

Consultancy and Professional Practice

W6: Implementation

Partnership & Stakeholder Dynamics

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CORE PRINCIPLE

The ultimate goal of consulting is to make the consultant unnecessary.

— paraphrasing Peter Block, *Flawless Consulting*

Capability vs. Dependency

Dependency

- Client waits for consultant input
- Consultant does work clients could learn
- Client knowledge isn't increasing
- Consultant involvement growing

Capability

- Client staff lead meetings
- They explain the approach to others
- Steps implemented without checking in
- Consultant involvement declining

⚠ **The test:** If you disappeared tomorrow, what would happen?



Remember the Monkey

Tasks migrate from the person who should own them to whoever picks them up.

During implementation, this accelerates:

- The consultant has time when client staff are busy
- The consultant has expertise clients feel they lack
- It's easier for everyone in the short term

💡 Every monkey that migrates to the consultant is a capability that doesn't develop in the client.

The Role Shift During Implementation

Plumber

Expert pair-of-hands.
Valuable but creates
dependency if you stay here.

Doctor

Diagnose and prescribe.
Dominant during analysis.

Advisor

Strategic partner. Key for
solution design.

Navigator →

Guide through change. **The
implementation role.**

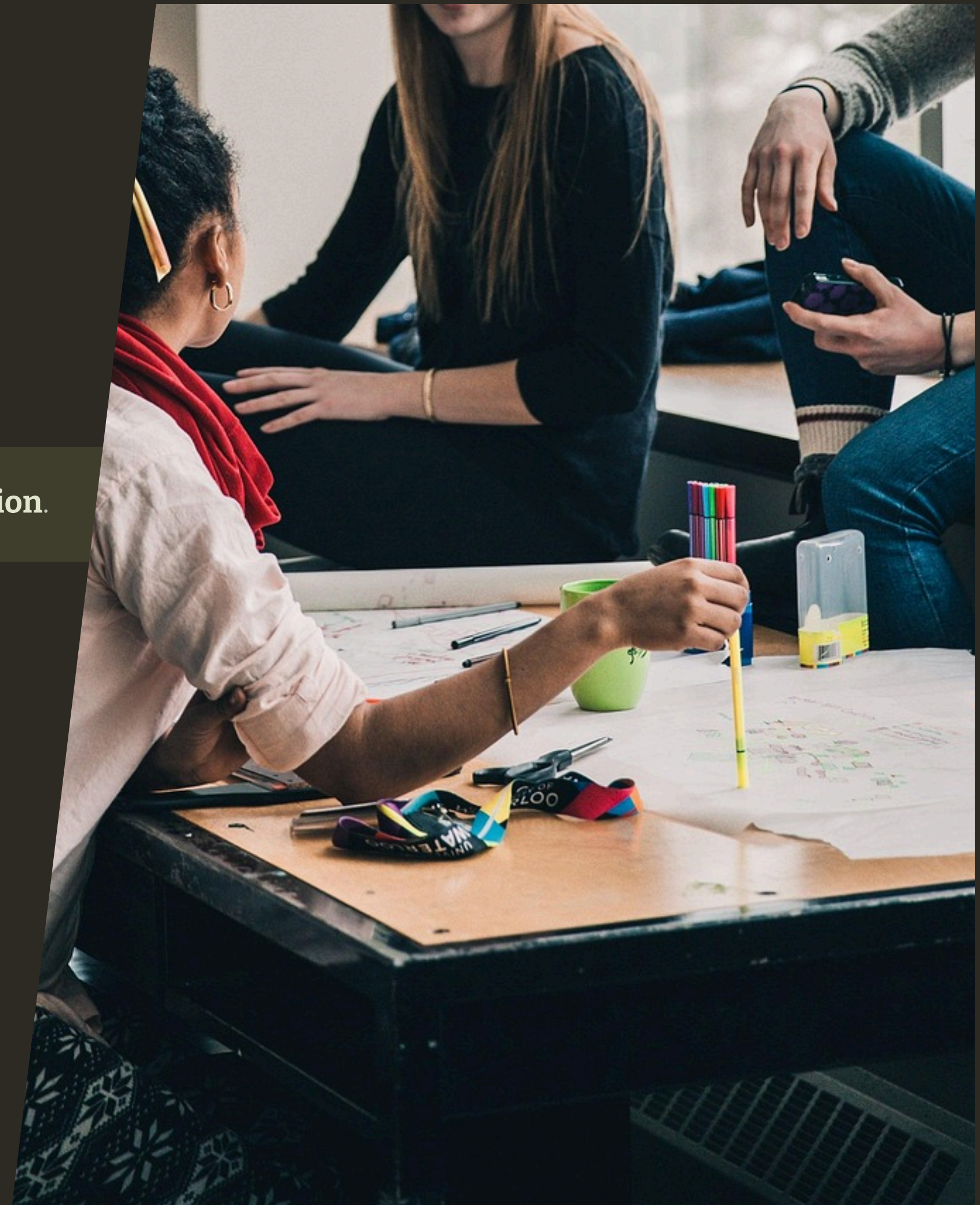
From Stakeholders to Partnership

The stakeholder map you created during diagnosis? It's already out of date.

How Stakeholder Positions Shift

- Abstract supporters face **concrete disruption**
- **New stakeholders** emerge as areas are affected
- Power dynamics shift with resources
- Early success can turn resisters into supporters

💡 Stakeholder mapping isn't a one-time activity. It needs **continuous attention**.



Sustaining the Five Beliefs

The challenge shifts from *creating* these beliefs to *sustaining* them.

Belief	Initial Challenge	Ongoing Challenge
Discrepancy	Is change necessary?	Is it <i>still</i> necessary?
Appropriateness	Is this the right change?	Is it <i>still</i> the right change?
Efficacy	Can we do this?	Can we <i>keep</i> doing this?
Principal support	Are leaders committed?	Are they <i>still</i> committed?
Valence	What’s in it for me?	Is it <i>worth</i> the ongoing cost?

⚠ Most vulnerable:
Efficacy (doubt grows when progress is slow) and
Principal support (leaders shift attention to the next initiative).

Based on Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder (1993)

Implementation vs. Design Resistance

Design Resistance

About the idea

- Questioning whether the problem is real
- Disputing the diagnosis
- Challenging the proposed solution

Response: **persuasion**

Implementation Resistance

About the disruption

- Already overloaded with other work
- Timing conflicts with peak season
- New way harder to learn than expected

Response: **support and motivation**



Key distinction: “I agree this is the right thing, but I can’t do it right now” is not resistance to overcome; it’s (often) a resource or timing problem to solve.

💭 Think about a change initiative you've experienced. Was your stakeholder map static or did it evolve? What happened to stakeholder positions as implementation progressed?

→ COMING UP NEXT

The planning paradox: why rigid project management can be the enemy of successful change.