



An introduction to  
STAGES

shirlaws  
Love Enterprise

## Introduction

### Purpose of this document

This document provides an introduction to the concept of the Shirlaws Stages Framework.

## What is the Stages framework about?

### Context – feelings

The Stages framework outlines the journey of a business, business unit or individual depicting each phase of a typical business cycle. There are different feelings that influence business decisions at each of these stages, e.g. a business in start-up usually describes their experience as **exciting**; whereas a business that is in the fast Growth stage are likely to describe their experience as being quite **frustrating**.

### How to use the Stages framework

The Stages framework can be used in a variety of ways. Generally, the Stages framework:

- 1 Is used as a management tool to determine where a business is by understanding the feelings within the business, and subsequently assessing the need for focus on Platform or Growth issues, i.e. to design business strategy.

**Platform issues include (sample only):**

- Capacity planning and management
- Sales processes
- Client services

**Growth issues include (sample only):**

- Channels
- Product
- Asset systems

- 2 Outlines the journey of a business, depicting each stage of a typical business cycle and the feelings that influence business decisions at each of these stages.
- 3 Provides an anchor of Context for the business to refer to and track its growth and development.
- 4 Helps management teams communicate more effectively:
  - Within teams and across teams/business units
  - Across product lines and across subsidiaries
  - Across management, e.g. CEO to Board.

The assumption is that people are at different Stages on this framework.

- 5 Aids succession planning – internally and externally in terms of timing and planning.

## L1 Concept

### What does Concept mean?

The **Concept** layer refers to the vision and ideas generated. It is the process of introducing an overview – the **why**.

### What does the Stages Concept look like to the client?

The Stages framework is basically a graph that highlights where the business is up to in its current journey and is used when the coach wants to get a client / prospect to move into a feeling space.

### What does the Stages Concept feel like to the client?

- The realisation that the business is in a particular space; therefore, a feeling of some relief due to their understanding of what has happened so far.
- This can show up as, "I'm not the only one."

### What blocks the client from moving to the next layer?

- The client may not want to acknowledge that change needs to occur; nor may they be prepared to actually do something about it.
- Remember: Some people don't want to acknowledge their feelings.

### What expectations need to be set with the client?

- Getting started is crucial!
- As a coach, it is necessary to move through the Stages framework by giving them **an experience**.

### How does a coach introduce the Stages Concept to a client?

If the coach discusses the feelings that arise around implementing a process, then the likelihood of the success of implementation increases dramatically.

## **Stages Concept (continued)**

The Stages framework needs to be described as follows:

- Feelings-based
- No numbers, i.e. %
- No time frames
- All relative to self

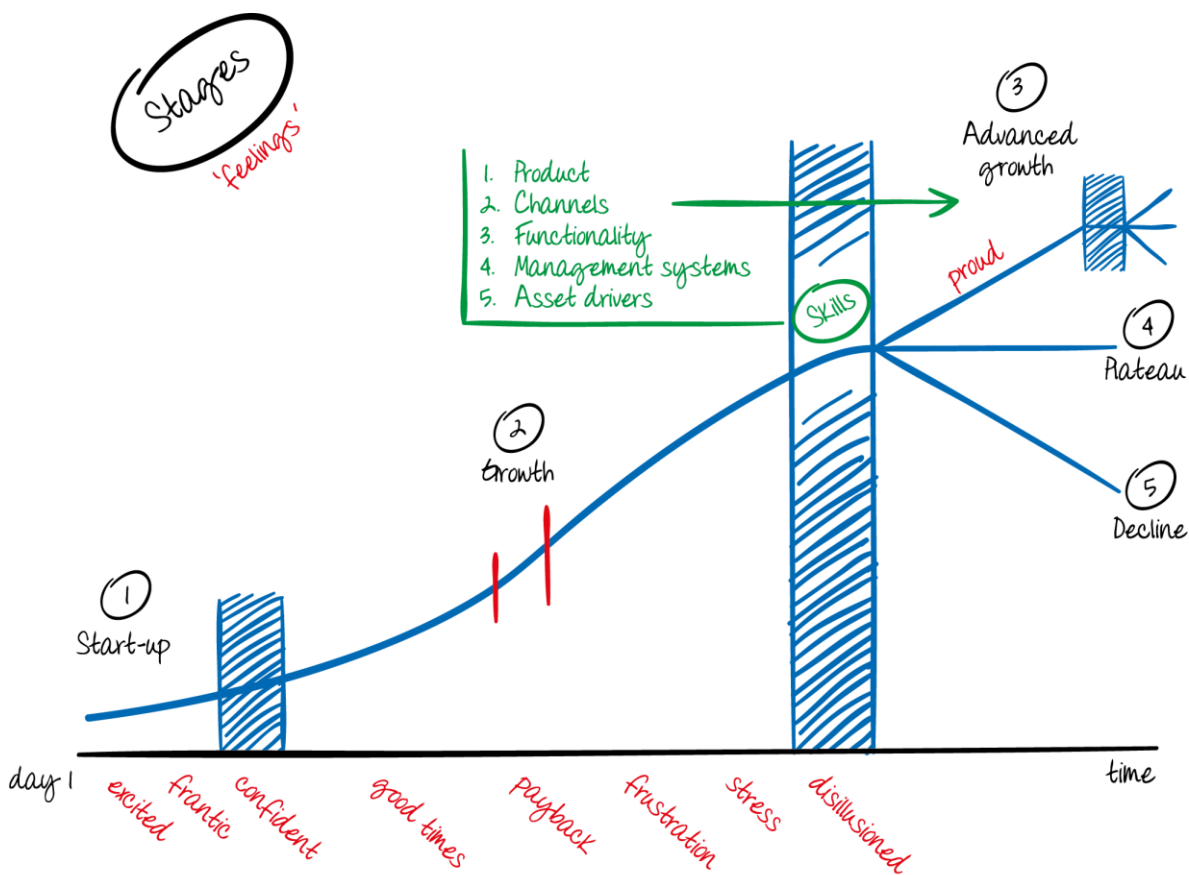
## **Coach activity linking concept to education of Stages**

As the coach it is important to get the client to identify:

- Where the business is at
- Where individuals in the management team are located
- Where departments/units within the business are located on Stages
- Where product lines are located etc.

## What does the Stages Framework look like?

The following is a depiction of the core diagram of the Stages Framework.



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