

Shaping the Views at the Top 2016 Len Kosova Workshop Group Summary

Challenge: Improving Government responsiveness to stakeholders and customers

Identify Critical Issues

- Limited money/resources
- Tension between the different needs of different clients/customers/patrons and stakeholders
- There are a large number of different customers that we need to know the needs of; there is a risk of blind spots
- Government can be driven in different directions by clients/customers, by regulations and by resources
- Political mandates do not always align with the results of engagement
- Internal culture change is required to implement major changes
- Lack of information sharing within and between silos at different scales can lead to poor customer responsiveness
- The age of some legislation can be a barrier to responding to stakeholder needs and wants
- The form of legislation can be unresponsive to change
- There is a need to minimise the lag time between the mandate for a policy option and implementation

Potential Solutions

(consider: who, what, where, when, why, and wow)

- Transparency
 - o Increase the use of plain language/easy english
 - o Train staff to be interpreters to the public and to each other
 - o Have conversations with customers about willingness to pay
 - There is a need to empower the community to be able to have these conversations
 - o Commit to communicating with the public about failures
 - o Asking how, why and when people want to be engaged
 - o Encourage dialogue and building trust, even in small ways
- Change the way legislation/regulations/policy to make them more flexible. This may involve a “delegation” of more items from legislation into regulation or policy
- Work with the public to encourage an appetite for change and risk in Government
- Departments should have engagement experts that act as internal consultants on the topic
 - o Education/training needs to provide the skills Government will require
- Governments should use indicators and measures based less on the overall budget spend and more on the improvement to services within a budget
- Government should increase staffing changes that reduce the length of time individuals spend in a role
 - o We need more generalists rather than specialists
 - o We need to investigate and change our recruitment models

Implementation Issues / Risks

- Too long of a lag between publication of a decision and implementation will result in a breakdown of trust
- Conflicts of interests between elected officials and the results of engagement (elected officials must be brought along for the ride)
- For some changes, current leadership may be too fixed on past approaches to take full advantage of changes
- Resistance to change/risk, and “the blame game”
 - Change management for staff and public will be required
 - The time required for this culture change may be significant
- Ego-centric information sharing by departments