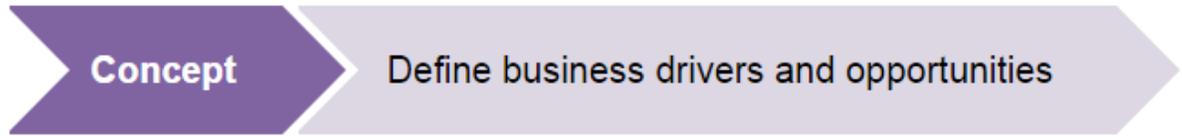




Phase 0: CONCEPT



The CONCEPT phase encourages helps you take a mindful approach to your project before you formally start it.

This phase:

- Ensures the necessary executive buy-in to fund, launch, and support the project.
- Identifies the business drivers, problems, opportunities, scope and objectives.
- Shows how the project concept aligns with the strategic direction of the organization.
- Evaluates the organization's readiness for undertaking the project and understanding the organization impacts.
- Can take anywhere from a few days to several weeks or months, depending on the size and scope of the business problem.

If your project continues to appear viable and likely to achieve desired results once you've finish the CONCEPT phase, move on to the INITIATE phase.

Key Participants: Sponsor, Project Manager, Organizational Change Manager

Concept Resources

- [1 The Role of the Sponsor \(New\)](#)
- [2 Sponsor Checklist CONCEPT](#)
- [3 Phase 0 CONCEPT General Guidance](#)
- [4 Business Case Template](#)
- [4. Business Plan Template](#)
- [5 Project Classification Assessment Toolkit 2018](#)
- [7 Summary Lessons Learned \(updated 12-19-17\)](#)
- [8 Project Update Snapshot9. Market Research and Alternatives Analysis Tips \(NEW\)](#)
- [Benefits Realization Readiness Assessment](#)
- [Creating a One-page Business Strategy](#)
- [Market Research - 1. Defined](#)
- [Market Research - 2. Fundamental Practices](#)
- [Market Research - 3. Checklists and Sample Questions](#)



[OCM Toolkit - List of Tools with Purpose and Benefits AEC](#)

[OCM Toolkit Overview AEC](#)

[Sample Readiness Survey Questions \(AEC\)](#)

[Sample Readiness Survey Questions \(AEC\)](#)

[Scope Definition Toolkit](#)

[Sponsor Diagram AEC](#)

CONCEPT STEPS:

1. Review the [Role of the Sponsor](#) and [Sponsor Checklist CONCEPT](#).

These help sponsors prepare for their role in a project and prepare for initial discussions regarding the scope of the potential project. The [Sponsor Diagram](#) may also be of interest to new sponsors.

2. Review the [Value Management Framework](#) or [Phase 0 CONCEPT General Guidance](#) to ensure familiarity with the process.

The project manager reviews the framework and accompanying tools.

3. Review the [OCM Toolkit Overview](#) and [OCM Toolkit - List of Tools with Purpose and Benefits](#).

The organization change manager reviews the OCM tools.

4. Get a jump on tracking your progress by opening a project in WorkFront using the VMF Framework template or downloading the Excel-based [Project Plan template](#).

5. Consult the Internal Logistics Checklist to make sure your project is logistically prepared.

6. Discuss the business objectives, vision, and any constraints (time or budget) and quality expectations.

The vision embodies the long-term outcomes that the sponsor and organization wish to achieve. It is written to be inspirational and memorable. It may be based on business drivers (external or internal) and the strategies used in response to these forces. This discussion occurs among the sponsor, project manager and organizational change manager. Understanding your Business Model is helpful in defining the business objectives and vision.

7. Conduct high level research, including market opportunities (market research), the scope and outcomes of like projects, and policy, rule and law review.



Use external research to understand how others may have addressed the business problem. This helps provide context for the scope, scale, and potential complexity of the proposed project.

Research is usually conducted by the project manager or project team and consists of outreach to peer organizations, web and literature searches, and third-party research organizations. It provides context for future project decisions and supplies the sponsor and project manager with valuable intelligence about what options may be available to achieve the desired business objectives.

8. Discuss and document the project scope in the [Scope Definition toolkit](#).

The sponsor and project manager use the scope to help establish the boundaries of the project and what will and will not be included in it. It also contains information on proposed deliverables, assumptions and constraints.

9. Complete the [Business Case template](#). Developing a [one-page business strategy](#) may be helpful in framing your business case.

The business case is a proposal that justifies a project. It includes an analysis of business process performance and requirements, assumptions, and issues, and risks by explaining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This is completed by the sponsor and project manager.

An agency-based business case may be significantly more complex than the summary version and, if that is the case, it should replace the simplified template.

If you are planning an internal service or a service that will be supported with chargebacks, use the Business Plan instead.

10. Complete the [Readiness Assessment survey](#).

The sponsor and organizational change manager identify and characterize the organizational complexities of the change associated with the proposed project and conduct the readiness survey. The results of the Readiness Assessment are used to help define the change strategy and plan the change management components of the project.

The [Benefits Realization Readiness Assessment](#) may also be helpful in establishing your organizations readiness to achieve project objectives.

11. Complete the [Project Classification Assessment tool](#).

The sponsor and project manager complete the self-assessment Project Classification tool. It helps reveal and characterize the business and technical complexities of the proposed project (the risk profile). The results help define the level of risk and visibility associated with the project and may drive decisions about how the project will be undertaken and managed.



12. Review Summary Lessons Learned.

The sponsor, project manager and organizational change manager review lessons learned for potential pitfalls and resolutions encountered in prior projects. Any identified pertinent lessons learned should be flagged for discussion during the development of risks.

Lessons learned are a repository of knowledge gained during similar projects, showing how project events were addressed or should be addressed in the future.

13. Begin status reporting using the Project Update Snapshot.

The project manager begins providing routine status updates to the sponsor. In later phases, status reporting may involve the Steering Committee and stakeholders. The snapshot provides an overview but the project manager may wish to include additional, more detailed materials.

14. Complete CONCEPT phase review.

The sponsor approves the business case, readiness assessment and project classification. The project manager submits the materials, including those of the change manager, to agency project governance for review.

The CONCEPT phase review is a formal, examination of the above work products to ensure the foundation of the project has been established and the supporting information to promote advancement to the next phase is completed.

TIP #1: To monitor the progress of your project, use the 100 Point Project Checklist in [Word](#) or [Excel](#).