11.958 Getting Things Implemented: Strategy, People, Performance, and Leadership
IAP 2009

Collaborative Strategy + Performance Management

11.958 Getting Things Implemented

January 2009

DAY 3 NOTES

Outline

- **Collaborative Strategy (1 church, 1 child)**
  - Rationales for collaboration (collaboration as rational win-win)
  - Lead implementers: Varied roles
  - Enabling the partnership: Legal reform, process improvement, restructuring, new norms, etc.
  - The multiple meanings of race in the case
- **Performance Management (DC)**
  - Choosing good measures
  - Aligning with strategy
  - Beyond a paper exercise: Political management to get it done

Rationales for collaborating

- **Partnering or collaborating as an alternative to other strategies for "producing": "Make" (do it in house) or "Buy" (contract for it).**

- **Is it the *best* way to produce an outcome? What are the risks/rewards?**

- **Two broad rationales**

  - Enhance legitimacy and support ("soft power"), the genius of multi-lateralism

  - Enhance operating capacity

What's in it for us?

For the state agency

- **Legitimacy: Changing the face of the agency and the adoption process, making adoption a community mission.**

- **Logistical and other assets: spatially distributed workforce and facilities, well-placed "ambassadors" (volunteers).**

For the churches

- **Access to decisionmakers, an opportunity to strengthen families, chance to "practice religious community" around a new objective.**

1 Church: Lead Implementers

Remarkably varied roles:

- **Strategy-maker:** Develop and update a well-informed gameplan (anticipate barriers, know their stakeholders and patterns of influence, identify what they need to know but don't, etc.)
- **Mobilizer of resources:** from participation to money and other kinds of contributions.
- **Policy advocate:** Identifying and persuasively arguing for changes in policy and practice.
- **Operations chief:** Fine-tuning the "gears" (thinking through nitty-gritty)
- Civic or social **"entrepreneur"** encompasses several of these.

Enabling the partnership

Thinking through and securing *changes* in practice, not just "teaming up" to do what each "side" already did:

- Legal reform, pitched on the merits plus potential savings to taxpayer
- Moving activities to new sites/times
- Reforms to screening process, to be less biased against prospective black adoptive parents.
- Re-structuring state agency
- Staffing changes, training, and more
- Creating the new nonprofit to help institutionalize the innovation, "outlast the founders."

Multiple meanings of RACE

- **A fault line between public agency and one of its key publics, a proxy for mistrust (legitimacy and support missing)**

- **A category of data collection and performance tracking (spotlights a racial disparity in wait times for adoption)**

- **A source of shared history, identity, and thus solidarity (helping "our own")—a social resource for mobilizing other resources.**

  But class cultures important as well (e.g. middle-class staff judgments about what a "good" adoptive family looks like, how it functions).

Summary: Lessons

- **Collaboration is one way—not necessarily the best way—to produce change. It poses risks and potential rewards (that may not be realized).**

- **Effective collaboration often demands that implementers play a wide variety of roles well (strategic, operational, mobilization-focused, etc.)**

- **Collaboratives evolve through stages, navigated jointly: agreeing on a problem, developing strategy, implementing ("co-producing" change)**

- **Collaboratives can have wider ripple effects (political participation, policy reform, etc).**

Performance management

- **Systems of performance measures and rules and incentives coupled with them ("management") should align with broader strategies.**

- **PM can promote good behavior as well as bad behavior, also distract (is time consuming, imposes an opportunity cost).**

- **So beyond alignment, we care about *selecting* best-possible measures.**

The quality of a measure depends in part on its purpose (list 1 of 2)

Purpose	Traits of measures to help achieve
Evaluate	Outcomes, combined with outputs and effects of exogenous factors ("everything else that affects the outcome significantly)
Control	Inputs and outputs that can be regulated
Budget	Efficiency measures, e.g. productivity
Learn	Deviations from the expected, discoveries about cause and effect, barriers

From Robert Behn (various works)

Purposes cont'd (2 of 2)

Purpose	Traits of measures to help achieve
Improve	Links between specific operational processes and outputs or outcomes.
Motivate	Almost real-time outputs/comes compared with production targets (e.g. monitoring wait times in the DMV, instant reporting)
Promote	Easily understood measures that citizens/customers really care about.
Celebrate	Periodic, significant performance targets, achievement of which generates a sense of individual and collective accomplishment

Assessing DC's scorecard measures

- **Note: The "goals" are really targets (specific values of measures)**
- **The quality is uneven, from DMV measures that meet the "promote" purpose (clear signal to public) to activity and output measures not clearly linked to public value.**
- **Some link more clearly to citywide strategy than others.**
- **Was there "lowballing"? (setting targets you know you can easily achieve)**
- **Wider stakes: managing city government's human resources, credibility of the Mayor, restoring the public's trust in government, securing and sustaining "home rule."**

"Good" measures

- **Should induce more of something good.**

- **Should include, or be coupled with, controls to prevent a "bad," such as: loss of quality, abusive behavior, only serving the most able/easiest to serve ("creaming"). NYC assertive policing example (police deployed more aggressively, complaints of abuse went up fast).**

- **Should convince the people that need to respond to them, not just a detached observer.**

Mitigating the risks of reporting outcome-measure targets

- **Rethink your impact and value proposition:** Can you gain more control over the "confounders" (factors outside your current intervention). There will always be limits to what you can control. *Example*: Building family assets by promoting savings versus fighting predatory lending and other "asset stripping."

- **Explain how the world works:** Tell a simple story about trends beyond your control (demographic shifts, market downturns, etc.) important for the outcome.

- **Consider targeting "intermediate outcomes"** (see Hatry) if "end outcomes" are too hard or risky.

Political management considerations

- **Experts can help pick technically sound measures, but constituencies "power" change.** What are their interests? How to build a coalition that backs real changes in practice, response to performance management systems, from line staff level to political bosses, outside influentials (Media strategy? Civic leaders?).

- **Risk of embarrassment, potential for cost savings, opportunities to gain political capital—can all be resources for building such a coalition.**