



# ukgovcamp

**Session: 2**

**Room: Committee Room 6**

**Session title : Skills for leadership and leadership and emotional intelligence, do we need human government service?**

**Session leader : Suraj and Manny and Becky**

**Volunteer to continue conversation after :**

Notes taken by : **Rehemat** (with some additions from a user called Anonymous Aurochs - and Manny)

## **Notes**

- Leads for work don't have skills to manage uncertainty
- Knowledge gets you to the table. But the next part is looking after your people.
- Default assumption that services in government are digital - they aren't always.
- How do you build trust with those you interact with? This requires you to understand them on a personal and human level. What methods do you use? How do you weave these skills and concepts throughout an initiative?
- How do on the ground staff get reflected in conversations and initiatives e.g. passport staff?
- Staff need to learn from each other and be able to say when they don't know
- Hierarchy creates command compliance. The right ideas don't always come from the top
- Leaders should be able to be comfortable with uncertainty

- If senior folk are the folks who started early career and don't move to gain new experiences, then there is an issue with group-think and a lack of diversity of approaches and ideas.
- Book: The Art of Action (Stephen Bungay)
  - <https://blogs.cranfield.ac.uk/cbp/book-review-art-action-leaders-close-gaps-plans-actions-results/>
  - We need a retraining programme for senior leaders of a similar scale to that carried out by Von Moltke to introduce Mission-style tactics
- What do we mean by communication? Is someone really listening?
- People don't challenge or question Grade 6s - they take what they say as right.
- If people don't feel psychologically safe then they won't speak up
- We need to create environments for people to bring them together to share ideas especially when they are spread out across the country. This will prevent siloes.
- Digital services - are they protection? They are likely to increase in government.
- Civil service recruitment assumes you know the job before you go into it.
- Place based approaches could be beneficial
- Everyone needs to talk to each other and build partnerships - participatory approaches need to be shared.
- Different agencies don't have data sharing agreements with each other so they can't share knowledge. These should be set up.
- How do we advocate emotional intelligence skills in our teams?
  - Course called "non violent communication"
  - "Leader as a coach" course
- Self awareness is very important
- Write down principles that we want our senior leaders to follow
- Need an innovation space
- System of assurance creates fear
- If senior leaders are scared then how do they make their staff community feel stable and able to make decisions?
- 1:1 line manager/line report weekly meetings are an effective solution for knowing what is happening and to support staff
- Mission, Vision, Values - these are important especially for monitoring outcomes
- "Justify what you do" - people can't do everything, where is effort best placed?
  - Book: The unaccountability machine
- Convening

---

Obstacles to data sharing: ultimately we need to trust front line workers and staff  
Justifying things:

- Work at multiple layers simultaneously

Leaders are afraid

- Three lines of accountability (orange book)
- Vs. Deming

#### **Qualities of a leader (as suggested by attendees)**

- Trauma informed
- Speak to their reports and take onboard what they say
- To think about the long term and not the now
- Empathy, curiosity and openness (CO Minister Speech -Dec 2005 - still true)
- Leaders should have good listening skills, provide psychological safety and direction
- Humility
- Create funding structures/processes that allow leaders to have space to support openness
- Trust in teams
- Willingness to adapt
- Willingness to work across boundaries
- Support and defend their teams
- Engage meaningfully, rather than just communicating one way
- Be brave, assume noble intent
- Be comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Be a coach
- Demonstrate Growth Mindset
- Consistency of purpose
- Build quality in ( Not checking afterwards)
- Drive out Fear (Do not re-create behaviour systems or rule that create fear)
- Invest in people, training and continuous improvement
- Build long term partnerships with suppliers based on total cost of ownership
- Answers come from a team not an individual
- Work in outcomes not task
- Trust is built through Actions
- Listen first,speak later
- Deming had it all figured out