

The 7 Lenses of Transformation

Foreword



Kevin Cunningham and Tony Meggs

The government's transformation portfolio includes over 50 major projects, spanning nearly all departments and agencies and representing more than a third of [Government Major Projects Portfolio \(GMPP\)](#). This portfolio is continually evolving but at present, it will realise nearly £50 billion in benefits and is scheduled to deliver well into the 2020s.

These projects will help to fulfill our objectives set out in the [Government Transformation Strategy](#) - our plan to transform the relationship between citizen and state, harness new technology to improve public services and make government more efficient. Exiting the European Union also creates opportunities to deepen and accelerate the vital work of transforming government in order to improve people's lives.

We co-chair the Transformation Peer Group, which brings together the wider government community to support the successful delivery of these projects. We are continually impressed by the community's passion for strengthening government's transformation expertise, and the Civil Service's long term commitment to this transformation journey.

In programmes as diverse as modernising courts and tribunals, introducing new ways of accessing general practitioner health services and reforming the welfare system, the combined scope and scale exceeds anything we have seen around the world in the public and private sectors. It shows what the UK Civil Service can achieve.

While the benefits of transformation can be huge, delivering these projects can be incredibly challenging. By their very nature, complex transformations usually involve significant organisational and cultural change, introducing new ways of working, and experimenting with new and innovative technology. Importantly, much of this needs to be delivered at the same time.

The 7 Lenses provide a practical guide for understanding complex transformations. They are the result of extensive collaboration between colleagues from across government who have first hand experience in

leading large scale transformations, supported by external experts. We have consolidated this expertise into a simple tool to guide your organisation's transformation journey.

Seeing this expert community grow and create tools like the 7 Lenses gives us high confidence that we will continue to improve our ability to deliver the transformation of government for the benefit of citizens.

Kevin Cunnington (Director General, Government Digital Service) and Tony Meggs (Chief Executive, Infrastructure and Projects Authority)

Overview of the 7 Lenses

As of 2018, government is working to deliver [more than 50 major transformation projects](#). They will realise almost £50 billion worth of benefits that will deliver into the next parliament. The sheer scope, scale and complexity of this portfolio is extraordinary. We identified some common characteristics across the [Government Major Projects Portfolio \(GMPP\)](#) that helped us to define the transformation portfolio and to understand the nature of these projects.

All of these projects do at least one of the following:

- transform services for citizens, which often requires people and businesses to interact with government in new ways
- make government more efficient, by reducing the costs of delivering services and improving our internal processes
- implement new policy, often to achieve a very long term outcome

These transformation projects are different in their nature from traditional major projects and invariably need multiple interdependent elements to be delivered concurrently. In addition to the drivers for transformation set out above, many also feature the following characteristics:

- implementation of new operating models, which means that new business processes need to be delivered in multiple phases while continuing to maintain legacy services
- organisation redesign and culture change, which results in new organisational structures and expectations around staff adapting to new ways of working
- location change, through estates rationalisation to deliver efficiencies or changing where services are delivered to improve the user experience by co-locating services and teams
- highly digitally-enabled, designing and delivering new digital front-end services or improving the back-end systems services rely on

Transformation programmes are extremely challenging in any environment, particularly as we face the delivery challenge of leaving the European Union. But we have recognised the need to work together across government, to share experience and learn collectively to improve our delivery capability and capacity.

7 Lenses

"The 7 Lenses give a helpful framework for large, complex programmes like HMCTS reform – allowing us to test, examine and drive what we are doing from all angles."

Susan Acland-Hood

Chief Executive, Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service

In 2016 we created a cross-government community of practitioners to share experience of transformation. We wanted to learn from successful work across government to identify areas we collectively need to tackle and improve our chances of delivery.

The 7 Lenses emerged from discussions with change leaders across government to develop a common language about what successful transformation programmes have in common. All of these programmes are very different, but we were able to identify common themes that you need to get right. We've distilled this mass of learning experience into a tool that is straightforward to apply in your environment.

Using the lenses will give you confidence and reassurance that you are focussing on the right priorities, and will help you to identify which areas need more attention.

This tool was developed and reviewed by experienced practitioners from within and outside government from a variety of roles, including programme directors, senior responsible owners and chief digital officers. We are grateful to them for being very candid in sharing their experiences of what has gone well, and less well, in the past.

The 7 Lenses have been tested and used over the past 2 years to help projects right across the government's major projects portfolio.

"We found the 7 Lenses a valuable tool as we created the new Office for Statistics Regulation, focused on ensuring statistics serve the public. The Lenses prompted us to think through this organisational transformation from a variety of perspectives." Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, UK Statistics Authority

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) and Government Digital Service (GDS) have been using the 7 Lenses in [our ongoing work to support delivery](#), for example through the IPA's [independent assurance of major projects](#) and GDS' [digital and technology spend controls](#). We're publishing the 7 Lenses because, though we know there is no single recipe for success, we've found that using this common language is helpful for teams delivering transformation across government. This publication supports ongoing work to help people understand what the 7 Lenses are and how they can use them.

Across government, we'll be continually developing tools and products to support transformation delivery. We built the 7 Lenses with the community and we would value feedback based on your experience of using them.

You can [join the cross-government transformation community](#) and find more community resources.

Using the 7 Lenses

The 7 Lenses are helpful when applied at different stages in your transformation journey. They're intended as a common language, which can help you find useful materials from other parts of government, as well as to develop your own materials and tools.

This tool is primarily aimed at departmental change leaders, including senior responsible owners (SROs), programme directors, chief digital officers and chief information officers. It has proven to be equally applicable to any size organisation (including agencies, small departments, parts of a big department and big departments).

How the 7 Lenses can help

The 7 Lenses are particularly useful to give teams a common language and consistent framework for talking about transformation. They are useful throughout the lifecycle of the transformation.

When setting up your transformation, the 7 Lenses can help you:

- structure your work and get started
- define success
- secure commitment and support from senior leaders
- make sure you have considered all of the things you will need to do to be successful

The 7 Lenses can be used at any time as a healthcheck to establish:

- how are you doing?
- what's the next most important thing you should focus on? (prioritisation and planning)
- will you get there? (reality check)
- are you missing anything?

People who support and assure projects have found the 7 Lenses helpful to:

- educate on transformation programme management
- provide methodology
- talk the same language
- reduce the time required to become productive

The 7 Lenses can be used as part of delivery assurance at different stages of the project, and especially at major project review points. Familiarising yourself with the 7 Lenses and where you are will enable you to have better conversations at these review points.

The [7 Lenses maturity matrix](#) has been developed to help teams reflect on how their transformation programme is performing today, and agree an ambition for where it should be in 6 or 12 months. It's a useful framework to apply the 7 Lenses and can be used alongside this guidance.

Together this helps to ensure the transformation is delivered in the best possible way.

"In a complex transformation, like Universal Credit, the 7 Lenses give me, as SRO, a way of 'seeing the wood from the trees' and making sense of complex and detailed challenges." Neil Couling, Director General, Universal Credit Programme

Lens 1: Vision

The vision gives clarity around the social outcomes of the transformation and sets out the key themes of how the organisation will operate.

The vision is a compelling picture of the future that aligns stakeholders around the purpose of the transformation, the scale of the ambition and the nature of the benefits. It creates the case for change and describes the user needs, the social and policy outcomes of the transformation. It defines how the organisation will operate.

Why you need this

Having a single view of the future can motivate people to collaborate towards shared outcomes, set the direction for subsequent transformation activities and provide a tool to ensure consistency between organisations.

The vision should be owned by those at the top of the organisation but created by people who represent the breadth and diversity of the business.

How to do this

When creating a vision:

- take time to understand the minister or most senior leader's full vision (it is rarely written down from the start)
- use a number of different ways to articulate the vision (like pictures and words) - have more than a vision statement (though this is still useful)
- allow space for the vision to evolve as learning is built up during the transformation (for example how human behaviours change with a new system)
- recognise that transformation programmes typically take longer than a single parliament - political and organisational priorities will change over the course of a 5 to 10 year programme, so the transformation will need to adapt as the work progresses

Trade offs

You may need to find a balance or compromise between:

- short term political aims versus long term transformation objectives
- evolving the vision in response to external events versus staying aligned with the original vision
- being ambitious versus creating a vision that you have very high confidence in being able to deliver

Red flags

Watch out for:

- rushing to action before there is sufficient clarity
- proceeding with a vision which is either undeliverable or not sufficiently challenging of the current service model
- business leaders not seeing the need to change
- lack of focus on the user (be that either the citizen or users internal to the organisation)
- when the vision is not talked about consistently by the senior leaders in the organisation

Example

HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) have embarked on an ambitious £1bn reform programme to bring new technology and modern ways of working to what is – and will remain – the best justice system in the world. Having a clear and understandable vision for this programme has been critical.

The HMCTS reform programme seeks to combine our respected traditions with technology to modernise and upgrade our justice system, making it easier to access for members of the public who find themselves involved in the system and easier to work in for our colleagues, legal professionals, judges and support services.

HMCTS's vision is set out in "Justice Matters", and this has been driven forward by a regular and interactive "One Conversation" programme to engage and involve its people in the process of change, and engagement with wider stakeholders too. This has been a well-received and understood campaign with plenty of supporting materials (both visual and written guides), and sets a clear vision for HMCTS staff, users of HMCTS services, legal professionals and the judiciary to understand and engage.

Lens 2: Design

The design sets out how the different organisations and their component parts will be configured and integrated to deliver the vision.

Having a coherent design is important because complex transformations need a view of how the whole picture fits together to deliver the vision - for example service design, technology architecture, people structures, processes and contracts - and how the transformation fits more broadly with other parts of the organisational context.

Why you need this

If you don't have a design in place, it can result in missed opportunities, disconnected work in different areas of your organisation, duplication and wasted effort through teams working to different goals. Operating model and agile approaches are useful tools and are complementary - the design approach must adapt to the context and operating environment. It is important to understand which elements need to be defined in advance and which must be iterated as the design progresses.

How to do this

When developing a design:

- have clarity around the design intent and intended outcomes, and understand the boundary of where the design effort stops and how it interfaces with other designs
- before starting the design journey, understand and agree the level of ambition
- include people who know and understand the business in the design team

- remember there is rarely one single 'perfect' design - instead, understand and agree where there are potential trade offs and compromises
- keep in mind the organisational readiness and capability to transform along with the implications for implementation of the design, such as weighing the advantages of a big bang implementation versus an incremental approach

Trade offs

You may need to find a balance or compromise between:

- ambition versus achievability of implementing the design, considering cost and timing constraints
- longer term needs versus shorter term political objectives
- consensus across stakeholders versus letting the design become watered down
- building a shared understanding and trusting each other versus dividing up the work

Red flags

Watch out for:

- getting lost in the detail, losing sight of the transformation outcomes
- insufficient detail to fulfil the intended purpose, like having no actionable examples that bring the design to life
- focussing on the parts of the design we are comfortable with (like process design or technology) rather than what actually matters (for example the design of the service as a whole, what this will mean for the customer and the existing organisation, or how the design fits together)
- not having consensus around the point in time we are designing for
- not having the appropriate governance to make timely decisions

Example

Digital Services at the Border (DSAB) is a good example of a programme where getting the design right has been fundamental. Launched in 2014, DSAB is a successor to the Home Office e-borders programme and is a business transformation programme enabled by information and computer technology.

DSAB required a clear and coherent design because of its inherent complexity. The new software system must cover all main points of entry at UK airports and ports, and the interface with IT security systems. The design had to consider multiple visions across all three areas of people movement (Border Crossing), freight (Advanced Freight Targeting Capability) and advanced security checking (Advance Border Control).

The programme achieved this by getting absolute clarity and freezing of the scope to be delivered. This enabled the team to focus on the service design and the technical architecture. Furthermore, effective resourcing, robust planning and scheduling was critical. Implementation teams were allowed to challenge the design to ensure it was deliverable. The design work also included setting the appropriate management information to monitor performance during delivery. Independent assurance reviews were also critical to the programme as an external sense check that the design would deliver intended outcomes.

Lens 3: Plan

The plan needs to retain sufficient flexibility to be adapted as the transformation progresses while providing confidence of delivery.

The plan provides a roadmap for identifying the sequencing and interdependencies between the different elements and responsibilities across the transformation programme or activity. This helps you to understand where you are heading and have a way to measure that the transformation is on track, while understanding how any critical services will be sustained during the change.

Why you need this

All projects need a plan, but for transformation the plan must reflect the complexity of the programme and accommodate the fact that not everything can be known upfront. It is not just about creating the roadmap as a one off activity, but about the process of iterating and maintaining it within a constantly evolving environment that cuts across organisations. This takes skill. To be successful, organisations need to invest in both adaptive leadership skills and intelligent programme management capability.

How to do this

Invest time and effort upfront in developing a credible plan. This will save time and avoid delay at a later stage. Plan the transformation in chunks that are achievable and can demonstrate incremental success - you can rarely do everything at once.

Ensure that the plan is achievable given the constrained delivery capacity. Use the planning process to detail the resourcing requirements, support understanding of the readiness of the organisation to transform, and plan internal and external communications.

Join project plans up within, and across, the organisation. Operating model changes and other transformational changes need to map to policy commitments.

Trade offs

You may need to find a balance or compromise between:

- keeping flexibility to adapt the plan to emerging changes in the design versus maintaining key milestones and managing more immovable targets such as people relocations
- making plans easy to communicate versus providing detail to gain confidence of deliverability
- responding to the pressure to start delivering versus the need to take sufficient time to develop a robust plan that is deliverable

Red flags

Watch out for:

- organisations or business areas working towards shared outcomes not aligned on the same roadmap
- only focussing on the start of the plan and losing track of the end of the plan (the outcomes and benefits)
- the plan not being owned at a senior enough level
- potential tension between political imperatives and wider transformational priorities
- attempting to predict the future with too much accuracy and detail, or onerous bureaucracy which is not justified

Example

The Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) Universal Credit programme replaces six previous benefits to support people who are unemployed, need employment support or receive tax credits.

The programme originally suffered from having delivery timetables and costs committed to and announced before having properly engaged with delivery teams. This resulted in an over-ambitious plan that didn't fully recognise what was required to achieve its transformational aims on the scale envisaged.

This led to a reset in 2013 and a rethink of the entire delivery approach to enable a more realistic prospect of successful delivery. Its deadline was changed from a complete roll-out within two years to a new 'test and learn' approach built into the plan. This enabled the project to be successfully rolled out, safely and securely, in incremental stages, iterating the plan and the service based on what they learned.

Lens 4: Transformation leadership

Delivering a transformation often means motivating into action a large network of people who are not under the direct management of the transformation leader.

Whereas leadership of traditional projects tends to be about minimising uncertainty, transformation leadership is about creating the right amount of uncertainty to generate productive organisational distress. This requires a higher appetite for risk and an understanding that transformation can take a significant amount of time. Alongside specific programme delivery, transformation leaders need to bring together multiple interrelated disciplines, which will typically include organisation design, culture change and human resources (HR) activity.

Why you need this

Having strong leadership is critical to the effective delivery of transformation. The complexity of transformation places a high demand on the leader and transformation leaders need to recognise this by employing an adaptive leadership style that sustains energy, manages uncertainty and drives a common purpose.

How to do this

The transformation leader:

- forms a compelling vision
- aligns people around the vision and builds community
- is highly digitally aware
- is appropriately disruptive but recognises where structure is required
- creates momentum and demonstrates early wins
- supports people in navigating ambiguity and uncertainty

One leader cannot do everything. Good leaders are aware of their capabilities and bring in the right people to support them to generate better solutions than they could on their own.

Consistency of leadership through the pivotal transformation phases is critical.

Leaders need to be supported by a strong enabling environment with strong sponsorship from the top. The senior team needs to be in agreement around what the transformation vision is and lead from the front in communicating this to the organisation and its stakeholders.

Trade offs

Leaders are often required to deal with other business pressures outside of their transformation role. This competition for focus and time can be a distraction to successful programme leadership.

There are not yet enough experienced transformations leaders in government to meet current demand. Very senior leaders must balance the needs of getting early momentum on the programmes with the need to secure the right calibre of SRO or programme director.

Red flags

Watch out for:

- leading the way we have always done, not acknowledging that transformation needs a different, more adaptive leadership style
- leaders not being open to support, coaching and authentic conversations with peers about what is, and is not, working
- insufficient support for the transformation from the executive team
- external, newly-promoted or inexperienced people being expected to hit the ground running without enough support around them

- senior leadership not being willing to encourage or tolerate productive organisational distress as necessary

Example

To develop qualified and experienced transformation leaders, the Transformation Peer Group commissioned a dedicated module for the government's [Project Leaders Programme](#) (PLP), delivered by Cranfield University and PA Consulting.

Based on the experience of the transformation community, the new elective module aims to help project and programme leaders understand some of the nuances around transformation leadership and focus more on the people elements of transformation.

We are developing a similar module for the government's [Major Projects Leadership Academy \(MPLA\)](#), delivered through the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School, as a simulation exercise to help the most senior leaders of major projects experience what it is like to run a large transformation in government.

Contact the IPA's Project Delivery Profession team for more information: projectdeliveryprofession@ipa.gov.uk.

Lens 5: Collaboration

Collaboration is key to transformation in a multidimensional environment that increasingly cuts across organisational boundaries.

Citizens' expectations are always increasing, and they often require services from different parts of government at the same time. It is critical that leaders from all of the organisations involved design shared outcomes and services together. This means the Vision and Plan increasingly need to be actively shared and joined up across multiple organisations.

Sometimes, different parts of government require the same component to deliver the service, for example [Identity Assurance](#). Sharing components may be an opportunity to be more efficient and deliver a better outcome for users of the service. Delivery teams need to be incentivised to collaborate to build these once in a way that works for everyone.

Successful outcomes can only be achieved when people across organisational boundaries are doing the right work at the right time. This requires a shared view of sequencing and prioritisation. This will help avoid the unintended consequences which can arise when ongoing active collaboration is not in place.

Why you need this

Within an ambiguous and changing environment such as the delivery of government services, successful transformation requires effective collaboration across multiple different groups, for example other government departments, agencies, 3rd and private sector partners, citizens, service users, suppliers and international partners.

How to do this

There is no single formula for how you should collaborate across stakeholders. However, the first step is to understand the stakeholder and organisational landscape, who you need to collaborate with, how and when. You'll also need to acknowledge that 'you may not know what you don't know' and recognise that it can take time to identify stakeholders.

Ministers and senior officials play a very important role in encouraging leaders to collaborate across organisational boundaries - they role model behaviours that set the right context for others in the organisation to follow.

Transformation leaders need to be skilled at leading beyond their formal authority, influencing people who don't report to them directly.

Collaboration is about supporting teams to have authentic and open conversations with stakeholders. This can help unlock challenges through different perspectives and insights that move the programme towards its intended outcomes. Ideas and lessons from other transformational leaders are often a valuable source for effective collaboration.

Structured collaboration will identify opportunities to share across organisations by mapping out and comparing the components which are required for services. Doing this will help avoid duplication and re-work, and deliver the transformation more quickly and cheaply. It can also help achieve a more consistent experience for users.

Collaborating and testing services with users is key to success as it increases the likelihood of acceptance when in the implementation and delivery phase of the programme.

Trade offs

Collaboration by its nature requires compromise. Different parties with different priorities and perspectives will need to take joint decisions.

Collaboration takes time and effort – this can feel like a compromise between making tangible programme progress and building consensus. Experience shows that teams that invest in collaboration from an early stage of the project life cycle invariably have better outcomes.

Red flags

Watch out for:

- not considering the end-to-end customer journey and not paying sufficient attention to the wider context or operating environment
- collaboration being an 'add on' rather than being core to the project plan and explicitly included in relevant roles and processes
- few incentives to collaborate across organisational boundaries and accountability
- lack of meaningful conversations across organisations and other bodies to ensure operating models and change portfolios align
- only investing in collaboration for key pain points and missing out on the full benefits of collaboration throughout the project lifecycle

Example

Our exit from the EU has provided the impetus to collaborate across government in ways we haven't before. The Cross Government Border Delivery Group, for example, brings together all the departments and agencies involved in activity, controls or other requirements at the UK Border, relating to the movement of people, freight and other goods, including much of our food. This ensures over 30 government organisations, with different policies, processes and IT systems are working together.

Collaborating across over 30 organisations is a difficult feat for anyone. In appointing a single Director General accountable for ensuring the border changes are delivered successfully, the programme is now seen as a whole, rather than as multiple separate projects and programmes. This will ensure the whole system at the border will work – not just for government departments, but also for passengers, our traders who bring our goods from the EU, the freight industry who cross the border every day, and all the ports and airports.

Lens 6: Accountability

Having clear accountability for transformation within an organisation enables productivity and improved decision making, and leads to better outcomes.

Accountability is about clearly defining the roles within the organisation and the transformation – knowing who is ultimately accountable for what, empowering people to deliver and holding them to account, internally

and externally. As complexity goes up, the need for clearly defined governance becomes more important to deliver a successful outcome.

Why you need this

Every organisation needs clear, dedicated and senior accountability for the leadership and organisation of any transformation activity. Having the right organisational structure and transformation programme structures in place will help you make faster and better decisions, and make it easier to involve the right people throughout the process. The governance structure needs to encourage the flow of information vertically and horizontally, and provide incentives for different parts of the organisation to behave in a collaborative way.

How to do this

People will be accountable for delivering specific outcomes. Over time, other people may be made accountable for the overall transformation. In complex transformation programmes, it is essential to be clear how the accountabilities work with each other, particularly when programmes straddle organisational boundaries.

It is important to create a culture which empowers people to make appropriate decisions and make progress themselves - while at the same time keeping senior leaders and ministers informed. Accountability for spending money, allocating people and resources, and managing risks needs to be articulated clearly.

Accountability is not just about taking responsibility at the end of the process or when something goes wrong. It is about taking ownership throughout and collaborating transparently and openly.

An increasing number of programmes require cross-department collaboration. In these cases, it is essential to build an operating and accountability environment that supports ownership of transformation outcomes across organisations, with a shared understanding of the boundaries and interdependencies.

Trade offs

Senior leaders are often simultaneously accountable for transformation initiatives and delivery of critical day-to-day services. This tension can produce conflicting priorities.

Organisations should expect to compromise when defining accountability in an environment that cuts across organisational boundaries.

Red flags

Watch out for:

- not having accountability for transformation at board level
- spending more time discussing who is accountable than delivering
- having lots of people with shared responsibility but no one with ultimate accountability for outcomes
- having multiple roles within an organisation delivering transformation (like transformation director, chief digital officer and chief operating officer) without clarity around their specific responsibilities (for example, separating responsibility for developing strategy and for the delivery of transformation)
- not giving the accountable person the right levers to change the status quo (for example not having flexibility to change supplier contracts or to control budgets)

Example

HMRC introduced the role of Director General for Transformation to provide a single point of accountability for transformation delivery and increase organisational maturity and understanding of transformation at the executive team level. This allowed the department to create a transformation portfolio with clear outcomes, dependencies and responsibilities for every stage of delivery.

This role was the SRO accountable for all HMRC transformation programmes and was the lead for prioritisation and delivery. Having a single SRO for transformation in the early stages of delivery allowed the organisation to develop its transformation capabilities and meant that that core dependencies across programmes were understood and managed at a portfolio level.

"Having the right accountability in place for delivery is critical to transformation. There are lots of dependencies and people need to know who is responsible for delivery at any given time."

Nick Lodge

Director General Transformation, HM Revenue and Customs

Lens 7: People

Transformation will require people in your organisation to be engaged and to change their ways of working - you need to communicate effectively with them at every stage of the transformation.

Engagement starts with those people who are affected by the programme and those that are supporting the transformation. Planning and implementing a comprehensive communication campaign is essential to keep people engaged.

It is important to have the right people with the appropriate skills and mindset to support your transformation. You will require skills from a number of government functions like policy, finance, project delivery, commercial and digital to work together on your transformation. Finding people with the right skills and experience is fundamental for success.

Why you need this

Leaders can't do transformation on their own. They need to bring those impacted with them, making sure they have the right skills and are able to work in new ways. This often requires long term culture change, which takes time.

How to do this

Transformation across government takes a lot of people power. Over time, government needs to invest in building a pool of people capable and confident in the delivery of transformation.

The skill set and behaviours required to support transformation can be very different from the skills for traditionally highly-valued civil service roles (like policy).

Transformation requires judgement, the ability to deal with ambiguity and above all the ability to guide people through evolving thought and changing contexts.

Draw on expertise from outside of government. There are innovative models and approaches we can take to support those delivering transformation.

Trade offs

You may need to find a balance or compromise between:

- recruiting talent versus upskilling employees - where do you focus your effort?
- individual career development versus your organisation's desire to hang on to skilled people - what is the right balance?
- having the right people in the right roles to drive the transformation versus maintaining business as usual

Red flags

Watch out for:

- having people carry out transformation roles as well as business-as-usual roles
- selecting the same team of 'the usual suspects' to work on every critical project
- people being reassigned to work on transformation projects but continuing with established ways of working
- teams talking in different languages and working to different programme objectives or functional norms - for example policy versus digital versus programme management - without a common understanding of the desired outcomes
- no consistent, strategic approach to workforce planning

Example

Most government departments are introducing a range of smarter working initiatives to transform the way our people work and their experience while at work. An example of this is cross-government Commuter Hubs, part of The Way We Work (TW3).

Cross-government hubs provide bookable desks for staff to work from, closer to where they live, offering the facilities staff expect in their main office. Many staff are already experiencing a better work-life balance, using improved technology to do their work and changing the culture of how we do things.

Across government, this has resulted in better engagement across teams, better cross-team working, and the right people being able to work together with the right mix of skills when needed.

Enabling environment

Transformation does not occur in isolation but as part of a broader environment. When we created the 7 Lenses, the community identified that the broader environment for every transformation in government has common features which impact all of us. We have referred to this as the 'enabling environment'.

The enabling environment includes:

- the political environment, ministers and Parliament
- the centre of government, including HM Treasury and Cabinet Office
- governance, approvals, scrutiny, assurance and support functions including the National Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee

The Transformation Peer Group is working to make systemic improvements to the enabling environment across government.

Contact the Cross Government Transformation team for advice on engaging with the broader cross-government community: transformation@ipa.gov.uk.

The team runs events to help share where transformation is working well, and welcomes contributions to the reference library of good work from around government they are building. They are also able to help with specific issues your transformation may be facing.

Community feedback

We built the 7 Lenses with the community and we welcome feedback on:

- how using the 7 Lenses has helped you with your transformation
- how we can iterate the 7 Lenses to help the transformation community
- examples of work you have done in your transformation which we can share with the community

[Join the community mailing list](#) or contact the Cross Government Transformation team with any comments or questions about the 7 Lenses: transformation@ipa.gov.uk.

