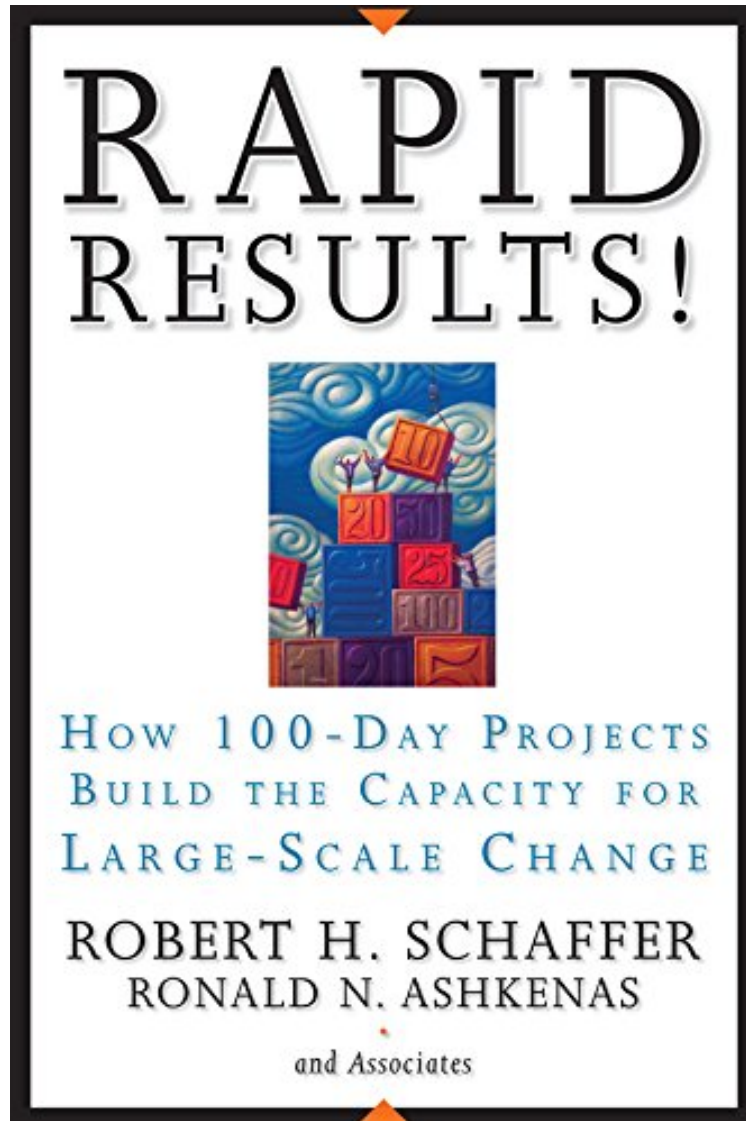


# Rapid Results!: How 100-Day Projects Build the Capacity for Large-Scale Change

*Robert H. Schaffer, Ron Ashkenas*  
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**Robert H. Schaffer, Ron Ashkenas : Rapid Results!: How 100-Day Projects Build the Capacity for Large-Scale Change** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rapid Results!: How 100-Day Projects Build the Capacity for Large-Scale Change:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Should be required reading for every president and government bureaucrat!By Dr. BillWith relevant examples, the authors lay out a reasoned argument asserting that big fix, multi-year change initiatives (think, ObamaCare)don't work. Why? Because every organization is wired together by

thousands, if not tens of thousands, of micro-connections that are not visible to the initiators of big-fix projects. When a big-fix, top-down, change/improvement initiative is launched, these micro-connections are disturbed and unintended consequences begin to occur -- consequences that the big-fix initiators are ill-prepared to manage -- so the initiative fails. Failure results from the inability to execute in the face of the multiple disconnects of the unseen micro-connections. If you saw Mickey Mouse as the sorcerer's apprentice in Fantasia contending with the multiple water-carrying brooms, you get the picture. The solution? Forget big-fix, long cycle projects. Instead, launch one or more 100-day fast response projects, some of which run concurrently, whose purpose is to attempt to achieve something that can be done in 100 days (that eliminates a lot of projects!) and, taking on an experimental mindset, succeed fail, fail fast, but above all, learn fast. Among other things, a learning organization learns to implement and develops leaders, both present and future, who have cut their teeth on executing successfully. Because a 100-day project works in such a small organizational area, it will likely detect the micro-connections it disrupts and develop sensible work-arounds -- something the big-fix architects and managers don't have the capacity to do in their multi-year big change transformations. I recommend as companion reading the HBR article "Why Good Projects Fail Anyway", which can be purchased online, and the book *The Lessons of Experience, Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job* which tells how managers learned to execute when given almost impossible tasks. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read for management for results. By Terry Wham Right on! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Tried and True Approach to Improving Performance and Building Leadership and Change Capacity By bronx book nerd When business or other organizational leaders have a major problem to deal with they tend to look for big, grandiose solutions - wholesale business process reengineering, major mergers and acquisitions, or wholesale reorganizations. These approaches more often than not fail. Why? Because they impose excessive change on an organization that is not prepared to absorb that type of impact. Instead, what leaders should do is adopt the Rapid Results approach. What this approach does is take discrete, bite sized yet meaningful challenges and take them on with the staff that exists. Leaders, with the help of their staff, including management and line, identify problems that need to be fixed, set measurable performance goals that push beyond the usual performance and aim to accomplish this within 100-days (give or take). What this does is give the group that is working on the goal something realistic to aim at, not some vague pie-in-the-sky future vision. In turn, by working on these goals with existing resources and a relatively tight time frame, group and individual creativity is triggered as well as learning how to problem solve and a myriad of other management and personal skills that may be taught in school but only really learned in the trenches. What this does is build organizational capacity for future change as well as leadership skills among staff. In addition, ongoing, multiple rapid results projects can both guide long-term strategy as well as support existing strategic goals. What Schaffer and his colleagues have done is taken the resources that groups typically tap into during a crisis - cross-functional cooperation, willingness to try new things, time pressure, etc. - and adapted them to the longer term management environment. I have seen this work first-hand in the public sector. All leaders should read this book before they engage a consulting firm for millions of dollars and many years for poor or no results.

Rapid Results! shows how to make large-scale changes succeed; by using 100-day results-producing projects to develop this vital implementation capability. Written by Robert H. Schaffer, Ronald N. Ashkenas, and their associates; leaders in the field of change management; Rapid Results! describes an approach that has been field-tested by real organizations of every size and description to improve performance and speed the pace of change. Rapid results projects produce results quickly, introduce new work patterns, and enable participants to learn a variety of lessons about managing change. Step by step, the book describes how the use of rapid-cycle, or 100-day, projects will multiply your organization's power to succeed at large-scale change. Schaffer and Ashkenas specifically outline the concept behind 100-day projects and show you how to Set up the architecture to implement rapid results projects Improve operational performance and also attain hard results in the soft areas of management Build rapid results into major organizational change such as reorganization, acquisition integration, and international development Use rapid results to drive leadership development and culture change

In the business world, it's all about rapid results. Schaffer and Ashkenas are here to make sure your company is maintaining the pace. In the lightning-fast business landscape of the 21st century, managers are expected to produce solid results, quickly. According to the authors, the key to creating widespread, lasting progress begins with achieving rapid results at the micro level; as you engineer small victories, your company will build a solid foundation for future, more global success. With their 100-day projects, the authors lay the groundwork for organizations to experience marked success at the micro level, which will eventually lead to increased productivity and the ability to implement necessary reorganization on the larger management level. Some of key points include the necessity of mobilizing large groups of people to initiate change, the importance of creating a unique transformation plan for your company and the significance of applying these principles in developing countries. Both authors bring a record of proven success coaching CEOs and other upper-level management, and they provide copious examples of rapid results successes, including Georgia-Pacific, Citigroup, U.S. Borax and United Aluminum. In an arena where quick success is

paramount, learn the tools of Rapid Results or get left behind. (Kirkus Reports Business Newsletter, October 2005) "In an arena where quick success is paramount, learn the tools of Rapid Results or get left behind." (Kirkus Reports)

"Ownership of the idea doesn't matter. What does matter is that the approach works." (CIO Insight Magazine by Paul B. Brown, October 2005) "The 100-day deadline drives an incredible amount of creativity. Because we were getting closer to our customers and partnering with them on the rapid results projects, we found new ideas for what they needed that we could supply." --Dean A. Scarborough, president and chief executive officer, Avery Dennison

"The rapid results projects described in this book provide a structured way to get people to contribute and be successful. That, and the tight time pressure, keeps people moving ahead instead of wallowing in complex processes." --A. D. Peter Correll, chairman and chief executive officer, Georgia-Pacific

"We have found that this approach energizes teams and provides an intense focus on getting results. At the same time, it is helping to build the capacity of our organization to drive transformational change." --Martha Marsh, president and CEO, Stanford Hospital and Clinics, Palo Alto, California

"Just do it! Do it now! These simple words reflect the mantra of Rapid Results! And they work. The book offers hope for those who really want to change. It shows that even large, complex transformations can be accomplished with 100-day rapid results projects. It provides sound principles that can be adapted and applied by any leader who faces the challenge of getting things done. It's not only a good read, but a good toolkit for action." --Dave Ulrich, professor, University of Michigan, RBL partner, and coauthor, The HR Value Proposition

"For leaders in search of the secret to success for their organization, this is the one book they should read. Rapid Results! will help them unlock extraordinary levels of performance now and with each passing quarter." --Patrick Sullivan, group CFO, Zurich Financial Services

"This is an approach that can be taken to accelerate progress on almost any goal. It has helped us make significant progress." --Lynne Fisher, managing director, head of diversity and talent, Citigroup EMEA

**From the Inside Flap**

**RAPID RESULTS !** In the race to be more competitive, today's leaders know that the "right answer" is right only if the organization can make it work. Without implementation capacity at every level—from the grass roots on up—large-scale changes and innovations have little chance for success. Rapid Results! shows how to make large-scale changes succeed by using 100-day results-producing projects to develop this vital implementation capability. Written by Robert H. Schaffer, Ronald N. Ashkenas, and their associates—leaders in the field of change management—Rapid Results! describes an approach that has been field-tested by real organizations of every size and description to improve performance and speed the pace of change. Rapid results projects produce results quickly, introduce new work patterns, and enable participants to learn a variety of lessons about managing change. Step by step, the book describes how the use of rapid cycle, or 100-day, projects will multiply your organization's power to succeed at large-scale change. Schaffer and Ashkenas specifically outline the concept behind 100-day projects and show you how to: Set up the architecture to implement rapid results projects Improve operational performance and also attain hard results in the soft areas of management Build rapid results into major organizational change such as reorganization, acquisition integration, and international development Use rapid results to drive leadership development and culture change Each rapid result project tests innovations and builds the capability of individuals and the organization as a whole. Once in place, this process will help your organization develop the fundamental capacity to achieve the longest-term and most far-reaching gains. Imagine; with rapid results projects you can experience the immediate gratification of results while also opening the doors to long-term success!