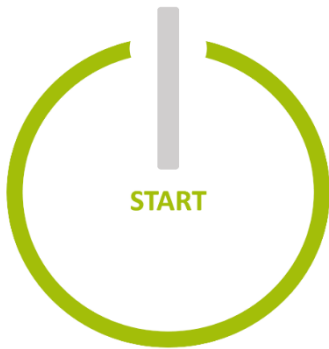

5 ways to kick-start your change programme

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“The beginning is the most important part of the work.” - Plato.

Following ancient wisdom, Meeta Thareja and Suzie Campbell offer a starter list for your change programme.

1. Start with the end in mind

Why do you want to change? Why do you want to be more efficient? Often we walk into organisations and find out the only reason they want to be efficient is for the sake of being efficient. It's not that they've not got a vision for themselves or don't want to enhance their customer experience, but it's usually a simple case of the two existing in separate parallel realities for the organisation. They want to be more effective but run an efficiency programme completely divorced from that objective. Which explains why the benefits of so many efficiency programmes atrophy over time. Do not start your change programme unless you have combined your organisational universe and have clearly established the end in mind. As clichéd as it sounds – have a clear vision – a vision for your change programme!

2. People make it happen

Once you've got your vision, you have what you need to engage and inspire your people. Get this right from day one. Engaging people from the start helps build a shared solution and one that's sustainable. In the work we've done with universities, we invariably find that the best ideas come from front line staff – you just haven't heard them yet. It is never too early to start communicating with your people and turn the energy into enthusiasm before it starts to turn into anxiety.

3. Speak to your customer

If you don't know what your customers want, speak to your customers. If you think you know what your customers want, still speak to your customers! The gap between what you think your customers want and what they really want can be vast. Do not underestimate the power of that one conversation with your customer. Very often we find organisations waste money on improving services that customers don't need. Your customers can give you a clear idea on what it is that you need to focus investment on and help identify quick wins.

4. Know what your starting point is

The natural instinct in most organisations is to dive straight into improvements. You can't improve if you don't know where you are today. Baselining the 'as-is' means you know what you need to improve, what you don't and you've signposted what next. It ensures you don't end up trimming the muscle along with the fat. It also gives you the



yardstick to measure your success against. Done smartly, it can be a great tool to engage your people in identifying the problem, not just the solution.

5. Be focused but flexible

As important as it is to have a clear strategy and objectives, it is important to have a change programme that is nimble enough to respond to changing priorities. Because priorities and circumstances, as we know, will change. C'est la vie! Your change programme needs to strike a balance between the large and transformational and the quick and dirty. Don't set in stone a two year programme that is going to be out of date by the time you start implementing it.

We'd love to hear your views and any add-ons to this list!

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