

Cutting your way forward



How-To:
Budget cuts

Five ways to do better with less



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There's no getting away from it, since the first impact of recession in 2008 only half of that initial decline has been recovered and public sector budgets have been cut back accordingly.

But there's also good news – because there is growing recognition that the public sector is responding with a great deal of positivity. From councils to emergency services and healthcare, organisations are finding new and ingenious ways to improve services for citizens while simultaneously streamlining their operations.

We all know this is only the beginning. With austerity measures set to stay in place until at least 2018, the public sector will continue to look at where it can improve efficiency. There will be more refinements to come. And for many, the end result is likely to be a complete transformation of the way you work.

In this How-to guide, we suggest ways you can keep the momentum going and continue to make that transformation happen.

“We have to be even more creative today. We have to consider how we are going to provide services within such a tight financial budget”

Nick Pym,
Director of Clinical Governance,
Blackpool Teaching Hospitals

Key budget cuts challenges

Make individuals and teams more productive

Maintain and improve service levels despite fewer resources

Streamline outdated manual processes

Make sure new technology investments provide value

Meet rising citizens' expectations

Dealing with budget cuts while also maintaining and improving service levels is no easy task, but it can be done. We recommend five areas that you can focus on to work more efficiently – and in ways that will also bring about positive change.

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| 1 | Better use of resources through mobile working | Flexible working was once a nice option. Today it's essential if you want to make the most of your resources. So consider how you can enable more flexible working to reduce costs like travel. Think about mobile applications that cut down on time-consuming paper-based processes . Most importantly, plan how the time and budget you save can be given back to the citizen. |
| 2 | Embrace cross-sector collaboration | Many organisations are actively trying to reduce the number of buildings they use. One of the best ways of achieving that goal is to share resources and back office infrastructure with other public service providers – not only to reduce property estate, but also to offer a more joined-up service to citizens. |
| 3 | Keep it lean | Lean methodology is having increasing influence on the way public sector is run. Use it to re-examine processes, identify unnecessary duplication and see where technology can be used to streamline processes in new customer-centric ways . And remember: if the change you want to make doesn't directly improve life for citizens, it's probably not worth doing it at all. |
| 4 | Consider the potential of social enterprise | When you face a significant reduction in budget, one option is to cut jobs. Another is to outsource. But there is another option to consider: a new delivery structure based on a social enterprise model . Those who have already taken this route say that it's an effective way to secure jobs, boost local economy and drive innovation. |
| 5 | Reduce technology procurement costs | There's a lot of talk about the potential of Public Service Network (PSN) to transform the way public sector services are delivered. But let's not forget that PSN's primary function is to rationalise the procurement of communications technology and reduce costs . If PSN isn't already at the heart of your communications strategy, it really should be soon. |



Find out more

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