

TRANSFORMATION 2011

Applying Systems Thinking to transform your organisation.

*Look after your customers, rethink your processes,
engage your people, reduce your costs, benefit society.*

Introductory notes - draft. This is part 3 a draft transcript of James Crawford (the Conference Chair's) address to TRANSFORMATION 2011 in May 2011 – the closing notes. The event presents new thinking, methods and case studies, based on Deming's system of management, for organisations seeking a radical transformation. This was the 12th annual event, sponsored by The Deming Forum and Vanguard. James is a Director of Touchpoint Change and a member of the Deming Forum Advisory Board.

Conference closing remarks, Thursday 26 May 2011

That brings us to the end of our conference. We have covered a great deal of ground, examined some complex issues, explored a straightforward but profound framework for change and started to apply it to the challenges of our own organisations. We have heard 4 case studies from 4 organisations that have found a better way of leading their people and are working hard to embed it.

Many thanks to our speakers who have provided the insight and ideas for us to learn from and discuss. I have distilled a few key messages that jumped out for me over the last two days:

- Peter Lachman from Great Ormond Street Hospital argued that understanding variation is a critical starting point for transformation – both natural variation (what patients need, which is surprisingly stable) and artificial variation (how we make matters worse, which is hugely costly). Huge improvements in patient outcomes, cost and safety have been demonstrated.
- Neil Alexander and Ian Gilson told us about the transformation of social housing repairs. By following the customer and uncompromisingly designing their service against customer needs, repair times have come down from 15 days to 2 days so far. They work in an environment where the customers are demanding, the organisation is innovative and their suppliers oblivious.
- DS Tim Metcalfe, Brian Russell and Kevin Jones from the counter terrorism unit explained how they were applying Deming's system in a very different environment. A systematic approach to collaboration, learning, testing and reviewing has had a huge impact on the way the 43 police forces and 9 CT units work together. They also mentioned Deming's point about

ceasing reliance on Inspectors to ensure quality! In their case the suppliers (of terror plots) innovate, government is demanding and the customers are oblivious.

- Shona Murray of Aviva explained that if we don't manage our organisations as a system our staff will turn their ingenuity to fighting off attacks of management and hitting arbitrary targets in any way they need to. Systems thinking has improved performance, strengthened controls, reduced costs and improved morale.
- One of our delegates, David Lansdown, suggested that "austerity presents an opportunity". Most organisations know they need to do things differently and need a more holistic and effective method to work with. Taiichi Ohno said that "everything you need to know about performance improvement is in your own system. You just need to know how to look". This is a good time to introduce a more profound change.
- Finally, Nigel Clements yesterday quoted Deming and said that "the job of a leader is to accomplish the transformation" – the job of all of us as we go back to our places of work.

That brings us to a close. Many thanks to all of you for your contributions and enthusiasm during the collaborative sessions and to our volunteers and organising team who give up their time and energy because they are passionate about making a difference and believe that success is worth sharing.

We look forward to seeing you at TRANSFORMATION 2012 in May next year.

Thank you.

This was written for **Change!** – the newsletter of Touchpoint Change Consulting. Touchpoint Change helps organisations in the private and public sectors to prioritise change, engage their people, develop good outsourcing and partnership arrangements, transform their operations and become self sufficient in continuous improvement.