

Change Management – Finding a Common Goal

by Barry Tuckwood

Change is easy isn't it? All you need is a great idea coupled with the means to make it happen and a group of people who are eager to assist. OK, maybe the first bit is easy; you've got the great idea – or at least you think you have. Now you need the means - someone else to give you money, time, people. And they have to be amenable to the entire concept, as do all the people who are going to help achieve it, and all the stakeholders who might enable or prevent success.

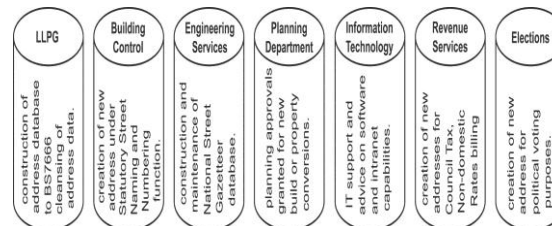
What you need is a common goal, some aspect that everyone can agree on so that they all accept the idea, see the benefits not only to the organisation but more importantly to themselves individually, and can help drive it to success.

Many initiatives founder because of the difficulties in finding that common goal. The initiatives require active participation by key players, and positive support from spectators. There is no room for those who have no energy even to be negative, those whose entire attitude is one of dejection. The real drivers will not have time for mere passengers. Cynics should be few, preferably joining in with the players, able to challenge the approach constructively.

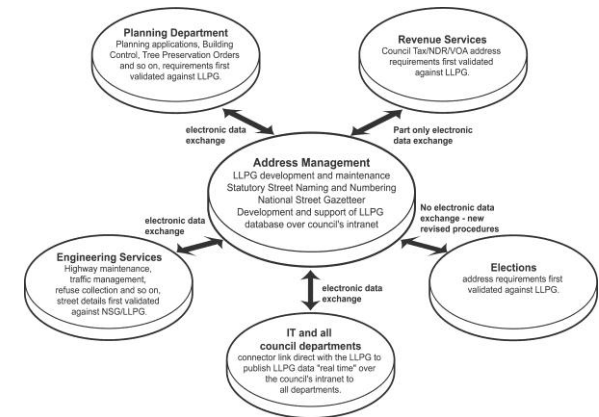
Challenge is good; outright negative cynicism is the breeding ground for disenchantment and failure. An absence of

challenge is bad – complacency leads to acceptance of poor quality. You need to develop descriptions of the project which help to form the group into real players with a common goal.

During the production of the Valuebill Starter Kit third edition we had a good example of finding the common goal from one of the participants in the Experience Sharing Workshops. Recognising that the components of many projects can be described as technical infrastructure, data improvement, new data maintenance processes, and related role changes we were given a case study describing the approach used for the crucial item of change management. This describes the initial structure as seven silos, seven separate groups that did not relate well to each other.



To break down this silo approach it was necessary to find a common goal, in this case recognition that address management was a core aspect of their roles, and could be managed better.



Since all projects require an element of change management, often the most significant and complex aspect of the project, it is worth exploring this at an early stage to ensure that the common goal is properly understood, the stakeholders are all identified, and a positive attitude can prevail. Overall success depends on it.

Diagrams taken from the Case Study prepared by David Heyes, Wigan MBC, provided for the Valuebill Starter Kit April 2005.

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