

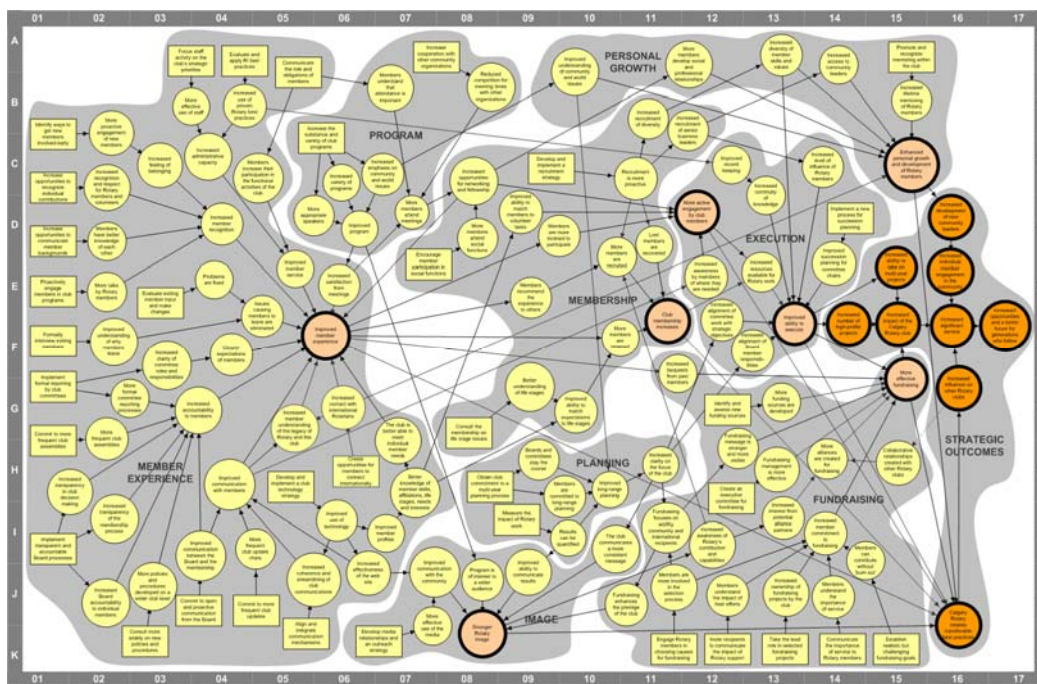
1. AN OVERVIEW OF OUTCOME MAPPING

Outcome mapping¹ is a new approach for defining and managing complex, multi-stakeholder strategic initiatives. It clarifies the outcomes that must be achieved to realize strategy, and identifies all of the necessary and sufficient actions required to achieve them. When completed, the map becomes a detailed “roadmap” for execution, and provides a framework for performance measurement to confirm that the intended outcomes are actually being achieved.

By thinking through the strategy we create a roadmap for execution and performance measurement. Accountability is assigned for every action, and implementation is actively managed by monitoring outcomes. Each stakeholder can see exactly where their own contributions complement the contributions of others in achieving the intended strategic goals.

1.1 A Modelling Technique

Outcome mapping is a modelling technique that creates a visual representation of strategy on a single page. The desired strategic outcomes are located on the right-hand side of the map. Projects and enabling outcomes that contribute to achieving these strategic outcomes are positioned throughout the map. Arrows show how they contribute to the end result.

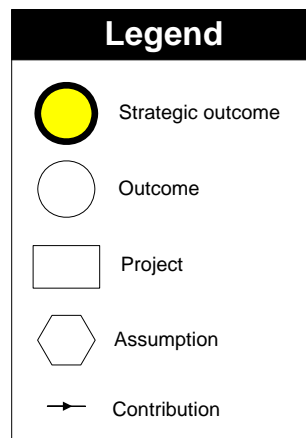


¹ “Outcome Mapping”, while named the same, is different from the outcome mapping methodology developed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) which focuses on outcomes in the form of behavior change. The two approaches however, have the potential to be quite complementary.

Clusters of actions and outcomes in the map relate to the creation or enhancement of capabilities required to implement the strategy.

1.1.1 Symbols

The symbols used in outcome mapping represent **strategic outcomes**, **enabling outcomes**, **projects**, **assumptions**, and **contributions**.



Strategic outcomes are the ultimate strategic goals.

Enabling outcomes are stepping stones to achieving the targeted strategic goals. They are usually expressed in a way that is measurable or verifiable.

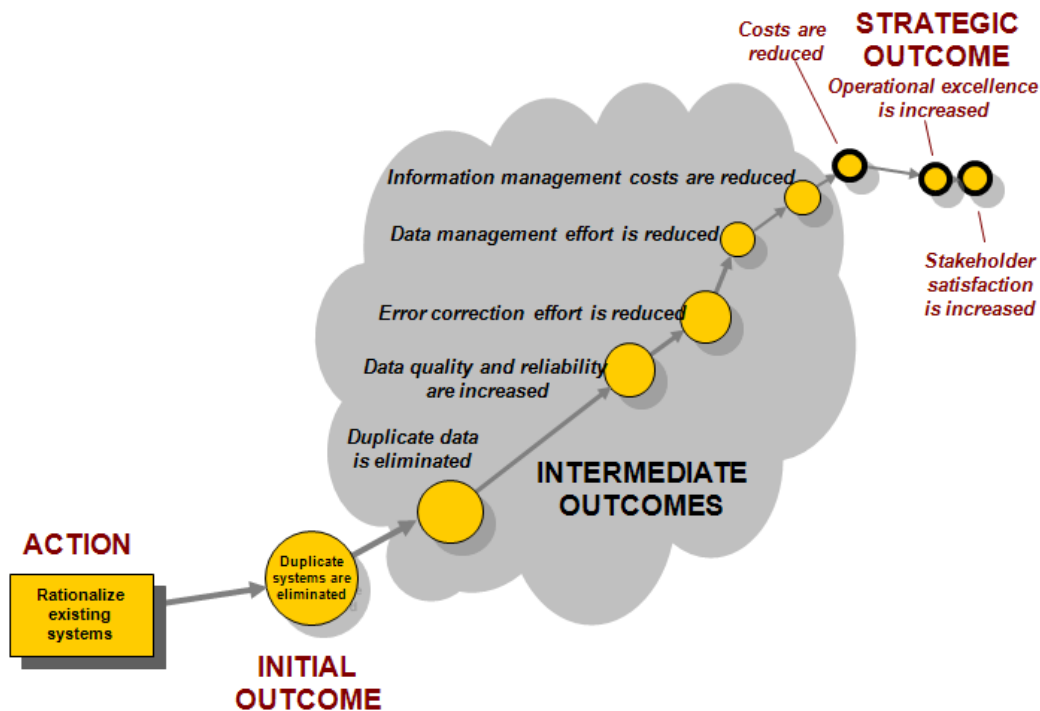
Projects are formalized work activities designed to produce specific and measurable outcomes.

Assumptions describe special conditions under which an outcome will be achieved -- where there is uncertainty that these conditions will exist and that the desired outcome will be realized. Assumptions highlight risks to successful implementation of the strategy.

Contributions explicitly show the relationship between actions and outcomes. Collectively, they define the logic for implementing a strategy.

1.1.2 Chains of Enabling Outcomes

Strategic outcomes are created through chains of enabling outcomes. Each chain starts with an action that creates an initial outcome. This outcome – combined with others -- supports the achievement of higher-level outcomes downstream.



1.2 A Tool for Successful Implementation

Outcome mapping provides a strong foundation for the successful implementation of strategy. Many strategies fail due to a variety of risks, including:

- *Fragmented vision* (Do we know what are we trying to accomplish?)
- *Poor strategic alignment* (Are we doing what we need to do to get there?)
- *Poorly defined outcomes* (How do we define success?)
- *Incomplete sponsorship* (Is there strong leadership?)
- *Weak commitment* (Are stakeholders committed?)
- *Poorly defined roles* (Does everyone know what they need to do?)
- *Ineffective program management* (Are we getting the intended results?)

By bringing clarity to strategic goals and concretely identifying the actions and outcomes required to achieve them, outcome mapping helps to address these risks.

1.2.1 Shared vision

The outcome map:

- communicates the logic and rationale for getting results;

- shows how each action contributes to outcomes;
- identifies required necessary and sufficient actions;
- surfaces key assumptions; and
- provides an effective way of communicating with stakeholders.

1.2.2 Increased strategic alignment

The outcome map:

- ensures that actions produce outcomes that are aligned with strategic objectives;
- provides a high-level view of the required change;
- identifies targeted results; and
- explicitly links actions to outcomes.

1.2.3 Well-defined outcomes

The outcome map:

- clarifies expected strategic outcomes;
- identifies specific outcome streams;
- establishes metrics to measure the achievement of results; and
- creates an action plan for implementation that has a much higher likelihood of delivering the anticipated results.

1.2.4 Complete sponsorship

The outcome map:

- shows the full scope of required activity; and
- surfaces sponsorship issues and assumptions.

1.2.5 Clear commitment

The outcome map:

- establishes a process for involvement and buy-in at all levels.

1.2.6 Well-defined roles

The outcome map:

- defines accountability and responsibility for actions and outcomes in a measurable way.

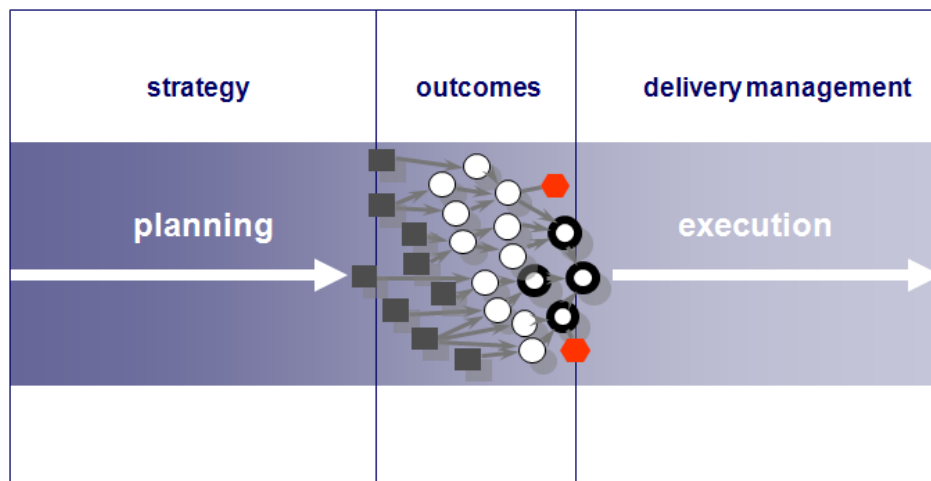
1.2.7 More effective program management

The outcome map:

- provides a roadmap for executing the strategy and monitoring results;
- shows the complete scope and effort required to implement the strategy;
- integrates all of the required enabling capabilities (process, technology, organization, people, product, and assets);
- identifies sources of risk and defines mitigating actions;
- documents major assumptions that may impact program delivery; and
- shows the downstream impact of issues encountered during delivery.

1.3 A Bridge Between Planning and Execution

The outcome map creates a bridge between planning and execution: encouraging clear thinking when developing strategy, and providing a framework that can be used during implementation to assign accountability, monitor progress, and measure performance.

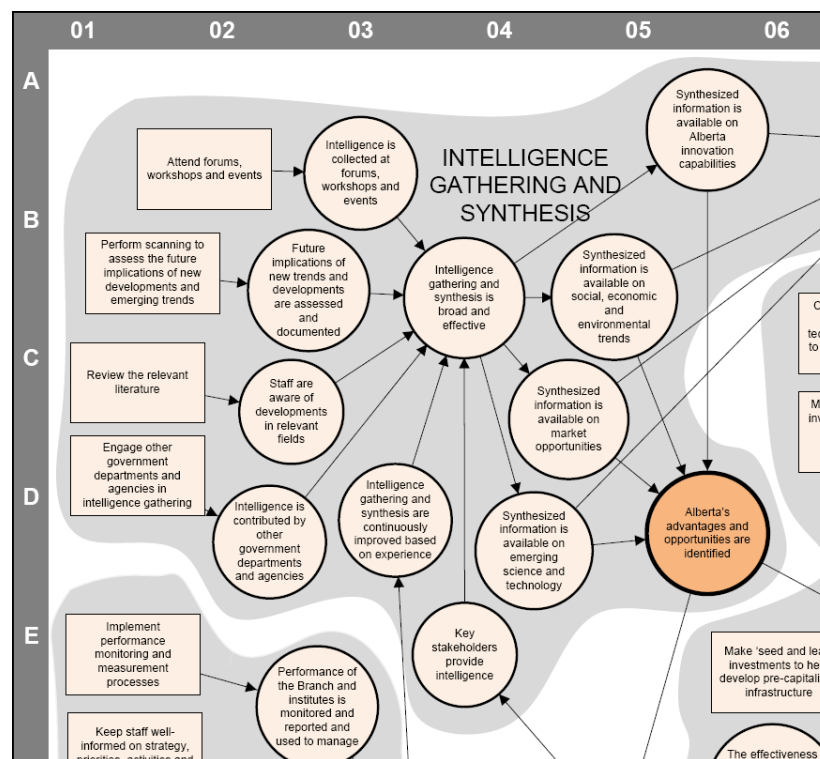


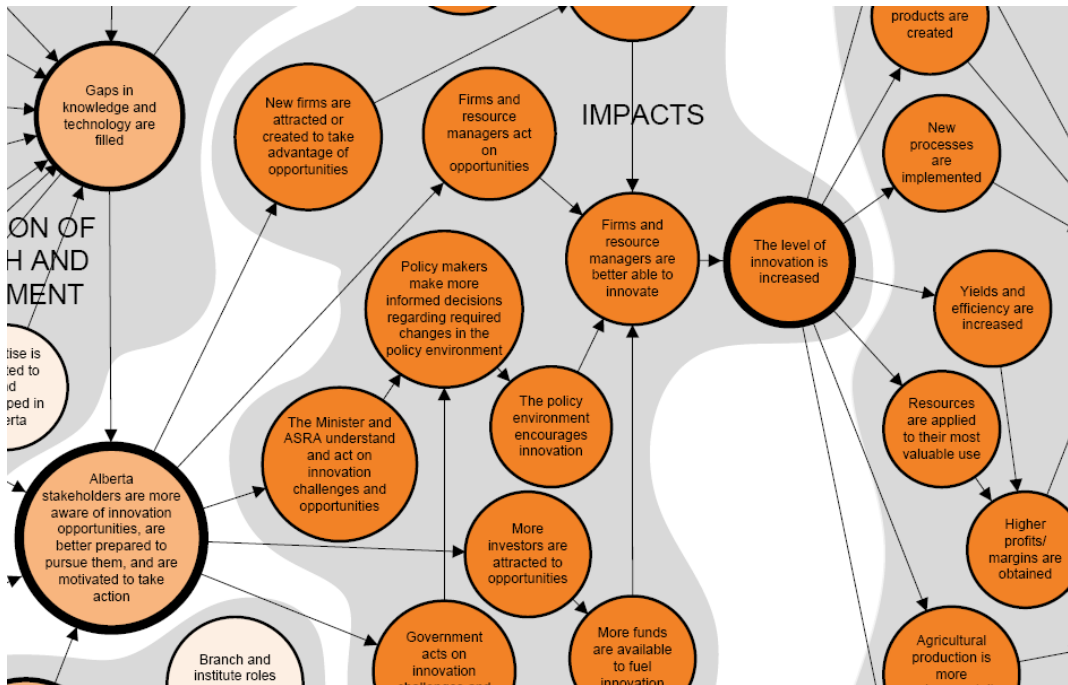
1.4 Publications that Inspired the Development of Outcome Mapping

Outcome mapping is one of a number of techniques used to develop causal models of change:

- DMR Consulting's Benefits Realization™ approach, and the Results Chain™ method described in *The Information Paradox: Realizing the Business Benefits of Information Technology* (McGraw-Hill, 1999);
- Cranfield University's Benefits Realisation approach, and the Benefits Dependency Network™ method described in *Strategic Planning for Information Systems* (John Wiley & Sons, 2002);
- The Strategy Map developed by Kaplan and Norton to support the Balanced Scorecard, described in *The Strategy-Focused Organization* (Harvard Business School Press, 2000) and *Strategy Maps: Converting Intangible Assets into Tangible Outcomes* (Harvard Business School Press, 2003); and
- *The Theory of Constraints* developed by Eliyahu Goldratt, described in *The Theory of Constraints* (North River Press Publishing Corporation, 1999) and *Goldratt's Theory of Constraints* (American Society for Quality, 1997).

1.5 Example: Two Small Sub-Areas from an 11" x 17" Outcome Map





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