

An EndState article by Ian Crawford

Article Date: 16th March 2009



At EndState we have adopted some very simple mantras which we work hard to turn into reality for all of our clients. Amongst these are:

- ≡ Say what you'll do, do what you say!
- ≡ If it's complex, it's too complex! If it's not simple, it's not simple enough!
- ≡ Decisions (D) multiplied by Actions (A) equals Results (R), (D\*A = R)
- ≡ If you don't decommission, you don't deliver!

The last of these messages is the focus of this particular article and one EndState has developed in response to our work in evaluating many programmes, projects and business change initiatives across a wide variety of industry sectors. When projects fail it is often the absence of benefits realisation which is cited as the most galling consequence. Decommissioning is often a key business outcome and benefit driver which companies often fail to achieve. EndState always advocates a focus on business outcomes and it is the early identification and continued re-appraisal of these which ensures that our clients derive value.

We have observed that many organisations, over time, lose sight of the business outcomes they sought to deliver when they started a change initiative. EndState explain how to retain focus on the business outcomes in other publications, so here we examine the scenario where a key benefit, decommissioning, is lost.

Decommissioning comes in a number of benefit-driving forms. Decommissioning:

- ≡ of products makes way for new products or product variants which drive revenue, market share, market profile and profitability
- ≡ operations enables you to free up buildings and space, reducing overheads and operational complexity
- ≡ processes helps you to simplify your operations, taking direct costs out of your business model and releasing management time
- ≡ platforms or individual systems reduces total cost of IT ownership and, more importantly, simplifies your overall business operating model
- ≡ technology and devices lowers your carbon footprint, helping your cost base and the environment simultaneously

All of these are important components of any business case for a major change programme or project, therefore it stands to reason that the business is serious about realising these benefits when the change is initiated. So, why do so many projects leak this type of benefit? Let us consider the following:

- ≡ During the initiation phase, programmes often fail to adequately identify all of the actions required to ensure that the decommissioning takes place

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### Key Observations:

- IF YOU CANNOT ARTICULATE HOW TO DECOMMISSION, IT IS TOUGH TO ACHIEVE!
- RE-APPRAISE BUSINESS OUTCOMES ON A REGULAR BASIS TO ENSURE YOU ARE ON TRACK
- EVIDENCE OF DECOMMISSIONING ACTIVITIES NEEDS TO BE PROVIDED
- IF THINGS CHANGE, ENSURE THAT YOU ARE NOT 'LEAKING' BUSINESS OUTCOMES

### EndState Differentiators:

- WE HELP OUR CLIENTS REDUCE THEIR HIDDEN COSTS OF RECRUITMENT
- WE GIVE YOU MANAGEMENT CONSULTING BRAND VALUES IN A RECRUITMENT COMPANY SETTING
- WE HAVE PERSONALLY BUILT TEAMS TO DELIVER SUCCESS; WE UNDERSTAND YOUR CHALLENGES
- OUR AFTER-CARE SERVICE FOR CLIENTS & CANDIDATES ALIKE HELPS BUILD LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS
- WE ALIGN OUR BRAND VALUES WITH YOUR VISION, ENABLING YOU TO ATTRACT & RETAIN TALENT



## IF YOU DON'T DECOMMISSION, YOU DON'T DELIVER!

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- ≡ The costs associated with making the decommissioning happen are generally under-stated due to inadequate planning
- ≡ The programme itself starts to run into budgetary or time pressures. One reaction to this is to de-scope activities and decommissioning is often passed into "Phase 2" or another project altogether - which often never happens
- ≡ Managers change and the accountability for achieving the benefits of decommissioning is often unclear as a result
- ≡ Occasionally, the focus of the organisation changes over time and the business outcomes originally envisaged are no longer desirable

All of these can lead to a significant erosion of the original business case, assuming there was one and that it was robust. Worse still, if you fail to decommission something that is market-facing (e.g. a product) then you can confuse the market and potentially lose revenue, as well as retaining a higher cost base than you intended.

So, **EndState** will always help our clients challenge what and how you are actually decommissioning as a result of your change initiative. We will help you:

- ≡ Draw line of sight between the desire for a decommissioning outcome and the actions within the programme which achieve that end state
- ≡ Assess your capability to withdraw an old product from the market at the right time and its effects on customers, revenues, profits, etc
- ≡ Deal with the implications of decommissioning an operation, e.g. staff implications, realising the benefits of building and maintenance savings, contractual savings, or transferring all of the activities to another party
- ≡ Assess the impact on your people / locations of process decommissioning
- ≡ Measure your ability to decommission systems and platforms with respect to the business operations which they support and the infrastructural commitments you have made previously

These are just some of the aspects you need to consider. **EndState** utilise our Launch Toolkit to help you demonstrate that the right questions have been asked and answered, both when you initiate change and if you need to repair a programme which has drifted out of control. We support your desire for change & ensure that the business outcomes you need to deliver success are tied to the completion of your initiative.

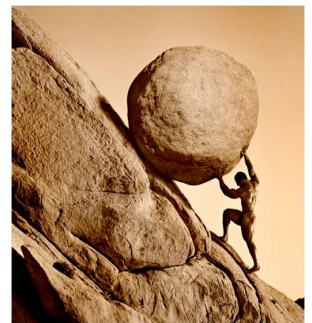
In conclusion, when assessing a proposition, be sure you can articulate the criteria which need to be fulfilled to achieve decommissioning. Make sure that the manager accountable for achieving the benefit has actually signed up to the size and achievability of that benefit. Finally, track the benefits through the life-cycle of your changes to ensure that they remain achievable.

Find out more about **EndState** at [www.endstate.uk.com](http://www.endstate.uk.com).



Magnify your chances of success with **EndState**.

"ENDSTATE HELPS YOU GET YOUR CHANGE INITIATIVES OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT. REMEMBER, PROJECTS DON'T FAIL IN THE END, THEY FAIL IN THE BEGINNING"



Work with **EndState** to make things simpler than they first appear.