



ukgovcamp

Session: 4

Room: Ellen Pinsent Room

Session title : What's my impact again & Journeying from the upside down to the right side up (test and learn) (paired as two different ways of thinking about data!)

Session leader : Tom and Linda

Volunteer to continue conversation after :

Notes taken by : Rachel

Notes

Trying to answer 4 questions

If you had experience of working in a “test and learn way” from your experience what is it that makes it successful?

- Project where they used to run 8 to 10 experiments so stakeholders and team saw things fail
 - Beneficial because by the end they could see some of the ideas stakeholders put forward had failed and that helped them understand how they'd got to the final two
- A lot resistance is “we can afford to fail” so having permission to fail but fail safely is good
- Being able to fail helps with the projects
- Scaffolding - you can't expect someone who has never done it before to do it right
- Structured learning cycles - sometimes people throw everything at the window so then don't know what you're learning

- It can be exhausting to go through this experimentation time - so it's about providing defined space to do this work and also making sure that we celebrate the wins
- When we talk about failure it's underpinned by experimentation - genuine experimentation means more failure than success
 - What's some enabling conditions for genuine experimentation
 - Scaffolding - found out what the appetite was for failing - they called it crash testing/speed testing
 - Normalise idea that trying out an idea and failing is ok

What gets in the way of you doing it?

- Needing to justify time, resource so it can be hard to justify
- Need to senior leaders to admit that they don't know everything
- Experiment method failed because too many advisers not doers, so made sure that there were 80% doers
- We're not set up to work in a test and learn way
- Test and learn need to be long term so that communities engage with it

How can you tell when it's working?

- Once people have been through it and felt it, then they can see the benefits
- Actually changing the culture
- Important to be about the outcomes from the start - having early wins will help you show that it's working

Where are you most excited about trying out "test and learn"?

- Trying out with help/service desk
- Testing and learning in a way that makes sense to communities rather than testing and learning to do with tech
- Organisational governance - how could we make committee meetings more effective

Other notes:

- Test and learn is good language because it doesn't talk about failing
- With user research - go and find out what you're wrong about. And with senior leaders say - what you think is an assumption
- People who are generating ideas are delivering services at the same time, so they struggle with having time for failure
- We need to be better at publicly sharing case studies and ROI, so that they aren't having to say the same thing 1-2-1 on their teams each time
- Is it better to say "we're going to try a few things and see which work" rather than saying "test and learn"
 - The language doesn't always help us
 - Need to make sure we use the language which works best for the person you're talking to
 - Sometimes putting the language around a "thing" puts people off