

The no-change approach to organisational change

Starting where you are

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I help organisations learn more about themselves and in doing so become more effective

Currently in a team of HiveMinders helping Northern Gas Networks discover 'new ways of working'

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Today's chat

Is a brief overview of approach we've been taking with our colleagues at a client - to facilitate a move to more effective ways of working.

I won't be talking about the mechanics of Agile/Lean implementation methods - it's a high level story of our journey so far, sharing some lessons we've learnt along the way.

Client context and goals



- Northern Gas Networks (NGN) - Gas distributor
- 3000 colleagues. £400m turnover
- Highly regulated industry, potentially dangerous working environment, strong command and control, control & competence culture
- Forward thinking CEO
- Pioneering new CIO (Dave Clark - well known to HiveMind)

- Technology estate managed by range of S.I.
- Relatively high IT spend for industry
- Initial goals to reduce IT spend and foster culture of innovation and improvement throughout organisation
- Ambition to reach goals through benefits of Agile/Lean practices, starting in IT



Common agile/lean change approaches

- Implement a methodology
- Implement a scaling framework
- Implement a change framework
- Programmes of change/Business Transformation initiatives



Characteristics of common approaches

- Change is external or 'outside-in' - consultants and/or management
- Process centric
- At best assume culture is changeable, at worst ignore it
- Focused on outcomes/end-state
- People on the periphery
- Change begins immediately

All have something in common:

Amplify resistance



We're trying a different approach at NGN

Got going with 2 core principles

- Start with what you do now
- Respect current processes, roles, responsibilities and titles

And a few basic practices

- Visualise the work
- Colocate teams
- Provide autonomy and purpose
- Improve collaboratively



Characteristics of this approach

- Things get going quickly - no change to way things work
- Change is internal
- People at the heart of it
- Engagement is inherent, generates intrinsic motivation
- Focused on the present - on how the work 'works'
- Sympathetic to current culture

In summary:

Amplify learning.....

.....leading to change from within



What we found.....

- The way things work is surfaced and constantly visible
 - The concept of resistance is subordinated, in some cases muted
 - Change has come from within and at a sustainable pace
 - Leaders have started to appear, at all levels
 - Innovation has started to increase naturally
 - It's spreading, and outside of IT
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- More valuable things are being worked on
 - Things are getting done more effectively
 - Things are getting delivered quicker
 - People are happier
 - NGN are becoming agile..... not 'doing' agile
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- It's still early..... 90 days so far



Guiding ongoing evolutionary change

- An appetite and ability to change has evolved
- HiveMinders are helping show what path to take next
- Working closely with people at all levels in NGN - building capability

An example - Technology and operational delivery context:

- When a team has got going, surfaced the way things work and started to work effectively together:
 - Introduce as a natural part of ongoing, evolutionary change:
 - Implementing pull
 - Limiting WIP
 - Managing Flow
 - Building in feedback loops



Anecdotal learnings

- Kanban has been a set of principles for effective organisational change - more than a set of practices to get things done, deliver software etc
- At the 'doing' level autonomy and value focus has enabled a mix of approaches e.g. Scrum, Kanban, hybrids etc
- With exec level buy-in it can spread quickly... too quickly
- Evolutionary change but accelerated - control the rate of change to match culture/environment, tactical etc. In your control/influence - HiveMind practitioner

- HiveMind team on the call for more examples? Col., Chris, Colin, Mark, Nicola, Ethar, Ian etc

Summary of the approach and our experience

- Start where you are - get going
- Visualise and colocate - but don't change how the work 'works'
- Put people at the centre of everything
- Don't try to change the culture, embrace it
- Don't 'be' the change..... provide an environment for it occur naturally and the direction
- Sense when change from within is being demanded - and harness the appetite

END

Thank you

Questions, discussion.

