



Institute for Public
Service Value

Transforming Public Services:

Workforce reconfiguration for social outcomes

• Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

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1

Introduction

More often than not, public services don't think about the workforce as a critical variable. They know their budgets are being reduced... but they don't think about transforming the ways workers are put together. To start asking questions about workforce configurations could have hugely beneficial effects ... – Ed O'Neil, The Centre for the Health Professions, University of California

In response to growing pressures, governments around the world are re-evaluating how public services are delivered. Urged on by the rising expectations of citizens, by budgetary constraints, workforce shortages and media scrutiny, along with political and operational pressures driving service efficiency, they are reshaping the way public services operate in order to provide greater value for citizens. And they're asking themselves just how effective their current workforce structures really are.

Organizing service delivery around the principle of public value – that is, seeking to improve social outcomes while delivering services in a cost effective manner – can mean taking a radical departure from traditional models of service delivery. By re-configuring these models to create more flexible, service-oriented workforces, government organizations aim to target customer needs as efficiently and effectively as possible. This means ensuring

that the right people are doing the right jobs in the right way to meet citizens' and customers' needs.

Reconfiguring a public service workforce is a huge and complex task. Not surprisingly, it can be messy and disruptive. And it must be done with great care to avoid compromising public good, and public safety, while still managing to achieve the higher performance and improved outcomes that make it a worthwhile undertaking. Despite its importance, however, information and shared learning about how to do it well is still thin on the ground.

This study, by the Accenture Institute for Public Service Value, aims to begin filling this information gap.

Our report starts by setting out a broad definition and describing the context in which workforce reconfiguration might take place. We analyze why and how public services embark upon workforce reconfiguration programs to increase

public service value. The study draws on an extensive set of interviews, a selection of in-depth case studies, a literature review and existing learning from Accenture's own practical experience of helping public and private agencies around the world design and manage successful workforce transformations. We also explore the critical dimensions of workforce reconfiguration and provide some insights into how these are managed in public service organizations.

We have found that successful workforce transformation may be described as a cycle consisting of five key steps. Summarized, these are:

- Step one 'build the vision for change'. This involves establishing that change is needed and, furthermore, that changing aspects of the workforce is the best means by which the organization can meet the needs of its users and communities. This step requires the development of a clear vision of the intended social outcomes. Formulating this outcome-based vision is crucial: it will not only guide all the subsequent stages of the transformation process, but will also serve as a critical lever for obtaining the necessary political sponsorship and buy-in from other important stakeholders.
- Step two 'design the new workforce'. This is the actual development of the new model for the workforce. It will start with a

scoping exercise and the specific definition of the new roles and/or ways of working. It is necessary to clarify the new or amended tasks, assess the skills required to fulfill the new tasks, develop a structure for the new roles and perform a detailed job impact analysis. At this stage, the team leading the transformation should also start to engage with staff and unions, and more broadly with a wider set of stakeholders, to obtain the necessary support for the initiative and help people to appreciate how ways of working within the organization are changing and what the expected public service improvements will be.

- In step three, 'plan the transformation', the team needs to ensure that the right infrastructure is in place to support the planned transformation. They also need to design the appropriate work strands of the change process. Our research shows that these strands typically include: human resources (HR) planning; planning

for consultation with staff and unions; developing public relation strategies; designing a program of broad, ongoing communication with external stakeholders; formulating implementation strategies; and planning for evaluation and review activities.

- Step four, 'implementing the transformation', involves putting in train all the activities planned in steps two and three. This needs careful orchestration, by a skilled and appropriately resourced team. It requires an ongoing dialogue with staff and a program of training and development, so that everyone affected understands the changes being made and how these will affect the way they work. Again, a continuous focus on engaging and communicating with citizens, customers, partner agencies and politicians is essential. All these people need to know why the changes are being made, that is, why ways of working are changing to meet the needs of the community

The methodology in brief

This study involved five stages: a scoping exercise; a literature review; a series of in-depth case studies; qualitative interviews with leading experts in the field; and analysis and reporting.

In the scoping exercise, we undertook an initial review of available literature on workforce transformation. We then held conversations with colleagues in the Accenture consultancy and with selected public service managers who had significant experience of workforce reconfiguration in public services. These scoping activities enabled us to draw up the research questions and the focus for the subsequent research activities.

The second stage saw a more extensive review of published literature and data related to workforce transformation and

change processes within public sector agencies. The literature review helped us to select our case studies for stage three where we studied places where a renewed focus on social outcomes has caused leaders to re-consider the way in which services are delivered and, as a result, to embark on a workforce transformation to improve those services. We examined a number of initiatives and selected three examples, which we studied in depth. These were Empowerment Schools in New York City, Community Police Support Officers in England and Wales and the Shared Services Initiative in Queensland, Australia. Each case study involved a series of interviews and a review of published data.

In stage four, we interviewed a larger number of senior public

service leaders and academics with significant practical or theoretical experience of workforce transformations, in order to obtain a broader picture of the challenges and opportunities that lay before them. We also conducted in-depth interviews with senior staff at Accenture who have direct experience of leading workforce transformations in the public sector. In total, we interviewed 27 people.

Finally, we analyzed the findings from the different stages of the research, and drew this together, with recommendations, to produce this report.

and customers more closely. This is particularly important in situations where the workforce transformation is highly complex or where implementing changes is likely to cause people anxiety and disrupt services.

- Step five, 'evaluate the impact and review the effectiveness of the transformed workforce', entails tracking progress over time and developing an evidence base to show exactly what differences the new ways of working are making. How is the transformed workforce performing in an environment where political directives and customer expectations are constantly changing? How has it altered the way the organization serves its stakeholders? Often, a review of this nature will yield important messages about what can be done in the future to improve further the ways in which the workforce is structured to deliver public service value. Reviews are also important in ensuring that the workforce transformation is not

seen as an end in itself. Publishing the findings will help legitimize the initiative and has a critical part to play in ensuring that changes can be sustained.

2

What is workforce transformation?

'A major role of workforce transformations is making the services more relevant, keeping up with evidence and best practice. From the consumer perspective it is about overcoming the traditional model in which the service decides what it provides, and fundamentally rethinking the approach to reconfigure the workforce to develop a partnership approach with the citizens. To deliver what they actually want and need'. – Michael Hoge, Professor of Psychology, Yale

Workforce transformation involves dramatically changing the structure of an organization's human capital to ensure the right people with the right skills are doing the right job to deliver goods and services as efficiently and effectively as possible. In the public sector, workforce transformation usually follows from an agency shifting its focus so that it can align its service delivery more closely with the improved social outcomes it has identified, resulting in a re-evaluation of who does what, and at what levels, to maximize cost effectiveness and performance.

Transforming the workforce inevitably challenges traditional ways of working and entrenched professional and producer interests, in search of better value for service users and citizens. In doing so, it can re-shape organizations and systems to tackle staff shortages, increase job satisfaction and forge stronger links between policy and practice.

Workforce transformation may involve changing established working relationships, activities and processes, and creating new roles or reconfiguring existing teams, in order to improve services. Often, it requires the reallocation of funding, changes in job specifications and renegotiation of terms and conditions.¹

There are four essential components:

1. Moving tasks up or down a skills ladder to alter the level of professionalization applied to specific tasks
2. Increasing the range of skills of particular groups of workers
3. Changing the skill mix or configuration of teams
4. Creating new jobs with new skills.

Most workforce transformation initiatives are likely to include a mix of all four components.

3

Forces and drivers for change



Figure 1: forces and drivers for transforming workforces

Advances in recent years have created an unprecedented case for change in the ways in which public services work. We are seeing a greater focus on effectiveness, efficiency and accountability and far more demanding citizens who expect an increasingly high level of service delivery, comparable to what they get from the private sector. At the same time, in a climate of budgetary pressures and, in the drive for greater efficiency, politicians and regulatory bodies are expecting government organizations to do more for less.

Managers of public services are under pressure to adopt reforms in order to realize the benefits that new processes, systems and technologies can bring. To respond to these complex and changing demands and deliver public service value, government organizations are increasingly considering the ways in which their workforces are configured. Designing new ways of working is becoming a key element of public service reform.

The case for workforce transformation may arise through either an informal, bottom-up response to emerging issues – such as workforce shortages or citizens' demands – or through top-down directives in the form of legislative mandates. In the sections that follow, we briefly describe the more powerful drivers of change, both inside and outside public service organizations.


Community expectations and activism

Citizens' expectations of their government is a primary impetus for public service improvement. Supported by the media and advocacy groups, individuals and communities – particularly in major industrialized nations – are becoming more vocal about their needs and are demanding targeted, personalized, responsive and efficient public services. At the same time, increasingly diverse communities and ageing populations and, in some

countries, a growing gap between the rich and the poor are all playing their part in producing complex pressures on public service leaders who have to balance many different needs and expectations as they set priorities to deliver public service value.

Economic and political changes

Governments and policy makers consistently put pressure on their public managers to improve service quality and efficiency at the same time: that is, to do more, for less. In their quest for public service reform, and prompted by ever greater levels of scrutiny from the media and advocacy groups, politicians increasingly have to re-evaluate different models of service delivery and funding arrangements. Furthermore, changes in demographics that are resulting in an ageing population and, with this, a lower level of tax-generated funds for public services, places significant restrictions on budgets.



'We have over-professionalized the workforce, leading to a gap that needs to be filled by skilled workers without the full training of the professionalized workforce'. Judy Hargadon, Chief Executive, School Food Trust

In this push for more effective and efficient public services, public service organizations now find they need to respond to more frequent changes in political directives and policy changes, and to be more flexible in the way they operate so that they can do so quickly.

Workforce transformation offers a powerful response to the need to redefine public services in the context of scarce resources. A comprehensive workforce transformation within public services keeps outcomes at the core of the process, and reconsiders how the workforce should be structured to improve outcomes for customer care and community well-being in a cost effective manner.

Changes in human resources and organizations

With the drive for efficiency and flexibility comes a pressure to reassess the suitability of existing ways of working. Traditional bureaucracies and

hierarchical forms of governance are being challenged and new, innovative ways of delivering services sought – both within individual organizations and in collaborative ventures with other public service organizations, voluntary sector agencies and private businesses. That this coincides with changing demographics – again, an ageing workforce is leading to employee shortages and growing competition for skilled staff – only creates a stronger pressure to re-assess ways of working.

As public service organizations evolve, some sections of their workforces have moved up the skill ladder and become 'over-professionalized'. Government organizations may now find they are working in the face of significant pressure from professional groups who – over time – have formed powerful, and sometimes rigid, alliances. Over-professionalization has at times caused a 'skills gap' around the delivery of general tasks, while shifts in workforce skills have led to recruitment 'bottlenecks'

and a reduced recruitment base for new roles. Both of these need to be addressed if public service value is to be maximized.

'We have over-professionalized the workforce, leading to a gap that needs to be filled by skilled workers without the full training of the professionalized workforce'. Judy Hargadon, Chief Executive, School Food Trust, UK

Changing how public services are delivered by reconfiguring the workforce can offer a real solution to these problems. In assessing the tasks required to deliver effective public services, and matching staff who have appropriate skills to each task, it is possible to make the workforce more streamlined and efficient, while skills gaps and 'bottlenecks' can be identified and addressed in an appropriate, targeted manner. This skills audit – at the 'design the new workforce' stage – also provides an avenue for targeting over-professionalization and skills



gaps by identifying what skills are required for specific roles and tailoring the workforce accordingly.

Technology

Over the past two decades, a technological revolution has dramatically changed the way we live and work. For government organizations, making the most out of the opportunities that new technologies offer invariably leads to changes in the skills and the number of people required for specific tasks, as some tasks are automated and others combined. A force for change not to be underestimated, technology enables governments to eliminate the duplicated effort that is prevalent in many public service delivery models today, and thereby to reform the way services are delivered. Technology also allows governments to align their services more closely with customer demand; in many cases, this is leading to different patterns of use as customers become increasingly IT-literate and self-sufficient.

4

Insights into practice: three stories of how workforces have been transformed to improve social outcomes

Governments and public services worldwide have developed a variety of different responses to the growing challenges they face. Alongside other types of reform, we are now seeing more agencies embark on workforce transformation programs as a way in which to improve performance and meet the needs of users and citizens more appropriately.

From our initial research into the types of workforce transformations taking place across public services, we selected three case studies from which to explore further how workforce reconfiguration creates public value. These case studies – Empowerment Schools in New York City; Police Community Support Officers in England and Wales; and the Shared Services Initiative in Queensland, Australia – are summarized below and described more fully in the appendix.

Preparing kids for college and life: empowerment schools in New York City

As part of a series of radical reforms aimed at improving the city's underperforming public school system, New York City (NYC) Mayor Michael Bloomberg launched the Empowerment Schools Initiative in 2004. Designed to improve school performance and student experience by removing bureaucracy and hierarchies in the school system and broadening the role of principals, the initiative transfers to the local level responsibility and a greater level of accountability for student achievement.

In exchange for this greater autonomy, principals of empowerment schools commit themselves to improving education outcomes including student performance, student progress, the school environment and the performance of the school as a whole.

Historically, the NYC public school system has been characterized by bureaucratic inefficiencies, a diffuse chain of accountability, and high turnover. Within the existing system, resources were often diverted away from schools and power was maintained at the level of the Department of Education, creating a frustrating environment for principals who felt powerless to institute real change at a local level. Against this backdrop, Mayor Bloomberg ran his 2001 electoral campaign on a platform of school reform with specific focus on improved accountability for student results.

Once in office, Bloomberg worked with the Chancellor of Education to develop a new way of working. Principals would be given more power to institute change in their schools: the intention would be to reduce bureaucracy and shift the focus back onto working with students to develop the skills required in a competitive world. At every stage, Bloomberg has been at the forefront of the transformation, championing the initiative, committing and maintaining long term funding and support structures, eliminating regulatory barriers, and accepting some degree of public and political criticism while celebrating improved results.

Reforming the workforce in empowerment schools has required a real change of culture and organizational structure within the school system, affecting students, principals, school staff and teachers, as well as the Department of Education and the school boards. The traditional role of the principal

– acting as an intermediary between the school and the Department of Education and ensuring compliance with rules and regulations at federal, state and district level – has been replaced by one that has increased responsibility for driving the educational performance of the school, and gives greater weight to an entrepreneurial spirit. It has required significant development and support for principals, including new skills training and enhanced information systems.

Preliminary analyses of the Empowerment Schools Initiative show improvements in student results in terms of graduation rates, attendance, test scores and college acceptance. Initially piloted in 29 schools, the initiative has now been rolled out across the city.

Creating safer neighborhoods: police community support officers in England and Wales

Over the past five years policing in England and Wales has changed dramatically. The introduction of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in 2002 has offered a targeted, cost-effective way of reducing people's fear of crime and creating safer neighborhoods.

The initiative came as a direct response to a growing challenge: citizens were becoming increasingly concerned about crime levels, even though actual crime levels had in fact been falling steadily. This disparity between actual crime levels and people's perceptions alarmed the police service in England and Wales, which was under constant pressure by politicians, media and citizens to improve public safety in communities. It is well documented that more officers on foot patrol improves the public's perception of safety. Yet, with pressures on public funds and a limited recruitment base of police officers, it was felt that moving more police officers to streets patrols would be inefficient and divert resources from other core policing functions.

The PCSO role was developed as a solution to this problem. It offered a new policing capability and also addressed a skills gap in police forces in England and Wales. PCSOs have fewer powers than fully warranted police officers – the role is intended to focus specifically on improved neighborhood safety – but fill many front-line roles in policing, primarily by mounting foot patrols on the street where they engage with the community and deal with low level incidents before they become serious crimes. Their presence in neighborhoods has been an important factor in providing reassurance to local communities and is, as such, a crucial part of the UK government's drive to crack down on antisocial behavior and nuisance. Because of their more limited areas of responsibility, they are also a less expensive resource than fully trained police officers.

The PCSO program in England and Wales has been widely regarded as a success by political parties, the

established police service and citizens alike. Through changing their ways of working and introducing PCSOs, the police service has successfully focused on reducing fear of crime and creating safer communities. A critical success factor has been the targeted and highly visible information campaigns which have both informed the public about the efforts being made to create safer neighborhoods and built a greater understanding of the role of PCSOs. The initiative has also been widely publicized in a drive to recruit PCSOs from diverse backgrounds.

With the aim of having 16,000 PCSOs in post by 2008, the success of the program has been – and continues to be – dependent on support from a broad range of stakeholders, including politicians, the existing policing staff, partner agencies and citizens. To build awareness and continued support, it has been necessary to demonstrate successes on an ongoing basis and identify what works and what could be improved.

The question 'how do you know you are making a difference?' remains central for decision makers and managers at all levels in the system as the roll out of the program continues. Evaluating the impact on crime and disorder of a single intervention is notoriously complex, and measuring the early impact of PCSOs is challenging by any standards. Evidence is being drawn from both qualitative and quantitative sources. At local level, forces are encouraged continually to consult with citizens, partners and businesses and identify examples of good practice and evidence of impact. This information is collected and disseminated nationally to develop learning and build ongoing support to ensure the initiative is sustained. Even at this early stage, however, a national evaluation has found evidence that community residents and businesses feel that PCSOs make a real impact in their areas, especially in dealing with youth disorder.

Optimizing efficiency and effectiveness through co-operation: shared services in Queensland

In 2003 the government of Queensland, Australia, embarked on its Shared Services Initiative, a workforce transformation program in which the back office functions of 26 government departments were combined. This was a huge undertaking, involving highly political transactions and affecting a large number of staff and services, including HR services, payroll systems, financial systems and document services. Because it affected so many people, and to avoid the risk of political fall-out, each stage of the program had to be designed and coordinated with care and a clear sense of the public value being sought.

Like many other governments, Queensland had its departments organized as 'stand-alone' units, each of which had its own budget, and IT, procurement and corporate services. It was becoming clear that something needed to be done to reduce a lot of duplicated effort, realize cost and efficiency savings and increase transparency and accountability. Combining back office functions held the promise of making large savings that could be reinvested in services to the public.

A Shared Services Agency (SSA) was established to oversee the planning, design and implementation of the project. A team from one part of the SSA, the Workforce and Communications work stream, developed a framework that would be carried out by each department's own implementation team. The main components of the framework were workforce planning, employee relations, workload management, vacancy management, training and development and workforce placement. The work of developing

a comprehensive design for each of these elements identified what jobs or tasks should be realigned, and who would be affected and how. Using this as a base, the team developed effective and transparent communication and training plans with specific timelines. These, in turn, provided a picture of the new workforce, feeding into a vacancy planning tool to identify where and when gaps in the workforce were likely to appear.

Following this framework allowed the different departments to plan and implement changes in a consistent manner. This was especially important given the impact on staff the changes would have and the potential for resistance they might raise. Staff in all departments needed to understand how the shared services would affect on them, their work and their daily routines.

The initiative has shown early benefits, returning finances to the government for reinvestment to

front-line services and improving government transparency and accountability while also providing a solution to looming workforce shortages facing the Queensland government.

5

Embarking upon successful change: Five Steps to Successful Workforce Transformation

'The most general lesson to be learned from the more successful cases is that the change process goes through a series of phases that, in total, usually require a considerable length of time. Skipping steps creates only the illusion of speed and never produces a satisfying result.'

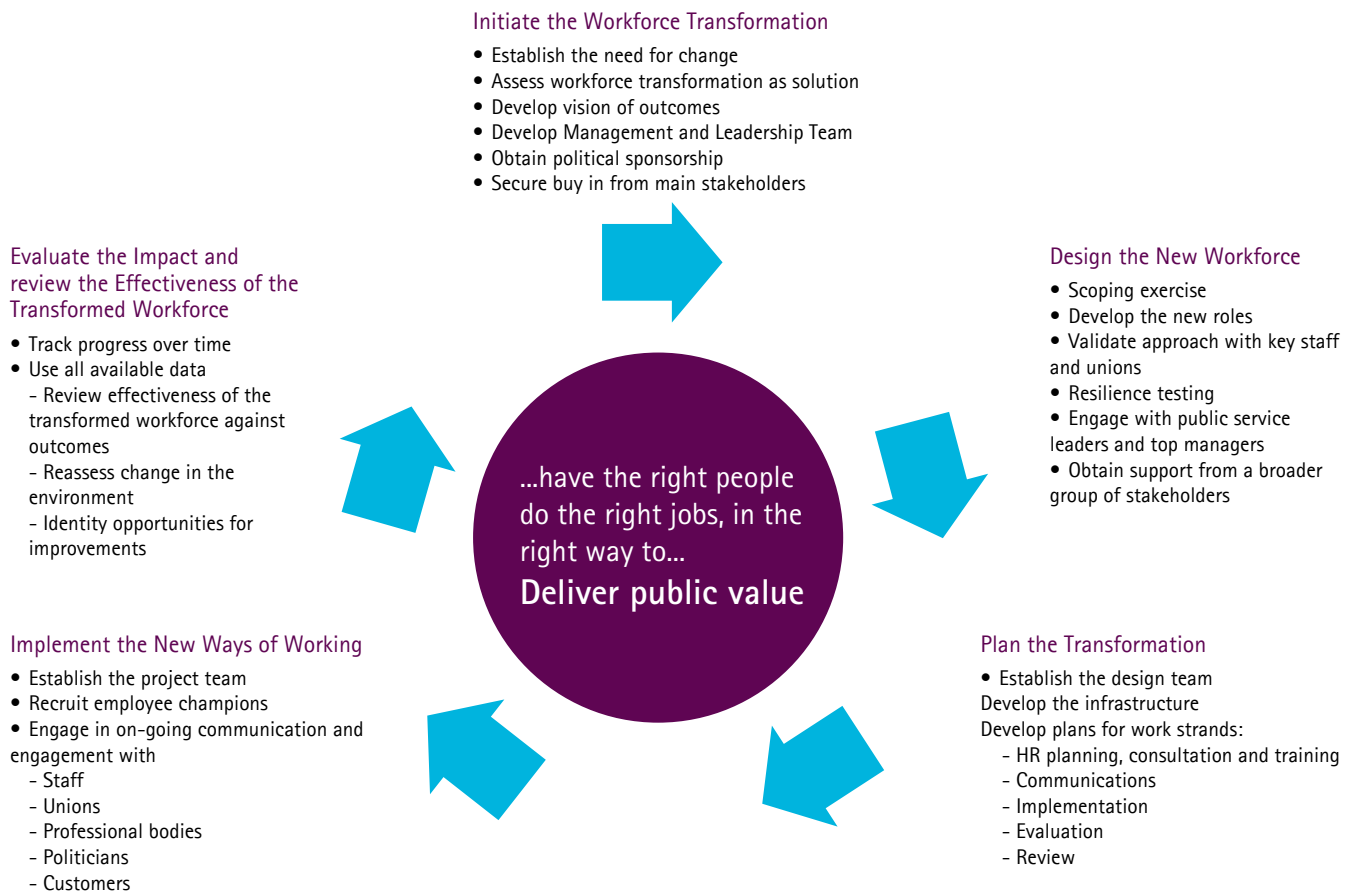


Figure 2. The Five Steps of Workforce Transformation

Workforce transformation is a tremendous undertaking, but has great potential to improve social outcomes. Indeed, a focus on improved social outcomes should always be at the core of the transformation: it is about having the right people do the right jobs in the right ways to deliver public service value. Nevertheless, whether a transformation succeeds will depend on how it is designed, communicated, implemented and evaluated. Although there is no single way of managing workforce transformations effectively and efficiently, we know that – especially in the case of large-scale workforce transformation initiatives – success requires a specific, carefully designed and explicitly planned program of change.

As the demands on public services continue to grow and change over time so does the need for nimble, flexible organizations that respond to the constantly changing demands and expectations of stakeholders.

Within this context, workforce transformation is an ongoing process of change. Successful workforce transformation initiatives therefore entail cyclical, iterative efforts, with critical and constant assessments to drive refinements in change planning, design and implementation throughout.

Through our research, we have identified five crucial steps, and specific related actions, that will be needed to manage the process successfully. In this section, we set out these steps, consider the challenges and give examples of how the process should be managed, based on real experience drawn from our case studies, literature review and interviews. The 'five steps model' provides the building blocks of a comprehensive workforce reconfiguration program while offering a powerful strategy for mitigating risks. The specific actions are highly interrelated but also need to be considered as discrete areas for attention. Otherwise, the process can

become muddled and crucial tasks can be missed.

Step One:

Build the vision for change

To guide step one, leaders of workforce transformations should approach the visioning stage by first asking themselves these questions:

- Where are the opportunities to improve how the organization can respond better to the needs and expectations of policy makers, citizens and communities? What are the desired outcomes? What is the expected public value?
- Is reconfiguring workforces the appropriate means by which

to change the organization to deliver improved public value?

- How do we engage with key stakeholders to ensure early buy-in and 'sign off' the business case?
- Have we put in place a multi-level, appropriately resourced and skilled management and leadership team to take forward the transformation program?

Our research reveals that workforce reconfiguration programs can be initiated from different levels in the system. Sometimes – such as in the Empowerment Schools Initiative in New York City – the change is driven from the top in the form of political directives. At other times – such as with the introduction of PCSOs in England and Wales – the change is a result of innovation in delivery organizations where, because they have been working closely with communities, public service managers see the need to change ways of working, the better to respond to the needs of their users and citizens.

A range of factors, too, can prompt the need for change. In some cases, workforce transformations have been a means by which to resolve a crisis, such as imminent staff shortages, or a reforming initiative aimed at turning around poor performance. In other cases, technological developments or changes in customer and citizen expectations can provide

the trigger. In all of the cases we reviewed, however, an identified need to improve public service value has been at the forefront of the initiative.

Whilst it isn't necessary – and is often not possible – to have a full picture of the nature of the proposed changes at this early stage, the leadership team initiating change will need a clear grasp of why the current ways of working are not producing the desired outcomes most effectively or efficiently. In identifying areas for improvement within the existing workforce structure, the team needs to come up with a sound argument about which problems should be addressed and where the opportunities for change lie. Occasionally, innovative leaders may have a broad vision early on of the type of workforce reconfiguration that they think would address the problems. At other times, though, a long process of identifying possible solutions will be needed.

Whether the result of a creative idea or a carefully constructed solution, however, the initiating leaders must ensure that the creation of public value is the transformation's central driving force. Without a clear and outcome-based vision, it is likely that the suggested workforce transformation will fail to get the necessary buy-in and support from stakeholders. Perhaps more importantly, failing to keep an outcome-based vision at the core will most likely result in costly, time consuming and potentially disruptive change with little or no improvements for users and communities. The three in-depth case studies conducted for this research all provide strong examples of how public service leaders who have embarked upon workforce reconfigurations have had a clear vision of both the problems and the outcomes. Another example – the introduction of teachers' assistants in many countries to improve learning – is also good illustration of how

'In every successful reconfiguration effort that I have seen, the guiding coalition develops a picture of the future that is relatively easy to communicate and appeals to customers, stakeholders and employees.' John P. Kotter, Harvard Business School.



workforce reconfiguration has been offered as a means of improving public outcomes (see sidebar).

The development of a vision must go hand in hand with a careful appraisal of the feasibility of different means of improving ways of working. At this stage, developing an initial, high level, business case that outlines the costs and benefits in relation to potential improved social outcomes allows leaders to make an informed decision: will a workforce transformation help them achieve their goals and is reconfiguring the workforce better than other possible types of reform? This assessment, based on evidence, will encourage leaders to focus on their specific context and find a tailored solution that meets the particular needs of their communities.

Our research found no evidence of one 'right' way of developing the business case. Nor did it point to any definitive list of the types of stakeholders who should be included

at this point. What it did show, and what all the change management literature suggests, is the crucial importance of getting support from a range of different stakeholders. A well developed business case that takes into account the views of many different stakeholders will lead to stronger support for the option that is chosen. The business case will, in turn, serve an important purpose in gaining political sponsorship and securing early 'buy-in' amongst stakeholders such as policy makers, governors, core senior managers and, at times, staff representatives and unions.

These early efforts to consult and engage can provide a strong foundation for the smoother design and implementation of the transformation process. If agencies spend too little time communicating their vision of change, resistance can quickly develop throughout the workforce who may be aware that change is occurring, but not understand how it will affect

them or lead to more efficient organizations or improved social outcomes. This was the experience of the leaders who developed shared services across all government departments in Queensland. With hindsight, the management team felt that the process might have run more smoothly if they had spent more time on this aspect early on in the process and put more effort into ensuring that stakeholders understood the benefits of change.

When the initial consultation has taken place and the necessary sponsorship and buy-in have been secured, steps can be taken to establish a dedicated management and leadership team – a critical prerequisite for success of any workforce transformation project. The leadership and management team should be recruited from a number of different levels in the system. They will possess different – but complementary – skills and perform different roles at the different stages in the program.

Reforming Classrooms to Improve Learning

In the past few years, formal education systems in many countries have faced increased demand to improve student learning. At the same time, growing class sizes and an increased level of scrutiny and accountability have been forcing teachers to spend more time on administrative duties. These factors, along with fiscal constraints, have put a great strain on teachers, to the point where many have left the profession early.

In response, education systems have sought ways to improve student

learning while retaining teachers. One such initiative is the formal introduction of teaching assistants in countries such as the United States and Canada, European countries including Denmark, England, France and Scotland, and Australia and New Zealand.

The rationale behind teaching assistants is that they free teachers to teach. By lowering the student-to-adult ratio and relieving teachers of some non-teaching parts of their job, teachers can focus on teaching. The use of teaching

assistants creates time for teachers to plan, share knowledge with peers, develop professionally and focus on their students' needs and, in as a result, student achievement rises. In turn, as working conditions and student achievements improve, teacher morale also rises; existing teachers feel more committed and new recruits are more likely to be attracted.

Together, the team members provide a sense of direction, legitimacy and stability to a complicated, long-term initiative and are often the driving force for obtaining stakeholder buy-in. Most people are inherently reluctant to change, and it is the management and leadership team's responsibility to ensure that people do not abandon the change process and revert to the status quo. This will take a continuous and sustained effort on the part of the team. The leadership and management team should comprise:

- A dedicated project team, made up of individuals with great expertise and experience in designing solutions and in managing change. This team will be the main group driving through the workforce transformation process in its entirety and – whilst individuals with specific expertise can be drawn into the team as and when it is needed – the core team members need to be dedicated to the process full time.

- Political sponsors: As workforce transformation processes often span electoral cycles, building a broad coalition of support among political leaders is crucial to ensure continued support for the program and its sustainability. Political support will also be essential if any legislation or regulatory changes may be needed.

- Support from top managers: Workforce transformation can be complex, expensive and potentially controversial. Top managers must continuously and openly champion the program with both internal and external stakeholders. They must also remain financially committed to the program over the long term.

- Employee champions: Successful change cannot be driven by the political leadership and the top of the organization alone. Effective change requires activists to be involved at each level in the organization. Managers will need to build a guiding coalition that includes employees outside the normal managerial hierarchy.

All four levels of management and leadership are important. Whilst workforce design and change specialists from the project team are held to account for developing the proposals for the new workforce (see step two) and the designing the process of the reconfiguration process (see step three), the other three levels are also necessary, both in their own right and as complements to each other. Broadening the leadership in this way will ensure that change champions are embedded in all levels of the organization or system. It will also provide opportunity for leaders at different levels to challenge and support each other at different times in the reconfiguration process, where one group or another may be weakened due to changing priorities, staff turnover or 'change fatigue'.

The people chosen for the management and leadership team will hold a position of trust and authority. They must engender and reflect strong support at every level



involved in the workforce changes and have the support and energy needed to influence and sustain the transformation program. Because politicians and top-level executives may be mistrusted for their tendency to 'play political games', staff in organizations may be more inclined to respond to other members of the team whom they may perceive as being more objective and focused on long term goals. These individuals therefore play a crucial role in managing employee trust and support for the program.

The management and leadership team should have its own program of activity, with a clear outline of different responsibilities and commitments, a formal tracking system for each member's work, a development and training program to support its work, a solid network across all levels and a contingency plan to replace anyone who may leave or be transferred during the course of the transformation effort. Finally, this coalition must jointly

assess issues and opportunities, and share a direction, a level of trust and open communication.

Step Two:

Design the new workforce

To guide step two, leaders of workforce transformations should approach their design process by first by asking themselves these questions:

- What types of evidence and input is needed to inform the scoping of the workforce transformation program and the re-definition of roles?
- Does the solution presented align new roles with new tasks, and outline explicitly how the new model will improve public service value?
- Are staff and other stakeholders consulted and is their input taken into account when validating the model for the re-configured workforce?

Once the vision and business case have been developed and the necessary level of sponsorship and buy-in from leaders representing the core stakeholders has been achieved, the next step is to develop a clear definition of the suggested solution.

The workforce design phase should include a scoping exercise to develop a detailed overview of the current situation that builds further on the initial evidence developed for the business case in step one. The scoping stage should be based on thorough research and comprehensive data analysis with a clear focus on mapping out the current workforce structure in the areas identified in the initiating phase. It will involve mapping existing job structures, reviewing current role descriptions and team structures and considering what capabilities are in place to perform the current tasks. The mapping exercise should aim to identify areas for improvement – where there are, for instance, bottlenecks in the

process of delivery, skills gaps or over-professionalization, duplication of efforts or ineffective use of resources.

After this comprehensive picture of the existing workforce has been built up, a role definition phase should occur, focusing on aligning roles appropriately with tasks. Our research identified a number of methodologies and approaches for defining new roles. Generally, however, role definition is a four-part process:

1. Identify the new or amended task or function required. The aggregated task lists should be linked explicitly to an outline of how the new roles are likely to offer more effective and efficient means in which to deliver public value.
2. Assess the skills required to fulfill the task or function. This should involve a detailed overview of both specialist and generic core competencies for each role



3. Develop the new role definitions, which includes delineating the responsibilities, reporting structure, competencies and performance metrics for each role.

4. Do a detailed job impact analysis, including a gap analysis of the current and planned roles, to determine the impact of the proposed reconfiguration and the number of employees affected. This job impact analysis will help pinpoint potential problems and come up with proposals for facilitating the transition to the new roles, and identifying performance management criteria.

To develop an effective set of roles that will work in practice, the workforce design specialists in the project team may need to work through multiple iterations and validations of the proposed configurations. In some cases, this will involve developing a limited number of different solutions, each of which will include considerations

of staffing requirements, cost implications and time scales. In order to identify the range of viable options, leaders may wish to draw on research to identify existing best practice, where available, or learn from similar emerging initiatives applied elsewhere in public services.

As they iron out the details, the workforce design specialists may need to take into account not only day-to-day tasks, but major events or emergencies that many public service agencies must be prepared for. For example, in the case of the introduction of the PCSOs to policing in the UK, a scenario modeling exercise is being considered to assess what impact further proposed changes to the workforce configuration will have on the resilience of the force under various plausible scenarios. This exercise will help assess risk and ensure that the proposed reconfigured workforce has the capacity and flexibility to respond effectively to the various situations confronting the service.

The various workforce transformation options should then be prioritized, on the basis of long-term and short-term gains and with cost implications and an informed view of risks. In general, the greater the complexity and sensitivity of the workforce change initiative, the more emphasis should be placed on generating quick wins which will help secure the support of policy makers, employees, service users and citizens. However, most change initiatives take time before the benefits can be realized and, furthermore, implementation can often be disruptive and thus compromise effectiveness in the short and medium term. Therefore, to manage stakeholder expectations, it is necessary to have a clear view of how much impact on performance the changes will have in the short and medium term, as compared to long term gains, as well as of the impact of any potential compromises to public safety.



Consultation and validation

To build as broad an evidence base as possible, organizational leaders and staff should be encouraged to feed into the scoping exercise as meaningful contributors. Establishing a systematic consultation program within the organization affected by the proposed changes will ensure that the proposed model is based on the expertise and experience of employees at all levels. In our research we found that early consultation will also help build a sense of ownership for the proposed changes and foster a culture of trust.

It is essential to draft a specific consultation plan, outlining who needs to be consulted (e.g. staff, unions, professional bodies, academic institutions, accreditation bodies) and when they should be consulted. This will affect both the specific design of the new workforce and the way in which the new ways of working are implemented. Overlooking this

important component of workforce transformation will only create resistance amongst staff and unions, and ultimately risk undermining the initiative as a whole.

Workforce reconfiguration creates uncertainty as professional roles change, affecting the relationship within and between occupational groups. Professional bodies can help control this uncertainty, potentially acting as champions for the change, but only if they are included in the process at the initial stages of design and if they can see the benefit of the changes for their members. On the other hand, if they feel excluded, professional bodies can just as easily hinder change or resist the re-casting of traditional professional boundaries that effective workforce reconfiguration often depends on. This is an important relationship to manage throughout.

In the consultation rounds, any issues containing an element of uncertainty or otherwise causing

Redesigning roles in the National Health Service, UK

The NHS workforce reconfiguration program in the United Kingdom identifies role redesign as an integral part of service redesign to focus on outcomes. Thus, measuring the improved delivery of health care services becomes a basis for changing the workforce. The program concentrates on using skills effectively across the workforce to ensure the best use of skills at each level by each member of the team.

To ensure that role redesign takes place in a consistent manner across the NHS workforce, a series of tools have been developed to guide and facilitate the process. These tools are made available to managers in a variety of formats, from computer based training to facilitated workshops such as the Role Redesign Workshop. This workshop is intended to help NHS managers effectively

work with stakeholders to identify areas of improvements within their departments or units and to develop and design appropriate roles for tackling these issues. Other tools provide standardized ways of problem audit and issue analysis, means of clearly capturing, understanding and analysis staff activities, as well as training in effective role profiling, which helps management consider basic details of the role: the core purpose, challenges in the post, a typical week, tasks/activities, competences required, education, possible salary and next steps.

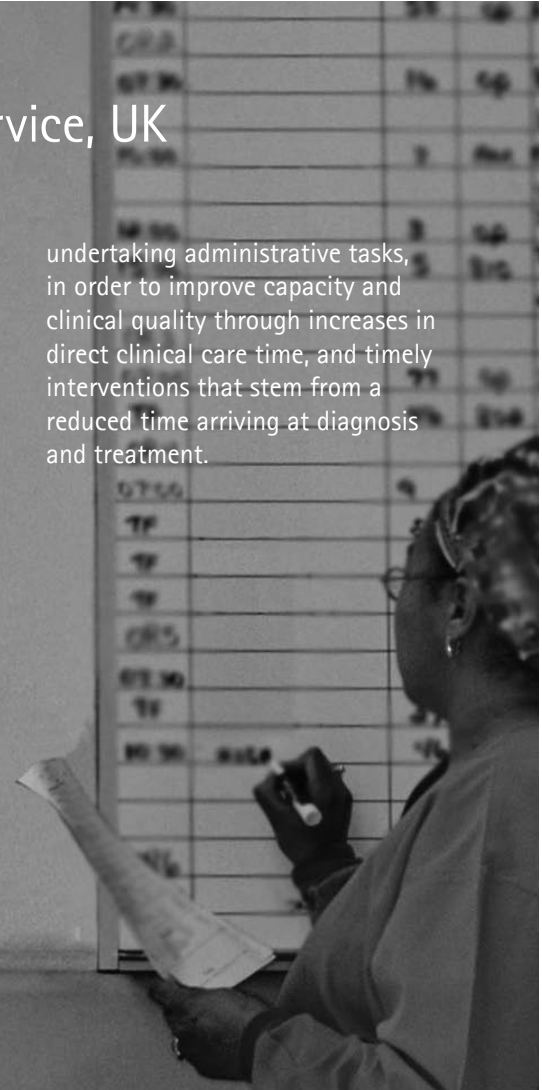
The use of a set of standardized tools to aid role redesign in the NHS has focused efforts to ensure that staff are re-deployed to function more effectively and efficiently. Clinicians, for example, have been freed from

undertaking administrative tasks, in order to improve capacity and clinical quality through increases in direct clinical care time, and timely interventions that stem from a reduced time arriving at diagnosis and treatment.

concern need to be discussed openly and thoroughly. Many employees in the public sector want jobs that are diverse and challenging, that utilize skills and allow a high degree of individual autonomy. Just as importantly, research demonstrates that people in public services are largely motivated by the difference they make to the communities they serve. With this in mind, consultation should include not only union and professional representatives at a state or national level, but staff and leaders at the local level, who will be more likely to accept change if they can see clearly how it will lead to better social outcomes.

Do not overlook regulatory bodies: their early involvement and engagement will be critical to ensure that changes, if needed, are supported by a regulatory mandate and that any service assessment is made on the basis of a fully updated set of performance indicators. Without this involvement, workforce

transformations face the risk that old performance indicators will create perverse incentives to resist changes and operate in the mode of 'business as usual'.



Step three:

Plan the transformation

To guide step three, leaders of workforce transformations should approach their planning by first by asking themselves these questions:

- Is the transformation plan comprehensive and evidence-based? Does it take into account risks and is it flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen circumstances?
- Is the right infrastructure in place to support the implementation? What type of governance is needed? Does

the legislative framework allow for the necessary changes to take place? What systems and technologies should be in place to support the implementation process?

- Do the human resources plans document changes, how will they affect employees and teams and what is in place to support the individuals affected by the changes? Is there a clear plan of training and development activities for employees and, if appropriate,

colleagues in other parts of the system affected by the proposed new ways of working?

- How have we planned for effective communication and engagement with different stakeholders throughout the transformation process?
- Are there sufficient processes in place to allow for a proper evaluation and review of the proposed workforce transformation?

Planning the workforce transformation entails articulating all the elements in the process itself and identifying the personnel responsible for each of these. Whether one intends to start with a pilot phase or go for a 'big bang' approach, it is well worth spending the time and effort to ensure the transformation plan is comprehensive, evidence-based and flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. The plan should link directly back to the vision and set out, in a logical chain, how individual activities will contribute to the sought outcomes.

Rushing through the process, or taking one's eye off the big picture, will result in piecemeal workforce reconfiguration designs. Then the team will find itself having to come up with revised strategies and making major changes, ad hoc, after implementation has begun. Naturally, this will be both confusing and costly. It will undermine people's confidence, provoke resistance and lead to inconsistencies which can

undermine protocols. The team in Queensland, for example, reflected that their implementation plan would have been more streamlined had they spent longer developing the different strands of their change program in more detail.

A well resourced and appropriately skilled project team, with significant experience in change management, is essential. At this stage it may therefore be necessary to build up the project team with additional expertise and capacity, especially in project management and facilitation.

The project team will typically need to consider implementation planning in the areas of: infrastructure; human resources; training and development; communication and engagement; and evaluation and review. We'll look briefly at each of these areas in turn

Establish the infrastructure

A well-developed, appropriately resourced infrastructure with the

necessary mandates, systems and tools in place to facilitate a smooth transition is the foundation of successful workforce transformation. Regardless of the size and complexity of the undertaking, transformation leaders should be considering a number of elements.

As we have noted, workforce reconfiguration is often political and very often contentious; therefore, the program must have a clear governance structure in place with the power to drive change. If designed appropriately, the structure can ensure accountability while still allowing special freedoms and flexibilities to empower the change team and deal with barriers posed by professional or union organizations.

Regulatory and legislative barriers should be accounted for at this stage, and a specific plan of action to remove any such barriers drawn up as an initial priority. For example, the specified range of designated powers that chief constables could bestow



on PCSOs, such as the ability to enter premises to search, or to detain a member of the public for a specified period of time, needed to be enacted in law. Without this legislated authority, PCSOs would not be able to perform their role in police forces and the proposed transformation initiative would never have worked. Issues of regulation also need to be considered: without regulatory backing, employees will continue to work to old practices, undermining the new ways of working from the outset.

Importantly, to support and coordinate efforts, workforce transformations should make full use of available technology. Leaders must determine how technologies can be used to ensure that the processes run as smoothly as possible and develop a plan for introducing IT as appropriate. For example, in supporting the implementation of the Empowerment Schools Initiative in New York City, a comprehensive package of IT systems was developed.

Support mechanisms – such as the service centers and network support teams set up for principals in New York City – will also need to be in place once the workforce transformation gets going. This planning stage is the time to examine what may be needed and ensure that such mechanisms either exist or can be established. Consistency and protocols should also be built into the infrastructure, especially in the case of high-impact organizations such as hospitals or police forces, to ensure that changes will not jeopardize safety or the level or quality of services provided to the public.


Ask how ready the organization is for change: this should take the form of a comprehensive review, based on evidence. Finally, do not neglect the resources and skills that the central management and leadership project team itself needs. This is critical: workforce reconfiguration is a complex exercise and requires experienced, professional and highly

skilled specialists to drive through the changes.

Plan human resources changes

Any workforce reconfiguration will lead to some changes in the type, level and/or volume of work being done. The human resources plan should build on the role design phase and detail who is moving to which role, when, and what this transition will necessitate in terms of: re-deployment, training and redundancies, the development of new corporate policies, terms and conditions, contracts and rewards, and workload and vacancy management plans.

To minimize the potentially negative effects of changes for current employees, sound human resources plans are essential. These plans should detail how staff will take their place in the new workforce mix, including retraining, redeployment, retirement and release, as appropriate. The level of re-training



'The outcome of a comprehensive communication plan will be an informed and more supportive organization that understands the drivers for the ... program, the key benefits to the organization as a whole and how roles/jobs will change.'

and redeployment may also drive the extent of training requirements overall, and should be considered in this light. Retraining, redeployment, retirement programs and release are not mutually exclusive but will reflect the new workforce reconfiguration and should be planned and executed in the manner best suited to the organization, its culture and its public purpose.

Inevitably, some cases of effective workforce reconfiguration will lead to redundancies. If this is the case, the human resources plan will be crucial to maintain employee morale, as far as possible, throughout the period leading up to the termination of employment. There are no easy ways to manage this. Be clear about the proposed changes from the start, and consider the specific timescales of the transformation with an eye on whether natural process of retirement, voluntary redundancies and attrition, or retirement options, could be offered to minimize the potential negative

impact on employees' personal and working lives. As the demographics of the workforce changes and there is a growing shortage of skilled staff within public services, there will be more opportunities for government agencies to offer existing staff employment in other areas. Retraining and career counseling should be offered as far as possible.

Because of its sensitivities, the human resources plan must be approached as a development process in itself. It must be given great care and attention, and not be regarded simply as an offshoot of the communication planning. People need to know how the changes are going to affect them individually, and what benefits the changes will bring, not just for the organization and service users, but for them too. As part of developing the Shared Services Initiative in Queensland, for example, a review of individual contracts, service agreements and compliance policies made the changes explicit and set out how

they would affect employees. This helped to reassure people and led to a greater degree of support even from those who had previously been resisting change.

Plan training and development activities

Any workforce transformation process, no matter the scale, requires a carefully tailored training program. After all, the benefits of a transformation initiative will only be realized if adequate numbers of appropriately trained people are ready for the new roles.

Naturally, the type and level of training needed depends on the type of workforce reconfiguration in question. For example, creating a new job with new skills requires more emphasis on training and development than does changing the configuration of teams to perform the same set of tasks. Specific roles will require extensive retraining and, in some cases, the organization will have to work with accreditation



bodies and educators to develop, enhance or modify a curriculum for the new role. Transformation leaders must factor the time and cost of developing and agreeing new educational standards into their design plan and implementation. Staff will often feel nervous about how they will perform in the new setting, or negative about the whole change program: this makes it all the more important that training activities are properly resourced and staffed by educators who command respect and trust. Peer-to-peer training often works well, especially for highly professionalized staff who feel that generalist trainers don't have sufficient insight into their specific roles and working environment. The National Health Service in the UK found the peer-to-peer approach particularly useful in its training program for clinical professionals, as part of its workforce modernization program.

Training should be targeted not only at the staff whose roles are about to change, but also at the other employees affected. For

example, when introducing new responsibilities for principals in the New York Empowerment Schools Initiative, the school superintendent and teachers – as well as the principals – went through a program of training and development to help them understand how their own work would be affected. The NHS workforce reconfiguration in the UK, mentioned above, also serves as a good example of how to identify training needs. The team there made use of a 'skills escalator' – a tool that specifies the educational requirements and competencies required for each of the different job levels in the workforce. This demonstrated that, at the top levels, certain types of staff, such as nurses, would have the necessary attributes to work as a 'non-physician clinician'. This analysis gave the healthcare system the flexibility to introduce (or discontinue) professional roles tailored to the needs of individual provider organizations and their local populations, without needing to

develop entirely new types of staff. By comparing current training and knowledge in certain roles against the requirements and competencies in the new workforce configuration, the skills escalator also allows the NHS to identify training gaps and the need for focused curriculum development.

Plan communication and engagement with external stakeholders

Public services are seldom delivered by one organization in isolation. Communication plans may benefit from including representatives from partner agencies. Similarly, it may be useful to engage with policy makers, governors and – in some cases – with user groups or citizens. A broad program of engagement will help validate and build ownership of your findings. Where workforce transformations change the ways of working across a number of agencies, a shift in how services are



delivered to the public often follows. Then development activities with users may be needed, to inform and educate, alter people's expectations and ways in which they interact with services, set other expectations and, in some cases, shift pattern of use. In Queensland, for example, when HR services were transferred from individual departments to a shared services center, the project team organized development activities with staff affected by the changes, to ensure they understood where to go for HR support services.


In any workforce transformation process, disruption to services and to day-to-day activities increases. Public services such as hospitals, schools and police, affect a large number of people and deal with life-threatening situations. It is therefore important that the risks associated with workforce transformation are managed to secure a sense of 'business-as-usual' and ensure safety, even in times of turbulent change.

Yet, however well managed, workforce transformation changes will always prompt uncertainty about the process and the end result. The management and leadership team, at all levels, needs to embark on a consistent and carefully designed program of external stakeholder engagement and public relations. It must consistently 'tell the story' of the rationale of the workforce reconfiguration program: what problems it seeks to address, how it will do this and what the outcomes will be. It is critical to focus on the intended benefits of the program and demonstrate how it will contribute to realizing these benefits. An good communication plan will result in sponsors getting the information they need to maintain commitment to the reconfiguration initiative throughout the organization.

To target its communication and engagement efforts well, the management and leadership team should start by developing a clear picture of all the people and

organizations who are affected by the changes. This includes partner agencies, suppliers, governors, policymakers and – last but not least – users and citizens, each of whom may have very different expectations. To communicate the changes, win support and, in some cases, change behavior, the management and leadership team must also plan for the ways that different stakeholders are likely to respond, and target their efforts accordingly. This includes thinking about what types and channels of communication may be more effective. One reason for the success of PCSOs in England and Wales was that public relations and communication were heavily emphasized and a number of channels used: letters to residents, websites, TV programs and highly visible advertisements on local transport.

The communication plan should be detailed enough to outline when and how stakeholders should receive information at different points



'Improving productivity is increasingly important – how it is measured is equally important due to the impact on behavior and service delivery.'

Aileen Simkins, Department of Health, England.

throughout the implementation cycle. It should also set out how to disseminate sensitive information in an accurate, transparent and consistent manner.

Develop plans for evaluation and review

The final element of planning the transformation is to develop an effective evaluation strategy. Evaluation is a fundamental component of the program but is often overlooked and not appreciated until after the program has been rolled out. It is, however, an essential part of maintaining political, financial and employee support for the program, and of making informed decisions on the effectiveness of the changes.

Effective evaluations measure the impact of the program against the desired outcomes set out in the vision and compare results from the new ways of working with those of the original workforce configuration.

Different stakeholders – politicians, public servants, other agencies, users and the wider community – will have different standards or perceptions of success. If leaders are to gain a true understanding of success, in terms of improved public service value, they must be aware of these differences, and factor them into their evaluation plans. Focusing on measuring outcomes in a comprehensive manner will ensure that evaluation is objective and does not focus too heavily on any specific stakeholder.

Throughout our research, we often found examples of evaluations that had fallen into the trap of relying on historic or inherited performance measurements, that were not linked to outcomes or that were not relevant to the reconfigured workforce. Look at any existing management information with a critical eye, and refine it to ensure it is fit for its purpose in the new environment.

Evaluation design must take into account a number of metrics that have an impact on outcomes, including performance management, cost and productivity, and customer and community satisfaction. Leaders must align each of these with the new workforce structure to ensure the evaluation focuses on the appropriate outcomes and provides a true, comparative representation of the effect of the program. This alignment will also remove any inherent perverse incentives, such as poorly defined performance metrics, that may be having a negative impact on the project.

Leaders must also be on the lookout for unintended impacts of the initiative and attempt to measure these too, asking whether public service value as a whole has been improved. An initiative may well have been successful according to its own mission, but affected other public services in unforeseen ways.

Step Four:

Implementing new ways of working

To guide step four, leaders of workforce transformations should approach implementing their new ways of working by first by asking themselves these questions:

- Is the implementation following the plans developed in earlier stages?
- Does the project team have sufficient capacity and the necessary skills to drive through the changes?
- Are the appropriate staff and stakeholders engaged in the process, and are all the important messages communicated in a prompt and suitable manner? Is staff consulted on an ongoing basis?
- How does information transfer and sharing of learning take place across the system?

This step about putting in train everything planned in the previous steps, implementing the newly designed workforce, and ensuring that the transition plans are followed in a co-coordinated, orchestrated manner. Implementing any workforce reconfiguration initiative is difficult. The process is highly complex and can take a long time. At times it may seem that everything has stalled as staff and leaders alike suffer from 'transformation fatigue' and morale falls. Skill, energy and persistence are needed to keep everyone focused and positive throughout the change process.

In our research we found that successful workforce transformations are often those that have a staggered roll out: change done in small steps reduces risk. Many initiatives, including the NYC empowerment schools in the United States and the introduction of PCSOs in England and Wales, start as pilots in selected sites. Taking this approach, especially with larger-

scale initiatives, ensures that the initiative is well tested and that other agencies or localities can learn from its early experiences.

Pilot sites allow the organization undertaking the workforce transformation to:

- Improve the quality of management information used in decision making
- Allow for varying lead times affecting the various components involved in the change, such as staffing, training and infrastructure
- Address resistance and political pressures affecting the change measures
- Develop awareness throughout the organization and secure the stakeholder commitment required for successful implementation
- Improve the quality of strategic decisions by 'systematically involving those with most specific knowledge;

obtaining the participation of those who must carry out the decisions; and avoiding premature momentum which could lead the decision in improper directions.'

Pilot sites – where appropriate – help mitigate risk, for instance if the reconfigured workforce cannot meet demand, or if the initiative proves to be less effective or more costly than anticipated. They offer the opportunity to test a series of approaches, and allow leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposals against outcomes before adopting them on a large scale. And they can be instrumental in developing greater grassroots support for wider-scale change.

The roll out strategy should follow a planned timescale for the pilots, review, refinement and wider scale roll out. Try to stick to a timeline with key milestones and do not neglect to include any lead time required for learning and development. The piloting stage

Outsourcing and community development

Changing ways of working and sharing services – such as happened with the establishment of Cayuse Technology in Oregon – can achieve efficiency gains and create opportunities for larger community development.

Cayuse Technology was created in response to traditional concerns about off-shore outsourcing, and a desire to meet the needs of a changing community. The Umatilla Tribe is working in partnership with

Accenture to develop a lower cost, domestic outsourcing capability that meets the needs of clients from both government and the private sector and improves the standard of living on a native reserve. This initiative offers the opportunity for residents to work in higher paid jobs, develop transferable skills and foster a professional environment.

Public service value was the cornerstone of Cayuse Technology. By developing 200 – 400 high

skilled jobs within the community, stakeholders expect Cayuse Technologies will have a 'synergistic effect' on the community – maximizing Umatilla Tribal resources before expanding the workforce to include people from the wider community. The center will enable a higher-wage lifestyle that in turn will drive money back into the community and create other jobs in the community to meet new demand for goods and services.

should be set for a pre-determined period of time, with points of consistent, formal evaluation and feedback across pilot sites built into the plan, that can be refined for the next phase of the roll out.

The sites chosen for pilots should ideally represent the socio-economic and demographic 'norm' of the system as a whole, and should be chosen through a formal selection process to ensure objectivity. And the number of strategies being pursued at any given time within these evaluation sites should be limited so as to provide an accurate picture of the outcomes of the piloted workforce reconfiguration initiative. Pilot sites must be prepared to commit themselves to progressing the initiative as fast as possible and identifying learning early on in the process. Finally, support should be put in place for pilot sites to ensure control is maintained during and after the transition.

Implementing workforce change requires significant expertise and, particularly in large complex programs, capacity. Often, too little focus is placed on getting right the specific skills, size and make-up of the project team itself. Without a suitably resourced project team there is increased risk of long delays in the implementation program and this can have a detrimental effect on stakeholder support and trust. An appropriately resourced project team will also allow for contingencies so that the pace of change can be maintained if or when, for instance, there is staff turnover within the team.

Continuous review and evaluation of progress is important throughout the duration of the implementation stage, especially to ensure that learning continues to take place and that lessons from earlier experience keep informing the design and delivery of subsequent stages. If there are multiple pilot sites or the transformation is

happening on a large scale, it is particularly important that ways are found to share learning across the different sites and project teams. In implementing the Shared Services Initiative in Queensland, for example, an extensive intranet and discussion forum was set up to inform different project teams on progress and to share lessons learned.

Step Five:

Evaluate the impact and review of the effectiveness of the changed workforces

To guide step five, leaders of workforce transformations should approach the evaluation and review of the changed workforce by first asking themselves these questions:

- How do we know that the changes to the workforce are making a difference?
- Does the evaluation give a fair and comprehensive picture of what happened, what worked well and what didn't work well?
- Is the evaluation process designed in a way that generates lessons on an ongoing basis?
- Does the review take into account all the evidence available to assess the effectiveness of the transformed workforce against intended and unintended outcomes?
- Have we got a process in place to identify what could be done to further improve the ways of working to respond to new political directives and changes in citizens' expectations?

Throughout the pilots and during the larger scale roll out, effective, timely evaluation is essential to demonstrate the impact of the change on performance improvement and outcomes.

But, as our research uncovered, evaluating workforce reconfiguration initiatives is not always easy or straightforward to do.

First, the results of workforce transformations may take a long time to emerge, longer than the duration of the actual transformation. Nevertheless, maintaining support and political sponsorship can depend on being able to identify impacts early or – at the very least – providing sound evidence that positive results are likely to follow from the workforce transformation.

The Police Community Support Officers case study provides a good illustration of the challenge. The initiative requires significant

resources and sustained effort over a period of time. While early surveys demonstrated that citizens felt more reassured, it is difficult as yet to provide sound quantitative evidence of how the greater engagement with citizens directly reduces crime rates. There is a strong likelihood that over time this will be the outcome; the challenge is to conduct early evaluations to gather the evidence and demonstrate a chain of causality. The management and leadership team is collecting not just hard, quantitative data but softer evidence as well – including a databank of anecdotes about how PCSOs have provided intelligence to help solve a murder crime or how a neighborhood policing team contributed to the broader regeneration of a housing estate. The evidence is used as the basis for ongoing communication with staff within the local forces and also forms part of national evaluations which are critical in order to develop learning about what works and

secure broader support for the changes made.

Second, it can be hard to isolate what the effects of any individual changes have been: workforce reconfiguration is often part of a wider reform initiative, and organizations operate in a dynamic and changing environment. In the Shared Services case study, managers have found this issue a major challenge and are currently refining a 'balanced scorecard' approach to help them establish a comprehensive picture of the impact of different aspects of their transformation.

Transformation leaders must be ready to draw on many different strands of evidence and to involve all stakeholders in the evaluation process and the analysis of findings to get a more complete picture. This is also a good way to ensure broad ownership of the findings and, once again, to help maintain stakeholder commitment and political support.



'Real reconfiguration takes time, and a renewal effort risks losing momentum if there are no short-term goals to meet and celebrate.... Without short-term wins, too many people give up or actively join the ranks of those people who have been resisting change.'

Finally, sharing the learning from the evaluation and celebrating early successes with both internal and external stakeholders will cement stakeholder commitment and political support.

The evaluation process itself should also be regularly assessed. Leaders should continually ask if the outcomes are being measured effectively and checking that the metrics are objective and do not, in practice, provide perverse incentives.

Workforce transformations are means to an end: public services delivering better outcomes more effectively and efficiently. As citizens' expectations and political priorities change over time, leaders must have a dynamic view of transformation projects and constantly review aims and progress against new political directives and developments in citizens' expectations and needs.

Throughout implementation and

evaluation, any findings should feed back into the design and influence future refinements to the reconfiguration, training, communication and evaluation plans. This refinement exercise offers a chance to incorporate any lessons learned through the pilots; it will streamline the process for larger-scale roll out while also ensuring the proper outcomes are measured to transform the organization into a high performing public service.

As most workforce transformation programs take a considerable length of time to implement, it is likely that many things – the needs and expectations of users and citizens, for instance – will have changed since the process was started. It is also quite likely that political circumstances will have changed, as most larger-scale workforce transformations in public services take place over a period that extends beyond the electoral cycle. Reassessing the new workforce in the light of such changes, and

seeing how the new ways of working are responding to changes in the environment is absolutely essential. A review of this nature is likely to generate important messages that leaders cannot afford to ignore.

6

Conclusion

For governments, moving toward high performance means providing greater public service value: delivering better outcomes for citizens and businesses, more cost-effectively. Operating in a way that delivers greater public service value implies radical changes for government – not only in substantial reconfigurations of processes and technology, but also in how government workforces themselves are structured. While making these dramatic changes can and does cause anxiety and significant resistance, pushing through to reach the desired end result will be well worth the effort. Our research into governments that are achieving high performance through workforce transformation demonstrates the tremendous benefits possible – for the individual employees themselves and for society as a whole.

Overcoming the challenge requires a thoughtful and structured approach, tailored to individual circumstance. While the unique circumstances that

prompt (and challenge) workforce reconfigurations may differ from government to government, our research has identified five basic steps (planning, role design, transformation planning, implementation, evaluation and review) that should be taken into account in all successful workforce transformations. With these components of workforce transformation in mind, we listed a number of key questions for governments considering their own workforce transformation initiatives. Formulating local responses to each of these questions will form a powerful foundation for ensuring that the right people are doing the right jobs to effectively meet the needs of service users and communities now and in the future.

7

Case Study 1 Preparing kids for college and life

Expanding the authority of principals in
New York City public schools

'Four years ago, I asked New Yorkers to give me the power to make decisions about education and hold me accountable for results...We've made great strides over the past four years – stabilizing and restructuring the school system, creating greater educational options from early childhood to high school, and increasing autonomy and accountability system-wide. With empowerment schools, we're giving principals the authority and the tools they need to run their schools and in turn, holding them accountable for raising the bar of achievement and making real and measurable progress. At the same time, we're streamlining the bureaucracy and putting our resources where they belong – back in our classrooms with our kids.'

Mayor Michael Bloomberg, 20061

Introduction

In 2004, New York City (NYC) Mayor Michael Bloomberg launched a workforce transformation program, called the 'Empowerment Schools Initiative'. One of a series of sweeping reforms to improve educational outcomes in the city's underperforming public school system², the Empowerment Schools Initiative is designed to tackle the many challenges inherent in turning around student and school performance. It aims to do this by giving principals substantially increased power to make decisions affecting their school community, and greater control over their resources, while holding them directly accountable for achieving measurable improvements in academic results, student progress and the school environment.

First piloted at 29 high schools (in what was originally called 'the Autonomy Zone' or 'A-Zone')³, the program grew to 42 schools in the

second year, 332 schools in year three, and will be made available to all of the more than 1400 NYC public schools in the 2007-08 school year.

For principals – who voluntarily apply to join the Empowerment Schools program – the main gains are substantially increased power to make decisions affecting their school community and greater control over their resources. This expanded role of the principal marks a significant shift, first, in the level of responsibility of the school's leader and, second, in the culture and the organizational structure of the New York City public school system. The jury is still out as to the ultimate impact of the initiative on long term student outcomes, since it is still in its first few years of operation. But early results look promising.

The New York City Department of Education is the branch of municipal government in New York City that manages the city's public school system. The school district these schools form is the largest district in the United States. Over one million students are taught in more than 1,200 separate schools. The department covers all five boroughs of New York City. The department is run by the New York City School Chancellor. The current chancellor is Joel I. Klein, appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2002.

Because of its immense size, the New York City public school system is the most influential in the United States. New experiments in education, text book revisions, and new teaching methods must work in New York to be viable in the rest of the country⁴.

Drivers for change

Like most large US urban school districts at the turn of the 21st century, NYC was failing to prepare students adequately for college and work. The evidence was copious. For example, in 2001, when the US No Child Left Behind Act required states to report on student progress, NYC high school graduation rates in 2001 were at 51 per cent, with only 28.4 per cent of graduates receiving Regents diplomas. This is in comparison to New York State-wide results of 61 per cent and 50.4 per cent, respectively⁵. At an aggregate level, performance has not changed much in four years, with 54 per cent of NYC high school students graduating and 31.6 per cent receiving Regents diplomas in 2005⁶.

Historically, the NYC public school system was characterized by bureaucratic inefficiencies, a diffuse chain of accountability, and high turnover. The Department of Education (DOE) dictated policy to regional and local superintendents who, in turn, conveyed this to principals. Schools' annual budgets – of over 650 thousand dollars per school – were run by local district offices. The schools themselves had a strict hierarchy and organizational structure.

In this weak system, resources were often diverted away from schools and power kept within the DOE and special interest groups such as organized labor and parent organizations. Principal retention was also a significant problem: even today, 58 per cent of the principals in NYC traditional public schools, and 65 per cent of the principals in empowerment schools, have three years or less experience⁸.

Regents Examinations, or simply 'the Regents', are a set of standardized tests given to high school students through the New York State Education Department, designed and administered under the authority of the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. In order to

graduate with what is called a 'Regents diploma', students are required to have earned appropriate credits in a number of specific subjects by passing year-long or half-year courses, plus the Regents examination in that subject area⁷.

Accountability for student outcomes

Against this backdrop, Mayor Bloomberg ran his 2001 electoral campaign on a platform of school reform and asked NYC voters to hold him personally accountable for student results. In 2003, he and his Education Chancellor, Joel Klein, launched the bold Children's First transformation program. Its education reforms included: disbanding the elected school board; replacing the thirty two school districts with ten regions; adopting a common curriculum for reading and mathematics; changing the way budgets are allocated to schools so that money follows students rather than teachers (the Fair Student Funding Initiative); launching a Leadership Academy; and opening 'small' high schools with significant support from foundations. The Empowerment Schools Initiative originally grew out of experiments with small high schools since, as Sanda Balaban of the Office of New Schools at the DOE puts it, 'the new educational institutions were not able to thrive when shoe-horned to the ossified, inflexible school management structure⁹.

Mayor Bloomberg was willing to hold himself accountable at the voting booth for the results of the entire school system and he asked empowerment principals, too, to take personal accountability for the performance of students in their schools.

From the start, the Empowerment Schools Initiative aimed to achieve educational outcomes for NYC students. In Chancellor Klein's words, the mission of the Empowerment Schools Initiative was to give 'every one of our students, regardless of

personal circumstances, a fair chance at a successful, fulfilling, productive life in a world that increasingly demands unprecedented levels of knowledge and competence¹⁰.

Preliminary analyses of the initiative, two years in, show improvements in student results in terms of graduation rates, attendance, test scores and college acceptance. For example, in the 2005–06 school year, empowerment schools reported graduation rates of 79.3 per cent, compared to 58.2 per cent city-wide, attendance rates of 87 per cent (against 82 per cent), mathematics course pass rates at 80.3 per cent (75.7 per cent), and college acceptance rates of 89.7 per cent (74.4 per cent)¹¹.

Of the forty-two schools involved in year two, only three performed below their student achievement targets. Eighty per cent of principals surveyed in the summer of 2006 said that being an empowerment school has had a positive or highly positive impact on their school community while 16 per cent reported no impact on their school community and only 4 per cent felt a negative impact¹². Principals who missed these achievement targets would have a conference with a DOE Rating Officer to develop an action plan to report against quarterly throughout the following school year.

Leading an empowerment school

To lead an empowerment school, principals voluntarily apply to the DOE and, if accepted, sign a 'Performance Agreement' (see sidebar for excerpt) that gives them the 'dual challenge of responsibility and accountability¹³. In a 2006 DOE survey of empowerment school principals, respondents cited the top three reasons for applying as: 'more control over the professional development of staff' (49 per cent), 'additional budget dollars' (44 per cent), and 'additional flexibility over dollars in the budget' (44 per cent)¹⁴.

Principals of empowerment schools



Empowerment School Performance Agreement 2006–2007

Whereas [NAME], principal of [NAME OF SCHOOL], shares the New York City Department of Education's deep commitment to raising student achievement for all children;

Whereas, empowerment schools are predicated on the view that our students will benefit when principals have greater authority over the key decisions affecting their school community, including broader authority over educational decisions, greater discretion over their budgets, a significant voice in selecting and evaluating the dedicated administrative team that supports them, and reduced paperwork and reporting requirements; and

Whereas, empowerment schools are further predicated on the view that empowerment and accountability are mutually reinforcing values and that, accordingly, these schools will be at the vanguard of a new, thoughtful approach to accountability applicable to all NYC Public schools.

have more freedom than principals in traditional public schools. The greatest freedom empowerment principals have, according to Eric Nadelstern – who was appointed by Chancellor Klein to run the Empowerment Schools Initiative – is to select the school's curriculum, choose whom to hire and decide how to train staff in their schools. In contrast, they have relatively less decision making power in the areas of student enrolment, special education, meals, transportation and firing staff. Since the legal barriers and lengthy processes required to fire staff make it so cumbersome and difficult to use, Nadelstern usually counsels principals to 'hire wisely'¹⁵.

In exchange for increased authority, empowerment principals agree to be held accountable for improving student performance on the following specific metrics or face dismissal in two years if they do not succeed:

- Student performance –

percentage of elementary and middle school students at proficiency levels; percentage of entering high school students receiving each type of diploma after four and six years

- Student progress – average gains in English and mathematics proficiency (grades 3–8), Regents tests passed (high school)
- School environment – attendance, safety levels, student/parent/teacher engagement
- School performance – results in comparison to peer schools as well as to the school's own past performance during the prior three-year period

This increased focus on accountability and regular performance measurement has begun to trickle down from principals to teachers to students. In the process, the increased accountability is changing attitudes. For example, in the empowerment school Bronx Law and Finance,

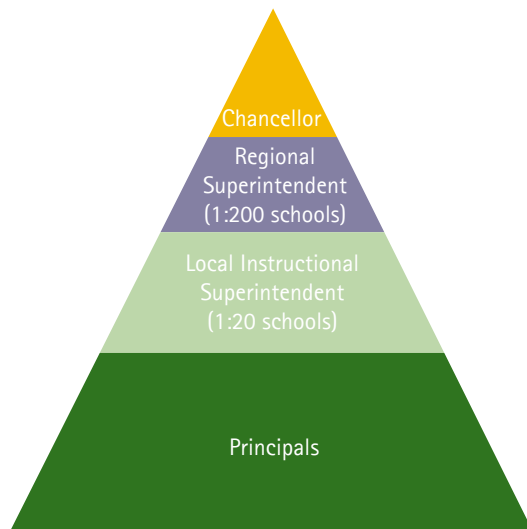
every student has an advisor who meets with them regularly to review their weekly progress report¹⁶. If a weakness is identified, the advisor works with the student to create an action plan that will be revisited the following week. In problem cases, the advisor is empowered to reach out to parents or social workers. One 11th grader commented on the benefit of this increased focus on her performance saying: 'The weekly progress report helps me know what areas I'm good at and where I need to improve so that I'm never lost'¹⁷.

Cultures shift and pyramid turns upside down

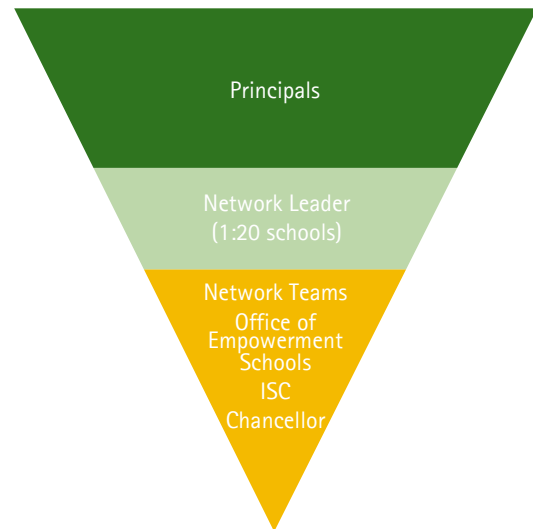
To make this workforce transformation program a success, a shift in the culture of the schools themselves, and at the DOE, is required. Inside an empowerment school, the principal becomes a change agent, tasked with building a culture of accountability. At

NYC Public School Organizational Structure

Traditional School



Empowerment School



Source: Interview with Eric Nadelstern, February 14, 2007.

the DOE, the culture is shifting from one of compliance to one of customer support to serve the needs of principals more efficiently and effectively.

For principals to succeed in their expanded role, a cultural shift needs to occur inside the schools. In traditional public schools, the job of the principal is to act like a 'traffic cop,' managing the interface between the DOE, school staff and students. Their primary role is to ensure that the school is in compliance with all federal, state and district level rules and regulations. In contrast, empowerment principals are responsible for driving the educational performance of the school¹⁸. To succeed, they need to be creative, courageous, entrepreneurial, instructional leaders. They need to embrace data-driven decision making and build a strong team and a culture of accountability inside their school.

However, as Jim Peyser of New Schools Venture Fund argues, 'In some empowerment schools, especially the more well-established ones that are part of New York's small schools movement, principal empowerment may present challenges to a pre-existing culture of collaborative management.' He explains that in most of the small schools the management model is typically one of joint decision making. In these schools, the principal's relationship to teachers is as a colleague, primarily, and only nominally, as a boss. He argues, 'This kind of flat organizational structure may be hard to sustain under the empowerment schools approach, in which principals are given greater authority'¹⁹.

Empowerment schools effectively turn the traditional organizational structure of DOE upside down (see graphic). In the new configuration, principals rise to the top of the pyramid. The reason to empower principals, according to Nadelstern

is to 'put responsibility [and school expenditure decisions] in the hands of those closest to students who are in the best position to decide how to get results for kids'²⁰. The underlying belief is that autonomy is a pre-condition for the success of principals, rather than a reward for high performance. As one of the empowerment principals explained, 'The paradigm shift of the system servicing the schools, instead of the opposite, has given my school community the opportunity to think about how we will ... be responsible and accountable to the changes we want to make in order for our children to achieve'²¹.

Professional development and support

While the Empowerment Schools Initiative requires its principals to assume a large burden of responsibility for transforming their schools, and demands results,



the DOE does not leave them unsupported as they rise to the challenge. Professional development and a more cost-effective support structure are core building blocks. Mayor Bloomberg, Chancellor Klein and the many foundations supporting the reforms recognize the critical need for professional development, both to increase the skills of existing principals and to build a strong cadre of others to replace principals who retire.

Empowerment principals receive formal training through the Leadership Academy, a non-profit organization, created in 2003, that designs and runs training for novice and aspiring NYC principals. Its courses include the Empowerment Schools Intensive (ESI) course which, according to a 2006 survey of empowerment principals, the majority of participants regarded as being very valuable²². ESI teaches principals how to use the new accountability tools (such as regular diagnostic tests) to make evidence-

based decisions to enhance student learning. The first step in the training is a series of summer sessions that encourage principals to share practices and lessons learned with their peers.

In the first year, as part of ESI, principals invite an 'Inquiry Team' of several teachers to visit and work with them at their school. A group of 20-25 students 'for whom the school has not been effective' is selected. The Inquiry Team uses all available data tools to understand the learning needs of the group. It identifies what skills are lacking among the adults working with those students and what skills that the students need are not being taught. Armed with such findings, Inquiry Team works with the principal to make changes to the curriculum and to reallocate resources to address the gaps. In year two, the team expands the process to address the needs of the entire school and find ways to improve student performance throughout the school²³.

There are other professional development programs available to high performing teachers aspiring to become principals or assistant principals. These programs, like the Scaffold Apprenticeship Model (SAM) that was launched by New Visions for Public Schools and funded by prominent foundations, also use an Inquiry Team model to teach teachers how they can use student performance data to identify learning gaps and how to design curricula to address deficiencies and raise achievement levels.

Cost-effective support structure

A structure of Integrated Service Centers (ISC), Network Support Teams, and central IT systems has been designed to unburden principals from time-consuming, bureaucratic paperwork and increase the time available to focus on improving student achievement.

The ISC is a call center where

Table 1: Breakdown of every dollar in New York public school budgets

	Traditional School	Empowerment School	Per cent Change
DOE	50 cents	34 cents	-32%
School budget at principal's discretion	13 cents	16 cents	23%
School budget outside principal's discretion	37 cents	50 cents	35%
Total	\$1	\$1	

empowerment principals can go for administrative transactions, including payroll, contracts, budgeting, technology and human resource issues.

The Network teams replace the traditional superintendent structure. The teams embody a new culture of customer service by supporting principals with problem solving, navigating through the DOE bureaucracy, capturing lessons, and disseminating best practices across a self-selecting group of empowerment schools. Through the Network Support Teams, the DOE provides service to principals more efficiently, charging principals around thirty two per cent less per school than the traditional school district model. With the increased efficiencies, as well as increased discretionary spending, empowerment school principals gain access to roughly thirty five per cent more of their school budget than what had been available to them in traditional public schools. (See Table

1)
 Network teams are accountable to the principals directly since the principals select, evaluate, and reward (or challenge) their team leader based on annual performance. In the summer of 2006, through a process akin to 'speed dating,' the principals met and ranked their top choices for network leaders, most of whom were former superintendents. Then, in cohorts of 20 schools, the principals and network leaders together selected the remaining members of the network support team. Seventy-seven per cent of respondents to the DOE's 2006 'Principal Survey' said they were satisfied with the network support teams but requested improvements such as a faster response time and a 'go to' list so they know whom to call on issues like technology and transportation²⁴. What principals seem to appreciate the most about the networks is the ability to share insights and practices with their peers.

Early in 2007, the DOE signed a contract to create a new student information system (called ARIS) that will give principals access to 'dashboards' with school-specific and system-wide data. ARIS is a prime example of how network teams lead to knowledge sharing and innovation between empowerment principals. The prototype for ARIS was developed by Marc Sternberg, principal of Bronx Laboratory – one of the original A-Zone schools – who wanted to find a way of using available student and school data to manage his school better²⁵.

Rapid expansion and implementation challenges

In January 2007, within three years of the program's launch, the Mayor announced that all NYC public schools will be eligible to become empowerment schools starting in the next school year. A veteran of the NYC public school system in his thirty-seventh year of service,

Table 2. Risks limiting wide-scale adoption of empowerment schools

Implementation challenge	Questions to consider
Ensuring sustainability, even in the case of political leadership changes	What would prevent the next administration from overturning the reforms?
Maintaining stakeholder buy-in as power shifts	If stakeholders, such as unions and organized parent groups, who have lost power in the new system continue to air their discontent, could they overshadow the successful pilot and block widespread adoption of the program?
Minimizing principal turnover and keeping a full 'pipeline' of people ready to step into the principal role	How does one attract and retain principals when burnout may be high (given new responsibilities) additional pay is nonexistent, and fit with the skill set of existing pool of candidates is low?
Scaling from pilot program to system-wide initiative	Can the new infrastructure be scaled up quickly and efficiently enough to support rapid expansion? If culture change is not pervasive throughout the entire organization, will old habits slow down the spread of the new program?

Nadelstern says he is 'astonished' by the rapid speed of the program's expansion. He remarked, 'This is the first time I have ever worked with a Chancellor where it is hard to keep up with how reform-minded he is' ²⁶.

Chancellor Klein fundamentally rejects 'incrementalism' as a strategy for improving the public school system and so has rapidly piloted and then expanded school reform programs like the Empowerment Schools Initiative. A key constraint driving the rapid expansion is a need to show results within the four-year electoral cycle and eight-year Mayoral term. Also, the Bloomberg administration wants to make lasting changes in the way the schools run that can not be easily reversed by a new administration.

While early results of Empowerment Schools Initiative show positive trends; the program faces several implementation challenges for a successful and sustained system-wide roll-out. The risks associated with sustainability, stakeholder

management, maximizing retention/ minimizing turnover, and ensuring scalability (summarized in Table 2) need to be closely managed in any workforce transformation.

Lessons learned

The NYC workforce transformation of public school principals reveals some examples of good practice that could be applied elsewhere where public managers want to launch similar workforce transformation initiatives focused on creating public value, in education or elsewhere.

- Focus on sustainability: The Empowerment Schools Initiative has proactively devolved as many resources as possible to the principals, on the assumption that it will be harder for future administrations to take back those resources. Another strategy has been to engage third parties, including nonprofits, foundations, universities and advocacy groups, to create programs in areas such as professional development

and information technology, since those groups will still be there to put pressure on the next administration, providing continuity and institutional memory.

- Build up stakeholder buy-in through early success. A benefit of starting the Empowerment Initiative with a pilot program was to have some quick success, gain champions among early adopters, and build credibility among sceptical stakeholders. In the first year of the pilot, the Chancellor asked regional superintendents to nominate schools for inclusion in the Autonomy Zone, to facilitate their buy-in for the new structure. Focusing on the end outcomes of student achievement and preparing kids for college, life and work, made it possible to gain the support of a diverse range of stakeholders early on. Although the Union of Federated Teachers remained neutral for the first few years of the reforms, it is now starting openly to question or challenge the reforms: an important reminder that careful



stakeholder management is critical throughout all stages of workforce transformations and not just at the launch of a program.

- Lead by example: NYC leaders from the Mayor down have consistently presented a clear vision of how the point of the reforms is to improve end outcomes for students. The fact that Mayor Bloomberg was willing to take personal accountability for student outcomes and stand up to powerful entrenched groups has allowed other leaders in the Department of Education to move ahead with bold educational reform programs such as the Empowerment Schools Initiative.
- Training and support as you move up the ladder. One of the hallmarks of the Empowerment Schools Initiative has been that expansion in principals' responsibilities has been accompanied by training, increased support, and a focus on succession planning. However, as principals move higher up the ladder, they have yet to see commensurate increases

in pay and rewards. Ultimately, this gap may prove to be a sticking point for empowerment principals who may expect increased rewards for increased pressures.

The Empowerment Schools Initiative illustrates how a workforce transformation effort can be designed to achieve public value. It will not be known conclusively for a few more years whether or not the intended outcomes are all reached. But, early indicators suggest that the initiative is being successful in reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies in the DOE and increasing student achievement. What remains to be seen is whether the initiative can be quickly scaled up, and sustained long enough to produce the intended results.

8

Case Study 2 Creating safer neighborhoods

Police community support officers
in England and Wales

[People want] patrols where there is very little crime or disorder. Patrol to be visible; patrol which will not be called away to do anything else; patrol which is local and entirely customer orientated ...routine patrol to provide citizens with the sense of security which... provides the very form of public reassurance which allows secure communities to grow.

(Sir Ian Blair, then Chief Constable for Surrey Police; 1998).

Reducing fear of crime has long been considered a critical outcome for the police in the United Kingdom. Introducing a new role into the already established policing family offered a targeted way of reassuring communities in a cost effective manner. The initiative is the brainchild of a group of senior managers within the police force. Amongst them was Sir Ian Blair, Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who back in the late nineties put the issue on the agenda.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) first took to the streets in 2002. The introduction of this new workforce represented a fundamental shift in British policing and challenged traditional ways of working by increasing the visible presence of police in neighborhoods. Since its pilot in 2002, the initiative has been rolled out nationally and there are now more than 8,500 PCSOs

employed across England and Wales, as well as in the British Transport Police. This paper tells how, through the innovative use of PCSOs, the police service in England and Wales changed its ways of working in order to reduce fear of crime and create safer neighborhoods.

Closing the gap between perceptions and reality: the challenge

Despite a steady fall in crime levels (15 per cent since 1995), citizens in England and Wales had been growing increasingly concerned about crime. In fact, surveys showed that nearly two thirds of all citizens believed that crime levels were actually going up. This disparity between actual crime levels and people's perceptions alarmed the police service in England and Wales, which was under constant pressure from politicians, the media and citizens alike to improve public safety.

As a result, Sir Ian Blair and other senior leaders in local police forces began to consider what they might do to regain public confidence and bridge what was becoming known as the 'reassurance gap'. They recognized that creating safer neighborhoods would require a focus on two key outcomes: not just reducing crime but, as importantly, creating an environment where people felt safe. A new approach to the police service's ways of working would be required if these two outcomes were to be realized.

It is well documented that more officers on foot patrol improves the public's perception of safety, satisfaction and confidence in the police. Over the past decades, however, greater centralization and specialization within the police service – and the increased professionalization of the police officer's role – has led to significant changes in work patterns. Police officers now spend more time at their desks and less out on patrol. In England and Wales, a recent study based on 378 'diaries' of the daily workload of constables showed that only 17 per cent of the working day was spent 'on the beat' and that the number of officers working proactively in the community had been declining.

Over time, as police forces failed to respond to the public's demand

for more street patrols, competition appeared on the scene. In some parts of England and Wales, local authorities and housing associations began

to employ private individuals and security companies to patrol selected neighborhoods, parks and other public spaces.

The resulting blurring of boundaries in public safety provision posed a significant challenge to the police service, which society still held accountable. It also raised issues about fairness: should one community receive more protection than the next, according to someone's ability or willingness to pay for it? Furthermore, the growth in private security protection raised concerns about citizens' confidence in the police as the main provider of community safety and highlighted issues of governance and the accountability of these private community patrols.

Community safety is not a product to be bought and sold. Government have a duty to provide public safety to the citizens it serves...We must deliver policing in the way people want. Our job is to do what is expected of us – Sir Ian Blair

What was immediately obvious to the police force leadership was that simply recruiting and training more police officers and sending them out as 'bobbies on the beat' would not solve these issues. Nor would it be financially viable or practical: public funding was already under pressure and the recruitment base for police officers limited. Instead, leaders kept their focus on the outcomes they had identified: reduced crime in neighborhoods and increased public confidence by reducing people's fear of crime.

In response to the challenge before them, they proposed the idea of a new breed of police staff whose chief purpose would be to increase the visibility of police in communities and work efficiently towards increasing people's perceptions of safety. The idea was

initially raised by Sir Ian Blair in a speech to Association of Chief Police Officers in 1998, and developed further by a group of police leaders and the Home Office. Introduced into legislation by the Police Act of 2002, a new arm of public safety was born: the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

PCSOs are part of the police family, but are not fully empowered police officers. Their job specification means that they can be recruited, trained, and put to work faster than fully trained police officers, and they are on lower pay scales. PCSOs were recruited in a number of pilot sites and, after a trial period, the initiative was rolled out to all police forces in England and Wales.

'We needed enforcement officers without the powers of full warranted officers, so that they would not be pulled to do back-office stuff. This would be the most efficient means in which we could build public confidence.' – Stephen Bloomfield, Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police

It's all in a day's work: Extract from a PCSO's diary

[In the morning] we have a briefing to find out what has been happening. All reported crimes are put on the computer system, so it's easy to see what has been going on. If there has been a spate of problems in a particular area we may be sent down to there to do visible patrols to deter any further incidents.

When we patrol we'll have a look around and make notes of anything suspicious. If there are incidents or if something looks like it may become an incident we'll call for a unit and wait until it arrives. We talk to the concierges in the flats and local shopkeepers to see if there have been any problems. We also do a lot of work with kids and young people. For example we go into primary schools to talk to the children about safety – 'don't talk to strangers', and that kind of thing. And we look out for kids playing truant from school.

If we see anyone, we'll take their details and contact the school to see if there is a legitimate reason for them to be out of school.

Some days we provide back-up during special operations. For example, if there is a warrant to be served we provide a visible presence and back-up for the police. Other days we may be asked to attend community meetings to answer questions and be a presence. Our role is to be the eyes and ears of the police. We meet and greet people, providing a physical link and presence on the streets. We are always on foot – never in patrol cars – so we are very visible and accessible.

Policing and presence in communities

PCSOs fill the need for a visible, uniformed presence on the streets. Patrolling neighborhoods – most often on foot – they focus on the needs of the community and spend most of their time engaging with people. They have become a crucial link in creating safer and more confident neighborhoods. The PCSO role also supports the government's neighborhood renewal agenda in a cost-effective way.

The role of PCSOs is to reinforce, not replace, other methods of policing. PCSOs are able to increase our capacity to perform high-level policing functions by increasing the ability of community constables to tackle quality of life and community safety issues. (ACPO 2005)

But PCSOs do far more than simply patrol the streets. PCSOs are able to assist regular police officers in crime prevention by dealing with low-

level incidents before they become serious crimes. Because they focus on problem-solving, lower level crime and disorder, they have a significant impact on reducing antisocial behavior and public nuisance. And they free up more highly trained regular police officers, allowing them the time to concentrate on more serious crime.

PCSOs also perform a crucial coordination and partnership building task at local level. They work with the community and other partners such as the local authority, schools, health and voluntary sector services to identify solutions and support local initiatives that have a positive impact on the quality of people's lives. (See: 'It's all in a day's work: Extract from a PCSO's diary').

Political parties, the established police service and citizens alike have all come to regard the introduction of PCSOs in England and Wales as a success. A recent national evaluation of the role demonstrated that

PCSOs have had an impact on public reassurance; many residents who were interviewed said that they felt safer and had less fear of crime since PCSOs began to work in their local neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, the longer PCSOs had been deployed in a neighborhood, the safer its residents said they felt.

Ultimately, PCSOs contribute to four main public safety outcomes:

- Increasing visibility.
- Providing local intelligence.
- Dealing with low-level crime before it escalates.
- Forming close links with partners.

Visibility

PCSOs spend the majority of their time in contact with the public – by being visibly on patrol and through their involvement in community networks. Their separate but complementary role supports that of police officers by providing a visible

presence on the streets. Typically, over half of their time is spent in the neighborhood on visible patrol and community involvement: this is more than three times as much as their counterpart police officers spend and allows them to get involved and forge relationships within the community. They make working with children and young people a priority, to prevent antisocial behavior and low-level crime.

'I think people find us quite approachable – because we have a set area to patrol people see us walking down the street every day and get to recognize our faces'. – PCSO

The fact that PCSOs wear a recognizable uniform is important, particularly to older people who, understandably, tend to harbor a higher than average fear of crime.

'They've got time to talk to people. The real police will be in and out... [PCSOs] can spend half an hour talking to you...It's as if it was like the local bobby when you were a kid.' – Resident

Local intelligence

By forging closer links with people in their neighborhoods, PCSOs obtain information that can be crucial in tackling crime and that would otherwise be difficult for the police to gain.

Sound evidence exists that intelligence-led patrolling can reduce crime. But regular police officers simply do not have the time to invest in building relationships within neighborhoods. PCSOs' constant presence on the streets tends to make people feel the PCSO has time to listen and to handle comparatively trivial problems. A PCSO is more likely, therefore, to be told about issues that people might not want to trouble a police officer with. Evidence also suggests that children and young people, in particular, are more inclined to pass on information to local PCSOs.

The information obtained in this way

is fed into an operational national intelligence model used by all police forces in the UK (NIM) .

'Their offender intelligence is brilliant – they often know more than the cops and have intimate knowledge of whereabouts of offenders. [Without PCSOs it would] take months to build up that level of knowledge.' – Police officer

'They do encourage people to report where they wouldn't [report] normally... PCSOs are phenomenally good at providing local intelligence.' – Police officer

'The beauty of PCSOs is that they can talk to the community... the people will tell CSOs things they won't tell cops.... On a daily basis they are talking to the community and can provide the cops with a lot of intelligence.' – Police commander

In terms of ethnicity, gender and social class, PCSOs are often more representative than police officers of the communities they serve. As such, they offer a better opportunity for the police service to engage with the whole community, including those people who may be considered 'hard to reach'. The PCSOs do this outreach in a number of creative ways, including community meetings, street briefings and face-to-face resident surveys' .

PCSO Norma Ali of Merseyside Police regularly attends meetings of the neighborhood Muslim Women's Group. Having earned the women's trust through her regular contact and by attending the meetings in plain clothes, she now provides them with information and advice about policing and safety, including domestic violence and crime prevention. Norma also provides an opportunity for the women to tell her about incidents that they may feel apprehensive about reporting to the police.

Impact on low-level crime

PCSOs play a major part in the government's efforts to tackle vandalism, disorder and antisocial

behavior. A major part of PCSOs activities involves tackling antisocial behavior and dealing with 'youth nuisance', which national surveys repeatedly confirm is the main issue for the public as a whole. In doing so, they supplement traditional policing activities without replicating them. Early successes from the introduction of PCSOs show how they deal with lower-level crime before it escalates, and local surveys with residents and businesses show that PCSOs are making a real impact in their areas, especially in relation to youth nuisance.


In Lancashire, local residents advised their PCSO that an address was being used for drug dealing, attracting crime and disorder in the neighborhood. The police found drugs there and the occupants were charged with drugs offences. At the next local community meeting, the PCSO and the local police officer were able to report on the results that had followed from people's active involvement.

Partnerships

PCSOs work actively with local public services, community groups and businesses, taking a partnership approach to producing community safety improvements. They spend much of their time in schools, youth clubs and with local businesses, which helps them form close relationships with partner agencies at local level and co-ordinate action that spans traditional organizational boundaries. In other words, by joining up people's efforts, PCSOs offer a more holistic approach to tackling community-based issues.

These sorts of links with partnership organizations – and with internal specialists such as intelligence units – are of immense benefit in trying to implement creative responses to both long term problems and crime investigations .

'The PCSOs provide a connectivity across local public services. They work with schools, make links with local authorities and understand businesses. They bring communities together in a joint effort to create safer neighborhoods' – Sir Ian Blair



'There are pressures of police constables to make use of PCSOs in a number of different contexts which may take them away from the community patrols... we have to work hard to limit the scope creep and work with forces to keep to the core of what the PCSOs are meant for.' – Jerry Kirkby, Programme Director for Neighborhood Policing, ACPO.

Key implementation challenges

Introducing PCSOs has dramatically changed the face of policing in England and Wales. The initiative is being widely regarded as a success, and there are plans to expand it and put in place 16,000 PCSOs in the next six years or so.

Nevertheless, the initial implementation has raised a number of challenges and generated important lessons for the police service or, indeed, for any organization looking to undertake a large workforce reconfiguration to increase public service value.

Local flexibility versus central control

To be able to respond flexibly to local situations and requirements, the roles and responsibilities of PCSOs vary in different geographic areas. This principle of local flexibility follows a tradition in UK policing,

where a chief constable (the person in overall charge of a local police force) exercises considerable local control. In relation to the PCSOs initiative, however, the principle posed a fundamental challenge: how does one balance a respect for variation in local solutions with ensuring that all forces in England and Wales follow 'best practice' in deploying PCSOs most efficiently and effectively?

Most police forces assign PCSOs to general patrol and engagement activities in a particular local neighborhood. Some forces, however, have developed specialist roles, where PCSOs cover similar tasks across a number of different neighborhood areas. Although the latter may offer a cost-effective response to existing work practices within the force, it takes effort away from the core task of providing reassurance, which is achieved when the PCSO is personally known to the community.

The central support team for the PCSO initiative has therefore stepped up its efforts to get the message across that PCSOs work best when undertaking community reassurance in specific areas, building close links with the people in their patch.

There have also been variations between forces in pay and conditions of service, resulting from PCSOs being employed on local terms and conditions. The use of shift allowances also varies, and – in some locations – 'special' shift allowance funds have been used as a means to enhance pay.

The variances in pay take into account market forces in different geographies and differences in deployment. However, the police service recognizes that it could do more to develop greater standardization and consistency across different areas.

The Metropolitan Police Service has been running an advertising campaign across London, entitled 'Spotting the Difference: Safer Neighborhoods' that challenges the public to identify how local policing is changing for the better.

Each of four printed advertisements shows two almost identical scenes and invites the viewer to 'spot the difference'. In the first advertisement, we see two images of a tower block: in one, graffiti

covers the wall; in the other it has been cleaned off. Another advertisement depicts more police on the streets, and the two others deal with antisocial behavior and noisy neighbors.

The advertisements appear on high street posters and buses as well as in local press and a selection of main London stations.

Designation of powers – targeted efforts or toothless tigers?

Designation of powers has been one of the most prominent issues in the debate about PCSOs. On the one hand, it is argued that limited power is at the core of the role of the PCSO whose primary objective is to provide reassurance. On the other hand, there is an argument for saying that the limited powers of PCSOs provide them with a very insecure environment and contribute to a public perception of PCSOs as 'toothless tigers'.

Legislation has set out a range of potential powers for PCSOs, but the chief constables at local levels are free to determine the specific powers, within that range, in their area, depending on local need. Thus, the powers given to PCSOs vary from force to force, and this can create some confusion within the service and for the public at large.

What is important is for everyone involved to be clear about roles, responsibility and deployment. Supervisors and partners must understand the role and remit of the PCSOs and be fully aware of the powers they possess. The public, likewise, must receive constant and good communication about the roles and responsibilities of PCSOs. Despite significant investment in media campaigns and publicity to date, however, there are still concerns about managing the public expectations. Certainly, as the initiative matures, the public will become more familiar with the remit of the PCSOs, but only if there is continuous communication.

Training and development

Before starting work, all PCSOs go through a seven-week basic training course covering legislation, human rights awareness, diversity and ethics, personal safety, emergency life-saving, radio procedure, process and evidence gathering and PCSO

powers .

Once the PCSOs are allocated to a police station they often receive additional training before going out onto the streets. This training includes health and safety and an exploration of specific issues related to the neighborhood in which they are going to operate.

The comparatively large number of PCSOs recruited in a relatively short time initially posed some challenges to do with processes for training and induction at local levels. National standards were not developed from the outset and local police forces initially lacked guidance about appropriate levels and types of training and development. Consequently, there was some significant variation in the quantity and quality of training and development initiatives offered to PCSOs in different areas. This issue has now been addressed by providing clear national guidance and by establishing a national

training academy. In addition, many local forces now have 'personal development portfolios' that list the wide variety of different tasks and skills that PCSOs have to complete or demonstrate while at work. These changes are positive; however, the fact that these initiatives were not in place early on has made it more difficult to foster change at local level.

Where possible, good practice is to combine PCSO training with the training programs of partner agencies that are more experienced in community development activities. This approach builds up a shared understanding of the issues related to community development and fosters relationships that will help promote joined-up working in the neighborhood. To that end, PCSOs are encouraged to make use of training opportunities provided by nine neighborhood resource centers across England.

Career progression

Recent evaluations show that many PCSOs have concerns about their likely career progression. Over 40 per cent of PCSOs, especially younger and male PCSOs, said they had joined as a stepping stone to becoming a police officer. While this pattern is positive for the service as a whole – and particularly so if the demographics of PCSOs goes on to be reflected in the make-up of police officers – the down side could be the loss of a familiar and consistent presence on the streets. There is no one way of resolving this issue, but managers must balance the need to provide support and opportunities for career progression against the need for local stability.

Managing performance

Nearly nine out of ten PCSOs are managed by a sergeant. As the number of PCSOs continues to increase, the management capacity of sergeants begins to become an issue. Indeed, some PCSOs are already raising concerns about a lack of direct supervision. In some

forces, a two-tier support structure has been successful, where the sergeant retains responsibility for annual performance reviews but the daily tasking and briefing of PCSOs falls to the constable within the neighborhood policing team structure.

Addressing the supervision issue has broader implications as well. The activity of the PCSOs must be monitored and supported by a clear performance framework to assess value for money, identify suitable deployment and establish what training and development is needed. To date, not all forces have an established framework for PCSOs, although many are developing one. Furthermore, because these frameworks are being developed and implemented at force level, there are likely to be significant differences, making cross-force comparisons difficult.

In Nottinghamshire the police are developing local performance measurements for PCSOs. The key performance indicators include time on visible patrol, number of engagements attended, number of problem solving initiatives undertaken, number of detentions and number of public notices for disorder. The measures are not designed to drive activity but to help focus and inform the way in which PCSOs work. The performance management framework is under regular review as the role of the PCSO develops.

Ensuring sustainability

To date, the UK government has been the principal source of funds for the PCSO service. The Home Office funds recruitment and 100 per cent of the salary cost for the first year and 75 per cent in subsequent years. The remaining 25 per cent of the salary – along with other expenses such as training, accommodation and transportation – are funded by local forces in partnership with a variety of agencies such as local authorities, housing associations and private businesses.

The current level of government funding reflects a political commitment to the scheme and, in general, people believe that support will continue, whichever political party were to be in government in the future. Nevertheless, a change in local priorities and financial pressures on other parts of the police force might result in a reconsideration of local funding.

To ensure continued support for the initiative the UK police force must manage expectations and maintain strong public relations during all stages of the change program, as well as in the day-to-day running of the scheme. They must keep up this support until PCSOs are a firmly established part of the wider police workforce, and this will continue to entail a significant targeting of their communication efforts at a diverse group of stakeholders: central and local policy makers, professional bodies, pressure groups, existing staff and, of course, citizens. The necessary outreach campaign means, for example, numerous evaluation and progress reports, websites, instantly recognizable advertisements on local transport and in libraries and cinemas, as well as community meetings and ad-hoc word of mouth information whenever opportunities arise.

Linking the initiative to the wider strategy for delivering safer neighborhoods, and detailing how PCSOs contribute to this and to the outcomes of reducing people's fear of crime and providing reassurance, will continue to be essential.

How do you know it's making a difference? Evaluating impact

Evaluating the impact on crime and disorder of any single intervention is notoriously complex. The relative newness of the PCSO initiative, combined with the fact that low-level crime – the primary target area for PCSOs – often goes unreported only complicates attempts at measuring value in this case.



Yet, it is crucial to develop an evidence base of the impact of the scheme, both nationally (to continue to secure political support) and locally (to demonstrate successes locally and identify what works and what could be improved.) The question 'how do you know you are making a difference?' is a crucial one for decision makers and managers at all the levels in the system. Aside from traditional measures of crime levels, other key performance indicators include confidence and satisfaction in the police, as measured by broad citizen surveys. Local forces are also encouraged to consult with local people, partners and businesses on an on-going basis. They also identify examples of good practice, developmental learning and anecdotal evidence of impact, which is collected locally and disseminated nationally.

Although a national standard of evaluation was not put in place at the inception of the PCSO initiative, early results from an interim

evaluation have shown that the introduction of the role of PCSO, and the resulting reassurance brought by increased numbers of highly visible patrols, has offered a cost-effective way of developing the service that police forces offer and delivering real improvements to communities.



Lessons learned

The introduction of PCSOs in England and Wales reveals some good practices from which public managers attempting to launch similar workforce transformation programs for public value in policing, or elsewhere in public services, might readily learn.

- Innovation and vision: Local managers' wish to reduce citizens' fear of crime was kept at the core of the initiative as a key desired outcome, as was a focus on what particular staff are there to do. This is a clear example of how public service managers at all levels can improve the ways in which they serve their communities by keeping a clear focus on outcomes and the best way to achieve them, and by being prepared to challenge existing ways of working
- Build strong communication and engagement processes. The success of the initiative depended

on communication, not only with staff and users, but through a broad program of public engagement and communication about PCSOs and the benefits of neighborhood policing. It demonstrates how early and consistent communication can help educate staff and the public alike about the aims of the new ways of working, secure support for an initiative and, at the same time, improve broader perceptions about public services.

- Develop evidence of impact: the introduction of PCSOs in England and Wales is a major transformation, which requires significant resources to implement and maintain. To ensure continued support and sponsorship, it has been crucial to develop evidence on how PCSOs have made a difference to reducing citizens' fear of crime, and ultimately, to crime levels. Using a number of different mechanisms to develop a picture of the impact of any workforce transformation program will help provide valuable

lessons of what could be improved and help secure its sustainability.

When senior police first proposed taking a radical approach to closing the reassurance gap, they could hardly have anticipated how familiar a figure the PCSO 'on the beat' would eventually become to UK citizens. We have seen how an unwavering focus on specific, improved outcomes, along with an enthusiastic response and willingness to engage on the part of police managers, local communities and the PCSOs themselves, has transformed the way neighborhoods are policed in England and Wales.

9

Case Study 3 Creating a streamlined government

Shared Services in Queensland, Australia

We have transformed the workforce to provide cost-effective corporate services across departments, which is much more efficient – the mere fact that we're making savings allows our government to make greater investment in front line services. Sharing HR and finance services has also created a better sense of connectivity across departments, and – by taking away some of the main back office functions in individual departments – we have created smaller, more nimble organizations , which can change faster to better respond to changes in our environment.

Mike Burnheim, Chief Executive, Queensland Shared Services Agency

In 2002, the Queensland government in Australia embarked on a workforce transformation program. The Shared Services Initiative set out to combine back office functions across 26 government departments in order to achieve efficiency gains and develop better support services through bringing together skills and expertise. The first phase of the project has already realized significant initial savings for reinvestment back into front-line government services, which directly affect citizens. This paper tells the story of how reconfiguring a workforce as part of a shared services initiative can produce more efficient and effective government organizations.

Streamlining back office functions

The structure of the Queensland government at the beginning of the twenty-first century was similar to many governments around the world. Each department functioned as a stand alone business with its own budget, technology systems and corporate services. This led to a situation where individual departments were struggling to relate funding to individual services and were not able to get a handle on financial transparency. Consequently, the government found it was playing a numbers game with budgeting: balancing over-spending in one department by under-spending in another.

With leading policy makers' recognizing the need to reform and become more accountable and efficient, the government embarked on a whole-of-government review of corporate services in 2002 to assess its existing service delivery structure. This review identified duplicated effort throughout the government's back office functions. Individual agencies each had their own human resources and payroll functions, finance, procurement and document handling departments. Each operated in a different fashion, with different team structures using a variety of processes, procedures and information technology systems. The review concluded that by combining the various back office functions and changing the workforce composition to align tasks better and eliminate duplicated effort, the government could realize substantial cost and efficiency savings while increasing transparency and improving accountability.

Developing the business case

As a result of this review, the Queensland government developed a detailed business case to understand better the scale of benefits that would be offered by shared services.

In establishing the initial business case, we identified performance returns which each of the shared service agencies needed to provide back to government. Barbara Perrott, Executive Director, Queensland Policy and Program Office

The business case outlined the following main expected benefits:

- Quality of support services; by bringing together smaller teams from the individual departments to larger teams within the shared services centers, staff was offered better opportunities to develop specialist skills, learn from each other and benefit from more focused support by management. This would, according to the business case, increase the quality of service and – because of the benefits of size – provide more consistent level of services as activities would not be put on hold if core staff were ill or on annual leave.
- Transparency; implementing a shared services initiative would prompt an exercise to identify and break down the actual costs of support services. This would allow leaders to make educated decisions about spending and form a rational basis for determining if individual services were best provided 'in-house' or if an external agency could provide the same or better services at a more competitive price.
- Leveraging investments; by consolidating investments in goods and services, most notably information technology systems, the government would be likely to have more control over its investments, thus ensuring that procurement activities could benefit from economies of scale.
- Focus on front-line delivery; as the responsibility of delivering corporate services would be transferred from individual government organizations, the business case stressed the benefits of allowing leaders in individual departments to focus less on the running of the department itself and

more on delivering services to users and communities.

With regards to efficiency gains, the business case estimated that combining back office functions would allow the government to cluster services and use staff more efficiently to deliver a more effective, financially transparent service that could produce up to AUD \$100 million/year in cost savings by 2009 – an amount that was projected to increase over time as efficiency gains were realized. These funds would be reinvested into front line services.

In summary, the business case estimated substantial cost savings and efficiency gains in addition to improved transparency, all of which would indirectly improve front-line service delivery.

The primary motivation was on dollar savings and efficiencies, but it is a bit of an albatross in terms of what you get out of people if you just focus on savings. The Government was keen to get funds back to redirect to other parts of public service delivery. Mike Burnheim, Chief Executive, Queensland Shared Services Agency

Outcomes: Early returns and unexpected gains

Following a review of the benefits outlined in the business case, the Queensland government decided in 2003 to embark on a state-wide Shared Services Initiative for back office functions across all of its 26 departments. Although the time frame set out by the government for realizing savings through combined services and efficiency gains was tight, initial phases of implementation have already produced significant results.

First, by establishing a common set of principles for support services such as HR and Finances which ensure that staff across all departments have similar points of reference within the shared service organization, the initiative has been a major part of creating a greater



sense of connectivity across the individual departments.

Second, bringing a significant number of staff and support activities into a new organization has meant that each individual department has been significantly reduced in size. This, in itself, means that the departments are more agile and flexible to respond to changes in political priorities and/or departmental reshuffles

Third, it is now widely acknowledged within the Queensland government that shared services provide a solution to the problem of looming workforce shortages in public services. These shortages, caused by the retirement of 'baby boomers', and an insufficient replacement workforce meant that the Queensland government would have to change the way it operated within the next 10 years; it could not continue to function in the same way with the same amount of staff. Shared services provide the same

services with reduced labor.

Last but not least, in terms of financial results, the business model was to increase savings each year with the aim of reaching the full saving target of AUD \$100 million per year in 2009 /10. Whilst the program has already realized significant savings, the rate of return has not been quite as fast as projected. Yet, within the first three years of the initiative a cumulated saving of approximately AUD \$75m has already been achieved and these resources have been re-directed to government priority areas, in particular to health and child protection initiatives.

Supporting the transformation

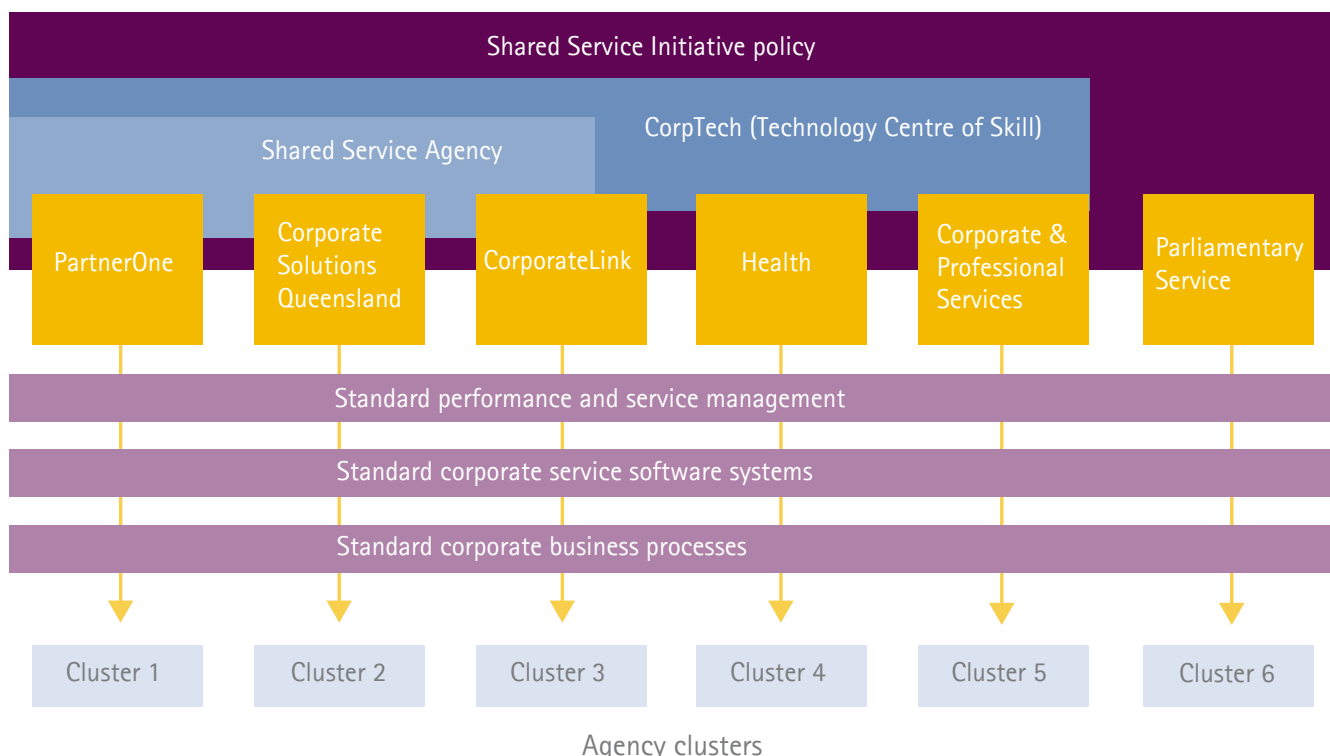
This vision is being achieved by leveraging economies of scale and skill, and is underpinned by standardizing business processes, consolidating technology, and pooling resources and expertise

across Government.

The Queensland government's Shared Services Initiative is a large undertaking with multiple aspects, with all major HR services, financial management and procurement activities of 26 departments being transferred into five new shared services centers. The initiative involves a large program of activity across a number of different, but related areas, including the implementation of a new technology system; the development of shared services departments; development of new pro-formas for changed ways of working; and broad changes to the workforce. A dedicated management and leadership group is in place to oversee and manage this large-scale change. This team oversees the implementation of the entire Shared Services Initiative.

The first element of this dedicated governance structure is formal leadership and decision-making body. The Shared Service CEO

Shared Service Initiative Operating Model



and Parliamentary Services. Each shared service provider deliver corporate services for a specified cluster of Queensland Government agencies. This is supported by shared information and communication technology services provided through CorpTech, a shared services provider set up under the initiative.

To ensure consistency throughout each of the six new agencies, the SSA developed four workstrands to oversee and coordinate the development and implementation of the new structure: Business Process, Performance and Service Management, Information and Communication Technology, and Workforce and Communications—the workforce reconfiguration element of the project. Each of these work streams feeds information into all the others, for a comprehensive approach to transitioning to shared services.

From 2003 – 2004 the workforce work stream mapped how activities

were being done throughout the department and then mapped how they should ideally be done. To reconfigure the workforce as part of the larger, coordinated change effort, the project team responsible for the Workforce and Communications work stream has developed a framework to be carried out by each of the 26 departments' implementation teams. In following this framework, departments could plan and implement changes to the workforce in a consistent manner across the government throughout the Shared Services Initiative.

This framework is especially important given the impact on staff: A workforce management framework delivers support for all staff as the implementation of the SSI progresses and assists individuals in shared service providers and CorpTech to proactively manage their careers as the outcomes of the business process review are implemented. It facilitates a consistent and coordinated approach to workforce management

across shared service providers.

Because the transformation pools resources from 26 departments into a smaller number of service delivery agencies, the workforce transformation component necessitates some redundancies while developing new roles for other staff in the new shared services agency. The plan require a consistent, coordinated communications and training program across all departments, as staff need to understand how the shared services initiative affects them and the nature of their jobs. Designing a framework to support staff as they face these changes is a fundamental component of the workforce transformation process to maintain service provision and staff morale while mitigating resistance to change.

The main components of the framework were:

- Workforce planning: this



involves breaking down each role to understand the skills and team composition required to perform the tasks in the new environment. Then, starting from the tasks and working up, the team structured the workforce to meet current and future needs, with a focus on achieving the outcomes identified by the business case.

- **Employee relations:** A plan to communicate changes was developed with clear outline of who should be consulted, when and what information they need. This plan outlines the strategies and the timeline for informing and involving staff in the existing government departments and new agencies, as well as the unions.
- **Workload management:** because the nature of roles changed significantly, the workload of individual staff needed to be monitored and managed appropriately. A workload management tool was developed

to manage work-life balance, absenteeism, health and safety and to maintain the quality of services being delivered.

- **Vacancy management:** Taking into account the difficulty of continued service provision in an environment of change, this component of the framework are responsible for the strategy for effective vacancy management. This includes consideration of variables such as staff mobility, professional development and recruitment in new and existing departments across government.
- **Training and development:** This element of the framework not only provides staff with the skills they need in their new roles, but also coordinates development activities across the government to help employees understand how changes affect how they do their job. The training and development program draws a link between the changed ways of working and the

vision driving the transformation, illustrating the benefits to be gained through shared services.

- **Workforce placement:** Through interviewing employees, conducting a skills assessment and then aligning individuals with specific skills sets to roles requiring those skills, the workforce placement strategy manages the changing roles of the workforce. It provides the framework for placing staff in the new structure with an aim of matching individuals to new roles in a fair, consistent and transparent manner. The framework has specific policies for transferring employees into their new roles, ensuring equal and consistent treatment for all staff, providing both the government and the employee an active role in determining successful placement while reducing, as much as possible, the stigma associated with this process.

December 2002	July 2003	July 2004	January 2005	April 2005	January 2006	July 2006	2007	2008
Government confirmed decision to implement shared services	Shared service providers established	HR/finance business process review completed	HR product short listed	eDRMS pilot began	Commended [what do we mean by commended here?] roll out of finance solution	Finance system pilot commenced	Roll-out of human service solution will begin	Human resource/finance roll-outs will be completed

Key Implementation Challenges

The Shared Services initiative in Queensland is a huge, long-term undertaking in organizational change. Throughout the initiative, leaders have been both realistic and proactive in critically evaluating their progress to date, identifying gaps or oversights in the original design and reacting to unforeseen circumstances to determine what lessons can be learned from the experience.

Throughout this project we know this is not a one-off plan. We are constantly learning. We are constantly taking this learning back to the design to tinker with it, to make it better for the next wave. Mike Burnheim, Chief Executive, Queensland Shared Services Agency

As the Shared Services Agency reviews the program and its progress to date in transforming the workforce, it has experienced

a number of pitfalls and learned important lessons. The agency is now taking into account these lessons in continuing the change journey within Queensland. The key challenges in implementing the initiative are set out below.

Managing the magnitude and speed of the change

The Queensland Shared Services Initiative has a huge agenda that affects staff and working practices across a wide number of departments.

Whilst obvious benefits in terms of fast implementation, taking a 'big bang' approach by putting in place shared services across all departments at the same time—magnified the complexity of the undertaking. The Shared Services Agency recognized early on the difficulties in estimating the scale of change and setting a clear, realistic timeline.

Now, nearly five years under way, they have had to extend the deadlines because the level of change was initially underestimated. This, the agency recognizes, is related to the issue of approaching the changes in one go with all the 26 departments being included at the same time. Whilst this approach has had its advantages, approaching the change in smaller steps and starting with selected pilot sites could have enabled them to learn and modify the design and implementation as they went along .

A series of other related changes such as process design, training and system upgrades or, in some agencies, changing systems completely, meant that the shared services project is much more complex than originally conceived. Resulting delays in systems roll outs and efficiency gains have made it harder to sustain the early levels of leadership engagement and staff confidence gained by early outcomes.



Unions could actually see that a lot of the efficiencies that we were looking for were largely going to be made through adjusting staffing levels downwards in key areas so they were opposed to it and they actually took the Government to our industrial tribunal to try and argue against the initiative proceeding ... we actually overturned that and got their agreement to move forward but they are still a reluctant player because they can see the impact on their staff.

Mike Burnheim, Chief Executive,
Queensland Shared Services Agency

The SSA remains pragmatic, however, and has simply noted the push back is based on a trade off; it can either maintain a level of quality or it can stick to its ambitious timelines, but it cannot do both. In order to avoid compromising quality and erode confidence in the initiative, timelines have been adjusted to reflect reality.

Sustaining efforts

From the initiation of the initiative in 2003, the program team recognized that a large change initiative such as this needs a well resourced, suitably skilled management and leadership team. Midway into the implementation it has proven challenging to sustain efforts and ensure that sufficient leadership and management capacity is in place in the face of staff turnover within the project management team. Similarly, sustaining the early levels of engagement of the CEOs of each individual department has proven difficult as early enthusiasm and championing of the changes has

given way to other priorities within the departments, which has made it difficult for the project team to ensure that all CEOs understand the need for their continued involvement as a champion. The formal leadership and decision-making body, which used to have all the 26 CEOs as members is now reduced to a subset of leaders. This has resulted in the need to re-consider how the subsequent stages of engagement are structured.

Continuing focus on communication and engagement

Although the communication and engagement strategy was planned to the 'nth degree' at a high level from the start, the difficulties in sustaining efforts have prompted a review of the initial communication and engagement framework

The communication and engagement plan has been one of the critical challenges for the project team:

the shared services initiative is a sensitive issue, as it involves an estimated headcount reduction of 25-30 percent across back office functions. This naturally has created some anxiety and resistance to the initiative from employees and unions.

The project team recognizes that more could have been done to ensure consistent and coordinated communications and engagement with staff and unions. In devolving responsibility to departments to carry out the communication plans, the SSA could not control the quality or consistency of communication and were not able to synchronize messages to staff at certain levels across departments. The SSA also found that the messages being conveyed to staff were focused on the benefits of the shared services initiative at a high level rather than translating these benefits into the impact on individual employees,

leading to a sense of alienation at a staff level.

By understanding the compounding nature of negativity resulting from the original communication plan, the SSA has become committed to effective communications with staff and unions to leverage a better relationship that will ultimately lead to better business outcomes.

In developing the next stages of the communications and engagement activities, more was done to engage with staff and unions to develop a clear understanding of the impact of the changes and to specifically address the concerns of the individuals affected by the changes.

The revised plan now provides a checklist for effective communication to staff throughout agencies as roles and functions change and a series of 'Agency Impact Workshops' have been put in place which emphasizes the need for individual departments to do more work in communications early on. These combined efforts have served to break down further resistance and lay the groundwork for compliance in an otherwise uncertain environment as the SSA has come to appreciate the interrelated nature of communication, relationships and business outcomes.

Although more emphasis is now placed on the importance of well-developed and consistent communication and engagement, it is clear that, however well managed, the project team has faced – and is likely to continue to face – some resistance from staff and unions despite the obvious benefits for the public. In order to push through the changes, the Queensland Shared Services Agency has introduced compliance policies and implemented short-term solutions such as temporary staff, who are unfamiliar with traditional ways of working and therefore more likely to accept the changes.

Finally, regardless of levels of resistance or compliance, workforce transformation is a long process

that can cause the most engaged workforce to become unmotivated. Given the size and timeline of the Queensland Shared Services Initiative, it was important to continually measure the quality of service delivery, to highlight savings and make early returns to government and to maintain stamina throughout departments.

In an effort to deal with staff resistance, the project team now places more effort on understanding what changes mean for individual roles and career progression and focus on identifying training and development opportunities and career progression for staff. While the initial business plan largely focused on intended efficiency gains and benefits for the individual departments and the service delivered to the public, the project team now seeks to translate the impact of shared services to motivators at a local staff level with the aim of ensuring all employees understand how the change will affect their career path and development opportunities.

A key element to overcoming staff resistance was understanding the importance of effective training. The project team found that staff would adapt to change much more readily if they were given the right training to feel comfortable in the new environment. Equipping staff to work with confidence in their new roles maintained buy in and reduced resistance.

Managing unforeseen circumstances

One of the major unforeseen challenges to the implementation is related to attrition. The staff transferred to the shared services agencies in new roles has undergone significant training and many are now placed in more strategic roles. As such they have become increasingly attractive to other employees and more employees than envisaged have chosen to transfer back into government departments in other, more senior, roles. Whilst


this is recognized as a positive outcome in the long-term, with the shared services initiative being part of an answer to how to deal with impending shortages of skilled staff, there are significant challenges for the shared services in the short term who needs to manage staff turn-over whilst at the same time ensure sufficient level and quality of services. The higher attrition rates have led to an over-reliance on costly temporary staff and increased spends on training and development.

For the change specialists in the project team, the turn over is also higher than envisaged. Having gained specific skills and expertise in managing the complex workforce transformation, some decide to leave to join private businesses who themselves are embarking on workforce transformation programs and are able and willing to offer better remuneration and benefits. This has resulted in difficulties in sustaining effort and ensuring consistency in the change process, and has prompted the need for higher use of contracted staff – all at a higher cost – which further affects the cost of the transformation program.

Lessons learned

The Queensland Shared Services Initiative has brought with it an ambitious workforce transformation and the implementation has not been without its challenges. Nevertheless, the implementation of the initiative reveals some good practices that could be applicable to public managers attempting to embark upon similar workforce transformation programs focused on creating public value in public services:

- Keep at the core a clear focus on what you're trying to achieve: The efforts in Queensland were rooted in a clear business case outlining the financial benefits on government organizations that would ultimately lead to improved public service outcomes. This clear understanding of the link between the initiative and



Sometimes people need a push to accept change.

Mike Burnheim, Chief Executive,
Queensland Shared Services Agency

improved outcomes was instrumental in driving through the changes – despite a high level of resistance from staff and unions.

- Do not underestimate the scale of the workforce transformation: Whilst difficult to map out from the start, large workforce transformation programs such as the one in Queensland require significant resources and sustained efforts over a long period of time. Being realistic about the level of investment and the timescale necessary to implement the changes will help manage expectations and perceptions of the success of the initiatives – this is key to secure continued support and sponsorship of the changes and will help mitigate risks in the process.
- Focus on intended benefits – not just for the organizations or services, but for employees too: Changing workforces is ultimately about people. Any workforce transformation that jeopardizes the self interest of staff therefore needs to be managed

carefully. In engaging with staff, it is necessary to focus on intended benefits and balance negatives with positives. It is also critical to, where possible, put alternative propositions to people so that they do not feel disempowered.

- Provide high level of training and development: A key lesson from Queensland is the fact that people are less resistant to change if they have undergone appropriate training and development activities and fully understand the nature of the changes and what they need to do to operate in new environments.
- Evaluating progress and impact: Although evaluation in the form of a Balanced Scorecard and performance management frameworks has been built into each stage of the program, these initial frameworks have not enabled a full identification of outcomes of the shared services initiative. The project team now recognizes that they need to focus on developing and measuring

metrics that will tell them more about their achievement against outcomes. To that effect, a Benefits Management Framework is currently being developed that will focus on measuring both the financial and non-financial benefits of the program, accompanied by a full fee for service costing model, which will be introduced in July 2008. In developing the framework, it is recognized that it is notoriously difficult to measure the full impact of shared services and to establish a link of causality between the change initiative and outcomes for users and citizens.

The early lessons from Queensland demonstrate how shared services can minimize duplication of efforts and create efficiency gains and free up resources to front-line services. Similarly, by joining up work processes and back office functions across individual government organizations, shared services offers innovative ways in which to streamline public services and create more nimble public services.

10

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