

Change in the public sector

Author : admin

Date : June 8, 2012

We've just been taking a look at a discussion forum on The Guardian about leading change in the NHS. It's an interesting read, with some eminently sensible suggestions on how our beloved health service could improve. Take a [look](#) for yourself.

To many observers, the NHS is a leviathan. A multi-headed hydra. It's so complex one wouldn't know where to start plugging the holes. Just ask the much maligned Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley. Indeed, for an institution of such scale (the biggest employer in Europe), with such a long history and under such a level of political scrutiny, any change will be painful. But not impossible.

Many of the goals and ambitions discussed on the forum are familiar to us at Able and How:

- "We need to engage with staff"
- "We should encourage managers to have conversations"
- "Objectives need to be explained"
- "We should focus on developing top leaders"
- "Future technologies will manage service and productivity issues"

These are not acute issues and when approached in the right way can be de-mystified and fixed. But the NHS, and more broadly the public sector, is a tough nut to crack.

In our experience working with public sector bodies, we have been confronted by a series of immovable obstacles. Toothy procurement departments, reams of forms to fill in, a hugely protracted pitching process and the sneaky suspicion that a partner has already been chosen long before any RFP was issued.

This isn't sour grapes for all the hours we've lost filling in VAT codes, honest. But we believe the public sector could change their approach to working with professional services. We're not arrogant enough to suggest we can single-handedly solve all of their issues. But we do believe that a valuable difference could be made by bringing in more ideas from the outside, learning from the private sector and using experts to unblock complex issues quickly. We want to help institutions that we value and care about, we know we can - just make it a little easier guys.