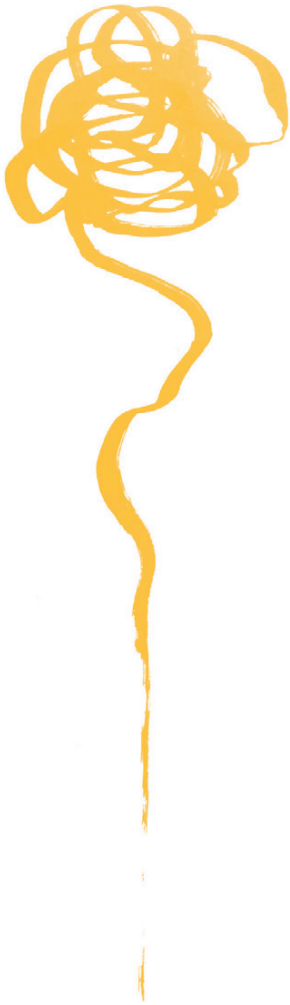
# SIMPLIFYING THE COMPLEX



A Guide to Transition and Activation Planning for Healthcare Construction Projects

YELLOW BRICK CONSULTING, INC.

# SIMPLIFYING THE COMPLEX

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## A Guide to Transition and Activation Planning for Healthcare Construction Projects

BY

YELLOW BRICK CONSULTING, INC.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Kelly Guzman, MN, RN,** is the Founder and President of Yellow Brick Consulting, Inc. with more than 30 years of healthcare experience and has helped pioneer the path for the Transition and Activation Planning industry. Her career started as a pediatric and ER nurse and progressed to hospital administrative positions before finding her passion for Transition and Activation Planning while working at UCLA on the new Ronald Reagan Medical Center. She has worked in the Transition and Activation Planning field for over 15 years and helped activate over 40 new facilities across North America. Kelly has a master's degree focused in Nursing Administration from UCLA.

**Lynn Aguilera, DM/IST, MSNEd, RN, CPN, CPHIMS, PMP,** is a Project Specialist at Yellow Brick with more than 25 years of healthcare industry experience in hospital operations and Transition and Activation Planning. Lynn is the Administrative Director of Strategic Space Planning and Transition Strategy at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford and the lead author of "Using Interdisciplinary Dress Rehearsal Events to Ensure Staff Readiness When Opening a New Healthcare Facility" published by *Health Environments & Research Design Journal* (HERD) in July 2019.

**Jeff Agner, MPH, BA,** is the Director for Transition and Activation Planning at Yellow Brick Consulting and has 14 years of healthcare Transition and Activation Planning experience. Jeff is responsible for the execution of Yellow Brick's strategic initiatives and Transition and Activation Planning process implementation.

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide is a labor of love and has been made possible by a dedicated group of healthcare project managers who wanted to share their collective experience with Transitioning and Activation Planning in healthcare facility projects. Special acknowledgment goes to Lynn Aguilera, Jeff Agner, MaryAlice Agner, Ann Ahmadi, Ali Broders, Erica Dickey, Melissa Johnston, Donna McNeese-Smith, Christina Olivarria, Kim Roberts, Kathy Stevenson, and the entire Yellow Brick Consulting team who have committed their time to share their perspective, experience, and expertise with healthcare leaders.

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO OPEN YOUR HEALTHCARE FACILITY

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

*Simplifying the Complex: A Guide to Transition and Activation Planning for Healthcare Construction Projects* was written to provide the reader with an overview of the fundamentals of the Transition and Activation Planning process. We started with a blank canvas, a love for healthcare, a passion for project work, and a commitment to finding best practices for Transition and Activation Planning for new healthcare facilities. Our team has worked in healthcare for more than 30 years and in the Transition and Activation Planning field for more than 15 years.

In our experience with Transition and Activation Planning projects of all sizes and scopes, we find that many healthcare leaders do not have the experience or internal expertise to lead and manage a Transition and Activation Planning project. While the Transition and Activation of a unit or a few departments could be absorbed into a department leader's day-to-day responsibilities, the Transition and Activation of a new tower or facility requires dedicated resources and an experienced team to guide these efforts. This guide provides the framework needed to navigate a Transition and Activation project, with a roadmap and tools to plan and implement a project of any size.

The transition to a new facility or department is not as simple as switching the lights off in one facility and turning them on in

another. Hospitals operate 24/7 and do not have the ability to stop operations or patient care, in order to move into a new facility. A project of this complexity calls for an experienced team that possesses industry knowledge and can share tools and best practices. The right team is an important part of the foundation for an organization's successful journey in the Transition and Activation of a new facility.

In our industry we frequently hear concerns such as, "I don't know what I don't know" and "I've never done something like this before. Where do I begin?"

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

You may be reading this guide because you are leading a Transition and Activation Planning project and need a resource to guide you through the process, or as an assignment for school or work.

This guide was developed to use as a resource throughout your Transition and Activation Planning journey. Each chapter can be read independently, or as part of the overall guide. This introduction will outline how to navigate through this guide and the subsequent chapters and tips to get the best use from each chapter.

## CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

The chapters are organized using the following format:

- Chapter Objectives
- Introduction of the Subject
- Content
- Summary of Key Points

## MARGIN ASSISTS

The following icons are used throughout the guide to assist with learning and referencing the content:

**Definition** – Explanation of a term or concept

**Key point** – Important concept

**Tool** – Aid to organize or manage work

**Sample** – Model to help understand the concept

**Principle** – Foundation of a system



**High risk** – Hot topics or critical issues

**Reminder** – Provides context to the subject

## ESTABLISHING A TRANSITION AND ACTIVATION PLANNING BASELINE

This guide will provide recommendations for a Transition and Activation Planning framework that is scalable to a project of any size. In an effort to provide context and a standard throughout the guide, the recommendations are based on the following criteria:

- 150–200-bed community hospital
- All services and patients moving to the new facility
- 24-month time frame

The Transition and Activation Planning framework, processes, and recommendations are scalable and have been used on projects of all sizes, including critical access hospitals, large academic

medical centers, and ambulatory centers. The recommendations in this guide are based on the 150–200-bed community hospital described earlier; therefore, when implementing the tools, an evaluation should be complete to ensure the content, level of detail, participants, and schedule are appropriate for the given project. Not all tools are applicable or required for every project, so it is important to assess and apply what makes practical sense for your project and organization. A larger and more complex project will require additional time, effort, and resources, and the planning efforts should be adjusted accordingly.

## Why This Is Important

 Capital projects are strategic initiatives that are high-risk and problem-prone due to the various moving pieces and the nature of construction projects. Much thought is put into the design and construction process and the required resources (hard costs) to manage them. Equal attention and resources are needed for the Transition and Activation Planning of the building (soft costs). The management of a healthcare construction project presents unique challenges. These projects include the building of facilities that oftentimes cannot stop operations to transition and move to a new facility. Developing and implementing detailed plans for these projects must account for parallel operations with shared staff and contingency plans for high-risk situations during the move.

Establishing a consistent process is critical to the success of any project or workstream. A solid framework will help the team responsible for managing the Transition and Activation Planning project to explain, predict, and plan the work required to implement the Transition and Activation Planning workplan. This guide will provide the process and framework needed to manage the Transition and Activation of a new healthcare facility.

## Defining Transition and Activation Planning

Definitions are found throughout the guide and in the glossary.

 **Transition and Activation Planning** is the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating the physical (Building

Readiness) and Human Resource (People Readiness) components that support the opening of a new clinical space or building. The plan supports the organization's goal of taking the building from design and construction to a live and operational facility.

## Transition and Activation Planning Framework

Our team has developed a Transition and Activation Planning framework using principles from the Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK) and the nursing model of "Assess, Plan, Implement, and Evaluate." Together, these methods have proven to be successful approaches when developing a Transition and Activation plan and can be scaled to support projects of all sizes. By developing a framework with recommended timelines, resources, and outputs, the owner has a consistent method to manage the process.

Some unique characteristics in the development of the framework for the Transition and Activation Plan include the following assumptions:

- The responsibility for the leadership and the oversight of the Transition and Activation Planning efforts are commonly delegated to the Chief Operating Officer or the Vice President of Facilities and Design.
- The work associated with the Transition and Activation Planning is typically in addition to their already busy schedule and workload.
- Not all hospital leaders are trained or skilled in project management.
- Missing a deadline in a major capital project causes significant financial impacts to the organization.
- An easy-to-use guide with a roadmap and plan to implement and manage a Transition and Activation project is essential.

These assumptions are the basis in the development of the framework and the recommendations presented in this guide and should be considered when developing the overall project approach, a timeline, and the resources required to manage a project.

## Transition and Activation Planning: Where Does It Fit in on the New Facility Project Life Cycle?

Understanding the continuum of a new facility capital project and its life cycle are important to the understanding of the scope and resources required for a Transition and Activation Planning project. Some Transition and Activation Planning activities begin during the Planning Phase of a major capital project. The traditional architectural and construction phases and their relationship to Transition and Activation Planning activities are highlighted in the schematic below (Fig. 1).

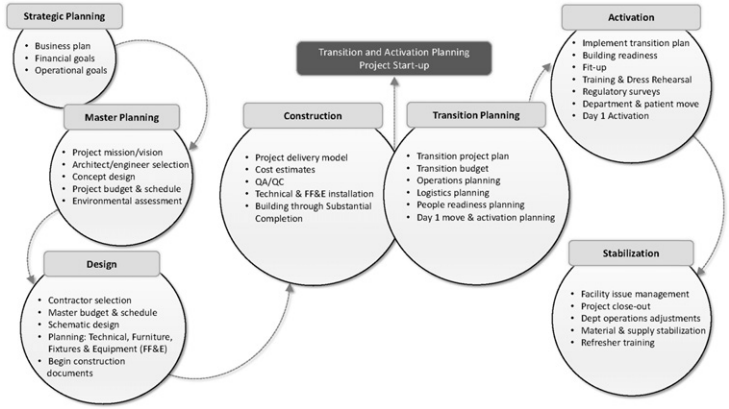


**Fig. 1. New facility project life cycle.**

## The Planning Phase: Strategic Planning and Master Planning

This phase of the project can occur anywhere from 3 to 10 years before Day 1 Activation in the new facility. It includes the development of the strategic plan, master plan, environmental assessment, and the business analysis. The planning phase focuses on understanding the needs and goals of the new facility project. This phase includes meetings with the board of directors, senior facility leadership, architect, and community representatives.

"It's hard to plan for the next 40–50 years using today's mindset!" Richard Azar, Chief Operating Officer, UCLA Medical Center

## The Design Phase

During this phase, the architects complete the schematic design concept and the design development documents. Negotiations occur to finalize space validation for program management and operational needs. The building is designed based on national and state guidelines and project requirements that were developed during the planning phase. This phase includes meetings with senior leadership and key stakeholders to ensure requirements are understood, prioritized, and delegated to the appropriate resources.

## The Construction Phase

During the construction phase, the facility engages a contractor who along with subcontractors will build the new facility according to the architectural plans and requirements. At this time the procurement process for equipment, furniture, IT systems, and various consultants such as the Transition and Activation planners are completed. This phase includes regular meetings with the Owner, Architect, and Construction (OAC) team and senior leadership to obtain updates about project estimates, including schedule, cost, and resources required.

The construction phase will vary based on the construction manager, the construction crew, the weather, and regulatory issues.

## The Transition Planning Phase

This phase occurs in parallel with the construction of the new facility. It includes engaging stakeholders to plan and validate

facility readiness, people readiness, and documentation readiness for the new facility. This phase begins approximately two years before Day 1 Activation. Outputs of the Transition Phase include facility resource identification, development of the Transition and Activation Budget, Transition and Activation Planning timeline and schedule, new operational plans and workflows, equipment and system procurement, orientation and training plan, fit-up plan, communication plan, regulatory plan, and move plan. This phase also involves regular meetings with the construction project team and leaders from within the organization.

The Transition Phase begins approximately two years before Day 1 Activation. The timeline is adjusted based on scope and complexity.

## The Activation Phase

During the Activation Phase the focus changes from "planning" to "doing." This phase begins six to eight months before the move and activation and is where the building is transformed from a construction project to a live, interactive healthcare facility. This phase actively engages the end-users in the implementation and execution of the various plans developed during the Transition Phase. There is a ramp-up period that involves careful logistics planning to ensure that the appropriate people have access to the building at the right time and that the right resources are available to complete this work. This is the busiest time of the project for the owner and requires additional, dedicated full-time resources to support the activation of the new facility.

The Activation Phase is six to eight months before the move and is the busiest time for the internal hospital team as they transform the building into a live hospital. Full-time resources are required to support Day 1 Activation.

### The Stabilization Phase

 This phase includes the immediate postmove activities and lasts three to six months. The facility focuses on stabilizing ongoing operating procedures, refresh and focused orientation and training, facility issue management, and project closeout. The facility is fully operational, the construction project team closes out the project, and the owner is responsible for day-to-day operations.

## OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER CONTENT

**Chapter 1: Project Kickoff and Getting Started**
**by Kelly Guzman, MN, RN, LBBP**
This chapter focuses on the components and resources required for a successful project kickoff.

**Chapter 2: Tools for Success**
**by Kelly Guzman, MN, RN, LBBP and Christina Olivarria, MSPM, LBBP**
This chapter provides an overview of tools for consideration for the project management of a Transition and Activation Planning project.

**Chapter 3: New Facility Transition Budget Planning**
**by Jeff Agner, MPH, LBBP**
This chapter describes the process for developing a Transition and Activation Budget. It includes the categorization of typical transition costs that are not included in the project budget, capital budget, or operations budget.

**Chapter 4: Building Readiness**
**by Kathy Stevenson, BSN, RN, LBBP**
This chapter details the critical importance of being prepared for building turnover and how to get the building ready for Day 1 Activation.

**Chapter 5: People Readiness**
**by Lynn Aguilera DM/IST, MSNEd, RN, CPN, PMP**
This chapter reviews the human element of Transition and Activation Planning. It describes the required components to prepare the teams to work in their new environment. This includes culture, change management, team structure, workflow planning, and orientation and training.

**Chapter 6: Reflections and Conclusions**
**by Kelly Guzman, MN, RN, LBBP**
This chapter proposes additional Transition and Activation–related activities for consideration when activating a new facility.

# 1

# PROJECT KICKOFF AND GETTING STARTED

**Upon completion of this chapter, the reader will be able to:**

- Describe the essential deliverables needed to kick off a project
- Describe the components of a typical timeline
- List common Transition and Activation Planning goals
- Describe the governance and committee structure
- List the components of a committee charter
- Name the major categories for a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) budget
- List the typical components in a communication plan
- Explain the purpose and use of a Decisions Document
- Review common metrics that should be included on a project dashboard

## INTRODUCTION

*The beginning is the most important part of the work.*
(Plato, The Republic)

Starting off on the right path with a clear plan is the first step to ensuring a successful project. When developing the plan, the Transition and Activation Lead should include project-specific information including the scope of work, goals, and roles and responsibilities for each team member. In our experience, having a dedicated Transition and Activation project manager responsible for the management and oversight of the project is critical to ensuring that the project remains on track. This chapter will provide an overview of the elements and deliverables required to get you started.

## GETTING STARTED: WHERE TO BEGIN

### Step 1: Transition and Activation Planning Project Assessment

Every project is unique in scope and complexity. Each facility's organizational culture is unique, so the Transition and Activation Plan should be customized to best suit the needs of the organization and project scope. It is critical to align the project objectives, priorities, and requirements with the culture to ensure success. Use past experiences of successful implementation of change or managing projects in the organization and apply them to the Transition and Activation Planning process. Consider reviewing Lessons Learned documents and historical information within the organization and consulting with outside organizations that have recently completed similar projects to better understand the task at hand.

To begin the Transition and Activation Planning process, a needs assessment should be conducted to validate the organization's goals of the project and the resources required to complete the project. The scope of work, resource requirements, and gaps and risks are identified during the assessment. The information gathered during the assessment will be used to develop a comprehensive project plan. The level of participation in the assessment will vary from project to project based on the organization's culture, so it is important to validate the approach and goals with the designated Project Executive to ensure congruency. Some organizations limit

involvement to senior leaders and the executive team, while others include frontline staff and representatives from the community and family councils.

The assessment process begins with the leadership team and project sponsors to identify the stakeholders and participants who will be included in the department interviews. During this meeting, validate best practices for communication in the organization. For example, clarify with stakeholders whether email, phone, intranet, or in-person meetings is preferred. It is helpful to use familiar language, tools, and processes when working with a new facility.

After meetings with the leadership team, department interviews are conducted with departments that will occupy the new facility and any department impacted as a result of the new facility. The goals of the interviews are to validate the assumptions of the new building and to obtain the following information:

- General building changes: impacts to space, census/volume, fire alarms, security, access, parking
- Department operations: anything that will be new or different in their department
- Human resources: staffing, role or job description changes, shared staff, or other changes
- Equipment/technical: new or different equipment or IT devices and programs
- Other: anything else they are concerned about. (A good question to ask is "What is keeping you up at night related to the operations and move into the new facility?")

**Closed-loop communication** is a **communication** technique used to avoid misunderstandings. Once the sender gives a message, the receiver repeats the message back to confirm understanding.

### Goals and Outputs from the Assessment with Executive Team or Project Sponsor

- Validate scope of work
- Validate work completed to date
- Validate stakeholders
- Validate resources currently available and identify any additional resources needed
- Validate roles and responsibilities of the construction project team, executive team, Transition and Activation Planning Team, and end-users
- Confirm committee structure and governance
- Confirm project timeline and identify project milestones
- Confirm meeting cadence and participant availability and constraints
- Validate Transition and Activation project plan for next 90 days
- Confirm new department placement and "From–To" list
- Identify organizational challenges and competing priorities

### Goals and Outputs from the Assessment with End-Users

- Validate new and different department operations and service line plans
- Validate required changes in workflow as a result of the new design or layout
- Validate new and different equipment and systems
- Confirm any challenges or concerns as a result of the new facility that are "keeping them up at night"
- Validate work completed to date

- Develop task list
- Validate end-user participation availability and constraints
- Validate Transition and Activation project plan for next 90 days

**Use of a Full-Time Transition and Activation Planning Consultant**

The ideal timeline to engage a Transition and Activation Planning consultant will vary based on the project size and scope. To provide a benchmark, this guide is using a 150–200 bed community hospital relocating to a brand-new facility as an example throughout the guide. The recommended timeframe to engage a Transition and Activation planning consultant for a facility of this size is two years prior to Day 1 Activation.

## Step 2: Transition and Activation Planning Timeline

The next step is to develop a comprehensive Transition and Activation Planning timeline. The timeline includes activities based on the construction schedule and owner requested date for Day 1 Activation. Much of the information needed to develop the timeline can be obtained from the construction project plan. The construction project plan includes information such as expected equipment and system installation, room or department completion, and key milestone dates that drive the planning activities. The balance of the information comes from the executive team and organizational goals.

The Transition and Activation Planning timeline should include project milestones and any organizational initiatives that may compete with the Transition and Activation Planning project activities, such as an electronic medical record upgrade or a planned regulatory or accreditation survey. It is important to remember that

most of the stakeholders have full-time jobs in addition to the project work related to the new facility; therefore, all organizational initiatives must be considered when developing the Transition and Activation Planning timeline.

**Typical Transition and Activation Planning Milestones:** Town hall events to share project information with stakeholders, Substantial Completion, Dress Rehearsal events, Certificate of Occupancy, Regulatory Visits, Mock Move, Move Day, Day 1 Activation.

### Considerations and Implications When Developing a Timeline

The Transition and Activation Planning Lead is responsible for creating and managing the Transition and Activation Planning timeline for the facility. The timeline is developed with input from the following groups: construction, facilities, IT/IS, communications, equipment, furniture, supply chain, procurement, operations and support department leaders, regulatory, education and training, HR, EVS, security, and vendors such as Transition and Activation planning consultants, equipment planning consultants, and the move company. It is important to take into consideration the dependencies of each activity and any impacts to the downstream teams when creating a timeline. The building needs to be secured before other activities can be coordinated. For example, EVS must clean the space so furniture can be installed, then IT can place devices on the furniture, and equipment must be delivered and installed so that staff can be trained on the new features. Because this is a construction project, it is wise to add float time or buffers to the timeline to account for any unplanned events that may cause project delays.

## Step 3: The Transition and Activation Planning Team

The Transition and Activation Planning Team are typically leaders from the existing facility who possess strong project management

skills and understand the organization, operations, and culture. The organization should identify an executive sponsor who is actively engaged in the construction project and serves as a champion for the project. A dedicated Transition and Activation Planning Lead will serve as the facilities leader and oversees all aspects of the Transition and Activation Plan.

> If funding or support for a full-time Transition and Activation Planning Lead is not available, then the team should have clear roles and reassignment of existing workload and responsibilities in order to ensure the project receives the attention needed to support the project's success.

Other dedicated team member roles include representatives from clinical departments, facilities, IT, procurement, logistics, finance, education, and project support. Chairs, co-chairs, and members for the various committees will need dedicated time to work on Transition and Activation Planning activities. Typically, these participants are department managers and staff from the departments that are moving.

The following roles should be included for a project with a scope of 150–200 new beds:

- Transition and Activation Planning Lead
- Clinical operations lead
- Facilities lead
- IT/IS lead
- Logistics lead
- Project support

### Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities for a Transition and Activation Planning Lead

Key competencies of a Transition and Activation Planning Lead include excellent communication skills and a proven track record of

working with high-profile people and projects with competing priorities, all while maintaining respect from leadership and their peers.

The role of the internal Transition and Activation Planning Lead is unique. Responsibilities include serving as the liaison and communicator for the project, representing the end-users with the construction team, and ensuring that operations are not impacted as a result of budget cuts or value engineering sessions. It is helpful to have someone with institutional knowledge and legitimate authority who is respected within the organization. Oftentimes the person who is identified to lead the project is an executive who already has a full workload. Bringing in temporary and/or external help during the transition is another option that must be carefully considered. The Transition and Activation Planning Lead must have authority with stakeholders to successfully recommend and implement change (Fig. 1.1).


**Fig. 1.1. Skills, Knowledge, Abilities, and Competencies for Transition and Activation Lead.**

Once team members are identified, a best practice is to validate their roles and responsibilities with the construction project