



LESSONS STILL TO BE LEARNT - Politicians Still Need to Learn Basics of 'Strategy to Structure'

It would appear from much of the political wrangling going on about forming a government that little has changed in the how Irish political leaders think despite the abundant opportunities for learning since the demise of the Celtic Tiger in 2008.

It would also seem that little learning is taken in from fields outside of politics or government administration despite all the investment and talk about the civil service learning the best that the business sector has to offer.

If the reporting of *The Irish Times* on the basis of "party sources" is accurate that: "Changes to the **structure** of Irish Water ...could be considered by Fine Gael as part of negotiations on forming a new government...", it could support the two points just stated.

Could it be that the error already made in the setting up of Irish Water will be repeated? There's not much real research in the field of Change Management - valid and reliable evidence, as against the change management anecdotes - with which the field is well populated. If, however, anything has been learnt from all the talk it is that **STRUCTURE should follow STRATEGY – the *how* should follow the *what*.**

That was not done in setting up Irish Water in the first place and it is looking like, having gone down a wrong path, political leaders are not up to finding a way out of the hole they dug. Hence they seem to have their minds set on continuing to dig.

The second learning, again ignored in setting up Irish Water, is that you **don't export the organisational culture of the old problem organisation into the new organisation** intended to leave behind the problems which necessitated the change to a new organisation.

This is also why the HSE had little chance of success from its outset. Even the HSE Director General in effect acknowledged that the HSE was a STUCTURE set up without STRATEGY:

And the Minister of Health, who, with the DG, one would have thought should have done something about this, agrees:

It's hard not to conclude that the Minister seems to have seen himself as an observer or commentator rather than the person with responsibility:

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