With the output of the previous process step, decision makers arrive at this final step in the decision-making process having made a commitment to a particular solution, developed preliminary yet deliberate thoughts about a particular transition journey, formulated the first two formal elements of solution-based monitoring and learning control systems, and identified four provisional resource requirements needed to sustain the solution. Once decision makers have made this final commitment to the primary solution in the solution set, then they must begin planning for its implementation and for control of that particular plan.

The implementation plan is an organized set of data focused on targets, resources, and timelines that spell out what is supposed to happen when decision makers put the solution into action. The four sequential stages of developing this implementation plan are identified as follows:

Stage 1: Generate action steps
Stage 2: Aggregate resources
Stage 3: Align resources
Stage 4: Determine plan outcomes

Creating the implementation plan requires a continuous planning process in each of the four stages, and the planning process must
continue even after the initial implementation plan is prepared because no plan is perfect or can take all eventualities into account. The planning taking place in this process step is known as “pre-implementation” planning. Ideally, decision makers will stay involved and follow through with fully developing monitoring and learning control systems for “during-implementation” and “post-implementation” planning. The entire cycle of implementation planning would include all three phases of planning in order to ensure that implementation of the primary solution is successful. Therefore, an ongoing planning process is necessary in preparing the implementation plan, and when appropriate feedback control systems have been developed and are providing negative feedback about the implementation, the original implementation plan may have to be revised.

This revision may come in one of two forms affecting the implementation plan. If the original implementation plan becomes subject to minor modifications or adjustments, then decision makers will have to recalibrate the original implementation plan. If the feedback information reveals that many major negative consequences are occurring in the implementation of the original solution, then decision makers may have to create a different implementation plan for one of the backup solutions. This second planning approach would constitute a renewal.

In addition to their tremendous thinking and planning investment in developing the implementation plan, decision makers must make sure that the implementation of the solution is progressing as planned. To track this progress, they must establish an implementation monitoring control system and an implementation learning control system to compare actual progress with the planned implementation protocol. This means that all four formal steps to establish a complete control system must be planned, and decision makers must gather and analyze continuous feedback information from “during-implementation” and “post-implementation” execution. Thus, decision makers have to stay involved with collecting and analyzing implementation feedback and they must have designed and installed implementation plan monitoring and learning control systems that are fully functional.