Stakeholder Interview Findings

Research on the development of a Centre of Excellence and everyone's role within it.

Timeline

- **Aug.9th** - Priority changing for Hub team, moving towards COE model

- **Aug.12th** - Andee joins team to develop service and resources

- **Aug.26th** - Andee continues research SystemScope started in July

- **Sept.13th** - 22 conversations in total completed

- **Sept.16th-20th** - Creation of findings deck for distribution

- **Sept.23rd-27th** - Presenting findings deck

Methodology - Process

- Initial interview approach geared towards designing the **ideal "how"** of the COE

  - [See interview script here](#)

- Research went from **user-focus to organization-focus** as new insights found

- Validation of COE direction captured, but less of the fine details on "how", **more mental model capturing on "what"**

- **Majority of findings point towards organizational challenges needing to be addressed ahead of the "how" of the COE**

Methodology - scope of participants

- Business-side "product owners" - Civil Aviation, Marine

- Transformation Office

- Solutions Centre

- Enterprise Architecture

- Service Management

- Change Management

- Past "Hub" employee

- Current UX employees and consultants

- IT Operations

- Facilities/Security

Key Findings

Finding #1:

Our ideas about *how* are conflicting in every key area.

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Intake - bringing in a client

- **Most DSTO shops think they should be the first point of contact** for the client

    - **Transformation Office** thinks they will be first point of contact and direct clients where to go

    - **Service Management imagines owning and facilitating relationships** with "program managers" and enacting support within the COE and EA

    - **Consultant from Solutions Centre working on entire DSTO process**, early stages of consultation

- **Business frustrated with the time spent going to each DSTO director**, multiple times, then receiving conflicting advice due to unclear roles, priorities, process

"**The Transformation role** would be to say, "You're going to redesign your service, we're going to help you make sure you're giving consideration to everything you should in doing so." Then, once you figure out what's in scope for what you need to change, then talking to Irwins team and saying, "Okay, what is the approach going into a service redesign."

- Transformation Office

"You wouldn't have the program go directly to the Hub to ask for help. **It would come on through the Service Manager.**"

- Service Management

"We want to be the **first point of contact.**"

-    Enterprise Architecture

[What would you want?]

A centre of excellence in transformation, including DSD, the Hub, Sylvain, one stop shop. Here's what we wanna do. Here's our plan moving forward. What services can you provide to us? **Instead of meeting individually, each director, DG, separately multiple times…** We spent a lot of time on that, at one point we felt like we were spinning wheels all the time. It was frustrating at one point.

- Past Clients

Prioritizing

- **DSTO priorities are not always aligned with program priorities**

- **Modernization** is in competition with **Cost Recovery** priorities

- **Prioritizing external services** to meet the new Policy on Service is being done at the expense of improving internal services that enable us to deliver externally

- People express desire to understand and align work to **one set of departmental priorities**

"I think it's about managing appetite in the department, so that there's only so many projects on the go. There's probably a countless number of things that could be helped in this dep't… **We need to triage, which is big deal because now you get into a departmental triaging process.**"

- Inspector

"**There's no landscape that has been done from a business capability perspective.** Let's take a step back and say "Ok, what is TC's priority? Licencing, registration? We don't have that overarching architecture thought process. How is everything fitting together? **We're all doing things individually.**"

- Solutions Centre

"**We will have to prioritize.** Irwin will want to have a plan of his own to say, "That's what I'm going to be doing." Right now what's driving our priority is the cost recovery."

- Transformation Office

Execution:

- All DSTO see the need to **collaborate to scope a project.** This collaboration isn't happening consistently or enough
    - Causes duplication of work, outputs conflict
    - Missed opportunities
- **Transformation does oversight but works separately** from other DSTO directorates
- Philosophy from senior management that **everyone should be able to intake clients and use the directorate services appropriately**

"Let's get together with the COE, architecture, ourselves, and you guys in the program and **let's just define the problem.** Then we'll come up with a project to take that forward."

- Service Management

"Everyone is pushing to move forward with new technology in their project, but **nobody is ready to work together to push something that's working.**"

- Solutions Centre

"Solutions centre managers take it upon themselves to be that [business relationship] manager...[senior management] is more of the opinion that there are no wrong doors. You should get the same services if you talk to Solutions Centre as if you talk to the Hub... **[senior management] thinks that they can enter through any door and use the hub process, figure out what they need, then be directed to the right shop, whether that's Transformation, SID or DSD."**

- Enterprise Architecture

"We'd like to be more involved."

- Enterprise Architecture

Evaluation

- **Solutions centre is pushing business to do the concept case properly**, but feel they lack the depth to support them in doing so, big cultural shift from previous approach

- Some find that teams are **"cheating" the concept case (completing user-related fields from assumptions vs real research)**

- **Concept case work is pre-capital funding**, a challenge to use our services for business problem exploration with limited operational funding

- **PMF governance is heavy**, and there's no one providing user-centred challenge function

"PM Framework can't be independent from the Hub process. It becomes layered. **We need to identify roles and responsibilities throughout,** who in DSTO, where clients play a leadership role, and that users play a role throughout, not just a discreet piece."

- Solutions Centre

"The **concept case on it's own is not enough**, they find plenty of ways to cheat."

- Enterprise Architecture

Potential risks if left unaddressed:

- **Not meeting objectives** due to not holistically scoping, prioritizing and resourcing the work to be done

- Everyone **remains unclear** as to who does what, why, and when

- Creates **unnecessary admin** overhead of multiple intake/prioritization, and collaboration processes

- **Difficult to measure** our impact on the business if only viewing own team's impact.

- **Loss of credibility** by not practicing best practices

Finding #2:

How do we fix a broken plane in flight?

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Misaligned expectations from the top

- Perception that senior management lacks some understanding of the **time transformation takes**

- Senior management and DSTO at large lacks understanding of the **complexity** of supporting a program to **both achieve financial sustainability and transform to be modern**

- Cultural lack of ability to **restore trust and relationship** between business, Transformation and IT

"Sometimes the expectation is [from senior management] **"You're just putting something online, why does that take so long?" I am doing service design!** … We want to make sure there is user adoption … And I have a challenge explaining that."

- Service Management

"People want the big bang, don't get me wrong, we need an end-state vision. But then you have to work back... what are constraints, money, resources. **Then we need to make a decision about going: crawl, walk or run.** They have to accept that, it's based on risk. People have a hard time making a decision based on risk, and accept, "You know what, we are going to do crawl right now, then we are going to walk, and then we're going to get to the run." **They'd rather say, "Let's just focus on the run." with fingers crossed.** A big bang approach just does not work. And THAT is working agile. And THAT is risk management."

- Service Management

What am I getting into before business problem exploration?

- **The business feels unable to dedicate time and resources** to transformation work. They perceive it as **"more work",** when already feeling over-worked

- The business feels **that they can't have "quick wins"** but instead need to investigate everything in the "business exploration" phase.

- **COE model challenges**: Some have gone to COE's and left empty-handed. Some feel unable to action advice. Some feel the experts opinion is out-of-touch with their reality.

- All business problem exploration activities are **before capital funding**.

"In order to pass gate 1 [PMF] I had to go to **4 different** meetings and present."

- Former Hub Client

"The Project Management Framework is a framework on top of a management framework called scrum."

- Former TC employee

Risks if left unaddressed:

- If we continue to underestimate time and complexity of transformation work, we will **continuously under-deliver value, leading to lost trust and half-baked solutions**

- If we don't supply the business with "quick wins" while scoping transformation work, we can **block meaningful, sustainable progress, and building trust**

- If we don't prepare the business with what to expect before they start transformation work the **process could fail due to internal blockers on resources and governance,** could lead to doing things the "old" way

COE model checks out if executed well, minus perception of holding all the innovation.

Service Innovation COE Needs

- Perceptions that having **standardized design requirements would encourage people to brainlessly complete design work,** ie. "must have minimum 10 user interviews"

- Want templates, examples, and a **repository of previously conducted research**

- Playbook would be helpful if provided best practices, and covered **why a play is used**, and what to expect from it.

"You do need a starting point, a minimum, but sometimes it backfires into becoming "how we do things". Interesting paradigm. **Strive for some focus, and avoid the "thou shalt". We have to trust."**

- Solutions Centre

"You see it in the project management area, a lot struggle because we go through presentation governance, lots of comments back, so **having access to a good example."**

- Solutions Centre

"**We need to know "why".** If you're given standards, it becomes "I have to". Lose thoughtfulness and benefit and the "why" ends up missing."

- Solutions Centre

"Drives me bonkers when they say you have to do agile like this. Nobody stops to say, we found if you move sprints from 6 weeks to 8 then it tends to become 12, then it becomes waterfall. We're missing the "why". **You should recommend, review decision, explain why, and then we're not just being told.**"

- Solutions Centre

Innovation

- **Solutions centre wants to own technology innovation** so that the learning is more easily maintained

- Service Management wants **each Service Innovation arm to have innovation space**

- TC has another Innovation Centre

- Some concern around **focus of innovation projects over solving current problems with innovative solutions**

"[On innovation with the COE] Where I'm struggling, **should each of our groups have some innovation space?** You have innovation space for user-centred design, EA would have innovation space for tech, we would have innovation space improving service delivery. Because when it's just one, everything gets tagged to it. But if we each had our space, doesn't mean we're not collaborating, but then you each have your arm of awareness, then doing, then innovating."

- Service Management

"There will be better ongoing management of pilots and research if it's in Solutions Centre. If there's a fence and ladder, one person and go and come back, is less effective than a small team in Solutions Centre who can better see if it's worth growing."

- Solutions Centre

To deliver or not to deliver?

- Everyone uncertain about the project delivery aspect of the COE, **will "the hub" still execute work? Or merely advise on it?**

Risks if left unaddressed:

- One-size-fits-all approach can **prevent innovation and usefulness of design**

- By not providing depth to resources, we **lose an opportunity to build capacity**

- Centralizing innovation could **prevent usefulness and sustainability of experiments**

- By continuing to provide design function, we could:

  - prevent sustainable **progress of having designers work in the government as FTE's**

  - **engrain the idea that design is an "IT thing"** and only to be had at certain parts of project.

Finding #4:

We all have bad reputations and burned bridges to rebuild.

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Underlying problems that lead to poor experience for the business:

- Being forced into doing something without considering **service's readiness** and **client's willingness**

- No one having motivation and/or capacity to **collaborate**

- Not having **clear processes and outcomes**

- **Undefined roles and responsibilities**

- **Disconnected consultations with different groups,** ie. that only cover one lense of sustainability or modernization.

"We were told, "Thou shalt use the Hub." That's where everything went wrong."

"Biggest issue is lack of resources. Not necessarily the Hub's issue – **there doesn't seem to be planning or follow through.**"

- Former Hub Clients

"**They [the hub] should integrate other groups in their work.** In my case it was the Innovation Centre that was only looped in after the fact."

"**There was no plan** [transition of project from Hub to Solutions Centre]. We were told we missed gates, and we've had to catch up on the [PMF] process."

- Former Hub Clients

Risks if left unaddressed:

- If our services feel forced, the project will likely **fail due to absenteeism**

- If our services ARE forced, then we are doing something seriously wrong, and **damaging our relationship to the business**

- If we are unable to consult as a directorate, consultations will take longer, and require the business to interpret the best path forward, which could **lead to inability to start**.

- If no one knows what everyone else is doing, we will further **lose credibility.**

- If we don't communicate our approaches, pivots/iterations seem unintentional, **reputation is hurt.**

Challenge questions

DSTO as a service?

Knowing that the **business-side** is:

- Overwhelmed by Transformation
- Under-resourced

Knowing that **our side** is:

- Duplicating effort, unaligned
- Needing to bring the dept. financial sustainability AND modernization

How can we make transformation **easy** and **accessible?**

COE model done right?

Knowing that "parachuting" Hub members into projects to deliver aspects is a temporary solution for departmental transformation:

How can we ensure that the COE is providing sustainable value to the department while accommodating immediate needs?

DSTO relationships restored?

Knowing that all of DSTO has trust to rebuild with the business-side:

How can we develop our services in a way that **builds trust** and ensures **promised value?**

Study limitations:

- Only one type of research tactic was used: **conversational interviews**

- All planning, execution, and analysis was conducted by **one researcher**

    - **This researcher is personally affected by the findings**

- The subject of the study shifted drastically and the researcher was not able to document a research plan representing new hypothesis and potential risks or biases

Bias mitigation efforts:

- Researcher chose quotes representative of findings and would show alternative contrasting quotes if they were present

- Researcher will include secondary research in recommendations to further add validity to findings

Thank-you!

For questions about the research or the findings, reach out to Andee Pittman:

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