Changing Times : case studies in transformational change and continuous improvement

Delivering Local Outcomes through Libraries
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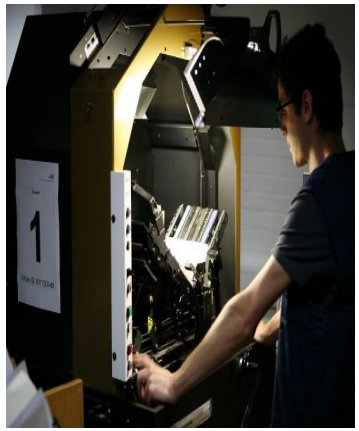
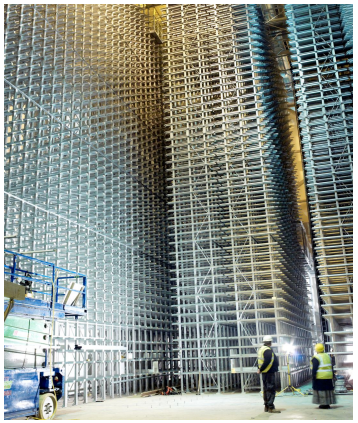
The British Library – The World's Knowledge





The national library of the UK. Serves researchers, business, libraries, education & the general public.

The largest document supply service in the world. Secure e-delivery and 'just in time' digitisation enables desktop delivery within 2 hours.

2 major exhibitions each year, and a number of permanent and small displays. A range of events support these.

3 main sites in London and Yorkshire. Circa 2,000 staff.

On-line services allow remote access to the BL catalogue, a range of learning resources, 'virtual' editions of well-known treasures, and much more.

2009/10 GIA:
£97.4m operational
£12.1m capital
Other funding secured 08/09:
£33m

150 million items in the collection including books, journals, maps, manuscripts, sound recordings, theses, patents and stamps.

Business and IP Centre, providing inspiration, and enabling protection of creative capital and business development.

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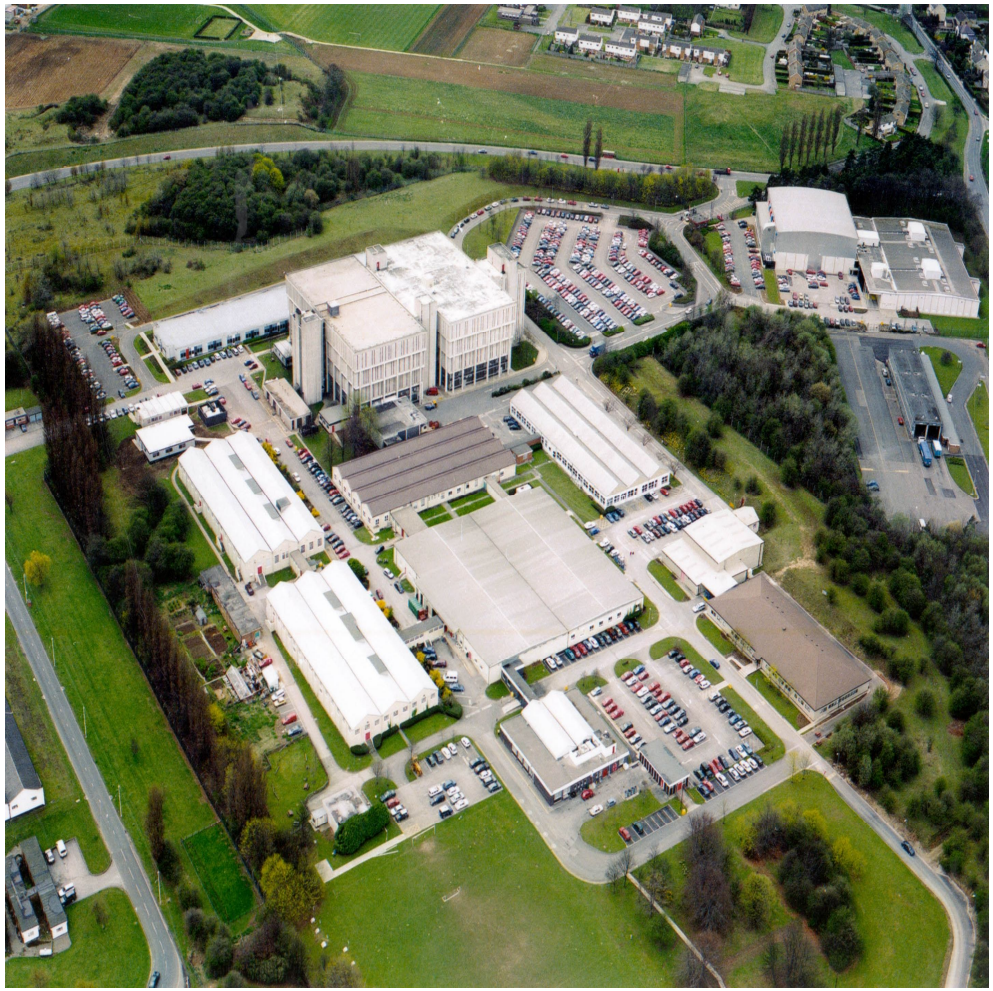
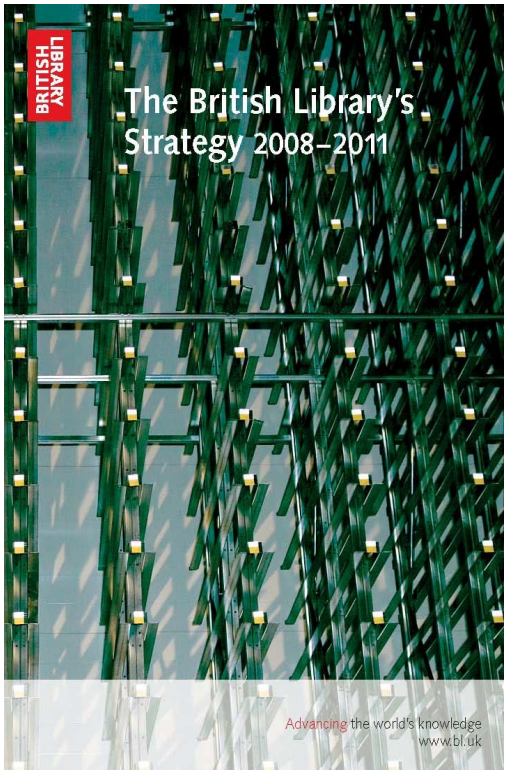
‘We’re fine. Why do <u>we</u> need to change?’

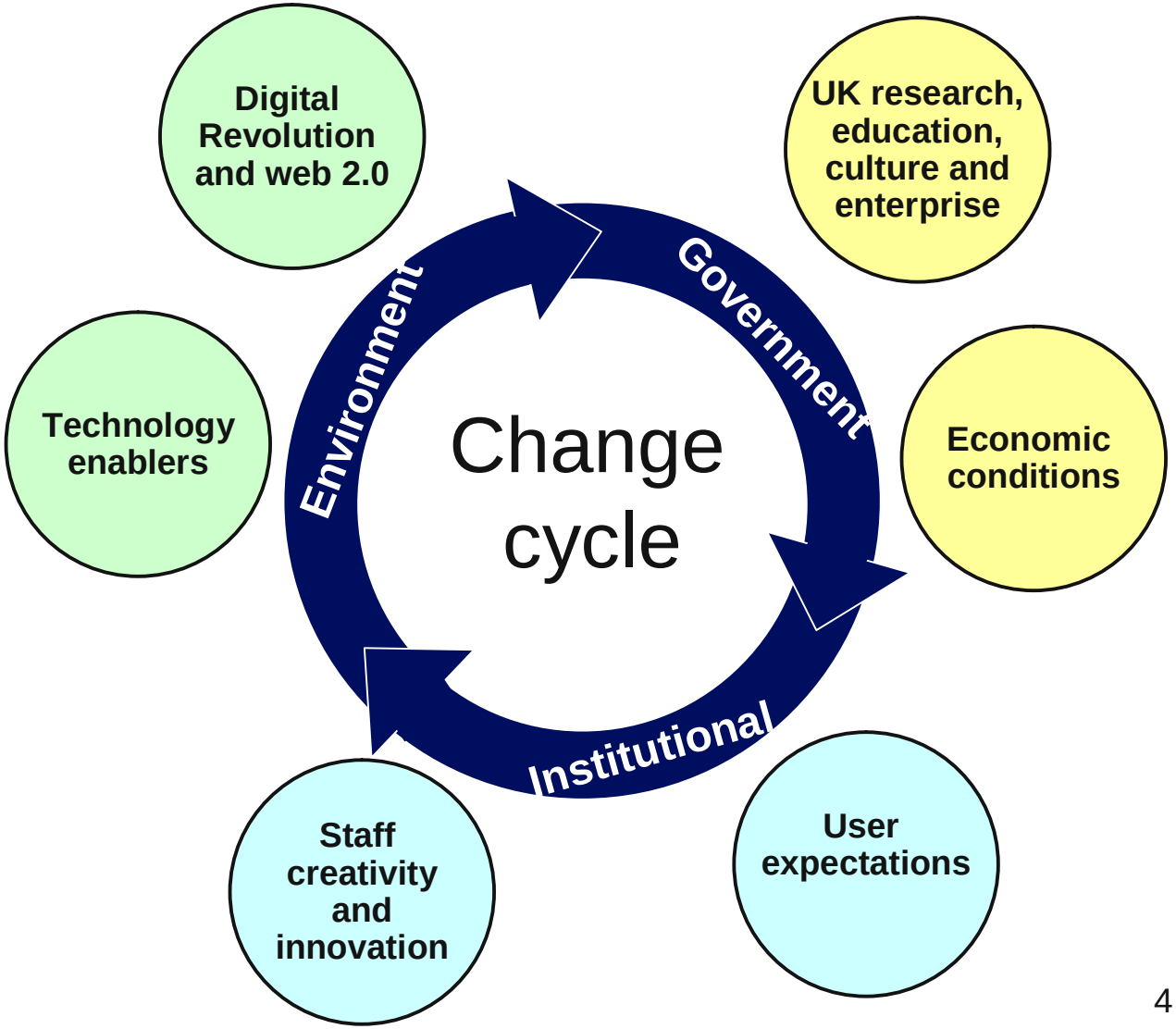
It’s not the **strongest** species that survive, nor the **most intelligent**, but the ones most **responsive to change**

Charles Darwin 1809-1882



What drives change at the British Library?



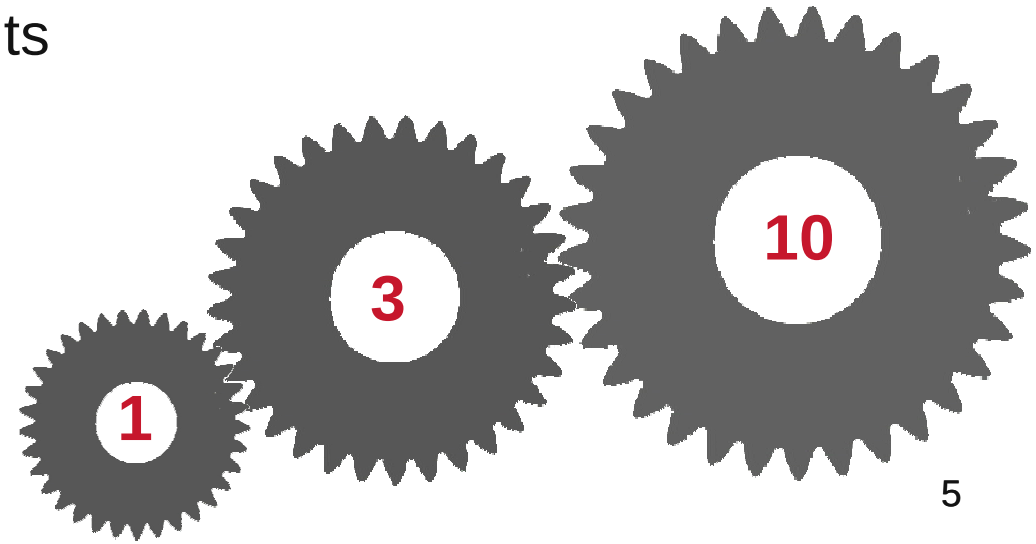


Interconnected change cycles - our philosophy of change

10-year cycle of introducing major transformational steps, re-orientating the Library to meet future challenges and opportunities

3-year corporate strategy cycle. Developing innovative strategy, to plan and define the shape of the Library and its services.

1-year business plans for continuous focus on implementation and results



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Today's case studies

1. Tackling traditional silos

- Big bang
- Large scale
- Management led - top down
- Technology enabled

2. Facing up to declining demand

- Continuous Improvement
- Small scale
- Staff led - bottom up
- Response to changing environment

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Case study 1 : Tackling traditional silos

What?

- Delivering efficiencies in large scale, back office materials processing (340 staff)

Before?

- Traditional organisation (professional silos)
- Separate management, separate systems
- Little focus on the customer
- Little capacity for change.

Catalyst ?

- Experience from outside the organisation
- Implementation of an integrated, centralised automation system to replace legacy systems
- New systems philosophy ('we will adapt to fit the system')

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Case study 1 : Tackling traditional silos (2)

How?

- End to end process review and restructure.
- Staff consultation through process improvement.
- Top down process

Benefits?

- Faster access to services and materials for users
- 300 renewed staff roles. 40 fewer jobs through retirement and voluntary redundancy.
- 15% efficiency saving (£1.5m saving)
- Streamlined operations and elimination of bottlenecks
- Cultural change – acknowledgement we can do major change
- Facilitates further change – digital content management, digitisation instead of cataloguing

A different approach - Continuous improvement

Drivers

- Proven success from other environments/industries
- ‘Big bang’ is not always possible or appropriate
- More positive approach
- Broader support for corporate change programmes.

Deliverables

- Service improvement, increased customer satisfaction
- Operational efficiency
- Reduced costs
- Staff morale - engage & involve colleagues.

Decisions

- Appoint a corporate CI Champion.
- Spread the use of Improvement Groups (team based kaizen).
- Appropriate training in core techniques (Lean processing, 5s)
- Staff initiated over 70 CI projects across the library
- Clear, measurable outcomes e.g. productivity
- Align to the corporate strategy using the EFQM* approach.

*European Foundation for Quality Management (business excellence model) – a universally accepted model with which organisations can design a business improvement strategy & benchmark progress.

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Case study 2 : Facing up to declining demand

What?

- Amalgamating traditional retrieval teams in Document Supply (18 staff)

Before?

- Separate teams based in different locations with the stock
- Separate management, duplicate processes
- Lack of necessary skills to improve situation

Catalyst ?

- Decline in traditional document supply (c.8%/year)
- Document Supply Futures strategy review encouraged staff to contribute to solutions
- Teams choosing issues to look at in their areas – owning problems and solutions

Case study 2 : Facing up to declining demand (2)

How?

- Plan, Do, Check, Act
- Training in lean processing techniques, principles of 5s, measurement and analysis.
- Bottom up – staff drove the project and the results

Benefits?

- Individual productivity up 14%
- Staff reduced by 33% (18 to 12).
- Others reassigned to other new services e.g. mass digitisation projects
- Salary savings of £121k/year

- Space saving of 180sq m, 850m new shelving space created
- Cultural change. Staff apprehensive to begin with but overwhelmingly positive responses.

Celebrating Success - Continuous Improvement Convention 2008

Area	Theme
Delivery	Reorganised layout to improve efficiency
Records	Reorganised processes & utilised visual control to improve efficiency
Transport & Consumables	Designed a system of recycling printer cartridges to protect the environment & generate revenue

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But don’t just take my word for it. Here’s what 2 team managers feel.

“The members of my team that participated on the day were very nervous but on the train home wanted to plan what we would be doing this year so we could apply again for next year. So I think this illustrates how very positively affected they were through the experience.”

“By only day 2 of working the new process our team's inbox was reduced from over 300 emails to 0. This was a combination of the vastly more efficient process and the increase in morale. There is nothing like seeing instant positive results to increase productivity and "get the bit between your teeth" !!! It's easy when you're under pressure and workload is bigger than the resource to say "we haven't got the time or we can't afford to take the time out". Continuous Improvement is time consuming but within 48hours we have reaped the rewards !!”

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To sum up

- We live in interesting times
  - Turbulent environment
  - Past practices challenged
  - No certainty on new services or ways of working
- Modernisation can be approached on many levels, large and small scale
- Technology can enable and drive – but attitudes and approach of all staff is what creates a successful change environment
- Your people are the key

Thank you for listening

For follow up and more information please email: Caroline.brazier@bl.uk