Ledningskraft

Designing managerial support in large-scale change management

What is it that makes ivy that has been merely getting by for years suddenly shoot up and grow tall and strong? Or an elderberry bush that has been given the best possible conditions to grow and thrive, instead wither away? How much can you really change conditions to get the results you want? It isn’t easy in complex situations to single out one particular factor of success or failure.

Ledningskraft, in English Empowering Change was implemented between 2012-2014, a comprehensive national management program where managers from local authorities and regions met to put plans into action. As part of our constant commitment to providing the best possible welfare services.

In this publication, Project Manager Anette Nilsson shares her experiences about the design and thoughts behind Empowering Change. Yet its primary focus is to ask questions that help us think about how to continue our work and carry out large-scale improvements in complex systems.
We’ll always be on the way
WELCOME TO A PLACE TO THINK FREELY

How can we do today’s work better tomorrow? This is an important question for the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, where one of our strategies is to utilize the skills and expertise of our members in different areas. We do this to constantly challenge ourselves to do what we do even better.

As part of our agreement with the government on coordinated health and social care for our most severely ill elderly people, a comprehensive national management program has been implemented – Ledningskraft, in English Empowering Change. In this program, managers from local and regional authorities met in teams in order to take the plans established by policy makers in each county and put them into action.

This is the first time a program like this has ever been implemented in Sweden. As Head of the Health and Social Care Division, I welcome this “roadmap”, where Project Manager Anette Nilsson has created a “room for testing thoughts,” as she calls it. In part, this document describes the design and thoughts behind Empowering Change, but mainly it asks questions that help us think about how to continue our work and carry out large-scale improvements in complex systems. To create the best welfare services in the world.

I am passing on Anette’s challenge – share your experiences with your colleagues around you! In this way, we will all continue to improve and be improved.

Autumn 2014

Hans Karlsson
Head of Health and Social Care Division
Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
Preliminary brainstorming

What is it that makes ivy that has been merely getting by for years suddenly shoot up and grow tall and strong? Or an elderberry bush that has been given the best possible conditions to grow and thrive, instead wither away? How much can you really change soil conditions to get the results you want? And what are the interacting factors that make what needs to happen to get the best possible growth, actually happen?

There is something exciting about complexity and things that cannot be controlled. My garden reminds me of that every year, and it is with that same curiosity that I approach the issues of complexity and new results in the “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People” initiative.

What is it that makes something that works well in one situation not work at all in another? What is it that makes a new approach that doesn’t seem to have taken hold, suddenly just take off and become established? There are, of course, a number of factors that work together to enable cultural change. It isn’t easy in complex situations to single out one particular factor of success or failure. Maybe one of the secrets is to relate to complexity, to constantly strive for influence from many different directions. The combined result is the one that matters, and the road there is paved by action. To never tire of contemplating, every day, these questions: How can we make this even better? How can we work systematically?

“We will never be finished, and that is how it should be”
Empowering Change has been implemented as a part of the agreement between the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions¹, in which I have been project manager.

Further along in this roadmap, I refer to this initiative as “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People”. Here, I share some reflections and experience on how Empowering Change is designed and implemented. I have also formulated a few general questions to brainstorm on.

Personally, I believe that we develop when we follow others on their learning journeys with curiosity and an open mind, and share our own experiences along the way. In a fast-paced era with a world of information at our fingertips, we are at risk of being stuck in the illusion that we don’t have time to think – or time to discuss what we learn when we do. But actually it’s just the opposite – we don’t have time NOT to think.

I don’t believe you can copy someone else’s journey of development. But you can always be inspired by joining someone else’s questioning. The amazing thing that happens when we share our experiences and thoughts is that the story never ends. When you find a thread that you want to weave into your situation, the story lives on, and when you share your experiences in turn, the tapestry takes new shape. With this as our departure point, I welcome you to come along on the journey and listen to the story of how Empowering Change was designed and implemented, told from my perspective as project manager. If you’d like to read more about the results of the entire initiative, “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People”, please refer to the final report. Let’s begin our journey with a link to the soil and conditions, and a few thoughts on context and background.

Background & Context

Three good conditions characterize health and social care for the elderly today. First: Never before have we had the opportunities to live as long as we do today. Second: Today’s elderly will not only be able to add years to life, but life to years. More and more people are living good lives all the way through and independently managing their daily lives. European studies show that Sweden is at the top in terms of good opportunities to age in comfort and security.

The third good condition is that circumstances have also improved for most severely ill elderly people.² To improve conditions for the approximately 300,000 people that need coordinated health and social care, the largest elderly care initiative of our time was implemented in 2010-2014.

Note 1 In an agreement with the Swedish government, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) implemented a major initiative in coordinated health and social care for the most severely ill elderly people between 2012-2014. When SKL launched this initiative, it was given the name “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People” and became one of the most highly prioritized issues at SKL during these years.

Note 2 According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, the “most ill elderly” people are those who are 65 years of age or older and have extensive impairment in their functional status due to ageing, injury or illness. In 2010, this group represented 18 percent (297,000) of the population of people aged 65 or above.
In December 2011, the Swedish government and the Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) came to an agreement on a joint venture with the vision of ensuring that every person in Sweden can age in comfort, security and autonomy, with access to good health and social care. From 2012-2014, SEK 4.3 billion was invested in this venture, primarily through performance-based government grants.

The initiative comprised the following areas:

- Good care for dementia
- Good care at the end of life
- Preventative approaches
- Good drug therapy for the elderly
- Coordinated health and social care

Each county proceeded based on a politically decided action plan for coordinated health and social care for the most severely ill elderly. To offer support to managers in moving from words to action, and to assist the large-scale change management work, the agreement had resolved to offer managerial support. Empowering Change – making things so much better for the sick elderly – began. All counties in Sweden participated, with cooperative management teams composed of representatives from municipalities, primary care and hospitals.

Moving from words to action – call for action

The starting point for Empowering Change was the action plans established by each county under the objective of creating better lives for the ill elderly through coordinated health and social care.

Management teams from the municipalities, primary care and hospitals were invited in to receive support in moving from words to action and implementing the action plans through joint management and guidance.

During 2012-2014, approximately 320 managers met at forums in Empowering Change. Along the way, the management teams were sometimes enlarged to bring in other managers, who were instrumental in actualizing and driving the change management process.

Creating a daily existence characterized by systematic quality initiatives for those we are there for is a great challenge for all of Sweden’s health and social care workers. A prerequisite for succeeding in this is that we all work under the attitude that we have two jobs: to carry out our work today, and to improve.
The Road to Empowering Change

No matter what you are doing, I think that one of the most important preparations is to identify the conditions and the expectations that the design will be based on. You also must determine who will do what in the change process.

Empowering Change is designed according to specific conditions. As a conceptual model to inspire the framing of the issues, I have outlined below both general prerequisites and the unique prerequisites of Empowering Change.

A few general preparatory questions:
1. What is the purpose of this initiative?
2. How is the initiative designed on a national level?
3. What is the expected outcome? And for how many?
4. What concrete prerequisites are there for implementation?
5. What opportunities are there to achieve improved results?
6. What are the risks that could lead to failure?

An important part of the preparation is to also think about your own role as project manager.

Some questions for reflection:
1. What do you feel is important to achieve?
2. What is your attitude going in to the work you will lead?
3. What previous experiences are you bringing in?
4. What type of support do you need?
5. Who will you report to?
When I was given the honor of project managing Empowering Change, some of the things I had with me were a managerial background and experience building up new businesses. I had started Passion for Life³, an initiative that received international attention, including First Place in the 2014 European Award for Social Innovation in Ageing. I also had experience from various project management assignments and directorships in the private sector. During my years at Qulturum, the improvement unit of the Jönköping County Council, I worked with leadership development, coaching, improvement science and innovations. I have had the privilege of working in a range of different contexts – local, regional, national and international – and over the years have built an invaluable network, including the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Boston, where I have also been a fellow.

New approaches – new results

One of the most important lessons I have learned is to devote my energy to thinking about and striving to see opportunities, and believing that where there’s a will, there’s a way. Focusing on what works well and not getting stuck in talking about problems and obstacles. This doesn’t mean ignoring the problems, but rather bringing them in and trying to turn them into opportunities. I am also convinced that everyone can contribute to making things better if you want to and decide to.

It is in our everyday lives that we build the capacity for systematic improvement when we are driven to make things better for those we are here for. Every system is perfectly designed for the results it gives. It is only when we change our approach that we can achieve new results.

What is Empowering Change and what is not Empowering Change?

Empowering Change offers participants support and inspiration without restricting freedom and individual responsibility. Its aim has been to support the creative power of the teams to find new approaches and forms of cooperation to benefit sick elderly people. That is why it was important at the start to think about what suppositions Empowering Change could be designed for to make it clear what participants, employers and other stakeholders could expect.

Note 3. In Passion for Life, we want to engage in a new lifestyle that affects health and quality of life. It is breaking ingrained patterns, becoming aware of improvements, moving from words to action, and making improvements in your own life that makes the difference.
Starting points:

› Empowering Change is a dialogue forum aimed at strengthening the power of participants to achieve results by finding their own path, seeing new perspectives, building relationships, and creating desire and energy.
› Empowering Change is focused on implementation and results. It is not about finding the “right” path – there are many different ways to reach the goal. The real question is, if the path you have chosen is one of them.
› Empowering Change is based on local ownership. The management teams create their own local stories by what they do to reach the goals. Their stores run parallel to the national story on the work to improve conditions for the most severely ill elderly people.

To make sure these expectations were the right ones, it was also important to clarify what Empowering Change is not.

Empowering Change is not:

› A course, which tells the participants what to do
› A series of conferences without obligation
› A program that takes responsibility and ownership for the team’s work and results
› A program in which you must report to SKL what has been done and achieved
› A breakthrough project
On the way to cultural change

John P. Kotter, Professor of Leadership at Harvard Business School, summarizes in his book *Leading Change* eight essential steps for successful change. This model has been something of a road sign for Empowering Change, and we have based our own eight steps on his. Kotter’s research shows that 70 percent of change efforts fail because they lack the holistic approach that is required. But this doesn’t have to be the case. A systematic approach increases the chances of success.
Below are a few thoughts on how we have allowed the eight steps of Kotter’s model to guide us. I would like to emphasize that these are not steps you move up in a straight line, but rather ones you wander back and forth over.

1. Desire to change
Finding driving forces, clarifying why something is important, and to whom? Why can we not continue as it is? Try storytelling to emphasize the needs of those we are here for. A known risk factor in all change efforts is that someone has seen a need or been given a “mission” to lead change, without giving those who will implement the change time to create an understanding of why the change should be made, for whom and by whom. “Understanding” is therefore a watchword in the first phase. The best way to create understanding is to formulate questions that show the way. It is the question and not the answer that provides guidance.

When we started Empowering Change, my experience was that there was a strong desire rooted in a shared belief that something needed to be done to improve conditions for the sick elderly.

Each forum also took “why are we doing this” as its starting point. With different stories, metaphors and films, the objective was described from the perspective of the elderly people. Seniors who had participated in the program in various ways were also present in the rooms at all forums.

2. Common reality
No one can achieve change on their own. A team must be formed that has a common view of the current situation and what needs to be achieved. Even in this phase, the questions are crucial. There also needs to be curiosity about each other’s questions and descriptions of “reality”. It is only in open and trusting dialogues that we can create consensus.

What characterized the first forums, as many of the participants commented on, was the lack of a common perception of “reality”. For many participants, this was the first time they had encountered a discourse like this. One participant expressed it like this: “Until now, we’ve only seen each other at Christmas and Midsummer, and then it was just to solve the problem of bed shortages over the holidays.”

In the discussions around the round tables, common perceptions began to emerge based on multiple perspectives. The starting point in Empowering Change, however, has always been to take the perspective of the elderly first. And based on that, design for a seamless system through joint management and guidance.
3. Shared convictions
When the team has agreed on a common direction for travel in the shared perception of reality, the next step is to identify the ways in which the future will be different and make it clear that it is possible to get there.

In this, the value of the action plans was highlighted, with each county determining its activities in relation to needs and gaps between the existing and anticipated situations.

4. Communicate the vision
Kotter uses the word “communicate”, though I would like to say “create” instead – create the vision together with those who will convey it onward. A vision requires a strong anchor in order to be realized.

Many of the managers in the different teams showed that they wholeheartedly believed that this was an important cause. With their involvement, they demonstrated in what they did in their own organizations that “this is important for me”. One concrete action was that the managers personally participated in Empowering Change’s forums and that they communicated what was discussed to their own organizations, set the stage for improvements, and demanded results.

5. Work processes
It is in the work processes that the new results reside. The great challenge is therefore to make visible the prevailing structures and approaches, and challenge them to change. When we do the same things we’ve always done, we get the same results we’ve always gotten. Getting new ways of working to stick around as the “obvious” approaches is not easy. The old structures and ways of working have a powerful influence that makes it easy to fall back into old habits and routines.

A recurring feature at Empowering Change’s forums was to demonstrate effects. At the forums, the team worked together to form a common picture of the situation and exchange experiences with each other over county lines to inspire, get suggestions, and secure stamina.

6. Results
The vision describes the long-term goals. To motivate the exertions it takes to get there, you need to capture and be content with rapid and tangible results in the right direction.

At forum number six, the Empowering Change management team invited more managers and key people from their county to present results and celebrate what they had achieved so far. And to challenge and encourage each other for the work that remained to be done. Also participating in this forum were Minister for the Elderly Maria Larsson, National Coordinator for Elderly
Care Eva Nilsson Bågenholm, representatives from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and key stakeholders from the county. Demanding results, broadcasting them, and celebrating along the way was met with positive reaction and gave new energy to the continued work.

7. Finding new forms

As the destination approaches, failure can be imminent. At this stage, it is important to fortify the progress made by finding new ways to work toward the goal. It is important to make the new culture known, talk about the new ways of working that have been changed for the better. Create awareness by visualizing and building structures in which it is easy to do things right and hard to do things wrong.

To strengthen awareness, the participants were given worksheets in which the teams indicated on a scale where they were in terms of technological change, behavioral change and cultural change. Questions that showed the way were: What are the new ways of working we have implemented and to what extent are they now a part of everyday life? Has one new approach been introduced in one division? Several new approaches in one division? Or have many new approaches been introduced in many different workplaces? It is only when we are able to look at the entire map based on actual results that we can see the gap between where we are now and how far we have left to travel.

8. Changed culture

If a culture change is to last, you have to be able to show that the new is better than the old, and make sure the organization doesn’t fall back into previously ingrained behaviors. Continue to talk about what has improved and point out the changes that have been achieved. It is important to measure and follow up, highlight the value over time, and never tire of developing and improving.

One question that the manager teams took back with them was: What do we gain by these new ways of working, or lose by continuing to do things the way we are now? Making the new culture known by demonstrating its benefits for the elderly, the system and the staff is crucial to achieving a lasting cultural change. If many are able to see the value in the new ways of working that form the new culture, then they will continue to do so. But if this value is not seen, it is easy to fall back into the old ways of working.

Let me give an example. When Senior Alert was first introduced, there was a technological transformation, and voices were heard in the culture, saying: “We’re only registering so we can get our money”.

After a while, this approach came to mean that the package of measures introduced became increasingly linked to the identified risks. Things then moved
to the level of behavioral change. After a few years, more and more voices in the culture said: “We work proactively to prevent falls, pressure sores and malnutrition.” Establish measures and follow up.

Only then, when it has become an obvious part of everyday life and how we carry out our work, can it be said that a cultural change has been achieved. At the workplaces in which employees and managers have really seen what a difference it makes to work proactively, and where there is a high level of ambition to create the best possible value for those we are here for, I believe the new culture will live on. As opposed to workplaces where the value and benefits of registering as part of a proactive approach is not made visible and concrete.

Vision is central

Managers need to create conditions for everyone involved to participate in shaping challenging future scenarios so that everyone will help carry the change that is needed to get there. As Gandhi put it: “Be the change you wish to see in the world” Being a vision carrier means breathing change into every step you take. Peter Senge, American expert on learning organizations, also discusses the creative tension between vision and reality in his pathbreaking book, *The Fifth Discipline*.

The gap between now and new

Change management is about sharing a common view of the desired future state, based on a common understanding of reality. As a leader, you need to constantly work with motivation, desire and drive. There is always a risk of short-sightedness – that nearby targets and economic incentives will obscure visibility and the ability to see far will be lost. This brings the risk that the daily grind takes over and the vision will be forgotten. While concrete, close-at-hand targets are needed to move into action, future scenarios are needed in order to see far ahead and travel in the right direction.
To be able to move, you first have to know where you are and where you’re going. In other words, it is important to have a clear understanding of the current situation (now) and how you would like the future situation to be (new). Once this is done, the next task will be to analyze the gap between the now and the new. In Empowering Change, we’ve used this gap analysis, shown in the illustration, as leverage for working with changed ways of working. This has largely focused on measuring and following up on results to see what has been done and to highlight movement. Transforming the unusual into the usual.

It is when new ways of working have become routine that a cultural change has been achieved. Often, this can concern a change that seems almost impossible at first, but which is so obvious once it is in place that it is difficult to understand how it ever could have been any different. “Haven’t we always done it this way?”

There should be no doubt about the target, but you must always remind yourself that there are many ways to get there. The important thing is to make sure that the road you have chosen will lead to the goal.

Kebnekaise, Sweden’s highest mountain. As the map shows, there are many ways to get there. Here are some questions to keep in mind:

- What is it that we expect to happen?
- What does the gap look like between where we are today and the best possible future situation?
- Who has the authority and the responsibility to launch the change process?
Who follows up and demands results?
What support is available?
What support will be needed?
How do we know that a change will be an improvement?

Systematic change management

Empowering Change has built on knowledge of improvement as formulated in Dr. W. Edwards Deming’s System of Profound Knowledge. Deming is best known for his improvement cycle, also known as the Shewhart, Deming or PDSA cycle. PDSA stands for Plan-Do-Study-Act – the four basic components in a systematic change process.

Deming’s theories are based on the understanding of systems, methods for measuring results and analyzing variation, change psychology, leadership and learning-driven change management. Change psychology in particular has been an important component of Empowering Change in order to understand what prevents a change from coming about. The human fear of leaving the safe and familiar is a strong incentive to stay with what you know. Leaving the status quo and changing approach is, for many, arduous and frightening.

One metaphor I’ve used in Empowering Change to describe change psychology is the emigrant statue in Karlshamn. Based on Vilhelm Moberg’s novel *The Emigrants*, the statue depicts Karl-Oskar and Kristina as they prepare to leave Sweden for a new life in America.

Karl-Oskar holds the staunch conviction that the only thing that matters is the path ahead. The new visions drive him. He doesn’t look back because he knows that there is nothing more to gain there – only changes can bring improvement. Kristina, on the other hand, turns her face to the side, back toward the comfort zone, where you know what you have, but never how things will be. Her fear of the new stands in stark contrast to Karl-Oskar’s strong desire for change.
It takes courage to dare to leave one’s comfort zone.

In our everyday lives, we also meet in this field of tension. Sometimes we can identify with Karl-Oskar’s feelings, and sometimes with Kristina’s. As individuals, we all have different experiences that affect our ability to change. As a manager, I believe that it is extremely important to be aware of these differences because we all live in a world where we constantly work with transformation and new ways of working. This awareness is necessary to perform one of a manager’s most important tasks: engaging and involving everyone in driving daily systematic change management, based on needs and in cooperation with those we are here for.
From some to all

A major challenge throughout the initiative for “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People” has been to achieve dissemination and large-scale implementation – to go from some to all. We have a metaphor we use to discuss this. The baked cake, the half-baked cake, and what is still only ingredients. This is an illustration created by Sarah Fraser, British expert on large-scale change management. It shows the difference between testing on a small scale and implementation on a large scale.

Theories in improvement science are based on identifying a need and then, based on different ideas, testing it on a small scale according to the PDSA model. In the “ingredients” zone, we don’t yet know how the mixture might look. It is in the innovative improvement zone that we possess a number of components that we believe will work together and create results. Many tests need to be carried out on a small scale in order to develop concepts. The half-baked cake symbolizes that we have a number of concepts that are under development and will soon be ready for the baked zone, but need to be tested first.

In the baked zone, we have proven concepts ready to be disseminated from some to all. In the initiative as a whole, focus has been placed on implementing what we know will improve conditions for sick elderly people throughout all of Sweden. This ambition does not prevent us from simultaneously testing ideas to learn more and discover new knowledge and new concepts. There is a risk that even what is conceptualized in new working methods will continue to be tested on a small scale. The challenge lies in daring to take the step to build support structures for the new working method, and adapting and implementing it for EVERYONE.
dialogue results
experience exchange cooperation

forum

promises

ILLUSTRATION ÅSA KAX
Empowering Change forums

In complex systems, forums are needed to create conditions for trust, testing and space to meet and create a dialogue that leads to common views and implementation. The forums have therefore been a central element in Empowering Change. The teams have met in these to exchange individual experiences with the input of innovation, excitement and knowledge from people around the country and around the world. The content of the forums has drawn from learning objectives, and a common theme has permeated all forums:

1. We want to do X
2. We do X
3. We continue to do X* (Regional forums at five locations in the county with extra guests)
4. Better results through implementation
5. We demonstrate effects
6. So Much Better for Sick Elderly People (Larger national forums with over 600 managers and elected representatives)
7. Where there’s a will, there’s a way* (Regional forums at five locations in the county with extra guests)
8. We will always be on the way
Ralph Stacey’s complexity theories show that forums in complex systems are often characterized by high levels of uncertainty and consent.

Details and big picture in preparatory work

Another ingredient has been extremely detailed preparatory work. The spatial encounter creates conditions for the human encounter. Before the forums, the team at SKL therefore prepared solid groundwork to ensure that both details and the big picture for the meeting would be as productive and rewarding as possible for each participant. As the organizer, it is important to show respect for the participants by making sure that their time is well spent. Here are some of our experiences.

“As organizer, it is important to show respect for the participants.”
Big picture

- Clear planning for what will occur during the forum. There should be a clear theme from the invitation to the agenda, announced in both language and form.
- The meeting should not be perceived as an isolated conference with sprawling activities, but rather as a process to support managers in moving from words to action, and implementing their action plan for coordinated health and social care.
- Stories that bring in the perspective of the elderly and that show why an issue is important.
- Well-prepared lecturers who know what is expected of them for this group and don’t just come and “do their thing.” Lecturers from other contexts very welcome! For example, two lecturers from Boeing in Seattle to highlight a learning organization and the importance of letting hard facts and interpersonal values go hand in hand.
- At each forum, an evening activity was arranged with the dual aim of reinforcing the day’s message and providing inspiration in various forms. The message at the first forum, for example, was that we cannot copy each other’s solutions, but can be inspired and implement them in our own way in our own contexts. To reinforce this message, Sweden’s beloved songbird, “Lill-Babs”, contributed to the forum by performing a song by another artist and transforming it into her own song. How can southern Sweden take inspiration from improvement initiatives in northern Sweden, and implement them in a way that still feels “southern”?

Details

- Be sure to find suitable locations and premises that clearly communicate the expectations of the forum to the staff and encourage involvement.
- The premises must provide the environment and opportunity both to convene in the larger group, and for more intimate discussions with just a few participants.
- Round tables reinforce the feeling of interaction – what we decide together, we will also take responsibility for ensuring is implemented.
- Coordination meetings with staff at the conference facilities to clarify roles and expectations, e.g. check-in procedures, meals, coffee, etc. Special meetings with technicians to ensure that sound, lighting, video and other technical aids work properly. Make clear cue cards/storyboards.
- It should feel like someone has really made an effort to go the extra mile, to make sure the participants feel welcome – flowers on the tables, music when the participants arrive, etc.
- It is also important that everyone in the organizing team makes their
presence felt and welcomes the participants in a cheerful, open and service-minded manner.

- The role of the SKL team was to provide support to the participants, who own their own journey of development, and we acted accordingly. The motto was: Our best for you.

**Support for implementation**

Empowering Change has focused on supporting the participants in moving from words to action. We have also emphasized personal responsibility in achieving change. To support the implementation of the changes throughout the initiative, the participants were given a workbook at the first forum. The book contained questions to discuss in the manager team and suggestions on methods and models for building up an everyday culture with systematic quality management. Among other things, this included a model for making decisions, because this is important when a culture needs to change.

The focus in Empowering Change has been on results and implementation, as these are essential to knowing what effect the initiatives will have. Data showing the combined national results and the gap left to bridge before results were reached was placed up on the Internet. These figures could be used to follow each county’s results over time and compare them with other counties.

Within Empowering Change, it was clearly evident that it is in everyday life, among those closest to the business activities, that the changes take place and are owned. The management teams have had an autonomous mission, but still made sure that it was important that representatives for the macro perspective were invested in the work. At some forums, the teams have therefore invited in key people to talk about what has happened and what support they would like in order to be able to implement the county’s action plan. Through the politically established action plan, the highest management team is in charge of the county teams.
Different forms of support have been offered the participants:

- **Webbkollen**, a person-centered interview tool that gives the elderly people a chance to be heard. A simple method that provides an overview and identifies possible causes of insecurity, problems with medication, and readmissions to the hospital.
- Strategic updates – telephone meetings six times a year in which all participants are invited in and given a 30-minute debriefing on the current situation.
- Empowering Change’s own website with invitations, information, documentation, a blog and more.
- Videos in which elderly people communicate why this is important!
- Articles that highlight the importance of the changes when we start working with a new approach. From the perspectives of both the elderly and the employees.
- Offers for development support from improvement units Qulturum in Jönköping County, Memologen in Västerbotten County and Utvecklingscentrum in Skåne County. “A menu of opportunities” is available on their websites, with a range of offers to support the management teams’ systematic change management. Resource persons from these improvement units have also participated in Empowering Change’s forums.
- National development networks and analysis networks to support the county teams.
- Current national aggregate results of indicators on the website.
- Leadership Forum, a virtual room for exchanging experiences along the way.
- Workbook with models, issues, questions, explanations and space for individual thoughts and ideas.
- Worksheet designed as needed along the way.
- Publication “Four Areas to Avoid Unnecessary Hospital Visits”.

Ledningskraft: Designing managerial support in large-scale change management
scoreboard

now

new

promises

So much better

primary care

ILLUSTRATION ÁSA KAX
Insight developed together

An important guiding principle in the care of elderly ill people as a whole, and in Empowering Change, has been to constantly look at the work we do from many angles and perspectives. There is an obvious risk of looking at things from too few perspectives. Another risk is to, for the sake of convenience, surround yourself with people who look at things through the same lenses. To challenge ourselves and create height, depth and breadth in our thoughts and actions, we have constantly surrounded ourselves with “critical friends”. With the help of national and international change experts, we have listened in and received feedback on the work we are doing. This, along with literature and evidence from different perspectives, has broadened our field of vision.

“Make sure many different perspectives come to light”.

My warmest advice is therefore to make sure that many different perspectives are identified and brought into the discussion. A “critical friend” is someone you knows your entire situation and wishes you well. Someone who asks questions that help you see things with new eyes and listens to your responses with respect. Perhaps there is someone in your network outside “the mission” who is willing to take on this role?

Another suggestion is to have a lot of windows open to literature and evidence.
In the “A Better Life for Elderly Sick People” initiative, we have drawn from the following fields of knowledge:

- coaching
- dialogue theories
- empowerment
- evidence
- philosophy/ethics
- research and development
- sustainability theories
- implementation theories
- complex system theories
- cultural changes
- quality improvements
- leadership
- learning organizations
- micro-, meso- and macrosystem theories
- mindfulness
- motivation and propulsion theories
- measurement-analysis-statistics
- network theories
- psychology/understanding of human behavior
- social movement
- dissemination
- storytelling and large-scale change

Everything is connected and every day is a new day, with many new chances to learn in the intersection where practice and theory meet.

We wish you the best of luck in designing and adapting your managerial support to the context you operate in. It is exciting to find new paths, and that joy is empowering!

Anette Nilsson
Project Manager, Empowering Change – A Better Life for Elderly Sick People
Empowering Change was implemented in 2012-2014 at a number of locations in Sweden in collaboration with all participants in Empowering Change, who proved that real cooperation makes a difference, and with the Better Life team at the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, with the support of Sarah Fraser, British expert on large-scale change management.
Ledningskraft

Designing managerial support in large-scale change management

What is it that makes ivy that has been merely getting by for years suddenly shoot up and grow tall and strong? Or an elderberry bush that has been given the best possible conditions to grow and thrive, instead wither away? How much can you really change conditions to get the results you want? It isn’t easy in complex situations to single out one particular factor of success or failure.

Ledningskraft, in English Empowering Change was implemented between 2012-2014, a comprehensive national management program where managers from local authorities and regions met to put plans into action. As part of our constant commitment to providing the best possible welfare services.

In this publication, Project Manager Anette Nilsson shares her experiences about the design and thoughts behind Empowering Change. Yet its primary focus is to ask questions that help us think about how to continue our work and carry out large-scale improvements in complex systems.