

Putting People First and Technology Second

THE CHALLENGE:

"I wanted a structure that would direct the efforts of a dedicated team of experts who would become more intimate in their customers' unique IT environments. Getting buy-in to make a people and culture shift not usually seen in IT teams was going to be a huge challenge."

Gavin Till, CIO, Christchurch City Council

When Gavin Till stepped into the CIO role at Christchurch City Council ("CCC"), he knew that a great result could be achieved for their customers by moving from functional to service aligned teams. MSH had already worked with the IT team to create a unifying concept and define their offering to their customers, which are the other internal business units at CCC. Continuing to deliver on their vision of "IT magic made easy" was crucial for the IT team to meet the wider customer value proposition of being "modern, mobile, resilient, innovative" for the citizens of Christchurch. Gavin engaged MSH to develop a detailed transformation plan which would underpin the shift to service aligned teams, while linking directly to the strategic goals.

As part of the transformation plan, MSH worked with Gavin to reorganise his department's structure to support the new strategic direction. The new organisational structure needed to significantly simplify how customers engaged with IT, and enable services to be delivered faster and more efficiently. In practice, this would mean being able to flexibly direct the team's effort where it was most required, without being limited by the boundaries of each person's job in the team.

MSH's approach to organisational design incorporates a leader's personal style

MSH believes that organisational structure is 50% logical and 50% personal, based on what leaders are willing to live with. So to kick off the transformation process, we worked with Gavin to

articulate his personal design principles so that his unique style of leadership would be reflected in the new team structure. This identified key outcomes that Gavin wanted the transformation to address, namely:

- customer intimacy;
- minimising hand-overs;
- maximising the use of resources so team members were not limited by functional job titles;
- a single point of contact for IT services; and
- Practice Leads who would be accountable for defining quality standards and principles across the whole department.

Guided by Gavin's design principles, MSH could structure a team where there was a centralised Quality and Practice team who were responsible for creating quality standards for the delivery of services, coaching, and monitoring delivery. While each IT manager partnered with different areas of the business, they were unified by using the same quality standards to deliver consistent IT services across the whole of CCC. This allowed the flexibility that Gavin identified in his principles: "Everyone is delivering quality processes - efficiently - while being focused on the unique needs of each customer".



THE OUTCOME:

"The way of operating has been a major change from how things have operated in the past. Our relationships with customers have been greatly enhanced. We are operating on a different level now and our engagement has been formalised. There are customers that wouldn't have received this level of service before."

"We are getting positive feedback from our immediate customers as they adapt to the new way of working – having one point of contact, rather than many. Customers are starting to see us as "their IT team" and are more open to including us in their regular business unit meetings, which means we can understand their needs first-hand."

IT Service Managers

The strategy map provides the logical basis for organisational design

Critical to the success of this transformation was that the new organisational structure was not drawn up in isolation – MSH related it directly to the strategy map we had already worked on with Gavin and the team which, through Key Results Areas and Learning and Growth profiles, identified the actions require to achieve the strategic goals. This level of detail enabled Gavin to hire team members with the required competencies, and develop results sheets to make sure accountabilities were clear. The results sheets, which are used to populate the CCC reporting framework, visibly demonstrate how the new service-aligned team structure is enabling the IT team to do work that directly achieves both the strategic goals of their team for their internal customers, and the strategic goals for CCC as large, which serves the citizens of Christchurch. "This means that every service team can see their unique contribution to the strategy" comments Gavin.