



## Desai Management Consulting - 3Q20 Newsletter

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### The Colors of Hope

"The more things change, the more they stay the same", the famous line says. This is in part a good motto for the season. The COVID-19 virus continues to ebb and flow around us here in the United States, with many factions moving in many directions in response. Around the globe, the situation is similar, with virus levels increasing again, only now in combination with the flu. Despite this, it is a season of hope.

Once again the beauty of fall colors is all around us, wonderfully bright this year. We are all hoping this helps the business community, large and small, find hope too, that all these changes combine to lead us towards a "new normal".



We continue to be ready to support businesses as they emerge from shutdowns, and face both business and technical opportunities. Once companies open their doors again, there will be a need to taking all the right steps to restore profitability. An organized set of methods as input to decision-making can be invaluable. An approach to such a review is described in the "Business Diagnostics" article below.

Our "Takeaway" this quarter encourages us all to approach each person and situation with an extended hand. As always, our Desai Team stands ready to help, and to accelerate the recovery process with our experience and expertise, and our focus on business problems to solve, and their associated value.

In closing, I like to reiterate two of the major issues continuing to face all of us today. First, the COVID-19 virus. I encourage us all to continue to work together in following government and medical direction to minimize its impact. Second, the issue of diversity and discrimination touches all of us, and requires our patient thought and understanding, as well as our pursuit of change so that everyone can live their lives in equality in all things. The explosions of color each fall, especially here in Vermont, can remind us of the beauty in diversity.

Thank you!

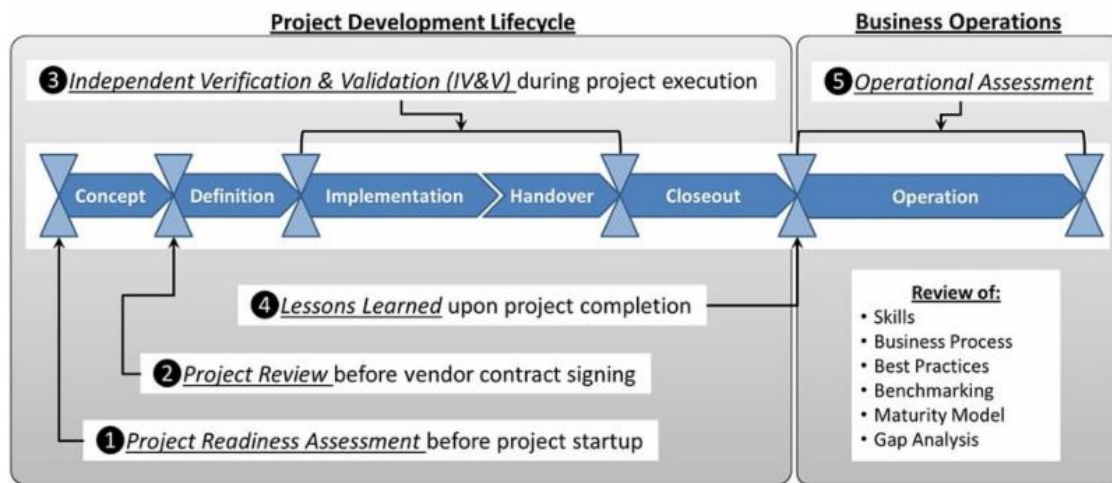
**Vijay Desai, Managing Partner**

## Introduction to Business Diagnostics

Perhaps never more than now, it's wise to examine business strategies, plans, and operations, to validate activities and investments in light of current conditions. COVID-19 has placed an unprecedented strain on businesses in many ways - to continue operating, to increase output, to introduce new products, and to reshape investments.

The Business Diagnostics (BDI) solution space contains methods for business and organizational assessment at stages before, during, and after project execution, and during business operations. These result in ongoing project measures to provide maximum assurance of project and operations success, for both internal and external parties involved.

The methods for review are done closely with customers to ensure that proper controls are in place, especially in large and complex projects, and that they exist throughout the project lifecycle and into operations.



The greatest value in Business Diagnostics methods is that they can be applied across complete project and operations lifecycles, as follows:

Project Readiness Assessments - at pre-project, that examine team, skills, processes, capabilities, and influencing factors internal and external to the project for adequacy and risk management in the forthcoming project work

- Deliverables: (a) Mapping to industry standard maturity models and best practices for team, skills, processes, and capabilities; (b) risk assessment of internal and external influencing factors;

Project Reviews - in advance of vendor contract signing to ensure that work required is adequately defined and prospective vendors are capable of completing it

- Deliverables: (a) Assessment of completeness and correctness of project requirements vs. industry standard methods; (b) suitability assessment of potential vendors for project implementation, considering prior experience and customers, team, skills, and proposed use of industry standard methods for project execution (e.g. PMP)

Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) - of a project once underway and throughout its execution, to ensure that project deliverables and objectives are met along the way

- Deliverables: (a) Proposed project deliverables enforced in industry-standard form and complete vs. project requirements; (b) ongoing inspection of project execution for faithful production of contracted deliverables, adherence to project plan and methods; (c) periodic reporting of inspection results and early warning for oncoming changes, risks, and issues

Lessons Learned - upon project completion, designed to measure the degree to which the project met its stated objectives and deliverables, and can be deemed successful

- Deliverables: (a) Assessment of completed project deliverable content and timing vs. contracted terms and conditions, highlighting incorrectness or incompleteness of functional and/or non-functional requirements and deliverables, as input to customer considerations in contract payment

Operational Assessments - once a project is deployed to operations, assessments can be performed on an ongoing basis, to determine how stable and effective the project results are, and as input to future optimization efforts.

- Deliverables: (a) Adequacy of team and skills; (b) completeness of business process definition and performance measures; (c) comparison of operations performance to industry and competitive best practices, through benchmarking; (d) scoring on appropriate maturity model to identify and analyze gaps and construct action plans

Flexible methods for Business Diagnostics can provide end-to-end project and operations assurance that works tightly with Project Management roles and methods to minimize risks for successful project execution, helps ensure ongoing operational effectiveness, and helps to better manage both internal and especially external resources involved. Most importantly, they will help validate plans and investments to reflect the changes and constraints presented by COVID-19.

Please [contact us](#) if you'd like to discuss these methods in greater detail.  
**Let's get to work!**

## Training

### **3-Day Certified SAFe® 5.0 Agilist (Leading SAFe)**

Desai in partnership with [Conceptia](#) has scheduled an online instruction for becoming a [Certified SAFe® 5.0 Agilist \(Leading SAFe\)](#). Dates are 10/26-10/28.

### **3-Day Certified SAFe® 5.0 Scrum Master**

Desai in partnership with [Conceptia](#) has scheduled an online instruction for becoming a [Certified SAFe® 5.0 Scrum Master](#). Dates are 11/2-11/4.

### **3-Day PMI - PMP Certification Test Prep Bootcamp**

Desai in partnership with [PMI Champlain Valley Chapter](#) has scheduled the next [PMI-PMP Certification Test Prep Bootcamp](#) on 3/24-3/26/2021.



## The Takeaway

### **How Can I Help?**

Most of us believe we live our lives with an intention to help others. It's important, however, to pause now

and then to reflect on what that really means, and how it takes shape.

"How can I help" can easily become an automatic phrase - an alternative to "Hello, how are you?" Thus it's important to mean it if you say it. This is true with everyone, but especially so with customers.



As you get to know your customers, be observant. Look beyond the current proposal or project scope, to further add to the value you can provide. Let your customer know where you see collateral issues and opportunities that you see beyond the current scope. Don't present them as "scope creep", but rather as additional requirements and opportunities for consideration. By taking this approach you can become a "trusted advisor" to the customer, giving them confidence in your value, and expanding their capabilities in managing and investing in their business.

At the personal level, the opportunity to help others is boundless, especially these days. I have watched in my neighborhood alone how someone provides meals to an elderly neighbor, while someone else mows their neighbors lawn. I've talked to many of these people, and have found that without exception nobody expects anything in return. Instead they encourage others to "pay it forward" by finding your own way to help someone and get involved.

It's clear that these 4 words can lead to great actions at all levels. Likewise it's important now and then to make sure they are more than words. We all will need some kind of help some day. It's good to get a head start by helping today.

As a parting note and way to help our customers, Desai Management is an approved vendor to provide technical assistance services to Vermont companies through the ReVTA grant, for services completed before Dec 4th, 2020. (<https://www.vermonteconomicdevelopment.com/>)

***"We rise by lifting others."***  
**- Robert Ingersoll -**

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STAY CONNECTED:



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