

facing *the* *future* *with* confidence

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The times are
changing and we
must change with
the times

SOLACE Summit

11-13 October 2011

SOLACE Gold Partners



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During this year's SOLACE Summit one group looked at the issue of transformation in four fairly packed sessions. It covered a lot of ground, not all of which can be captured here. But one of its main outputs was a Chief Executive checklist.

One of the key strengths of our group was that it brought together Chief Executives and Senior Managers from local authorities, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector. As such it brought together people who had attempted to transform their own organisations, as well as helping other transformations through a variety of partnership arrangements.

Here is our collective wisdom that we would give to ANY Chief executive or management team, setting out on a transformational journey

1. You have got to put your best people on the transformation task, no matter how vital they are to where they are already. Don't just use those who are 'spare' for the transformation effort
2. Transformation involves three different things which are often conflated; transforming the purpose of your organisation, transforming the organisation itself and transforming the delivery of the organisation. Be very clear about what it is you're aiming to transform, and address all of three types of transformation.
3. You must have clarity of purpose but you can't have absolute clarity about what your organisation will look like in three years time because change is now a constant. The transformation process is never really complete.
4. You need to communicate transformation, what you are aiming to achieve and why, to everyone it has an impact on, including citizens. There are a million saboteurs for everyone who is a champion.
5. Be bold and daring. Avoid concrete-setting. When using outside organisations, go beyond commissioning for outcomes and formal contracts. Have quarterly meetings as a minimum
6. You must understand the difference between procurement, commissioning and co-production. Understand all the possible models for delivery of services. You cannot leave this to "experts". It is the responsibility of general management to understand the pros and cons of different configurations.
7. Understand your partner's business model and understand your own, and understand the inherent risks in both. There is no such thing as a homogenous local authority or organisation. All relationships demand active management. The relationships you have are important.
8. Make sure all your decisions are focussed on citizens/customers and not on the systems of delivery. Ensure citizens/customers are part of the solution
9. Really understand what risk is and you and your organisation's appetite for risk. Create an environment where it is safe to innovate and work in a new way
10. In local authorities, transformation can come about through incentivisation and empowering citizens to improve their lives and communities.
11. Anchor your people into the vision and plan the business continuity and for the continuity of momentum
12. Do it or don't do it – transformation is not in between. You cannot be a little bit transformational.