



Whitepaper

Improve, Transform and Save



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Following a steep increase in expectations, local government organisations across the UK are facing a growing necessity for a process management program to support compliance, digital transformation and service improvements.

Introduction

Cost savings, staff satisfaction and effective COVID-19 solutions have increased the already enormous pressure on local government, resulting in an increased number of councils recognising their requirement for an effective, human-centric process management platform.

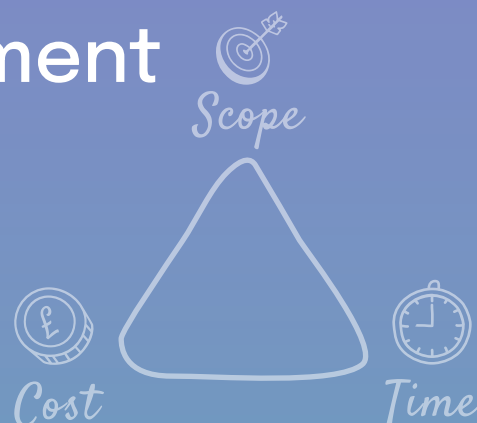
Our observations underline the belief that councils are facing great challenges that we believe are best dealt with on a process management foundation:

- The pandemic has forced public bodies to rapidly implement changes.
- Cost savings are achieved by reducing headcount (via digitisation)
- The focus on process management and the involvement of operational staff is critical for success in digital transformation.



The process management objective triangle

Working on improving processes is completed as a necessity and the three key objectives we see councils striving to reach are continuous service improvement, digital transformation and cost savings.



In most cases we find the three key objectives are reliant on one another. For example, cost savings are an outcome of improving the effectiveness of services and subsequently they are driven by digital transformation. By placing operational staff at the centre of that triangle, we can make process management human-centric.

At Engage Process, we have seen hundreds of cases that confirm human-centricity is a key success factor. The importance of getting multifunctional staff thoroughly involved in any process is for the benefit of digital transformation.

We see three main reasons for this:

1

Processes need to be optimised prior to being digitised. It makes a lot of sense to thoroughly go through a process and to use “lean” techniques to improve it. One of our council customers reported a great example, whereby 80% of the process steps in their complaint handling process were found to be non-value added. The subsequent optimisations were made quickly and, as a result, the following digitisation was cheaper and more effective.

2

Another important aspect of human-centricity is the role of consensus. The number of cases needing an exception to be dealt with is often greater than the number of cases going through like a clean case. In most organisations, only the operational staff will be aware of the all-important exceptions, placing the staff at the centre of process improvement.

3

The third reason is focused on getting multi-functional teams involved in the transformation of core processes. These teams will become drivers of change instead of change resistors.



Councils are special



A non-visual organisation is one that deals with primary processes that are not automatically visible. Although there are definite benefits to visible processes and solutions in comparison to some non-visual organisations processes, when using the right process management platform, non-visual organisations can work just as seamlessly to improve processes.

We have taken the process management **objectives improve, transform** and **save** as key drivers to justify effort and attention for human-centric process management in non-visual organisations.



Process management: yet another management program or the common foundation for all?

Many non-visual organisations have started to integrate process management programs into their digital transformation efforts. Process management platforms are often managed by business analysts and if done correctly, the process management program and associated workshops are a direct translation of the primary services delivered by the organisation.

These processes are pivotal for operating staff to explore their work and form the basis for any transformation, compliance or cost reduction program.

We acknowledge that many organisations have a multitude of programs and goals for process management:



Streamlining different management programs together puts into perspective the primary services. The importance of bringing processes in line with one another is understood clearly when we think of interdepartmental goals. The time and cost efficiencies of programs that run in line with each other are in most cases invaluable.



Speak the same language as the operational staff. Not just literally, but by expressing understanding and driving changes in the organisation that demonstrate solutions to their concerns.

Goal focus and Management support is key

Where we want staff involvement in change, and possibly even people-driven change, management has an important leadership role to play. We see six important points for management teams to be aware of:



1

Clarify overall corporate goals that can be shared by the whole organisation and are translated from the highest level to the work floor. In setting goals try to translate them to the P (pricing or costs), Q (quality and functionality) and D (delivery, speed, timeliness) of the core services. Goals should be customer-focused. For example we strive to shorten lead times on all our services, reduce costs for our community and rapidly design the new services that are needed to support both the staff and the public customer journey (new laws, working from home, increase in social services).

2

Take away threats and be honest. Some organisations need to reduce headcount. Make clear how that will be done. If reduction of headcount is needed and if it can sufficiently be done by natural attrition, make that clear.

3

Focus on customer service processes first. We sometimes see councils that work on improving the 'annual budgeting process' or the 'HR hiring process'. These processes are not part of the reason for the existence of your organisation, instead, they are supporting processes. Thus, focus on the primary processes that the customers and staff can easily identify with.

4

When processes are improved, changed, new services designed, IT systems implemented, often the tasks of staff will change as well. **Make sure you recognise, manage and communicate this change and you assign coaches and training programs to support this.**

5

When teams and staff are empowered to drive change, **make sure that you listen to them and take their improvement suggestions seriously.** This is a natural game. When staff suggest small improvements, put great effort into making these work. Something that will encourage them to speak out when they find more.

6

Celebrate and communicate successes. However small the improvements are, communicate them internally and identify which goals are achieved by doing so, preferably with a clear impact on the above-mentioned P, Q or D. Try to do these communications on a regular basis so people keep pushing.

Involve your teams

The essence of any improvement is knowing the process inside and out. Instead of focusing on advanced improvement ideas, we love to emphasise the very basics of process management. We would strongly advise that all stakeholders get to know the processes, including all relevant exceptions.

Getting to know the process with the entire staff is not easily done. You will need to discuss and explore the processes in their language, using icons that mean something to them.

In the process maps, you must be able to drill down to the level of detail needed to address all exceptions.

Finally, you need to be able to look at the process from different angles and ask questions like:

- Where are IT systems supporting the process?
- Which steps are manual?
- Where do we meet and where are the moments of contact with the customer?

Engage Process recognises that organisations that can acknowledge the pivotal impact of staff input to dealing with crisis management, reducing costs, and increasing organisational compliance. Transformation, service improvement and staff efficiency are just a few of the many benefits local government organisations can expect to see if they can successfully integrate a process management platform.





The notion of the non-visual-organisation

As emphasised in a McKinsey survey, most transformation projects are not successful. A lack of staff involvement and insufficient focus on process management are among the reasons mentioned.

To understand some of the failures behind process management implementation, it is important to understand some core characteristics of the organisations requiring digital transformation and process management platforms.

Councils and administrative organisations are among those that often see the most benefit from our process management

platform. These are what we call non-visual organisations. We use the term 'non-visual organisation' where the customer-oriented core processes are administrative in nature.

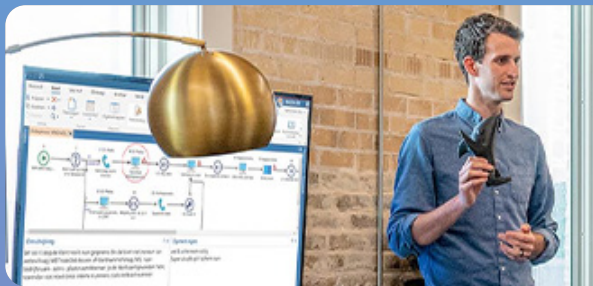
Unlike visual organisations such as manufacturing companies, healthcare services, logistics and transportation, you cannot physically see and experience the core processes, making it harder to notice exceptions and develop timely solutions.

Implementing process management

What are the differences of process management implementation in visual and non-visual organisations? Due to the special nature of non-visual organisations, the implementation of process management and team involvement asks for a different approach.

In visual companies, you empower the teams around the visual process, whereas, in non-visual companies, a very important role is played by process workshops. A quick three-to-four-hour session will see that all the roles within a process are participating in the exploration of the customer process.

To find out more about our workshops, please see our workshop paper:



7 Steps of a great (remote) workshop

[Read more](#)

Similarities of visual and non-visual organisations include people-driven processes and an overall human-centric approach. Multi-functional teams must be formed and staff must be empowered to explore a beginning-to-end process. It is a culture change that includes looking beyond departments.

Another similarity is the importance of stating clear operational goals that are shared and understood by all. For example, asking 'what are the challenges that we have and why are they urgent?' will be a useful exercise here.

Improvement benefits

Improvement aspects are different in the non-visual organisation
Where visual companies often follow the TIM WOODS strategy , in non-visual companies you see a different mix. Typically you get big benefits by:



Reducing lead times by taking out waiting moments where possible.



Improving service time for the primary services of the council. For example, implementing self-service which allows for supportive services to be running 24 hours per day, seven days per week.



First-time right approach and upfront control: check and channel all cases at the beginning of the process.



Combining roles and tasks as much as possible. This includes authorising people to undertake more tasks, giving staff the information and access needed to complete tasks, further reducing the number of “one-level-up” or special expertise cases.



Increasing the simplification of exception tracking and solution implementation. During the discovery of processes by the staff, they will undoubtedly find a number of exceptions that each department will prioritise according to the effect it will have on their process. When you task and authorise the staff to simplify the process they will be able to reduce the number of exceptions and make the process much more effective.

Improved agility!

Getting your staff more involved and taking ownership in change through process management will have a strong impact on the agility of the company. A highly motivated and empowered team can change the way they work almost instantly.

Many organisations have experienced this during the COVID-19 crisis. New services have been created and teams have been required to work from home. However, we believe a motivated team can work differently tomorrow.

IT systems can often remain an exception, as their service changes need to be designed, built, tested and implemented.

Most successful changes are made through a combination of a highly empowered team that immediately responds to the challenge and help in designing and implementing the required systems.



Our Conclusions

A good process management programme can be the common foundation for all change management of councils. It can bring speed, agility, cost reduction and improved quality to all services. But to do so, there are five requirements:

1

People must be involved in process management.

2

Processes must be discussed in sufficient detail to include all relevant exceptions.

3

Processes and process steps must be enriched with data for management programs.

4

Ongoing review / continuous improvement must be formalised.

5

Digital transformation and RPA must also be driven and supported by process management by the operating staff and must not be seen as a special IT staff program.



Our mission : Seeing is believing!

In non-visual organisations it is critical for the staff to see, live, experience and explore the customer-focused processes that are pivotal to your organisation's existence.

When your staff see the processes and are empowered and supported to help make improvements, they will start believing in what you collectively do and will help to drive change with you.



Get in touch with us

Interested to learn how Engage Process can support you in your process management activities, such as process workshops?

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About Engage Process

Engage Process empowers staff to discuss, evaluate and improve processes together. Putting the employee first makes Engage Process a true “human centric” solution. This means proactively exploring and reimagining processes in real time, by the people who are actively working with these processes day-to-day. Processes create the foundation for management programmes such as cost savings, compliance, service (re)design, and digital transformation.

Over 300 organisations in Europe and North America use Engage Process on a daily basis. These include City of Edinburgh Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Brunel, City of Brugge, Firmenich, and Leeds Federated Housing Association, as well as many others in different industries.