

**BLACKMORE FOUR**



# **AN INTRODUCTION TO ORGANISATION DESIGN**

**Outstanding Business Performance. Powered by People.**



# INTRODUCTION

Every business wants to attract and retain talented employees. Not only are they critical for future growth, they give leaders reassurance and trust. However, contrary to commonplace thinking, having the best people on board is not enough to ensure success.

How employees work together is a vital part of creating a successful organisation. It enables a business to adapt and compete in a fast-changing world. To be truly effective, people need to be able to collaborate, share ideas and work towards a common purpose.

Designing an organisation that supports and encourages employees, and ensures they are empowered to achieve their goals is what an organisation should be striving to do.

**This guide offers an introduction to organisation design and its impact across a business.**



## WHAT IS ORGANISATION DESIGN?

Organisation design is about aligning the structure and culture of the business with its aims and ambitions. It is about more than just lines of command and control. It is understanding the drivers for change, as well as what work needs to be achieved, what resources are available and what suits the nature of the organisation.

**As every business has their own unique purpose and values, the design of the organisation must be adapted to meet these.**

It is also not a one-time project that becomes set in stone. As with all organisations, change and growth means the design needs to be continually reviewed and adjusted as the business context evolves, to stay relevant and effective.

**Organisation design is about aligning the structure and culture of the business with its aims and ambitions.**

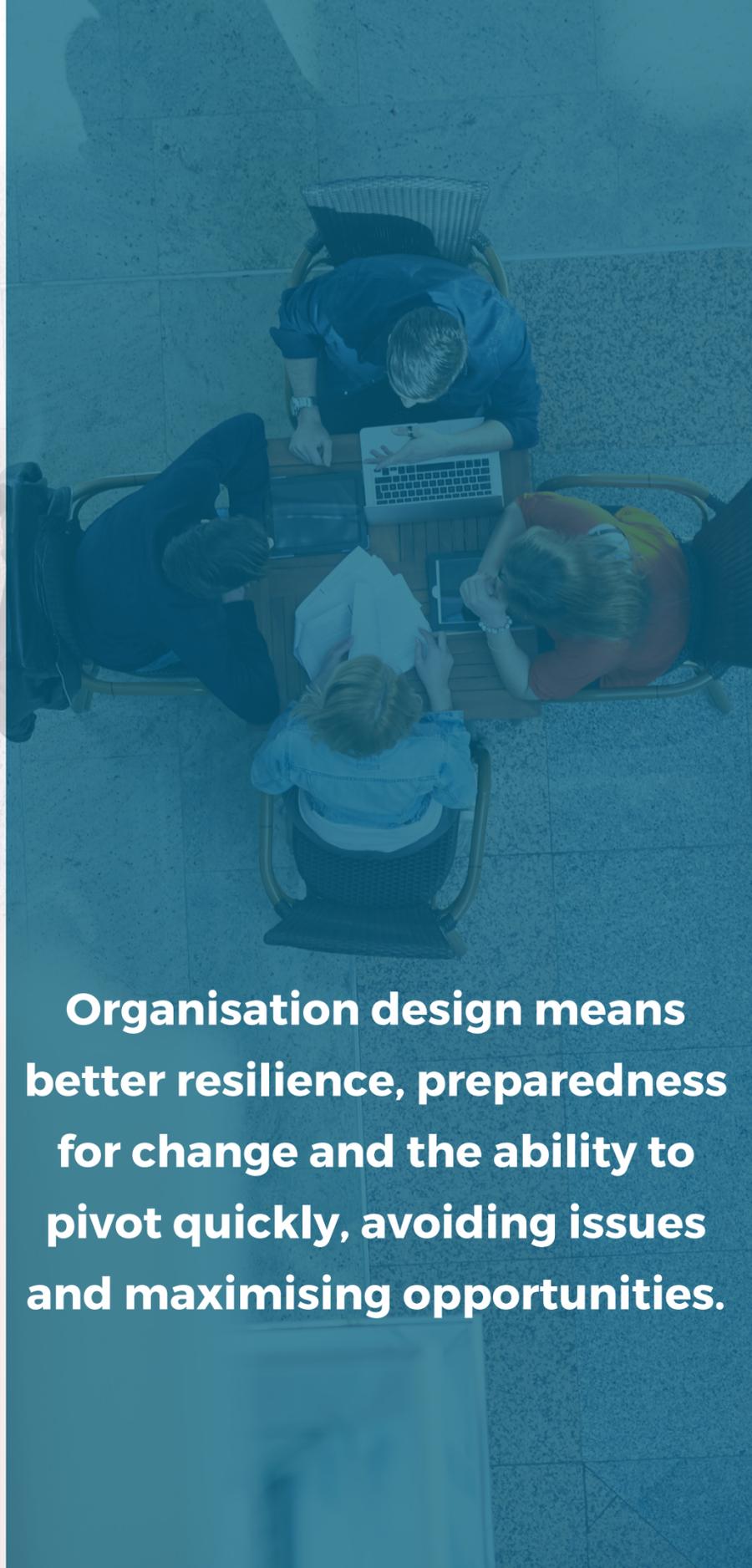
# IS ORGANISATION DESIGN IMPORTANT?

By taking a considered approach and looking at your business 'in the round', as opposed to standalone teams or silos, there are huge benefits to effective organisation design.

Essentially, it gives your people the ability to work more effectively together, and coordinating efforts to achieve common objectives leads to:

- Improved individual performance, greater productivity or personal effectiveness
- Greater efficiency and the subsequent opportunity to invest in growth
- Conscious, collective effort and realising the potential of teams
- Increased profitability through growth and/or efficiency

In the long term, organisations build resilience, are more prepared for change and able to pivot quickly to address issues and maximise opportunities.



**Organisation design means better resilience, preparedness for change and the ability to pivot quickly, avoiding issues and maximising opportunities.**



# ORGANISATION DESIGN: PRIORITIES

While the approach and outcomes of organisational design needs to be tailored to each business, there are four clear priorities that should be consciously addressed. These form the foundation on which you can build your design.

## 1) Purpose

What is the business and the people within it working towards? This must be front and centre when considering any organisational design. Having a clear purpose can help alleviate any anxiety people may have about change. This purpose is relevant to how roles are defined, how people work together and how much guidance is needed.

## 2) Shared values

If values are to be relevant, they need to exist and show in real-life behaviour, not just be written down. The organisational design must support the values of a business and ensure people can live up to them.

For example, if a company value relates to innovation, the organisation must be designed to allow employees to be creative, put forward ideas and to facilitate cross-departmental collaboration.

# ORGANISATION DESIGN: PRIORITIES

## 3) Long-term ambitions

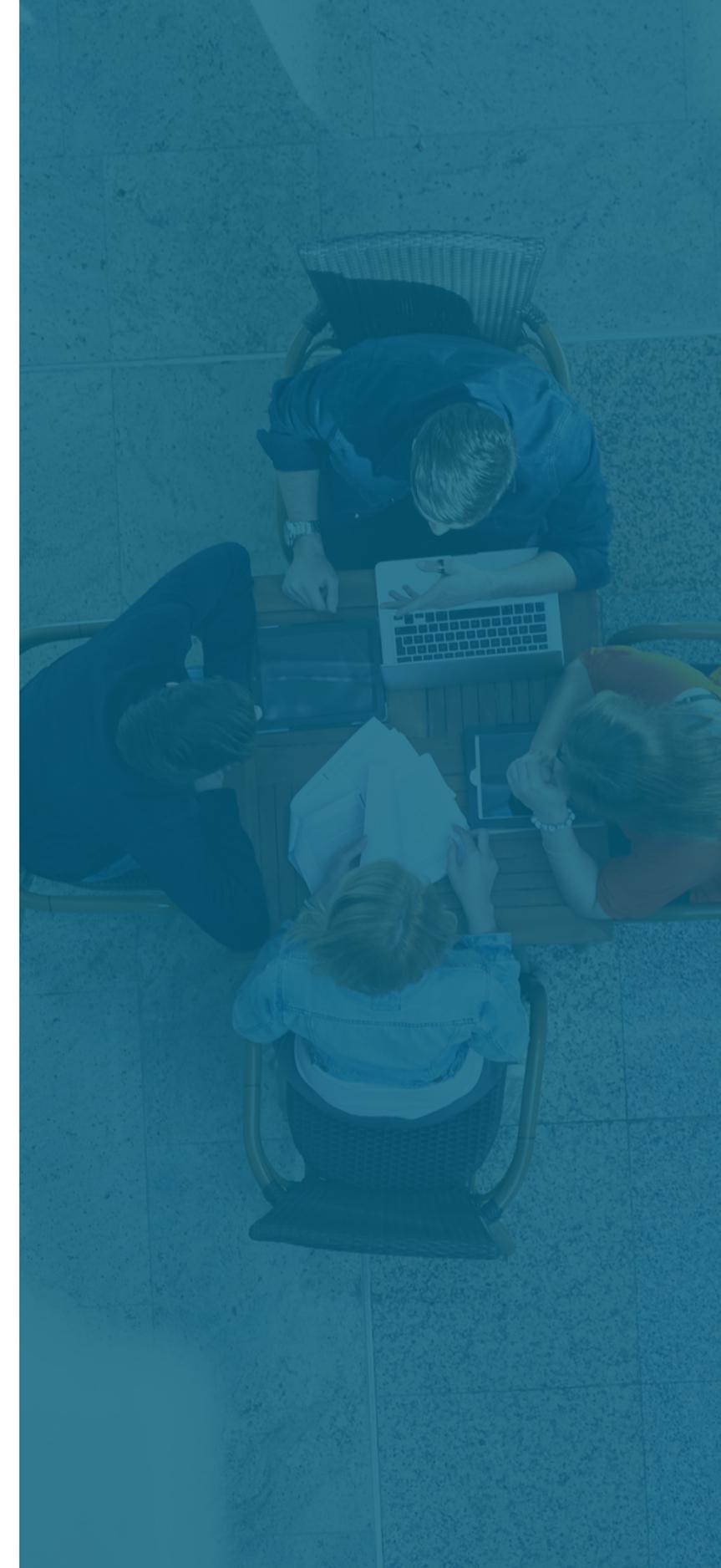
Many organisations may have aspirations that anchor them, which can be more fixed than their short-term goals, and link to their wider purpose and shared values. This could be delivering exceptional customer service or unrivalled value for money. These over-arching ambitions need to underpin an organisation's structural and cultural design.

## 4) Agile plan

It has never been more important for organisations to be flexible and able to respond collectively to new opportunities. There is a careful balance to be made between being equipped to work effectively today while ready to respond to the challenges of tomorrow.

The ability to form, disband and reform high-performing teams to meet specific, strategic priorities relies on a structure that allows 'teaming' based on capabilities, well-managed processes and a culture that embraces change.

**It has never been more important for organisations to be flexible and able to respond collectively to new opportunities.**





# ORGANISATION DESIGN: INFLUENCES

## External influences

Developments in technology have been a huge catalyst for change when it comes to organisational design. These have influenced how and where people are able to and want to work, which in turn affects job design, structures and communication channels. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated these moves with more employees working remotely, leading to further decentralisation in structures and decision making.

## Internal influences

As well as what's happening in the wider world, the culture and type of work within an organisation should also impact organisation design:

- **How likely is it that business priorities will change?** Assessing the magnitude, speed and frequency of change will determine how much flex needs to be built into the structure.
- **How much line management is required?** The amount of active management and supervision that people need to perform effectively is crucial when considering organisational design.
- **How much standardisation is needed?** With increased levels of customisation demanded by customers and employees, consider what works best for each division and individual.

## NOTES

## ORGANISATION DESIGN REFLECTION POINTS

Organisational design must be a continuous and bespoke process that suits the individual requirements of each business. Other important things to remember are:

- Avoid the temptation to chase fads or population solutions.
- Be clear what is required now and what may be needed in the future.
- Encourage all employees to be involved.
- Demonstrate a clear connection with strategic principles.
- Be mindful and deliberate in designing your cultural DNA.
- Designing an organisation is not a one-time project; to stay effective it needs to be continually revisited and altered in line with business needs.
- Be in it for the long term - keep the design of your organisation as a point of importance and you will build resilience for the future.



**Let's talk**

# BLACKMORE FOUR

With over 20 years' experience working with complex organisations and businesses on the cusp of change or rapid growth, we know and understand the need for organisation effectiveness to help you achieve your goals.

**We focus on the future of your business and its ability to grow.**

Through actionable insight, we focus on your future ambitions rather than historical challenges. We help you navigate change and develop leadership and organisational capabilities to improve the overall effectiveness of your business.

**Outstanding Business Performance. Powered by People.**

**E: [CONTACT@BLACKMOREFOUR.CO.UK](mailto:CONTACT@BLACKMOREFOUR.CO.UK)**

**T: 01277 575 604**

**W: [BLACKMOREFOUR.CO.UK](https://BLACKMOREFOUR.CO.UK)**

