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**MANAGEMENT
SCHOOL**

Change in the Public Sector: Why is it so Hard?

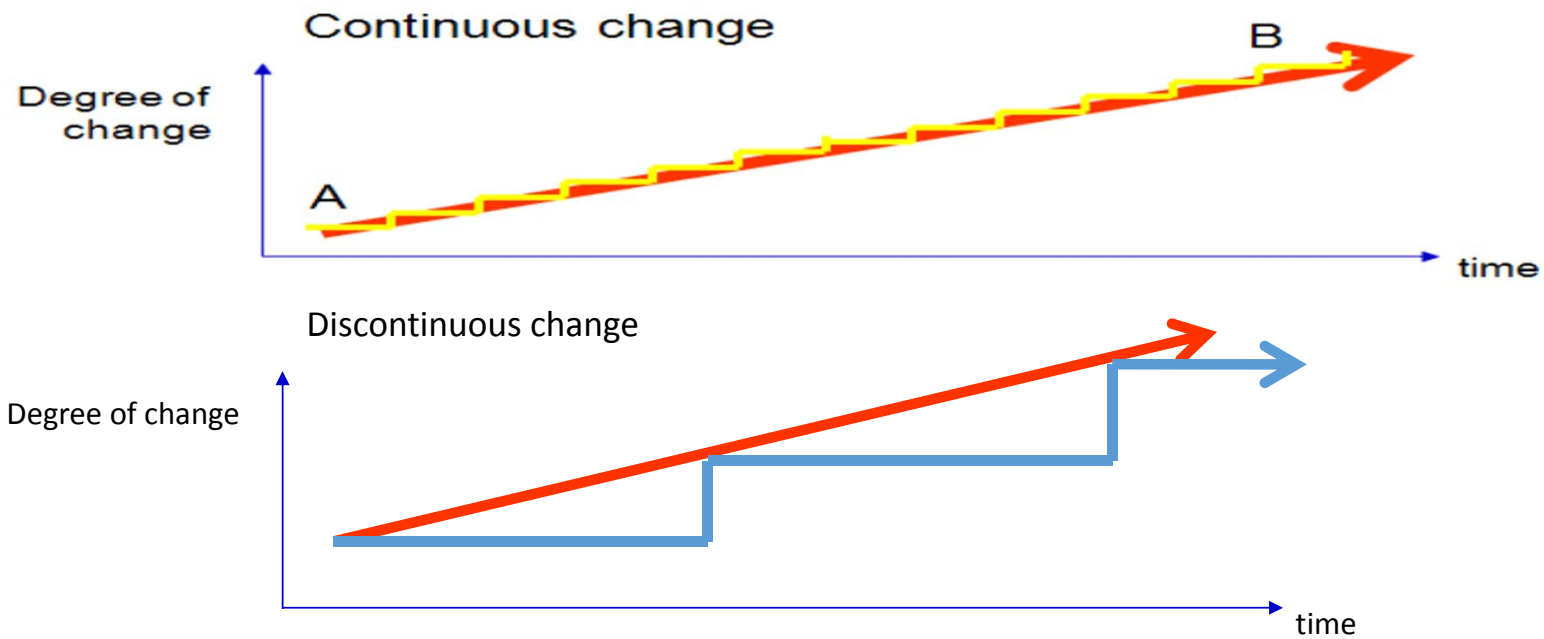
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Queen's University Management School

So, for the next 20 minutes

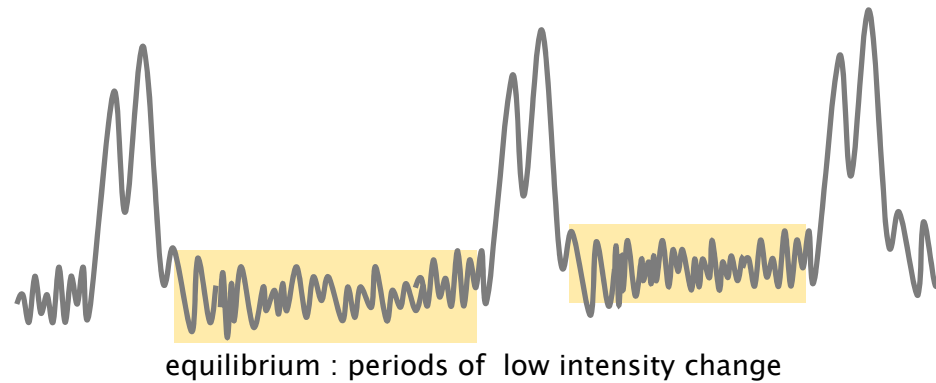
- Who am I?
- Why am I talking to you about (local Government) change?
- What are we going to (v quickly) do?
- And why it might matter....

What do we mean by Change?

- Change occurs when the state of something is altered or modified. It involves moving from one state to a different state.



Punctuated equilibrium is the dominant pattern of change



This is the dominant pattern of change because a number of factors act to limit the degree of change that occurs in the periods of low intensity change

Organisations as Open Systems

Most social organisations are open systems i.e. they are open to the influences of the external environment on which they depend for survival and success. If organisations do not appropriately interact with, and adapt to, the external environment then they will wither and die.

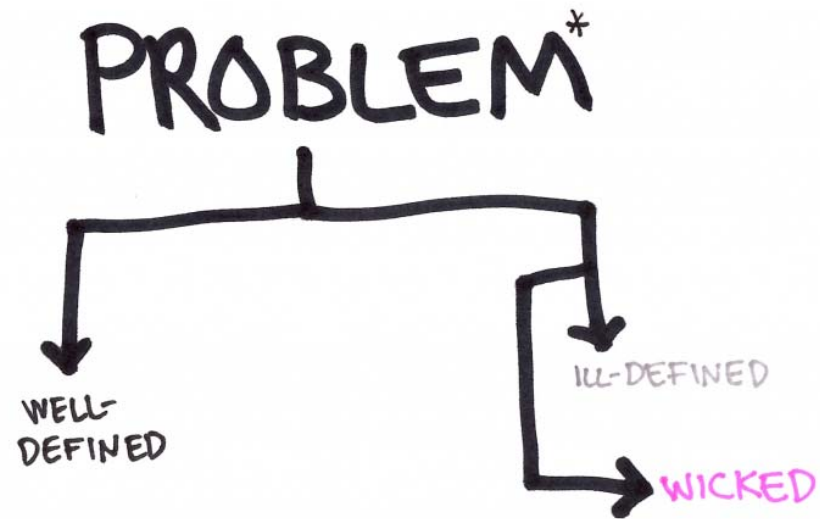
What do we know about Change in the Public Sector? (and is it different?)

- Different Challenges – public accountability, demonstrating value for money, increasing expectations regarding service labels and quality from both public and politicians
- Boundary between public and private sector increasingly ‘hazy’
- Not one approach that works all the time
- Two main approaches – Planned v Emergent
- Also ‘Bold Stroke’ or ‘Long March’ (Kanter 1992)

Change Dimensions: Laminated and interconnected

- Societal (Wicked problems)
- Organisational
- Individual
- And all the spaces in between

Wicked Problems



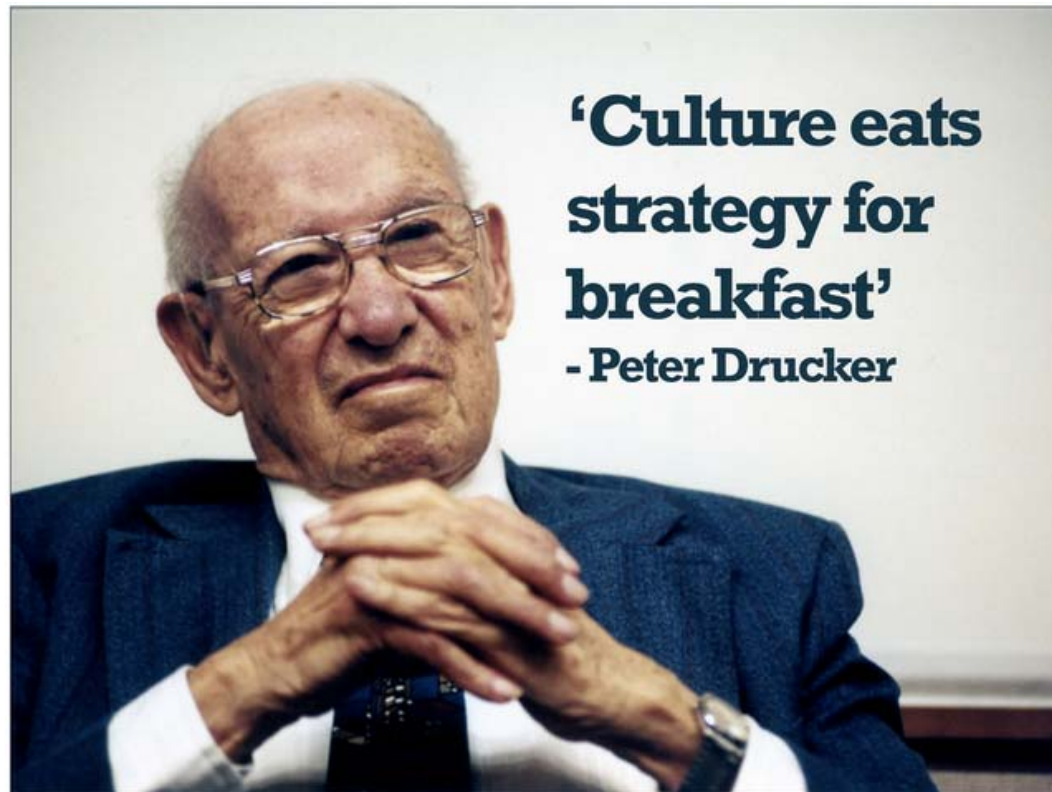
* THORNDIKE, 1931: PROBLEM = WHERE THE ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ATTAIN GOAL(S) ARE NOT OBVIOUS.

Changes to Local Government NI

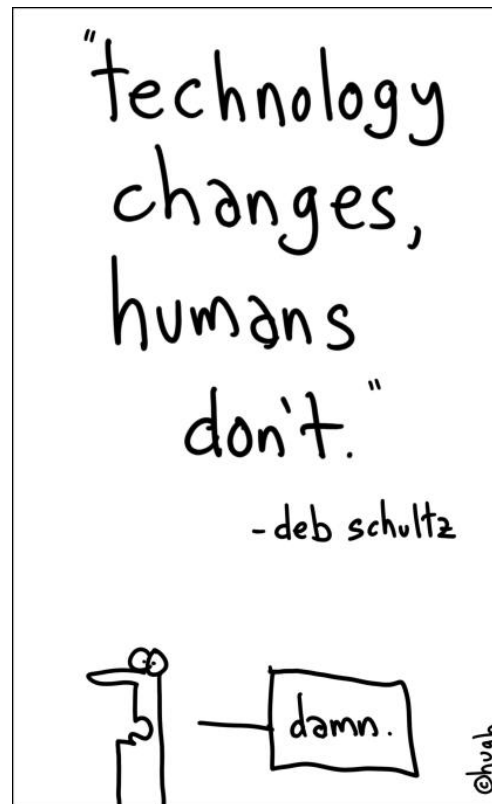
- From 26 – 11 Councils
- Structural Change
- Cultural Change



Why does culture matter



Culture Change



Organisational Realities

- Practical Drift -



Do as I say.....

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“I want you to find a bold and innovative way to do everything exactly the same way it’s been done for 25 years.”

Individual

- Leadership is inescapable
- Change is psychologically very difficult
- Pacing matters (Kotter)
- Studies have found a link between the magnitude of life changes – irrespective of the desirability of the changes – and illness susceptibility - This relationship can be moderated by individual differences (e.g. hardiness and self esteem) and past experience
- Organisational power and politics are tough
- Organizational change involves a change in situational factors (such as technology, structures, and systems) and a series of personal transitions for all those affected
- Resistance is ever present

Getting it to stick and some questions...

- Kanter's Law *'Everything looks like a failure in the middle'*
- Resilience – the other big thing
- Boundary spanners – and why they are invaluable
- What is catastrophe for your org?
- What does success look like?



Questions / Comments ?

Keep in touch!

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