achievements, the whole does not proceed in a synchronized, successful manner.
  e. You observe, understand and participate on the ground. Never rely on what is reported to you or what you learn from hearsay. Always gain your own picture. Decisions and actions should only be based on clear observations and proof, not on assumptions or interpretations. This has nothing to do with mistrust but rather with the fact that perceptions can be very different without one being wrong and the other right. Your perspective is required for successful implementation management.
  f. You pay attention to your experience prison by regularly asking yourself "Do we really have to do that? Isn't there a shortcut? Couldn't that be simpler? Can we putt less effort into that and still achieve our result?" If something is not really making a contribution to the result then stop doing it—consistently. As a good implementation manager you are able to let go.
- The implementation team
  "Implementation team" refers to the factual implementation organization working on the individual sub-projects. The teams set up within this organization must be managed according to uniform principles by very productive sub-project managers. The latter usually take on this additional responsibility parallel to an operational role, so you cannot, and should not, assume that they always know

exactly what to do. In your own interests make an effort to steer sub-project managers away from established, seductive "input thinking" and ask over and over again if they are moving closer to the agreed result; what makes them uncertain or certain and what the specific next steps will be. Every sub-project should undergo this self-examination on a weekly basis. In this context it is important for the implementation team to take its leave from plans to-do lists to the greatest extent possible, instead working with results lists. What will have been completed by the end of next week? What progress or interim results are apparent?

Time and again I determine how difficult teams initially find it to work according to precisely these principles. If you are able to successfully carry out a re-education process in this regard you will experience enormous productivity in implementation.

You should furthermore, together with the implementation team, agree cooperation principles and ensure that they are consistently adhered to. In addition to implementation specific agreements I can provide you with the following basic principles from my practical experience:

a. Together you can enjoy wonderful discussions; obtain opinions and "spar" with each other. Conceptual and development work is, however, best carried out alone. This is strenuous and requires practice, however, in the final instance, not only results in greater speed but also qualitatively better results.
b. The consequence of the first item is that workshops serve to present and discuss concepts; to collaboratively weigh alternatives and to arrive at different points of view. They do not serve to jointly formulate ideas. The discussion topics must be well prepared and followed up on in order to be able to present and discuss the results achieved at the next gathering. Workshops will thus be reduced to a minimum in terms of time, lasting a maximum of two or three hours, with a few exceptions.
c. The same applies for meetings. Their sole purpose is to provide brief presentations of status with regard to the achievement of results; confirming or unsettling factors; correspondingly required decisions and to agree the next steps. Meetings should thus never take longer than 30 min since discussions which last longer begin to go round in circles. This is generally due to insufficient preparation or the shifting of conceptual work to the meeting if this work would take up too much time.

We human beings constantly underestimate how much time we have available. Make sure that the sub-projects gauge their next activities with regard to results and enter them into the diary in addition to the many other obligations. The result will be realistic, relaxed but still very productive work.

A little practice will also result in ever increasing degree of accuracy in the estimations. You do, of course, run the risk of getting caught in the "Not possible" spiral. The following leadership principles, which I often discuss with all the project and sub-project managers involved in larger implementation programmes, can help to provide valuably invested time.

Kolbusa's leadership principles in implementation

- Speed and from the outset
  In most implementation projects speed is not generated until the end, when the pressure to produce results suddenly increases. Good leadership, in contrast, ensures that the required speed is available from the outset; that there are training courses in between and also that there is sufficient time to take a break. With the assistance of clear results orientation and these principles you will move forward quickly while remaining relaxed. It is important that you do not demand endurance sprints. The principle is—sprint, training, relaxation, sprint, etc.
- Regular training
  By 'training' I do not mean that you participate in a joint fitness programme or should scramble about in climbing parks but rather that you, as the implementation manager, regularly consider together with your sub-project managers, and with the greatest possible inner distance, what you are currently doing; what is going well; what was less successful and which things you could, under certain circumstances, have done differently because they would have been simpler and more direct. Create what complexity researchers refer to as the "optimum cognitive distance" to your problems and issues. Consider your issues and problems with distance and from different perspectives so that you a) do not become superficial and b) do not become entangled in unnecessary details. Give yourself time to learn and consider. The last ten minutes of a status meeting will not, however, be sufficient for this purpose. In this context I have had positive experience with initially allocating two hours every two weeks for this at the beginning of an implementation project and later every four weeks. It is helpful to bring in uninvolved sparring partners either from within or outside the organization for this purpose in order to gain suggestions for alternative procedures and methods.
- Consistent reliability and commitment
  Ensure that there is reliability and commitment in small (from meeting to meeting) and large matters (for example agreements with sub-project interfaces). Always base your management on the motto "Every agreement can be renegotiated as long as this is initiated proactively by one of the partners". Saying just before "closing time" (in a meeting) that you have unfortunately not managed to complete your tasks is and should incur penalties. If you want success there is no alternative but to establish a culture of absolute reliability. Ensure that notes are made at the end of every meeting concerning what has to be taken care of by whom by the next meeting. This does not require detailed minutes, which are generally a waste of time and energy anyway. It is not a catastrophe if someone states during a process that he is not able to complete everything and renegotiates his undertaking. To wait, however, until the meeting to do so must be publically reprimanded.
- Realists instead of optimists
  It goes without saying that successful implementation management requires a positive spirit. Optimism can, however, not only become laughable but subsequently very frustrating. Fooling yourself and awakening false expectations is wrong. Educate your sub-project managers to also imagine the catastrophes over and over again so that they do not subsequently experience an unimagined catastrophe—in

other words, they should engage with the current issues with all their ramifications without fooling themselves in any way.

- Genuine priorities
  As an implementation manager you are positively obliged to set clear priorities and to also communicate them. Have you too noticed that implementation programme plans, no matter in which industry or country, are initially a conglomerate of issues, while at the end ever fewer Gantt bars or other planning bars are to be seen? In this context it is precisely at the outset that clear priorities must be set in order to achieve fast progress in a few, key areas. Always try to genuinely move three things forward instead of moving hundreds of things just a few centimetres. The latter is not only inefficient but also frustrating. The more you focus your resources, the more successful and stress-free your implementation project will be. It is up to you as the implementation manager to withstand the pressure and desire which will, of course, arise from all sides to do lots of things in parallel and at the same time and to compensate for this pressure.
- No overloading of the team
  Motivation is the result of success. This is why it is so important to work in an results not activity oriented manner, not only allowing you to see from week to week that things are moving forward but also based on the successive, tangible achievement of progress criteria. To this end it is important that all participants know the context of the implementation project. The amount of work should also be reasonable. No-one can possibly work in a focused, sensible manner for more than eight hours a day over the long term and implementation management should be structured accordingly. It is, as a matter of principle, nonsensical to work with other assumptions. Weekly "diary management" is helpful tool also in this context. Avoid the motor overheating. Statements such as "Then we'll just have to plan on 120 %" may sound heroic and feel heroic during the first few weeks but are not productive.

Never work with to-do lists at any stage of your implementation project. They are nothing but deceptive intermediaries between tasks and time, the most important resource which you and your team have. Time can only be represented by means of your and your team members' diaries (cf. Fig. 7.2). I believe that to-do lists are not meaningful for the following reasons:

- Their compilation and management requires a significant amount of effort.
- They breathe down your neck, making you feel guilty and generally only generate frustration, since it is, in any case, impossible to achieve everything on the list.
- They are incalculable and vague because they show no results but only activities. And even if activities can be estimated in terms of the time they require they are still not entered in any diary and thus have no specifically assigned time frame.
- The list gets longer and longer and is hardly ever fully completed. If things should be attended to then they must be entered into a diary, ideally on a weekly basis, in order to maintain momentum. This is the only way to gain a clear overview, which generally results in the recognition that you have taken on far too much.
- As a rule they contain more issues and activities than are necessary as well as also too many well-meant issues and activities.

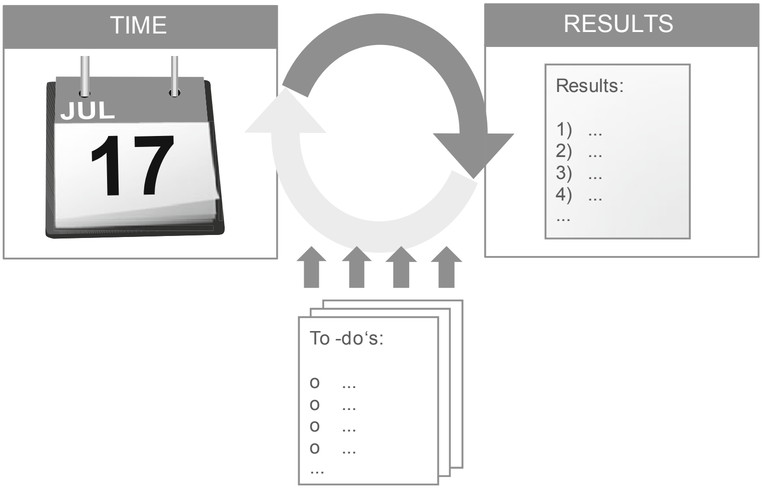

Fig. 7.2 To-do lists as an unnecessary link between time and results

For a long time I valued project planning with all the associated methods and tools highly which is why I never really found it easy to put my insights into practice and work with milestones; project and activity plans or to-do lists. However, at the latest when I determined that doing so increases productivity, since only one issue is worked on during a phase, but then in highly focused, fast manner, I was convinced. Also because the additional flexibility and resilience make it possible to react appropriately to new requirements without having to time and again overturn planning which it has taken a lot of effort to develop.

The above mentioned leadership principles only function if you are genuinely prepared to relinquish planning and reporting on milestones and activities. If you seriously bring the desire to achieve results to the fore and everything you do is focused solely on this. You will retain your productivity if you concentrate on achieving your goals, bit by bit, week by week, only agreeing the relevant next steps on this basis. Vis-à-vis your stakeholders you only report progress towards the result and not any progress in activities, which are, anyway, irrelevant for the result. This maintains the flexibility to be able to do what is appropriate and not to have to do what has been planned. And continuous reflection provides you and your team with the possibility to take the shortest, most intelligent routes, which may not even be recognizable at the outset of a process.

Implementation Insight No. 33
To-do lists destroy productivity and are nothing but "intermediaries". They stand between what you would like to achieve (results) and the time which is required to do so. Both can be better managed by means of weekly results lists and team diaries.

The management style of integrating everyone into the implementation project or change, which has become widespread in recent years, not only turns the project into a complex matter but also has the additional negative effect that the company's or division's productivity decreases more than necessary during the change. This maximum degree of integration is, in my eyes, a sign of weak leadership. Endless explanations have to conceal management's own uncertainty, true to the motto "I told everyone what was involved, so why aren't they joining in now?" People do not inevitably join in because someone tells them something. They either join in because they feel addressed on an emotional level, which is not, for a start, the case for most changes, or because they experience clear leadership. Clear leadership within the framework of implementation management is characterized by the fact that the next steps are clarified by means of well-thought-out concepts; a clear specification and corresponding certainty as well as also confidence before becoming active. Instead, however, it is increasingly the case that there is continual discussion, with the relevant aspects often 'talked to death', until in the end an ever increasing number of reasons emerge to explain why certain things will not function and, finally, the point is reached at which the change originally envisage becomes absurd.

> I accompanied a chemicals group during the process of establishing a shared service centre across the individual member companies. Despite a bad 'gut feeling' I agreed to support the CFO in his approach of integrating all the affected operational divisions into the formulation of a concept in order to ensure maximum participation and the greatest possible degree of resilience of the concept—as it was explained to me. Things turned out as they had to—the concept development already required huge amounts of energy and time to guide the team even to the obvious synergy possibilities. Not to mention the implementation plan, in which the managing directors of the individual companies "suddenly" became heavily involved. The end of the story? A lot of effort with little effect. Because the concepts, which were already not strongly pronounced but nevertheless sound, were "talked to death". At no point did the CFO display the strength of character to provide the required orientation to the goals by means of clear leadership and demonstration of his expectations. It would have been better to form a core team for the concept development with the explicit expectation that results it formulated would be implemented accordingly.

This case is a classic example of the fact that, without clear leadership, consistency and unambiguous expectations, not only the result will be below average but also an unnecessary amount of resources and time will be wasted.

This shows how disadvantageous it can be not to consider in advance who should be integrated into the implementation process when, how and in what sequence—and in conjunction with an absolutely clear objective. If you, as the decision maker, do not have this picture then you, obviously, cannot communicate it.

7.2 Nothing Will Happen Where Nothing Happens When Nothing Happens

If implementation projects are not consistently managed from the outset following initial motivation the reliability and commitment in cooperation between the sub-projects and also within the teams begins to decrease which in turn has a demotivating effect. A dangerous vicious circle is established. Good implementation managers thus ensure that upcoming projects have a distinct culture of consistency. This culture values being able to rely on one another, in both the small and the large things, and having the certainty that relevant changes or newly occurring factors will always be announced in good time and/or as early as possible. The above mentioned evolutionary accuracy of estimation means the implementation project is managed iteratively with a focus to the future in sensible time frames of between one to, at most, four weeks. The regular overall project reviews ensure the synchronization and comparison of individual sub-projects; concepts can be altered and adjusted to fit each other without it being necessary to revise detailed, well-thought out plans designed for the long term, which do not, in any case, exist in high performance implementation projects. A high degree of reliability and commitment must be established both in the overall project reviews and also within the scope of the sub-project reviews on a weekly basis. False morals and incorrect working principles can spread all too quickly. Delays are simply accepted and there is a reason why it was not possible to complete work on time in every case and for everyone. Such implementation projects not only become increasingly unproductive, losing momentum but also often require ever increasing doses of "artificial" pressure on the part of top management to achieve progress.

As we all know from our experience, we sometimes put off tasks for long periods of time before quickly completing them just before the submission date. But why do we so often need a large amount of external pressure before we finally do what is necessary or make that inevitable decision? If we stop to consider for a while we will quickly arrive at the conclusion that fear is behind this. In my experience there are four types of fear with which you will have to engage with regard to yourself and as a coach for your sub-project managers, since this will enable you to solve one of the main brakes on implementation processes:

- Fear of the courage of your own convictions
  Within the scope of the process and when pushing through what is necessary we do not really trust our instincts to be able to distinguish what is right from what is wrong and cannot thus, in the end, be genuinely successful. Being successful means being as true as possible to our own vision and transforming it into reality.
- Fear of hurting others
  Wherever decisions have to be made there can be victims. No-one with responsibility for an implementation project who has half-way decent ethics and morals will intentionally create a situation which has negative consequences for individual participants. This is why it is even more disastrous and, in my opinion, morally objectionable to delay because of unwillingness to face a confrontation necessary personnel consequences as long as possible until external circumstances leave no other choice. Instead of acting consistently from the outset we allow our own inconsistency to make things worse, thus causing unnecessary damage.
- Fear of getting balls rolling
  The fear of others' opinions (for example managers, employees, etc.) is most definitely not a good guide. Because once the ball has started rolling there is seldom anything you can do to stop it. So—trust your own capabilities!
- Fear of failure
  We want to be successful and are afraid of failing or doing the wrong thing. In this context it is essential to weigh up matters dispassionately; to make a good decision and to listen to your gut feeling. And then act consistently!

Consistency from the outset is thus an important attitude to successfully master implementation projects. In order to make this type of management easier and enable a team to achieve good performance it is advisable to arrive overall at a culture of consistency.

Kolbusa's principles for the establishment of a culture of consistency

1. Flex your muscles from the outset
   The framework of reliability and the rules which everyone must adhere to must be clearly communicated to all participants at the very outset of an implementation project. This clarity with regard to the rules of cooperation and in communications is also one of the leadership principles . Consistency thus also means ensuring that these rules really are complied with.
2. Consistency means setting a good example
   Be aware of the influence your actions have on everyone else working on the implementation project. When the organization besets you with "Not possible"; "Won't work" and "Impossible" statements the only way to be truly consistent is to apply this consistency to yourself. Start with yourself and set a good example to the organization with your own consistent behaviour.
3. Consistency means action
   Things will not improve if you wait. The longer the required consistency is put off, the more severe the negative consequences of the lack of consistency will become. You must act as soon as possible. And that point in time is usually earlier than we believe! Trust your intuition. Sometimes, for example, it is better to remove a project employee from the team at the first sign of incompetence. This protects the project from failing miserably and averts damage from your employee who would possibly experience something far worse if the project failed.
4. Nothing will happen where nothing happens when nothing happens!
   Inconsistency is incredibly contagious. Once it begins in small places it quickly becomes a habit and then a culture which can only be overcome with a lot of effort. It then becomes normal not to complete the tasks which were agreed at the last meeting. It is thus imperative that you ensure consistency and reliability in the small and also the large things.

Implementation Insight No. 34
Consistency should not be confused with severity. You do not need to be unfriendly, abrupt or employ a rough tone or to establish a dog-eat-dog culture. On the contrary even. Motivation is generated by success. Success is generated by clear results targets which are correspondingly realistic. Such targets can certainly be renegotiated; there should, however, be consequences if they are not adhered to without prior notice and renegotiation.

I have often experienced that in situations where individuals are under great pressure and the only option is consistency this consistency can be very harsh. It is far better to be very consistent very early on and, in doing so, to act ethically, morally and humanly. Overall this means simply acting in a responsible manner.

Consistency and reliability transform implementation into a flow experience demonstrating genuine implementation momentum. Because each individual has clarified for them self their expectations of themselves and others and can rely on being given everything they require for their own success. As an implementation manager it is necessary to know in this context what your own team is capable of achieving and at what speed. Because only then can the corresponding degree of reliability in the organization realistically be generated. If your own team is completed overwhelmed, be this in terms of time or expertise, then it cannot possibly hold to its promises and be reliable. The result is a culture of frustration not consistency.

7.3 Getting Away From the Colour Miracle—Good Implementation Reporting

Implementation reporting is intended to ensure that the specified goals and expectations are met and, in this spirit, that the results aspired to are brought closer. This information is essential for both the direct participants and also the stakeholders in order to gain the required trust in the implementation project. Reporting should thus refer not to plans, activities or to-do lists but rather to the degree to which the specified results have been achieved, always in the form in which the relevant stakeholder groups require. The only question to which an answer must be provided is "How close are we to the results aspired to?" Following this it is possible to discuss why you believe that the results can be achieved via this route; where uncertainties and obstacles are seen and how they can be handled. In this context it is meaningful to hold a short workshop with the individual stakeholders at the outset and to make a note of the personal criteria which they will apply when assessing whether they are progressing with the implementation or not. You should thus agree three to five criteria which should be the basis for future reporting.

The characteristics of good implementation reporting

1. The correct focus
   The focus of implementation reporting should be on the results and not the activities should, in the meantime, have become clear. The question is how in what detail the achievement of results should be discussed and from what perspective they should be viewed. The sub-project reports and the resulting overall project reviews will thus without doubt be more detailed when presenting the concepts to be formulated or processes and structures to be implemented than the condensed reports for the steering committee. The steering

committee is sure to also be interested in reporting on the implementation process from the implementation manager's point of view, which, under certain circumstances, is not relevant in the individual sub-project reports. Depending on the target group good reports communicate the correct things in the correct density. The rule of thumb is, however, that no report should be more than three pages long. Consider a corresponding reporting system which, at minimum, always covers the following criteria, presented graphically and attractively prepared—goals; two to three progress criteria per goal; degree of achievement and history; critical success factors and required decisions.

2. Optimum cognitive distance
   A lot of implementation reporting is frequently totally overloaded or can only be understood following detailed explanation. Both for those who have to compile it and those who read it. Good reporting is short, to the point and based on the interest and intellectual context of the corresponding target group, which can thus understand it easily. Empathy is the keyword here. Put yourself in the position of the relevant target group and ensure that, using a self-explanatory manner, you summarize the entire project and status in the relevant context of the reader on three presentation slides.
3. Look the ugly truth in the face
   Reports often become a complete farce—quickly completed by the sub-project managers just before the deadline with as few critical and, in any case, self-critical comments as possible to make sure that there are no queries and work can continue they represent the consequence of the activity-oriented management of an implementation project. Stakeholders' trust in these reports dwindles and the employees concerned or project sponsors also want to know what the project's real status is. Make sure that this does not happen to you. Establish transparency and honesty and, in this context, also support your sub-project managers and remain confident. It is a fact of life that things go wrong—in every implementation project! It can, in the interests of the learning effect; implementation productivity and the culture, only be intelligent to show where one step has been taken forward and two back and what has been learned from this experience. Continue to manage with a results-oriented focus and express this in your reports. Anything else will only result in unnecessary implementation stress.
4. Reporting consistency
   It is not necessary for everyone in the project to know the reporting to the board of directors and steering committee. It is, however, crucial that the reporting is consistent and coherent in its structure and mechanisms. If at all possible then be completely transparent so that all project employees or at least the sub-project managers also know the reporting to the steering committee and the sponsors. Avoid, however, having to jointly agree upon the content for reasons of solidarity! The issue is consistency and, where your own evaluations and estimates are also included, transparency. This will always lead to resistance. The more openly you proceed the less stress and annoyance you will have later.

5. The correct reporting philosophy
   No-one needs optimistic reporting, what they need is honest reporting. Within the reporting hierarchy and the team you must ensure that a culture of honest reporting is created. To this end difficulties in sub-projects must be taken seriously and correspondingly support given and countermeasures initiated instead of simply saying negative things and listing accusations of blame.
6. Management attitude to reporting
   Do not allow your stakeholders to prescribe how you should work. You should neither allow yourself to be forced to adopt any kind of reporting schema nor persuaded to report on milestones or activities. Of course it is important to meet the expectations of management, however these expectations should be focused on the implementation project's success. And this can best be demonstrated by the results progress.

Implementation Insight No. 35
Good reporting is characterized by the fact that it does not bring milestones and activities to the fore but rather reports on the basis of results criteria and progress aspired to. This demonstrates how much progress has been made and how quickly the result aspired to is being moved towards.

Reporting understanding must be clear in the organization to facilitate good implementation reporting. It must be comprehensible at the lowest reporting level, for example the sub-project level, where and how the reported aspects will be used and what significance the individual aspects have. I have often experienced that team satisfaction was polled or specific risk assessments were requested and nothing, absolutely nothing, was done with this information. Within the scope of the complex international programme of a large US company we once intentionally classified specific aspects as being in the dark red zone ... and the effect? No query. Pay attention that this does not happen to you otherwise the reporting will only be carried out for the sake of the reporting and, with the exception of effort, there will be no recognizable effect. In many organizations there is also, unfortunately, still standardized implementation reporting, which is used for every project in an only slightly revised, if revised at all, form. This forces the implementation manager to lie to bring his world in order since the reporting is unusable for his own project or provides little information or creates an input-oriented management structure. This costs an unimaginably large amount of effort, strength and energy—in particular to maintain this tissue of lies. And the situation occurs, unfortunately all too often, in organizations that all or some of the issues which have classified as yellow or red in the sub-projects suddenly, by means of a colour miracle, move into the green zone. Small wonder that reporting is often not taken seriously at all.

8 Moving Up a Gear—Implementation Gravitation and Implementation Excellence

In addition to the preconditions discussed in the previous chapters, which must be met to achieve a measurable increase in the productivity and speed of an implementation project, your project can be helped to even better performance by what could be termed a philosophy of implementation management. It provides assistance with the art of combining results orientation, stringency and composure despite all the inconsistency into a congruent process whole and thus not only arriving at better results but also maintaining the degree of stress and pressure on all participants, including you personally, at level which is as low as possible.

A differentiated implementation philosophy will, furthermore, enable you to trim a company to implementation performance or, expressed in a more discerning manner, to establish a culture of implementation excellence. This excellence is gaining in significance above all because the shelf life of strategies is becoming ever shorter; competitive boundaries are increasingly blurred and opportunities and threats are emerging on the horizon in greater numbers and with higher frequency only to disappear again. In other words individuals who are experienced in getting to grips with strategies, changes and projects quickly and promptly will already have a decisive competitive advantage thanks to this skill in itself.

The chapter begins with a presentation of one of the key elements of implementation gravitation. It describes how to train yourself and the implementation participants to handle uncertainty and blurring in the process itself and with regard to the result (What will be the result?) as well as also inconsistencies (Does everything really fit together?) better and with more composure. This includes, among other things, a consistently realistic assessment of the performance capability of your team and your own options as well as an on-going examination of activities with regard to possibly simpler and more direct routes to the end result. This requires a high degree of self-reflection which can be trained, namely using the gravitation wheel. It describes five phases based on the principles of Rhapsodizing, Breaking out, Fantasizing, Manipulating, Gravitating, Dynamizing, Enduring and Learning.

In order to adopt these principles in the daily routines of implementation and, in the long term, inject them, as it were, into your company's or division's DNA

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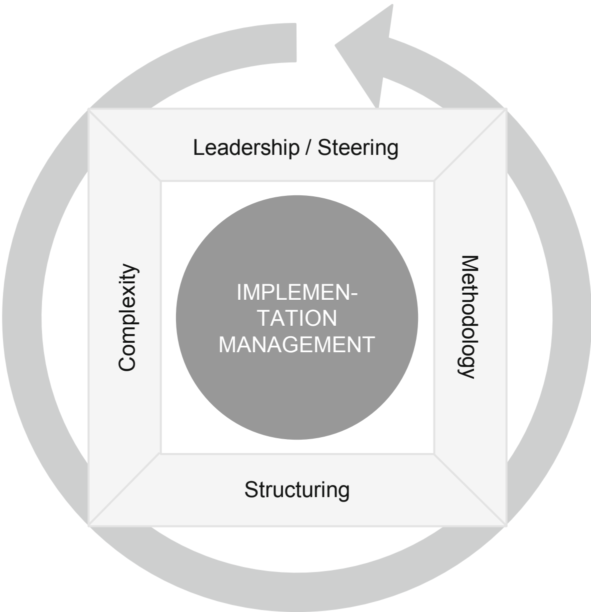

Fig. 8.1 The dimensions for increasing productivity in implementation

you must fall back on the support of the Chief Gravitation Officers (CGOs) of your choice, who have been empowered to facilitate the process. The CGOs embody, to some extent, these implementation principles and help to accelerate implementation performance and continuously purify. Implementation excellence with this structure can then be developed into a competitive factor if, in the overall entrepreneurial context, it results in all strategy implementations; changes and projects being handled with an attitude which is fundamentally different. The precondition, in turn, for these management competences is a range of core principles whose introduction and establishment is carried out via the central lever of leadership. To achieve company-wide implementation excellence you should thus consider your understanding of leadership; the resultant leadership philosophy and the leadership principles which are actually practiced on the ground.

8.1 The Gravitation Principle in Implementation

A variety of aspects generally contribute to a successful implementation procedure within the scope of which the participants are not burdened unnecessarily although they may perform to a high degree (cf. Fig. 8.1):

- Structuring
  Good planning during the tactics phase (concept and planning) generates clarity and conceptual certainty which can serve as the basis to systematically promote implementation (cf. Chap. 3).

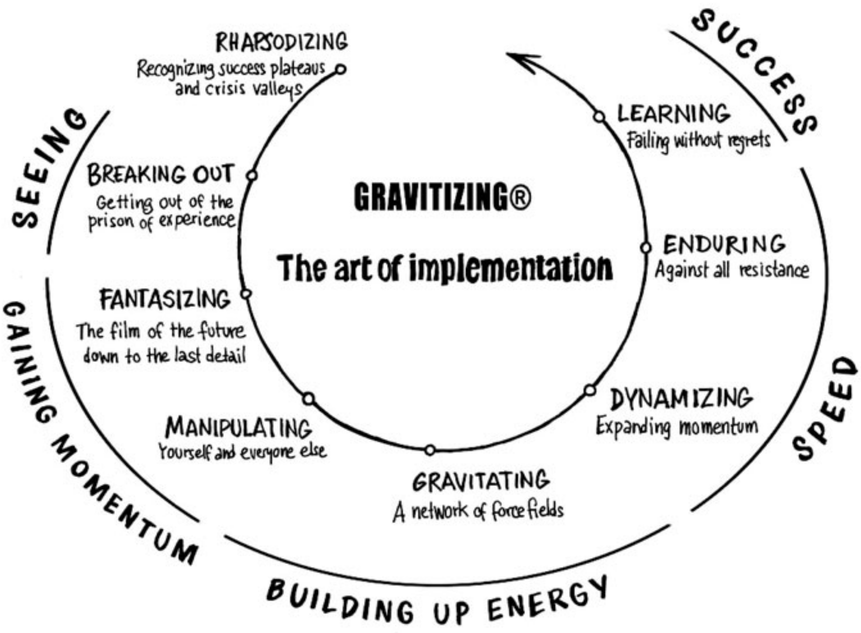

Fig. 8.2 Five gravitation phases define the art of implementation

- Methodology
  Method cancer is avoided by employing the small number of correct methods in a focused, concentrated way and not allowing them to become an end in themselves (cf. Chap. 4).
- Complexity
  Existing complexity is structured to be, as far as this is possible, controllable by using networked thinking and working with options and alternatives (cf. Chap. 5).
- Leadership and steering
  Instead of making everyone concerned into a participant as a matter of principle or randomly and opportunistically creating coordination (agreement by discussion), careful thought is given to who is integrated into the implementation process when, in what sequence and how. In addition to this commitment and reliability within the structures is achieved with the assistance of consistent implementation management (cf. Chap. 6 and 7).

If you have these four aspects under control during your implementation project then you will experience good performance. In order, however, to move up from fourth to fifth gear very specific attitudes and working principles must be built around these four central implementation aspects. You will thus enable—to remain in the metaphor—your motor to move into an even more efficient speed range (lower stress and (work-) load) at higher speed (effectiveness and quality of results). This is facilitated by the five gravitation phases with their eight gravitation principles (cf. Fig. 8.2). By establishing these principles the productivity of, in particular, larger implementation projects can be taken to a new level. Fifth gear can be achieved.

The phases of gravitation and their gravitation principles

Phase 1: Seeing The sooner you recognize that your swarm, in other words all the implementation participants, is moving in the wrong direction the greater the opportunity for a successful, rapid implementation. The metaphor of the swarm used here illustrates excellently what often happens in implementation projects. For some unexplainable reason the entire implementation team, for example, insists on reducing product diversity in order to lower costs or on formulating new structures and sales concepts to increase turnover or on consolidating IT systems to raise efficiency. And the assumptions of every single one of them are completely wrong! While costs may be lowered by reducing the range of products it would, however, in the final instance lead to decreased customer acceptance and thus simultaneously to a dramatic loss of turnover. The new structures and sales concepts would have no effect whatsoever in increasing turnover because it has been overlooked that the competitor is no longer the supplier from next door but, for example, the PlayStation which keeps movie-goers at home. Everyone has, however, moved in the same direction, just a like a swarm—"If everyone does it, it can't be wrong".

The "Seeing" phase is thus concerned with effectiveness – namely in the large matters—cf. the examples above—and the small ones. If, for example, it is an open secret that the strategy has not really been clarified and, despite this, everyone is working on creating the new target organization instead of holding up a stop sign and asking "Why?" It is thus important to observe yourself and the "swarm" in order to clarify over and over again what is actually being done why. And this should apply to daily activities, for example at meetings, workshops and steering committee meetings, and with regard to the entire implementation project. The two gravitation principles of *Rhapsodizing* and *Breaking out of the prison of experience* help to focus your view. What is at issue is to identify your own swarm behaviour and that of the team and to recognize whether something is only being done because it "has always been done like that" or "because that's the way it was planned". There are always better alternatives and short cuts—you must merely be practiced in always looking at things in a different way.

Put yourself and your team in a position to look at the upcoming issues from various perspectives. This is the only way to find the solutions and opportunities which fit your goals—they may possibly be outside of conformity but will be coherent. If you proceed according to the **Reflection Rule**, questioning why you do certain things in a certain way you will recognize whether the swarm is heading in a particular direction just because it is a swarm or if the direction really is the right one. Open your view to the wider context of implementation and examine the meaningfulness of your actions in day-to-day business operations. If, for example a strategy is aimed and moving a business unit forward then the interrelationship between the business unit and the overall company, the entire industry and also other industries must be taken into consideration within the scope of implementation.

You must always be clear that reality is only perception and always only exists in the eye of the beholder. If you are able to internalize this insight you will generate an openness in yourself which sensitizes you to routes and options which you would otherwise not have seen. In this regard the **Questioning Rule** according to which you consciously and continuously question things, looking for simpler routes, i.e. you break out, is of assistance. As is the **Doubt rule** which prevents you from getting caught up in issues but instead enables you, with your spirit of implementation, to keep a clear view and form your own opinion, trusting blindly in nothing and no-one but instead looking for yourself to see what is really going on around you. Successively establishing these gravitation principles and rules in your implementation project is the responsibility of the CGOs, who are trained in gravitation management and can, and may, point out these issues to you time and again in order to thus concentrate on the basics and what is right by means of a high degree of effectiveness of resources, strength and available time.

Phase 2: Gaining momentum By developing the right pictures of the future by *Fantasizing* and, as it were, implanting them in the heads of your implementation team via *Manipulating* you will successfully generate the correct momentum for implementation and the swarm will focus on this as if of its own accord. In order, however, to recognize that something is not effective or perhaps even wrong what is required is a clear picture to serve as the basis for making these deductions. When generating momentum the principle of *Fantasizing* is the most difficult exercise for inexperienced implementation managers. What should you fantasize about in the case of reorientation of the business unit? This is a factual issue! Why should an energy company concern itself with fantasies within the scope of the energy revolution and the resulting consequences? Quite simply because otherwise you will only move forward from the status quo in a series of small steps and, as a rule, only optimize or change the status quo. You will work from the past into the future, not from the starting point of a result, in other words a picture of the future, when considering what exactly needs to be done. The implementation culture, the overall actions, of your implementation project must, however, be strongly influenced by this fantasizing if you have an interest in speed and effectiveness. Fantasizing is the embodiment of the philosophy that images must be created for every goal and result in order to thus provide a uniform picture in the participants' heads (**Image Rule**). To ensure that everyone is working synchronously it is not necessary to think the future through down to the last detail but rather to talk about expectations and always think and work back from the result.

Your CGOs will provide both top management and also every working meeting with the required imagination. If the board of directors wants yet another discussion on why the management structures of the individual companies cannot be altered in future then it is time, for example, to bring imagination into play. In other words, the CGOs illustrate what the future could be like and the shortest route to get there is not to spend time on issues concerning why things are the way they are today.

The **Self-manipulation Rule** will be of assistance to now move the implementation team in the right direction. Based on the motto "Talk the walk and walk the talk" you should not only follow words with deeds but imagine the route in your mind's eye, allowing its progress to become clear ("Talk the walk"). You will thus practically manipulate yourself into taking a certain direction to actually follow the route you have described. The **Implantation Rule** enables you to lead others in the right direction by communicating the benefits of this for them within the scope of discussions. You paint a positive picture of what they can expect in the future. The consequence of both rules is that all the participants will begin to believe in the result and, thanks to this belief, will also achieve it.

Phase 3: Building up energy In order to move forward quickly and productively during an implementation project it is, of course, not enough to recognize the way in which what things have to be completed correctly but instead speed must be generated. In other words, the force of gravitation generated by attractive images of the future should be exploited. By establishing the four gravitation principles described above you will create these implementation force fields (*Gravitation*). Looking at things differently (*Rhapsodizing*); freeing yourself from your prisons of experience (*Breaking out*); imagining the result in metaphorical terms (*Fantasizing*) and focusing yourself and the others towards the required and desired results and actions (*Manipulating*)—taken in sum all of this generates force fields since belief in the result is an enormous source of productivity. With the aid of the **Network Rule** you will be able to interlink these differing force fields. If, for example, during the course of implementation of a strategy to achieve service leadership the Service Division formulates a new roles concept and is also on fire to develop the required competences for this this formulation result can either be destroyed or enriched by the its interrelationship with other results. The first situation arises if the new roles concept is, in whatever way, always the subject of disparaging assessments. The second, in contrast, occurs when results synchronization is carried out between the divisions at regular intervals and everyone indicates their willingness to adjust their own concepts so that all of the concepts are able to interlink. If, for example, a discussion between the Sales and Service divisions takes place from the customer's point of view because Sales urgently needs specific information about the customer originating from the individual contacts so that the role model in the Service division is adjusted accordingly. Using the network principle you ensure that Sales and Service compare their formulation results and expectations once a week or every two weeks, continuously adjusting them to match the goal.

The task of the CGOs is to support the individual projects, sub-projects, teams or working groups in generating implementation momentum by employing the right attitudes and principles.

Phase 4: Speed Thanks to gravitation the implementation project has gained momentum which is now expanded to generate speed. In order to gain, and then maintain, this speed it is essential to develop an inherent momentum (*Dynamizing*) and to overrun any adversities and resistance which may occur (*Enduring*). Because once your project has come to a halt a large amount of energy will be required to re-gain speed and return to the implementation flow. During *Dynamizing* the CGOs establish the principle of working in "chunks"—short intensive units during which agreed small results or "result slices" are achieved at high speed, followed by relaxation, reflection and training before the next result slices is attacked. Successful implementation projects are not marathons but a series of sprints, training and relaxation. Once the Service division has set itself the task of implementing its new strategy by means of closer proximity to customers and customer loyalty no sophisticated plans will be formulated and then completed but rather the task will be broken down into slices, starting from a clear image of the future and the orientation of the "service swarm"—a good sourcing model; a new leadership/steering model and a new organization model must be identified. To this end the "Sourcing" sub-project turns its attention to its first "results slice" without planning all the other results slices in advance. To begin with, for example, a model for internal cooperation is developed, based on the desired future perception which Service has of the customer. Following this, the resulting complexity drivers and existing competences will be thought through. One after another. And the insights gained from the first results slice will be used to plan the next ones. By doing so you drive the project forward in the positive sense—in other words without pressure but while still achieving an increase in pace. Speed is also generated by applying the **Rewards Rule**—Successes in implementation are rewarded, generating positive incentives. The **Speed Rule** ("Speed is as important as content") ensures that all the participants are pulled through the implementation process at high speed, thus overcoming natural sluggishness and the tendency to first think everything through in precise detail and protect yourself.

The *Enduring* of resistance is unavoidable in order to prevent any loss of speed. To this end you must observe your own emotions—are you afraid of breaking out or do you feel forced to react to an attack just because the swarm is not following you? Enduring means letting resistance bounce off you or breaking it. The **Crowbar Rule** enables you to get implementation participants who are not actively integrating themselves into the implementation project on board or even to exclude them. This can be achieved via the categories of purpose, power and fear (cf. Chap. 6.1). If the purpose of specific implementation participants is not identifiable but there are, however, opportunities to achieve something and if resistance cannot be broken with a clear statement and the threat of consequences, then you must disengage yourself for the relevant individuals. "Crowbar Rule" because this issue should, ideally, be clarified quickly and as early as possible. On the other hand, there may be individuals, for example stakeholders, who make certain demands on the implementation project or individuals who either consciously or unconsciously, want to manipulate or threaten implementation. Their resistance must be warded off using the **Wall Principle** by simply ignoring this resistance and building a wall around these individuals. To this end make clear to the team what expectations and demands from which quarter they should react to and what should diplomatically be ignored.

Other types of resistance which typically emerge during the process must also be endured; resistance which, for example, is expressed in the form of statements such as "We first have to consider carefully what we are doing here before we get started." No, you do not! You must have a clear picture of the next step. Endure not knowing exactly how things will progress. Any and all attempts at anticipation are doomed to failure—everything turns out differently anyway—and represent a waste of time. A consistent management attitude is required to tackle this resistance. Actively combat the tendency for such groups and "principalities" to be formed. This type of resistance is, to a certain extent, normal and a human reaction, however puts the brakes on implementation and/or makes it unproductive. Groups are acceptable, sealing yourself off in (sub-) projects is not.

Phase 5: Success Success is celebrated in small steps, by noticing that you are, little by little, getting closer to the fantasy—despite repeated failures which are par for the course in this context. You must have the freedom to learn, which includes doing the wrong things or the right things wrongly. If failure occurs, the cycle starts again from the beginning—by *Rhapsodizing* your CGOs ensure that other levers or a better approach are identified. Success is learning. Only by learning do we improve. And we learn best—I would almost say 'only'—by making mistakes and failing. In the small things and the large ones. The Service division, for example, learns the lesson that listening to conversations with customers is annoying; creates a lot of administrative work and does not bring any real benefit. While this was previously an instrument to assess customer loyalty and appreciation of performance a search must now be commenced to find alternative assessment and steering options. In order to learn an implementation culture of failure is required—in other words making failures does not result in punishment. Mistakes are the only way to move forward and implementation projects where no mistakes are made do not exist. There are, at best, only the ones which conceal mistakes, refusing to admit to them, but this is not the way to learn from them. Rathermore you must be able to be proud of being able to make mistakes, because this is the only way to try out unknown routes. The **Rule of Tolerating Mistakes** must be introduced, as must the **Rule of Recognizing Mistakes** which allows mistakes to be openly stood by and a joint analysis to be carried out concerning the reasons why something did not work. Implementation presentations not only serve to demonstrate how wonderfully everything is progressing but also as learning matter. This also results in the **Rule of Forgetfulness**. What was believed to be right yesterday can be held to be wrong today. Opinions can change in the course of learning and new insights can emerge. Querying issues and changing your opinion is thus actively desired.

Implementation Insight No. 36

"Disciplined composure" must be practiced in order to move an implementation project up from the fourth to the fifth gear. You must generate the confidence to recognize when you have taken the wrong track. You must fantasize in order to be able to work back from the result in the first place before completing one issue after another at high speed and without first having already envisaged or planned Step Two and Step Three. This requires discipline and stamina.

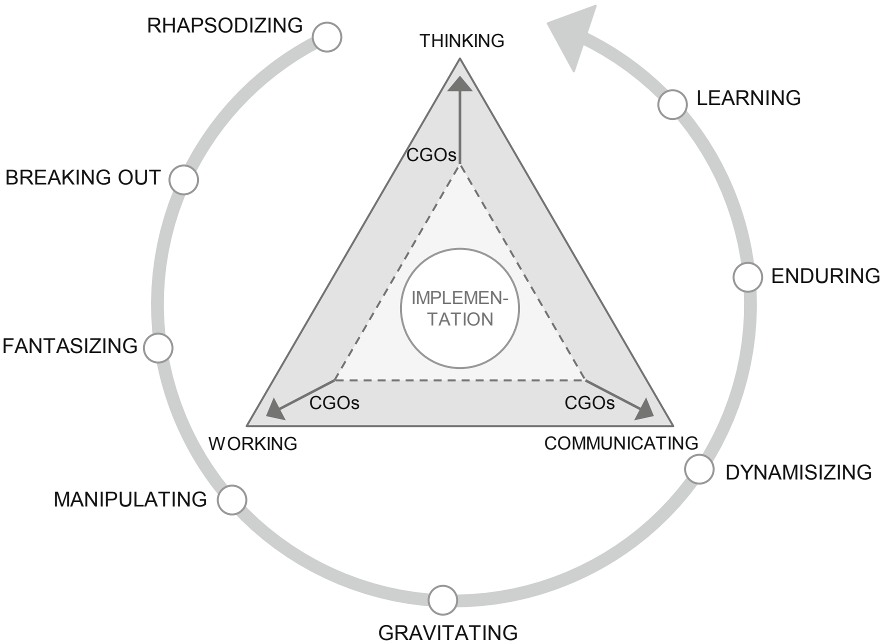

Fig. 8.3 The shaping of thinking, working and communicating by CGOs

8.2 Selection and Management of the Chief Gravitation Officer

So-called Chief Gravitation Officers (CGOs) represent the lever to establish these principles in a project, larger programme or an entire company's strategy implementation. Their task is to communicate these principles during the five phases of gravitation (cf. Fig. 8.3) and to inject them into the DNA of the implementation project. There are three different options for installing the CGO function:

1. You make your implementation managers (programme managers, project managers and sub-project managers) into CGOs.
2. You select the CGOs from throughout the organization across various management tiers.
3. You yourself, as the responsible implementation manager, lead your project managers or teams according to the principles, functioning as a role model or multiplier.

I myself usually work on the basis of the third option. In the case of implementation projects which have stalled or threaten to fail, I immediately apply the eight gravitation principles, generally without any great theoretical explanation. Some participants immediately understand what I am trying to and adopt the principles, others totally reject the procedure. I try, however, to ignore or put up with this resistance because I know that in three to five weeks the first fruits of success will become apparent and will, in turn, be motivation enough for the entire team to continue working according to exactly these principles. The advantage of this option is that it enables progress in implementation performance to be made relatively quickly and even extremely rigid structures quickly become flexible again. The disadvantage is that it requires a certain amount of experience and stamina and that the participants initially have difficulty understanding the rapid success, if at all.

If you do not yet have any or only limited experience with the principles it makes most sense to choose Option One and train a selected group of individuals to take up positions as Chief Gravitation Officers— in other words, the best option is to appoint your programme, project, sub-project and/or team managers as CGOs. This should, as a matter of principle, always be your first choice, however in approximately one quarter of all the cases in which I accompanied implementations this was not possible. Because when fronts have become too entrenched, viewpoints are too habitual or there is just a plain lack of the required competence in executive management positions, only the second choice remains to you, namely to search in the ranks "behind" the managers, where you are guaranteed to find individuals with the "right spirit", the correct amount of "constructive disobedience" and who also have the desire and will to move the upcoming project forward. Because if these individuals were not present the company or division would have long ago ceased to exist.

CGOs actively contribute to the implementation process, ensuring through clear structuring and collaboration on the content-related level and contact with the employees that the correct principles and tools are always used in the conceptual and planning phases as well as during execution. They not only skilfully demanding results and tasks and monitoring and criticizing them but also transforming the implementation participants into genuine implementation heroes.

Implementation Insight No. 37
The CGO's raison d'être consists of helping to transform all the project participants into implementation heroes with the assistance of the eight gravitation principles.

1. Selecting CGOs In the function of a moderator and coach CGOs enable working, thinking and communicating in implementation organizations. They have understood that there is little point in pushing people and trying to convince them using logic alone. They are, rathermore, able (and not everyone can do this!) by sketching corresponding images of the future (Fantasizing) to fire up others emotionally and feel a desire to transform others into the heroes of the implementation project. If both of these basic characteristics of "emotional desire to lead" and "authentic success enablement" are lacking then a CGO is lacking a key qualification for his or her position. The "magic third" which change management likes to demand is not even necessary here. Having the right manager on hand at less critical points is fully sufficient. The penetrating power of just a few individuals is often underestimated. If you are lacking such managers then search in the second and third tiers of management for individuals who are "on fire" for the implementation project; who may perhaps

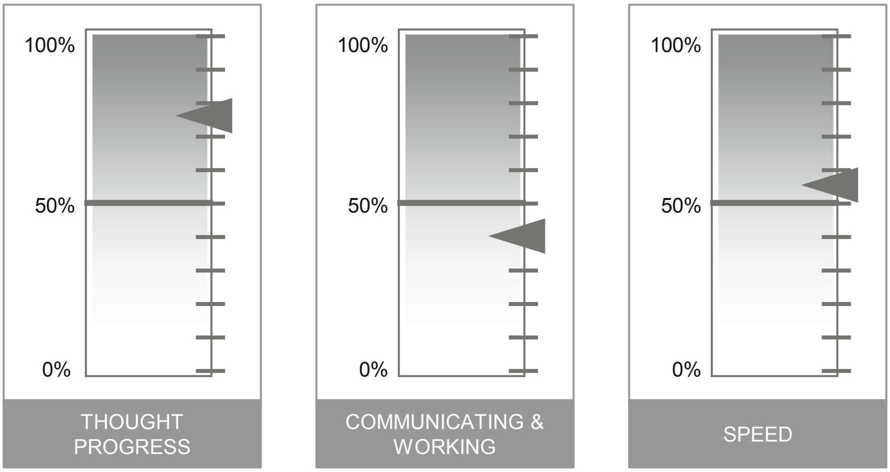

Fig. 8.4 The gravitation maturity model

be considered unconventional thinkers or critics—they are of greater assistance than those who may know what needs to be done but lack the confidence to do so. Simply gathering a few CGOs around you with what are then automatically high-profile positions will have a corresponding effect in itself. Even if these CGOs may possibly be viewed with suspicion, don't be deterred but, on the contrary, ensure that the process is speeded up so that there is no time to think about such issues and manage from the front. All that matters is that you train the CGOs well and place them in a productive operational mesh of relationships with the project managers.

2. Training and management of CGOs In order to actually achieve the planned increase in productivity with the scope of the implementation project with the aid of the CGOs it is important to continuously further develop their competences and to monitor their success. You should delegate this task to master CGO who meets with between five and seven assigned CGOs at regular intervals (at least every two weeks) to gather information about progress but also to provide assistance with questions such as "Have the CGOs changed the way of thinking, working and communication within the implementation project? Are they succeeding in making thinking more wide-ranging and focused? Is cooperation developing more efficiently and are communications becoming more purposeful, open and results-oriented? Is the culture of mistakes growing?" In addition to verbal feedback in discussions with the master CGO about support and successes in the sub-projects a number of indicators are required to document progress (cf. Fig. 8.4):

- Thought progress: How far has thinking in networked structures and mechanisms of action progressed?
- Communicating and working: How successful is working in options proving to be?
- Speed How long does the average meeting last? Has the number of participants at meetings decreased?

3. Establishing CGOs Within the scope of an implementation project it is best to place a CGO at the side of every project manager—insofar as he does not take on this role himself. It is, generally, more effective if the CGOs have no project management responsibility. This allows them to concentrate primarily on the principles and anchoring them in the project, while the project managers can focus their undivided attention on their own issues. Under this precondition the following rules exist for the establishment of the CGOs:

- CGO rotation
  CGOs should be deployed across (sub-)project boundaries in order to interlink the sub-projects and to communicate the concept of working, communicating and thinking according to the gravitation principles. To this end rotation of the CGOs within the sub-projects should take place every six to eight weeks.
- CGO ratio
  The rule of thumb is that one CGO should be installed for every sub-project with a maximum of ten employees. In the case of larger implementation projects the corresponding number of individual projects with CGOs should be set up.
- CGO function
  It is best if CGOs act in a moderating function, not a leadership function. Their position within the implementation organization is on a par with the corresponding sub-/project managers to whom they are assigned. In other words, both operate together as a management tandem.

4. CGO arenas The arenas in which CGOs can have an impact are not their desks and also not any kind of internal meetings at which the principles are discussed, internalized and trained. They are, rathermore, the places where their implementation is taking place and, with the exception of implementation-specific structures, these are to 80 per cent workshops, meetings and project review sessions.

8.3 Implementation Performance as a Competitive Factor

It is not a new insight that competitive and market requirements are changing ever more quickly. The further development of existing markets is resulting in completely new offerings (for example electro-mobility or kite surfing) or new needs are being generated which in turn lead to previously unknown markets (for example apps or smart metering). Or the boundaries between previously separate markets or industries are becoming blurred (for example between laptops/PCs and mobile end devices such as smartphones; between social gaming and online gambling or between food and non-food, or existing structures are changing (among other reasons because of the energy revolution) and product life cycles are becoming ever shorter (for example cars, mobile phones, notebooks). The causes of this are, in essence, the four megatrends— globalization; technological progress; demographic change and scarcity of resources. These trends are causing business models to change; companies to come into existence more quickly but also to disappear again more quickly

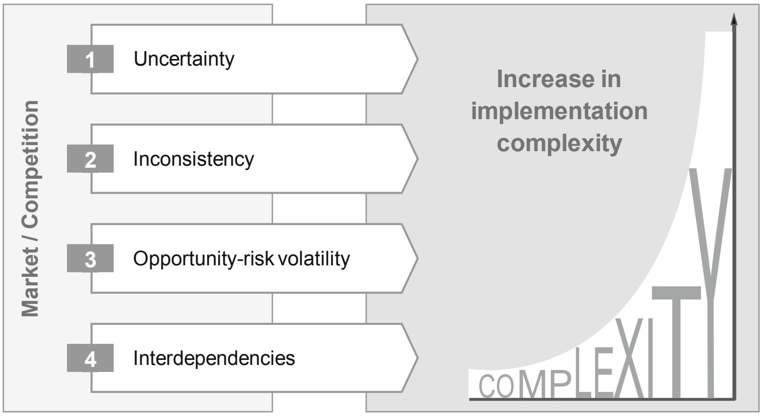

Fig. 8.5 The effects of market and competitive changes on implementation challenges

and mean that long-term success is no longer automatically guaranteed through the successful development or continuation of a business model. Every company must learn to handle the repercussions (cf. Fig. 8.5):

1. Uncertainty
   It is now very difficult to forecast how competitors will behave. It is often not even clear who the competitor will be next year or what the economic and political basic conditions will be like in twelve months. Crises come and go more quickly than in former times and their effects are totally incalculable, as demonstrated by the constant false prognoses of the so-called economic experts.
2. Inconsistency
   While numerous manufacturers are suffering from stagnation in consumption other manufacturers are, at the same time, selling three times as many products as previously. These inconsistencies are just as much a daily occurrence at national and global level as in companies. The latter are also experiencing situations in which certain divisions are performing excellently while others, in comparison, are underperforming for reasons which are difficult to explain. Strategies and projects are struggling with contradictory demands and basic conditions.
3. Opportunity-risk volatility
   An increasing number of opportunities are appearing on the horizon increasingly often, but which trends and technologies should companies focus on, which ones should they ignore? The heating systems manufacturer Viessmann, for example, has succeeded in integrating IT, modern apps and heating technology into one competitive advantage at the right time. German car manufacturers in contrast have missed out on the first developments in electro-mobility—certainly not deliberately but because they simply focused on other opportunities, such as, for example, the high performance motors required in new markets. Volatility creates entrepreneurial stress—it brings a huge range of options and, at the same time, the constraint of having to set genuine priorities during real focusing of resources, which in turn means being consistent in letting go of existing structures. Most companies have not had much practice at doing this.

4. Interdependencies
   Not only individual implementation projects are becoming more complex because, due to the high degree of process integrity between the various business divisions and the production, process and IT structures behind them, it is generally no longer obvious what the specific and overall repercussions are. An increasing number of so-called interdisciplinary issues will arise which have to be efficiently introduced and worked on across the most varied corporate divisions or group companies. Take, for example, the case of De-Mail, a legal innovation intended to replace letters; registered letters with reply advice numerous public service processes as well as also the authentication requirements of banks and insurance companies. The providers of such solutions have suddenly been confronted with a market which did not previously exist in its form and which they are not prepared for. The result is commingling of private and business customer segments and solutions which were previously more or less stand-alone concepts. Suddenly complex implementation is required across divisions which have never cooperated with one another in this way before. This type of implementation will increase significantly.

In terms of their effects these four factors stand for complexity. A complexity which, due to the interdependency and inconsistency, is hard to manage and thus strenuous but which, due to the opportunities it generates, is also wonderful because genuine competitive advantages and the company's further development can arise from it.

Implementation Insight No. 38
The development of implementation excellence, with which you lead new issues to success at high speed; have the ability to let go during on-going projects and are able to quickly put teams into different contexts and enable them to cooperate, will become a decisive competitive advantage.

Some years ago a telecommunications company set up a programme to adjust value creation structures; shorten time to market and increase cost efficiency. Parallel to this it was planned to amalgamate the IT and Network Technology divisions as well as the customer management structures of various customer segments. The IT systems behind this were intended to be consolidated and automated to the greatest extent possible. The programme was planned to take 18 months, however finally dragged on for three years. And although it was already clear after two years that even with this new structure and the new systems the company would trail behind the competition the programme was still followed through to the end.

This is a negative example from the past which no company will, in the future, be able to allow itself to follow. It is a typical case in which the four above-mentioned factors were not really engaged with but rather it was believed that:

- The company knew for certain what would happen ("uncertainty")
- It was possible to clearly regulate and describe everywhere why what would be done how ("inconsistency")
- Opportunities which existed once would exist forever and that an eternity could be taken to implement them ("opportunity-risk volatility")

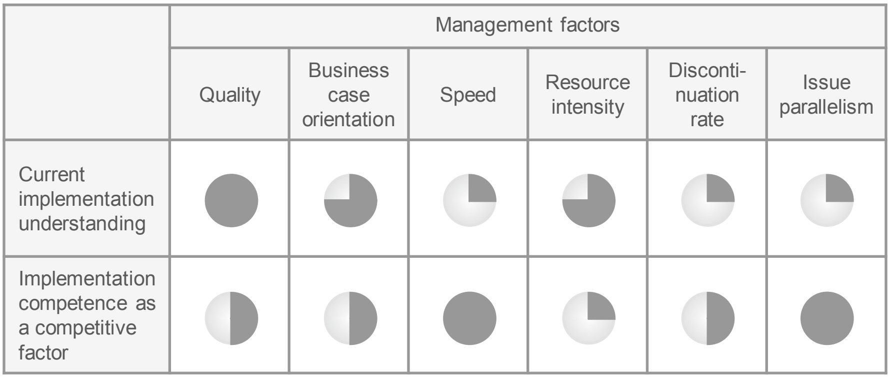

Fig. 8.6 Changing requirements on implementation management (understanding of leadership)

- The product range and customer demands in other segments would wait until the company was ready. The smartphone world thus came into being during the course of the project, thus already making it a farce ("interdependencies").

This implementation project was, from the outset, already too long-winded and did not develop any speed. The focus was also not on important issues but rather every item of the programme was planned in detail from the beginning to the end and the orientation was solely on activities. Finally, the "sunk costs" trap was not long in coming—i.e. good money was thrown after bad because the company wanted to follow the plans through to the end although the sense of the entire project had already been questioned repeatedly very early on. Management should have stopped the implementation much earlier, altering the programme and setting new priorities based on the new circumstances.

If, on the other hand, implementation excellence should be generated as a competitive advantage you should bear the following in mind for the future:

- Monstrous implementation projects are a thing of the past.
- We will increasingly have to work in small "result slices".
- Speed will become as important as content.
- Long-term plans are outdated, instead you should adapt to changes in your environment; in competition or also in the project itself. This can be achieved most successfully without long-term plans.
- We must learn to handle uncertainty regarding what the future brings.

In order to thus utilize implementation competence as a competitive factor the changed requirements (market/competition) must, at any rate, be taken into consideration (cf. Fig. 8.6).

The management factors which are relevant in this context and, in my opinion, will have to be weighted differently in future are:

- Quality
  We must learn, and force ourselves, to abandon perfectionism. This does not mean that quality is no longer relevant but, rathermore, that it will develop iteratively. Hermann Scherer has, in this context, spoken of the principle of "quick and dirty

quality" (Scherer, 2011). This puts the issue at hand in a nutshell—in order to learn we must be able to make mistakes and to quickly achieve success we must quickly produce results. In this spirit you must dispense with the desire to do things perfectly. You will, if you want to be successful in the long term, no longer have the time for this. The motto must thus be to develop something presentable quickly in order to then, under certain circumstances, improve it in the course of further iterations and to always have the option, taking into account the above mentioned complexity factors, to adjust things or even throw them over board. And this applies for implementation projects overall, which must be correspondingly queried, namely also for every single concept. Quickly compile a complete, low quality draft; look over it and then improve it iteratively.

- Business case orientation
  It is usual and, against the backdrop of economic action, also very sensible to substantiate all implementation projects with business cases. This practice is, however, in my experience becoming ever more absurd. On the one hand very definite statements are made concerning specific turnover volumes and cost developments and the resulting profitability. On the other, the interrelationships with other product structures and future developments are, if not completely ignored, only considered in very vague terms. Things are idealized; thinking is not networked and plans are developed which cannot really be realized. So are, as a logical consequence, business cases in this form a waste of time and should we bid a firm farewell to them? No, we must consider which projects are meaningful and which issues have priority in order to thus be granted the investment and resources required. There is, however, an increasing tendency to place more significance on projects whose purpose is to move the company forward strategically. In parallel with this a competitive advantage should be generated, however it is still unclear precisely how it will present itself or if it will pay off. The correspondingly required business cases are not concerned with increasing efficiency but rather with deciding by means of an interrelated consideration what will move the company forward strategically the most quickly and furthest. For example, penetrating new markets; finding new products; entering into new partnerships or getting to grips with value creation structures or business models which are currently a gamble, since it is not clear whether and how they will pay off. For this reason the significance of business cases will not necessarily decrease in future but the focus will be another. The emphasis will no longer be on whether a project pays off to the last penny or cent but rather whether it generates competitive advantages, in particular also thanks to the flexibility and speed with which certain issues can be approached.
- Speed
  Speed is as important as content. You must become faster and you will only become faster by doing less and also completing this "less" more quickly. This requires an extremely focused results orientation and a high degree of flexibility plus the confidence to clarify some of the problems and challenges during the course of the process or to let them take care of themselves. Speed must become a principle. In today's management speed is still always equated with setting and

pursuing "sporting" plans and milestones. This is, however, the wrong approach. (cf. Chap. 4.3).

- Resource intensity
  As a matter of principle you will continue to be called upon to increase productivity—i.e. to achieve more with fewer resources. This, combined with the above-mentioned management demands concerning quality and speed, will result in your having smaller, leaner "speed boat" projects and no, or at least only a few, large "tankers" within the scope of your implementation of strategies or organizational changes. The resource intensity of projects will thus decline dramatically.
- Discontinuation rate
  Based on the changing business case orientation, which is turning to more strategically justified projects, and more rapid market and competitive changes the discontinuation rate of implementation projects is also increasing. At least in cases in which there is not a corresponding lack of management consistency. You must learn to implement the principle of "sunk costs" in reality. As soon as you recognize that a certain project; a certain strategy or change no longer makes sense you must let go and transform what has, so to speak, to date been understood as "ignominy" or failure into a principle—discontinuation! Another topic, a new focus, changed priorities. In order to achieve a culture of implementation excellence you must develop a different relationship to mistakes and project discontinuation. They do not represent failures but rather continuous learning and further development. Reasons for letting go could, for example, be that the new structure, the new market entry or the changed assessment or leadership system does not produce the desired success or that the basic conditions have changed to the detriment of the project and that other routes must thus be taken. Today implementation projects are still all too often only pushed through to the end because this is what was discussed and decided upon. You will have to be increasingly committed to discontinuing things as soon as you recognize that they are of no use.
- Issue parallelism
  Today's implementation project is interlinked with other management aspects and is more generally carried out in parallel than in series and thus has more similarities with a small speed boat than a slow moving tanker. The understanding of leadership will have to change accordingly—in other words, the degree of decentralism and trust in the individual "speed boats" will have to increase. Implementation topics will, in future, need to be accomplished less sequentially than in parallel since the diversity of issues and complexity will no longer various issues to be completed one after another. The significance of networked thinking and working will therefore also increase in this context.

Taking these management factors into account in an organization and establishing them is not possible overnight. My experience is that you have to start looking into them and making them a discussion topic in order to thus successively arrive at implementation excellence.

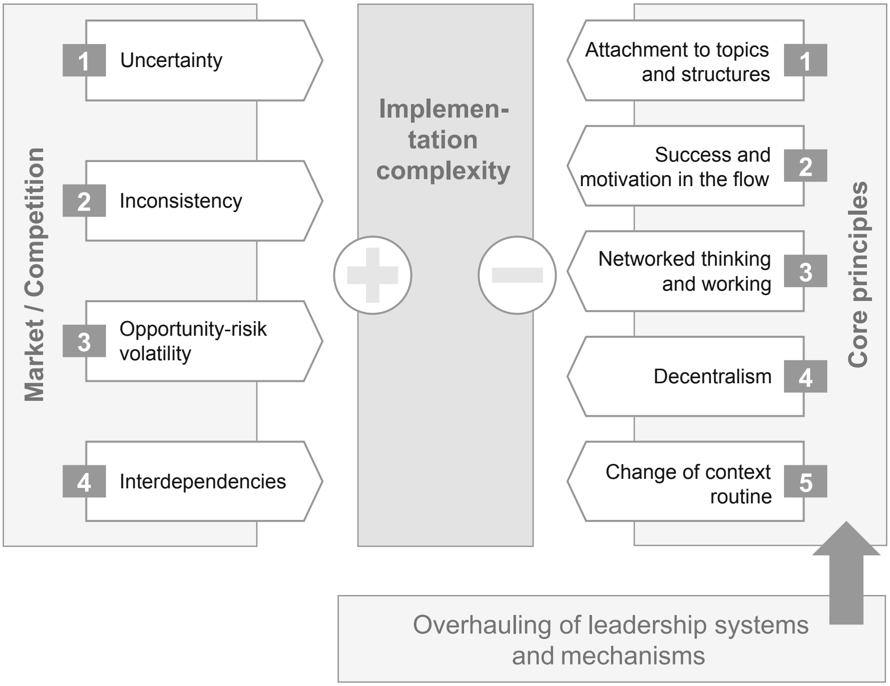

Fig. 8.7 The five core principles of successful implementation cultures

8.4 Management Principles of Implementation Cultures

Companies will only achieve implementation excellence and thus an improved ability to compete if they are able, by altering the weighting of the six above-mentioned management factors, to arrive at an implementation culture which allows for the four megatrends . The core principles described below (cf. Fig. 8.7) must be established to achieve this.

Core Principle 1: Attachment to topics and structures While it has, to date, been usual for an employee to accompany a project from the beginning to the end in future they will increasingly only contribute to project phases but work on several projects simultaneously—and parallel to their operational tasks. "Project" in this context does not refer to the topics resulting from "normal operations". In this regard it is today also already usual for an IT department, for example, to work on three development projects in parallel. What is, rathermore, meant are projects which further develop the participants; their own department; their own division or the entire company, thus changing them. If such projects are perceived as an additional burden then this is a sign that the organizations and employees orient themselves to "normal operations". Breaking down this orientation and overcoming the attachment to structures and individual topics is the task of the manager. The significance of organizational frameworks and functional classifications must decrease if you are to achieve implementation excellence.

Core Principle 2: Success and motivation in the flow When is someone successful in an organization? When are they motivated? The attempt by organizations to work with the "Motivation 2.0" magic formula (Pink, 2010), i.e. to set goals; monitor the achievement of these goals and to offer the prospect of a bonus for positive results, causes more damage than it brings benefits. With their focus on goals and bonus structures the management systems, which are usually even still based on annual rhythms, generate priorities and effects which are already obsolete just a short time later and thus unproductive. Such leadership and goal systems must be reconsidered and replaced by much more agile leadership mechanisms focusing on the immensely satisfying effect which contributing to quickly achieved goals can have as an incentive.

Core Principle 3: Networked thinking and working Growing complexity forces us to take an ever increasing number of factors and their interrelationships into consideration. Linear thinking must thus be replaced by networked thinking which companies must, in turn, support by means of the corresponding working methods and conceptual tools . A decisive step towards this is to train an organization to work consistently in all it does from the result backwards and to penetrate the operational mesh of relationships behind this in order to thus identify the few, key levers. Concentration on these levers helps to master topic complexity. Thinking outside the box can also help to control complexity and arrive at surprising results. Taking a look at other industries, markets and value creation structures and obtaining ideas thanks to completely new contexts can all assist the search for solution options. And this type of solution, on which every company is today dependent, is more attractive than the procedures which have to date been in place. All corporate functions relating to process orientation; quality management; human resources and similar supporting issues must also, in the interests of results oriented working, be reconsidered. Because they are also purely input oriented, generally providing little direct benefit. I am not arguing that these functions are, in themselves, superfluous but simply that they should be relocated to where they make a direct value contribution and also have a direct connection to results.

Core Principle 4: Decentralism Successful implementation cultures are strongly characterized by maximum decentralism. This not only refers to a corporate division or unit structure which is as decentralized as possible but, above all, to the establishment of decentralized business units and the assignment of as much responsibility as possible to the individual business divisions. Structuring and management should thus be extremely non-hierarchical. Companies should be structured and organized as functioning organisms. The risk that this will generate small "principalities" can only be combatted with corresponding leadership and steering mechanisms such as the puzzle management approach described above (cf. Chap. 3.2). Controlling and

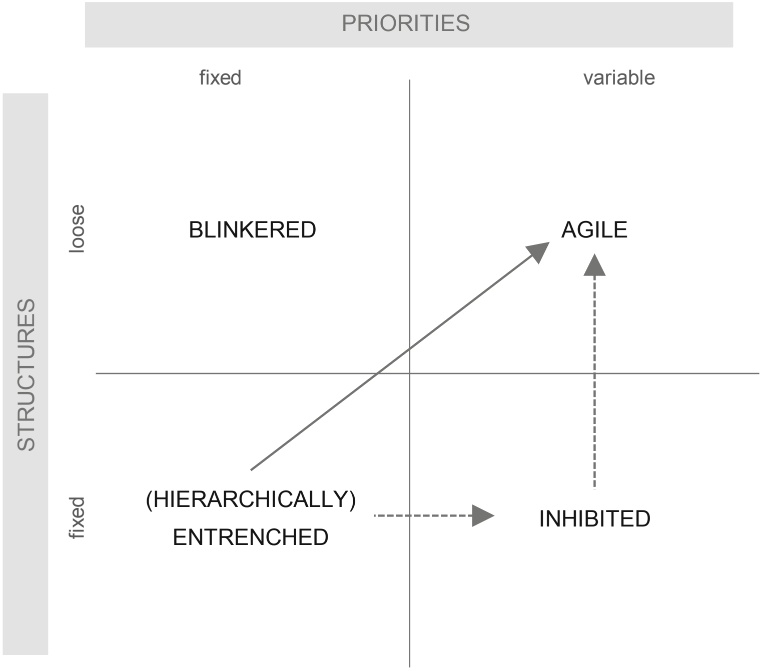

Fig. 8.8 Implementation cultures require agile structures and priorities

administration effort must be reduced to the necessary minimum using intelligent leadership mechanisms and structures.

Core Principle 5: Change of context routine The regular rotation of both employees and also management executives to other work and project contexts should be a routine practice. This can be difficult in the beginning—cf. forced job rotations or somewhat more speedy project changes—however, as soon as it has become an established programme, helps to escape the attachment to structures and topics; to think more in networked structures; generate more empathy and prevent the decentralism principle leading to the isolation of individual divisions, thus resulting in "overly independent" attitudes.

8.5 Leadership—The Key Factors

The key lever to anchor the five core principles of implementation cultures is to consider your own understanding of leadership. The majority of the leadership and steering approaches, structures and mechanisms with which I am familiar are only compatible with the performance implementation culture principles described above to a limited extent. Fig. 8.8 illustrates the direction in which leadership and steering must move in order to be successful in this sense. Many companies, with their priorities and hierarchical, entrenched structures, are currently located in the bottom left quadrant. It is, however, extremely difficult to achieve implementation excellence with this type of leadership and steering, particularly since the market is increasingly forcing companies to operate with changing priorities.

In order to move out of the inhibited to the agile status, which is, in my view, unavoidable for companies today, they must reorganize themselves in a completely different manner, based on the above mentioned five principles of leadership. To this end the five core principles of implementation cultures will once again be consulted.

- *Job rotation must become a principle*
  In order to arrive at the change of context routine managers, and namely at all levels (leadership principle), must be in a position to assume other functions and/or responsibilities in the value creation chain to ensure that they do not remain imprisoned in fixed structures.
- *Changed goal systems*
  Employees must feel the desire, and be able, to motivate themselves to work in differing contexts. A low degree of attachment means identifying with topics but increasingly less with the business unit in which you are employed but, instead, feeling yourself to be more and more an entrepreneur within the company. In other words, entrepreneurial thinking must be promoted and reinforced.
- *No monetary management systems (leadership principle)*
  The low degree of attachment of management and employees to specific topics or goals makes it necessary to comprehensively reconsider the leadership system at all levels. It is imperative to move away from monetary goals. Because success and motivation arise from the flow, in this case from the frequent change of context; the low degree of attachment; the pronounced entrepreneurial mindset and the pleasure in moving topics forward. No-one perceives moving to another team as something bad but rather views such a change as being only temporary. Management systems which are targeted to bonuses must be deterministically measurable and assessable and this is the point at which there is a collision with the new requirements. What will, in future, be crucial with regard to individual implementation projects and the agility of the organization will be in contradiction to established management systems.

9 Overview—Quick Steps to Accelerate Implementation

To conclude I would like to once again summarize the levers which are crucial to successful implementation management in the form of an overview. Use this overview as an aid to memory and orientation, also for the event that you may possibly have to quickly release jammed implementation brakes.

The five strategy emotionalization steps according to Kolbusa The lack of clarity of strategy documents is often the reason why implementation work becomes slow-moving, drawn-out and complicated. Strategies are often only linked to abstract things and, accordingly, cannot develop any driving force. Attraction is, however, important if you want to persuade a company to adopt a new or even only partially changed position. A strategy must thus be attractive to operational management, both on the content level (logic) and also on the level of emotions. This is best achieved by anchoring the corresponding images in managers' heads which are required to generate the positive emotions which are so important for the process.

The five strategy emotionalization steps according to Kolbusa

1. Yourself
   Implementation is connected to leadership. If you want to successfully implement strategies you must have a burning desire to achieve a goal. And an abstract goal will not ignite a burning desire in you—an emotional image is required for this. So write down (spontaneously and unstructuredly) what life after the strategy implementation will be like. What will be different in future; how will the achieved goal feel, what will people talk to each other about and how will they do this; how will you treat your customers; which supplier relationships will be structured how?
2. Breadth
   Get your top management colleagues or constructive sparing partners whom you would like to get on board to carry out the same exercise. At most seven individuals.

M. Kolbusa, *Implementation Management*, Management for Professionals,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-42036-8_9, © Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2013

3. Comparison
   Go somewhere quiet with this team for a day and discuss the images which have been noted—without prepared overhead sheets but instead with a good moderator (either you moderate or you take part, but you can't do both at once). Following this, ask the participants to compile a joint three to five DIN A4 page future text.
4. Translation
   Then consider how you can reproduce this future text in one of the models available to you. This analytical penetration will produce insights which give feedback on the future text and vice versa. You will have to go through this ping-pong game two or three times before you achieve consistency on both the emotional and the analytical level and can tangibly feel how the spirit of the strategy is being anchored in your top management team, developing its driving force.
5. Depth
   Every manager presents this image to his next management level without using any aids and spends one day discussing these images—initially freely and spontaneously, then in a structured, methodical form.

Procedure guidelines for concept development The concept development phase is about "honing" the strategy—in other words it is about the required conceptual detailing to describe the company- or division-specific strategic gap between "Here"—the current position—and "There"—the strategic position you aspire to. You are required to give a lot of thought to the issues "What will the new location be like?" (concept development) and "How exactly do I get there to be well positioned and to do the right things in the right way using the right competences?" (planning). While doing so you can orient yourself along my guidelines.

Concept development guidelines

1. Conceptual depth
   Decide how far down the management hierarchy and in which divisions the objective ("What is the new location like?") must be broken down in order to plan sensibly and experience speedy implementation.
   The motto in this context is "The result to be achieved dictates where and how much certainty is required". This is the manner in which you identify who must be included in the process in order to ensure that the downstream process takes care of itself at all the levels involved with the implementation project. Consider carefully down to which level you want to create this certainty by means of conceptual depth. The deeper you go, the greater effort will become, namely an exponential increase. You should thus include as few individuals as possible and only as many as necessary.
2. Key questions
   The principle of core and key questions will help you to identify which topics and divisions require particular attention within the scope of concept devel-

opment. Your core question puts in a nutshell the overall strategy from an individual division's point of view and is at the centre of attention. Every division thus has its own central core question with regard to strategy. This core question is surrounded by three to seven additional key questions which have to be clarified using corresponding models. The crucial questions are thus consistently asked, compared and discussed working back from the end result. Be sure that there is a strictly limitation to the few crucial questions. It is imperative that you ensure discipline.

3. Selection of the required models
   The answers to the key questions are developed with the aid of models depicting how your organization as a whole will function in the future. The following models could be relevant in this context:
   - The *corporate model*—What is the fundamental business understanding; the corporate mechanism or logic like, based on which the company will work in future?
   - The *value creation wheel*—What are the future core and supporting processes and what will the interfaces between them be like?
   - The *organization model*—How will the company be organized in line with the new corporate logic and restructured value creation?
   - The *leadership and steering model*—How will the future organizational units be orchestrated and steered to ensure that everything interlinks with the correct priorities and that the corporate model and also the value creation wheel become reality?
   - The *sourcing model*—How must the manufacturing depth change in strategic terms, working from the value creation wheel's core and supporting processes?
   - The *competence model*—Based on the value creation wheel which competences will be required in the individual divisions? Which roles and functions represent the most skilful means of ensuring they are available? And what are the key value and complexity drivers which can be used to create a well-thought-out quantity structure to define the size of the organizational units?
   - The *cooperation and values model*—Must there be changes to the kind of cooperation and dialogue?

   The first four models described above are indispensable for a concept; whether you require the other models or even additional models (for example *location* and *partner models*) depends on your strategy.
4. Concept development of the required models
   The purpose of selecting models or of model development is to give operational management certainty with regard to the changes to be initiated. The models must be broken down to the level for which there should be clarity (conceptual depth). Model formulation is thus merely a means to an end to create clarity regarding central aspects.
   The promote/prevent model can, among others, enable you to expose the issues causing uncertainty in operational management.

Each of your key questions is answered in the form of a graphic presentation on a DIN A4 page. Since the interdependencies are very large you will not be able to develop your models successively but rather iteratively within the scope of answering your core and key questions.

5. Loops for model synchronization
   Since your models and the answers to the core and key questions will not immediately interlink coherently, neither within a division nor between the divisions you must thus coordinate the models with one another several times. Only when every division is clear on what its own strategic contribution to the implementation of the corporate strategy will be like; how it must organize itself to do so and what the master plan for achieving the relevant status as described using the future models will be like has the required degree of maturity been achieved.
6. Iteration (until clarity has been achieved)
   The goal of concept development is to generate a clear image of the future for the operational management personnel who are responsible for the implementation project concerning what the new strategy should achieve. In other words, the objective must now be transferred into the heads of operational management, and namely in a far more detailed form. The drill-down must take place within the scope of concept development until this goal has genuinely been achieved. Otherwise during the planning phase it will become difficult to clarify who has to do what by when and the result would be blocking uncertainty.

Elimination of the WEDTM phenomenon Poorly or insufficiently thought-out implementation projects always and without exception generate uncertainty on the part of the participants. If your implementation project has been infected with the WEDTM phenomenon (What exactly does that mean?) you must identify the points at which you need to create clarity. The following five step programme must be completed in the order described below to overcome uncertainty.

Kolbusa's 5 step programme to eliminate the WEDTM phenomenon

1. Future script
   Ask all the participants to write a two- to three-page script for the film of the future for your sub-project or your division, alone or in the team. Based on this future script every area of responsibility should formulate what will change for them with regard to the business; to value creation (nothing else is of interest) and what will be new or wound up. This retropolation anticipates the result aspired to, describing the situation as it could be following a successfully completed implementation project. It is important that the films of the future do not exceed a range of thought of six to nine months.
2. Structural foundation
   These written expectations must now be systematized and structured. Based on the diverse models, for example value creation models; process models;

product portfolio representations; value contributions; etc., each division systematically describes for itself how the image it has formulated of the future following completion of implementation can be systematized and firmed up in the form of diverse models.

Only outline the crucial aspects in your future model, thinking about what the “conceptual gap” is like and describing them for each division by examining the following three aspects:

a) What will be added “tomorrow”,
b) What will change and
c) What will be wound up?

This is done in the form of an outline diagrammatic plan without text and within a fixed template structure prescribed by programme management.

3. Orientation
Now specify three to four criteria to show whether the implementation process is actually approaching the target status. These progress criteria ensure focused, rapid implementation, since all further discussion and actions will be focused precisely on them and on nothing else (no plans!).
4. Safeguards
Clarify what makes your team confident in the long term that it can achieve the results outlined and what may possibly give cause for concern. The last aspect in particular is very important in order to give the team the conviction and certainty that the desired objective really can be achieved. Do not be satisfied with simple answers but rather probe into who really believes in success and why. If you are not given any answers then either corrective work is required, since it is not yet clear what should be achieved, or you have a motivation or competence problem and must take steps to re-staff your team.
5. Questioning of uncertainty
Should the participants’ uncertainty persist then you must probe into your team’s worries and difficulties, listing them in detail. Also make use of the promote/prevent model. Be sure to practice a culture of openness when trying to overcome the problems; ask which aspects should be addressed to whom in order to identify the impeding factors.

Jigsaw management—Synchronizing films After elimination of the WEDTM phenomenon—i.e. focusing of the image of the future for the individual divisions—a comparison is required. Each of the divisional or departmental scripts represents an individual piece of a jigsaw puzzle which provides information about one implementation area and every one of these jigsaw pieces has tabs and blanks which must interlock precisely during the comparison.

Kolbusa’s five steps for successful jigsaw puzzle management

1. Linking organization charts and pieces of the puzzle
The jigsaw pieces (future scripts) which have been formulated in isolation from the organization chart must now be integrated into the organizational

structure. To this end the relevant elements of the organization chart (corporate groups, divisions, departments) are each viewed as a jigsaw piece. These pieces must be combined in accordance with the cooperation models and working relationships which have been formulated. The images of the future which are still focused on the existing divisions are sorted into new jigsaw pieces corresponding to the future organizational structure.

2. Clarifying the jigsaw pieces' tabs and blanks
   Services which are drawn from other divisions create blanks in your own jigsaw piece and the tabs, which protrude into other divisions, represent the services to be provided. It must thus be clarified for the individual jigsaw pieces which services the responsible divisions require from other divisions in order to make their own implementation successful, thus bit by bit clarifying which parts of their own jigsaw piece interlock with other divisions. Only, and exclusively, the tabs and blanks, the input and output relationships within the scope of value creation, are of interest! Everything else should be viewed as a black box, lying in the sphere of responsibility of the corresponding "puzzle manager". Do not allow complex observations of detail, such as process modelling, etc., to detain and hinder you.
3. The relationships operational network for the jigsaw pieces
   Once each division has considered its input and output relationships (the tabs and blanks) a jigsaw comparison is made. It is used to determine which division has what expectations from whom and what hypotheses each division is using for its own divisional concepts. During this comparison it is helpful to use an operational network to document the individual relationships in order to identify how value creation could perhaps be simplified. This operational network is, furthermore, an important instrument for the next step since it shows very clearly which divisions have necessary relationships with each other and, within the framework of bilateral comparison meetings, will have to carry out further coordination.
4. Bilateral jigsaw comparison—Tailoring
   Once the operational network has revealed the relationship of the jigsaw pieces to one another it is time to determine which division will clarify what with whom and in what order. The models developed during focusing are used to this end.
5. Jigsaw puzzle progress
   Using the outlined jigsaw image the criteria showing how progress can be made towards the result must be determined. Time and again these progress criteria will the overall implementation project as a means of monitoring project progress in terms of results. These progress criteria have also already been formulated during focusing and can be used here.

Identifying pointless concepts—The concept filter In order to be successful in implementation management methods and concepts must be deployed with a strict goal orientation and only crystalized to the extent that they serve safeguarding and protection against mistakes and unnecessary experience curves. They can thus endure a necessary degree of blurring. In order to identify pointless concepts and limit the number of methods required for concept formulation the right questions must be asked when gathering evidence. The concept filter can be of assistance in this regard. With its help all the concepts which do not meet at least one of the following criteria are discarded.

Kolbusa's concept filter

1. Target contribution
   Is there is a clear connection to a goal, in other words is there either a clear contribution (concept) which outlines the result to be achieved in terms of a type of result or an indirect contribution in the sense that the method delivers more attractive options, routes or short cuts to the result aspired to?
2. Immediate explainability—"Why am I doing that?"
   If it cannot be clearly explained why a concept is being formulated and what connection it has to the goals then the concept should be discarded.
3. Contribution to at least one other concept
   Does the concept or method only stand alone or does it also provide a contribution to other concepts? An isolated concept is not particularly helpful and makes it legitimate to ask the question whether the correct means have been selected at all to achieve the goal.
4. Generation of management certainty with regard to implementation
   Does the concept help the responsible managers to carry out the actual implementation more easily and reliably?

The path to the optimum speed zone Most organizations work around the optimum speed zone, never entering it, because they do not demand sufficient speed in implementation or never develop a truly realistic feel for their organization's performance capabilities, thus either over- or under-revving the implementation motor. The following guidelines will help you to bring the participants through the implementation process at the optimum speed.

The path to the optimum speed zone

1. Calculation of the optimum speed range
   Clarify the following for yourself: What performance can I achieve? What can be done within what time spans? What is my team, my organization capable of achieving?
   Think this through systematically. Break the concepts and results to be delivered down into pieces and locate them on the time axis. Calculate the resources which are actually available and allocate them to the individual pieces. Even if the results should be sobering (which they often are), this is the only way to attain a realistic starting point.
2. Define the formulation goals
   Do not work with to-do lists or plans but instead with results lists and in clear, short intervals of one to a maximum of three weeks. This is the only way to

keep the feedback cycles short enough to provide your team with the required momentum and inherent enjoyment of the project. Activities, time or effort have a counter-productive effect in this context.

3. Organization of progress management
   Project/progress management and any and all forms of reporting must be structured in such a way that you only focus on results and not the activities and plans. Only agree how much the degree to which the result has been achieved should have increased by the next meeting and what the team believes must be done to achieve this. You could, possibly, touch on the issues but should not, under any circumstances, discuss them.
4. Graphic presentation
   Ensure that all concepts and papers for decision-making are compiled using images and graphics. In other words all models, results types, reports, etc. function via models which intuitively clarify the interrelationships and alternatives graphically, using a small amount of key information. No-one takes any notice of anything else later anyway and it is also irrelevant for achieving the result.
5. Application of the concept filter
   Unnecessary concept formulations also decrease speed. The concept filter should thus be applied here to ensure focusing. Less is more!
6. Use of resources
   Resources must be focused on whatever the result should be. A consistent orientation to results is thus required.

The eight principles for mastering complexity In order to be able to manage complexity in an implementation project appropriately the dimensions of concept development, planning, policy and emotions must be addressed in a differentiated manner. The following eight principles can be of assistance with this.

The eight principles for mastering complexity

1. Focus Principle
   Focus allows you to avoid unnecessary planning complexity. Setting genuine priorities helps you to achieve output oriented handling of your resources. Focused results are achieved via successive, precisely observed progress as well as by planning "by sight".
2. Resilience Principle
   Let things take their course, also in terms of conceptual thinking, and do not fixate on specific developments. Do not look for certainty within the scope of planning but instead manage the moment! This has a positive effect both planning efficacy and also on the management emotional complexity.
3. Options Principle
   Always think, work and discuss using options. An attitude which offers no alternatives only serves to create barriers. Make it a habit for everyone in your

team to always present three options without being recognizably in favour of one of them. This is the only way to avoid the emergence of entrenched fronts where compromises are the only option left in order to achieve a solution.

4. Drivers Principle
   Devote yourself to the interests, worries and fears of the participants. If you want to achieve implementation momentum then you will have to connect with emotions. Use the operational network method of networked thinking by asking yourself: Who among the decision makers and other relevant individuals has which interests, worries or fears? What are their causes? Who influences whom how strongly? Positively or negatively? You will thus recognize who the drivers are; who is "caught between two stools" but is critical for success and who will, in the end, go along with this and how you can use these interrelationships in the interests of your goal.
5. Manipulation Principle
   Thanks to your work with the Drivers Principle you know which "buttons" you have to press for whom in order to be able to motivate the participants as you wish or to create constellations which are expedient for achieving the goal.
6. Network Principle
   Networking allows the political interests and positioning and/or goals of the participating individuals and interest groups to be recognized in their context and their direct or indirect effect on the overall system. Within the scope of concept development networking helps to consider the crucial factors and options.
7. Encapsulation Principle
   Break down complexity into clearly delineated units (capsules) without reducing it and avoid somehow including all the participants everywhere. So instead of giving a very broad conceptual task to the strategy implementation team clearly separate individual conceptual projects (encapsulation) with five to seven progress and results criteria are assigned in order to focus each capsule specifically on what is really important.
8. Speed Principle
   If correctly applied, when used in both concept development and also planning speed facilitates focusing and control of complexity since your team is not able to spend as much time thinking about complexity. The imperative is to work quickly in clearly defined, small units of time in order to thus retain your eye for the basics and remain efficient.

Practicing focused implementation policy In order to arrive at a well-functioning overall political structure the participants' individual interests should be examined on the basis of the following questions: Who has what interests for what reasons? Where are there overlaps? Where do the individual spheres of interest diverge or have no overlap and why? How can more favourable constellations be prepared for a successful implementation project? The following quick steps will help you to make your implementation project's political situation transparent.

Kolbusa's implementation policy programme

1. List the relevant individuals
   Relevant individuals included everyone who, from your perspective, plays a key role within the scope of the implementation project such as, for example, stakeholders of all kinds; project sponsors; project drivers; project managers; management executives from the most diverse divisions or departments; holders of key competences; etc.
2. The Powermap—Identify attitudes
   For each of these individuals examine the question "What goals and what values are associated with this person?" (public sphere) and the question "What interests play a role for them, what gives them pleasure; worries them or makes them anxious and what, under certain circumstances, makes them envious?" (personal, emotional sphere). Under no circumstances should you underestimate the power of status and recognition!
3. The Powermap—Visualize the diversity of interests
   Link the spheres of the single individuals in the form of an operational network, based on the question "Who influences who?" Stronger influences can be represented by thicker arrows and you can also differentiate between positive and negative influences.
4. Understand the political landscape
   The operational network can be evaluated and interpreted with the aid of an active-passive matrix (Vester, 2002). The goal is to identify the factors or individuals which are relevant to the question "Who exercises the great influence, either positively or negatively, in my implementation project?"
5. Analyse the results
   The following questions are of assistance for the conclusions you can draw based on the findings gained and for the resulting measures to be derived from them:
   - What are the decisive success drivers for the implementation project?
   - How can these individuals be combined in bodies within the project or, if necessary, separated?
   - Are there individuals who will never be able to bring their personal interests and goals into alignment with the implementation goal?
   - Can you bypass these individuals or do you have to attempt to manage implementation project with the knowledge that this resistance exists and how can you break down this resistance as soon as possible or intentionally escalate it?
   - Are there individuals or groups of individuals who are working against your implementation project but whom you could get on your side by means of actively influencing them? Who are the most influential individuals and on what emotional level do they exercise influence?
   - Are there groups or alliances which actively support the overall goal?
   - Can you get additional individuals into this group?

Leadership principles in implementation Good implementation management is characterized by the fact that it approaches success of the goal by means of recurring sub-processes. The following steps should be carried out at intervals of one to a maximum of four weeks for the overall project—without fail weekly for sub-projects. Specifically—every participant notes in their weekly diary what will be done by whom on what day. This trains realistic assessment of feasibility. The following leadership principles are of assistance in this regard:

Kolbusa's leadership principles in implementation

1. Speed! And from the outset
   ensures that the required speed is available from the outset; that there are training courses in between and also that there is sufficient time to take a break.
2. Regular training
   Consider your issues and problems with distance and from different perspectives so that you do not become superficial and do not become entangled in unnecessary details. you are currently doing; what is going well; what was less successful and which things could you have done differently because they would have been simpler and more direct? Give yourself time to learn and consider and bring in uninvolved sparring partners either from within or outside the organization for this purpose in order to gain suggestions for alternative procedures and methods.
3. Consistent reliability and commitment
   Ensure that there is reliability and commitment in small (from meeting to meeting) and large matters (for example agreements with sub-project interfaces). Always base your management on the motto "Every agreement can be renegotiated as long as this is initiated proactively by one of the partners". Consistency is decisive for genuine implementation performance. Never confuse consistency with severity in this regard but nevertheless bear in mind that 'where nothing happens if nothing happens nothing will happen'.
4. Realists instead of optimists
   It goes without saying that successful implementation management requires a positive spirit. Engage with the current issues with all their ramifications without awakening false expectations. Ensure that things are thought through from the result backward and that you are always prepared (catastrophe scenarios!). Remain positive without fooling yourself.
5. Genuine priorities
   Set clear priorities and also communicate them. Try to genuinely move three things forward instead of moving hundreds of things just a few centimetres. Withstand the pressure and desire which will, of course, arise from all sides to do lots of things in parallel and at the same time and try to compensate for it because if everything is a priority then nothing is a priority.

6. No overloading of the team
   Motivation is the result of success. So allow the team to see and feel how the process is progressing on the basis of the status of a few clear progress criteria, sharing the pleasure in this with everyone. Reward progress with status and recognition—not with money! To this end it is important that the amount of work is reasonable. Avoid the motor overheating.

Establishing a culture of consistency Consistency is an important attitude to transform conventional implementation projects into high performance implementation projects. Try to establish a culture of consistency in order to enable your team to perform well.

Kolbusa's principles for establishing a culture of consistency

1. Consistency from the outset
   The rules which everyone must adhere to must be clearly communicated to all participants at the outset of an implementation project. Consistency then means demanding reliability with regard to these rules. Strong signals will occasionally be required in this context—those who do not adhere to what has been agreed are out of the game—even if this initially represents a loss. The performance losses will quickly be compensated for by a developing culture of consistency, within the scope of which everyone can rely on everyone else.
2. Consistency means setting a good example
   Be aware of the influence your actions have on everyone else working on the implementation project. When most of the statements reported back to you are "Not possible"; "Won't work" and "Impossible" then you can only have a corrective influence by behaving consistently yourself. Only be setting the example of consistency can you motivate others towards the result to be achieved.
3. Consistency means action.
   Things will not improve if you wait. The longer the required consistency is put off, the more severe the negative consequences of the lack of consistency will become. So it is better to act sooner than later; corrections are easier to carry out than making up lost ground.
4. Consistency to the end
   Inconsistency is incredibly contagious. Once it is permitted it quickly spreads, becoming a habit which can only be overcome with a lot of effort. So—consistently adhere to the rules agreed yourself and the others will do this too.

Good implementation reporting Good implementation reporting must answer only one question: "How close are we to the results aspired to?" Following this it is possible to discuss why you believe that the results can be achieved via this route; where uncertainties and obstacles are seen and how they can be handled.

Characteristics of good implementation reporting

1. The correct focus
   As a rule of thumb no report should be more than three pages long. A report should, at minimum, always cover the following criteria, presented graphically and attractively prepared—goals; two to three progress criteria; degree of achievement and history; critical success factors and required decisions.
2. The optimum cognitive distance
   Do not overload your implementation reporting—neither in the thematic nor the time dimension. Good reporting is short, to the point and clearly laid out. And, most importantly, practice empathy. What is the target group's context of understanding? What experience and expectations (output/results related) must reporting be based on? What are the questions which the target group asks itself and how can you answer them simply and intuitively?
3. Look the ugly truth in the face
   Build your reports on transparency and honesty, and support your sub-project managers and remain confident. Reports which have been mined to prevent criticism will cost you the trust of the stakeholders (Where is the project really?).
4. Reporting consistency
   Reporting must be consistent and coherent in its structure and mechanisms. Where your own assessments and estimates are also included it is imperative that you pay attention to transparency.
5. The correct reporting philosophy
   A culture of honest reporting should be created within the reporting hierarchy and the team. To this end difficulties in sub-projects must be taken seriously and correspondingly support given and countermeasures initiated instead of simply saying negative things and working with accusations of blame.
6. Management attitude to reporting
   Do not allow your stakeholders to prescribe how you should work. You should neither allow yourself to be forced to adopt any kind of reporting schema nor persuaded to report on milestones or activities.

About the Author

Matthias Kolbusa who has a degree in Information Technology and a Master of Business Administration (MBA), operates an international network of selected top management consultants under the umbrella of Hamburg-based EXECUTIVE Consulting GmbH, which he founded in 2001 and is managing partner of. For over ten years he has been providing consulting advice to international conglomerates; medium-sized companies and non-profit organizations in matters relating to strategic focus and the mastering of reorganization and restructuring. His clients include, among others, AXA, Axel Springer, Bosch, Daimler, DAK, Deutsche Telekom, EnBW, E-Plus, EWE, MAN, (o2) Telefonica, Provinzial, Signal Iduna and Volkswagen.

Characteristic for him and for his work is a "merciless" focus on results. Methods, be they of a strategic, political or dialectic nature, are always only the means to an end and should be kept as lean as possible. In the final instance only one thing counts: entrepreneurial success which has been achieved in a humanly and globally responsible manner.

Clients value Matthias Kolbusa for the genuine benefits he provides: strategic clarity; the creation of management structures; unifying individuals behind strategies and being a valuable, actively supportive helper when implementing these strategies and changes. He uses the right policies to efficiently create and establish structures leading to entrepreneurial success.

As a member of the *Club of Rome* he combines his passion for networked thinking and strategic management with social responsibility, displaying a personal commitment to the *Club's* projects, currently in the field of education.

He has for several years also been drawing on his own success and understanding of consulting to coach consultants in order to make them and their clients more successful.

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