

Critical Success Factors

Right players, in the right roles, operating at the right level

An early theme that emerged from the interview data was compression (role holders working one or more levels below the level of their role) across the organization. There are typically four reasons why this happens (or sometimes, a combination of two or more of these):

1. Roles are not clearly defined at the appropriate level;
2. Role holders are unclear about the level of work of their role;
3. Role holders lack the requisite skill, knowledge, experience or information processing capability to successfully execute on the requirements of the role;
4. Role holders who are new to their higher level role choose to continue to execute the lower level work they are more accustomed to.

As part of the implementation of the new organization design, roles must be designed to reflect level-appropriate accountabilities. Before final placement of people in roles, potential role holders should be assessed to determine whether they have the information processing capability, knowledge, skills, experience and leadership capabilities sufficient to the requirements of the role.

Identified theme(s):

- Department-wide confusion about accountability and level of work contributes to challenges with the LW3 continuous improvement work and LW4 general management work

Additional Focus on business process improvement

Another theme that emerged in the course of data collection and analysis was the limited volume of cross-divisional inter- and intra-departmental business process and systems improvement work underway. This theme is directly related to the theme noted above.

When role holders are not executing at the right levels, important work fails to be done. In this case, the important work (which should happen at LW3 and LW4) involves designing, implementing and continuously improving systems and processes that are designed to facilitate the flow of work inside a Division, between Divisions in the same Department, and between Departments.

This situation is particularly acute between Public Works & Planning and Economic Development (at the Departmental level) but was also reported regularly between Divisions within Public Works.

The implementation of the new organization provides a good opportunity to clearly define these continuous improvement accountabilities, and to hold the appropriate role holders accountable for execution.

Identified theme(s):

- The attention of LW4 and LW3 organizational leaders is focused inward and down, suppressing cross-boundary work required within PW and across City departments
- This has a high degree of impact on Continuous Improvement work, which is generally insufficient for an organization of this scale and complexity

Technology and a clear Digital Strategy

Consistent with the theme above, a third theme that emerged early in data collection and analysis was the importance of having the appropriate technologies in place to support the effective operations in the current state, and to enable system-wide process improvement.

The absence of a clearly-defined enterprise digital strategy and enforcement of common and scalable technology standards and infrastructure contributes to the wide variety of technologies deployed throughout the Department, and heightens the risk of further technological divergence over time.

As the workload within Public Works increases (a notion implied by the City's ambitious new strategic plan) and results of emerging demographics in the workforce change the availability of labour, process improvement and structural changes will need the support of enhanced technology to cope with the increasing workload.

While there are pockets of advanced technologies in place in Public Works, some attention should be paid to increasing the use of technologies throughout the Department (and potentially, between Departments) in order to support and enable process improvements and changing workloads.

Identified theme(s):

- Operational improvements, critical to future success, will allow the city to continue to deliver services at or above current level
- Technology and management systems and process improvement are critical.