Who Else Might This Change Affect?

A practical guide to spotting connections beyond your own part of the Business.

Start with what you know

Before thinking about other departments, establish what the Project proposes to change and how it might affect your own area.

What activities, processes or information will change? What does your team do with them? Which people or systems provide inputs? What outputs do you produce, and where do they go? What consequences remain uncertain?

You don't need perfect answers. The purpose is to identify what you understand and where further investigation may be needed.

Look beyond your department

Other teams and departments. Who receives information, services or outputs from your area? Who depends on your team's activities?

Systems and reports. Does your information feed another system, regular extract, spreadsheet, report or management process?

Customers, suppliers and external organisations. Could the change affect what people outside the organisation receive, provide or expect?

Connected processes. What happens immediately before your team's work, and what happens after it?

Decisions and approvals. Could the change affect responsibilities or controls belonging to another area? Who has the knowledge and authority to speak for them?

Five questions worth asking

1. Who provides the information or inputs we depend on?

2. Who uses what our team produces?

3. Which other teams, systems or organisations might notice this change?

4. Who understands those connections better than I do?

5. Who needs to be consulted before the Project makes a decision?

When you discover another affected area

Tell the Project what you've identified and why it may matter. Where possible, provide a contact or suggest someone who could help. Be clear about what you know, what you suspect and what still needs checking.

For example: ‘I can explain how our team uses this information, but Finance also receives an extract. I'm not sure how they use it, so we should involve someone from Finance before confirming the impact.’

You don't need to answer on Finance's behalf. You've identified a possible dependency and a sensible next step.

What isn’t automatically your responsibility

Identifying another affected area does **not** make you responsible for bringing that department into the Project. The Project should organise the appropriate investigation, stakeholder engagement and coordination, potentially involving additional representatives, workshops or senior management.

Unless explicitly agreed as part of your role, you shouldn't automatically be expected to recruit other departments' representatives, arrange and manage their participation, chase responses, approve changes on their behalf or take ownership of their processes and decisions.

You can help with introductions and explanations, but wider engagement should be organised by the Project, with responsibilities clearly agreed.

A simple way to record what you've noticed

A few notes may be enough: **Possible affected area** — **Why it might be affected** — **Who might know more**.

For example: Finance — receives a regular data extract — Finance reporting contact; Customer Services — uses information from the changed process — Customer Services manager; External supplier — receives information from our team — supplier relationship contact.

These are illustrative examples, not a requirement to produce a comprehensive impact assessment. If the connections are extensive or unclear, the Project may need a more structured investigation.

A final thought

Being the Business representative doesn't mean being the representative of the entire Business. Your expertise is valuable because you understand your area and can help the Project recognise connections it may not have considered.

Sometimes the most useful answer you can give is: **'I know who we need to ask.'** That's not passing the problem on. It's helping the Project find the right people to solve it.

Notes: possible connections to raise with the Project

Possible affected area	Why it might be affected	Who might know more