

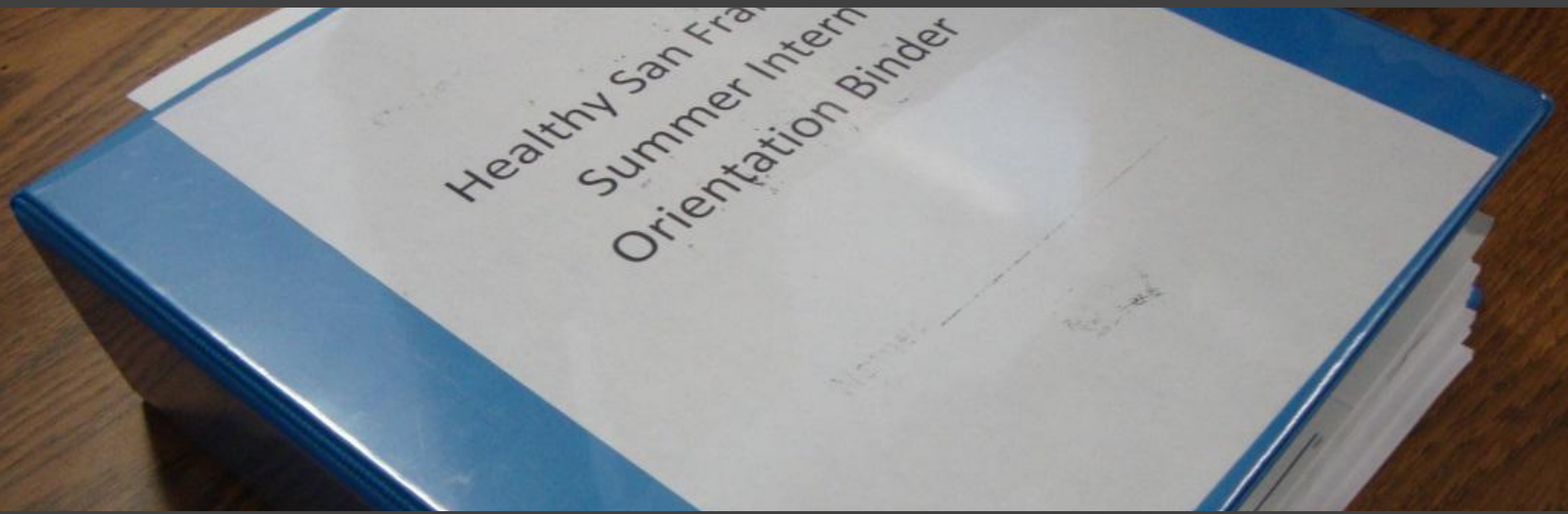
Ten Tips for Local Implementation of National Policy Innovation

Lessons from 2013 Ash Center Summer Fellowship

By Sylvia Leung

September 2013

About the Author



The San Francisco Department of Public Health's Healthy San Francisco (HSF) is a nationally recognized and award-winning health access program that provides coordinated care to about 60,000 individuals without health insurance. From May to July 2013, Sylvia Leung served as an Ash Center Summer Fellow at HSF.

While at HSF, Sylvia helped the City and County of San Francisco track the roll out of Covered California (California's state health exchange) and developed a strategic implementation plan that ensures San Francisco is prepared to uphold its commitment to universal coverage with the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

This presentation is a reflection of the perspective and opinions of the author and not of the City and County of San Francisco or the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation.

About the Affordable Care Act

***The Patient
Protection***

&

***Affordable
Care Act***



111th Congress of the United States

H.R. 3590

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (also known as Affordable Care Act, ACA, Obama Care or Health Care Reform) was signed into federal law by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010.

The largest overhaul of the United States health-care system since the enactment of Medicaid and Medicare in 1965, this federal statute has large implications at the federal, state, and local levels. The ACA is a prime example of national law reform that depends on state and local government for implementation.

The primary opportunity this reform represents for municipal and state governments is expanded health care coverage to more residents. One of the primary challenges is adjusting to changes in how health care is delivered and funded.

About the Methodology



This presentation highlights ten tips that local governments may consider when implementing a new federal law. Based on Sylvia's experience as an Ash Center Summer Fellow, it identifies lessons relevant to implementing the ACA or another national policy innovation. This presentation is not based on exhaustive research, but rather is a reflection of individual experience and perspective.

10. Leadership



San Francisco's Office of the Mayor is the leader in implementing the ACA in the city and county. The San Francisco Human Services Agency and Department of Public Health also play important roles, but the leadership of the mayor is necessary as the ACA reaches across agencies and across other sectors.

Lesson

Designate a leader in local government with the authority to convene public and private stakeholders to set a vision and mission, and to shape a strategy to successfully implement a new federal law. The leadership role would ideally fall to a specific agency or individual.

9. Strategic Management



Healthy San Francisco created a work plan that clarifies the specific tasks, deadlines, and roles that are needed to implement the ACA, particularly the health coverage reform. This work plan served as a management tool for the Office of the Mayor and other relevant offices, including the Human Services Agency, Department of Public Health, and Office of Small Business.

Lesson

Strategic management, required to execute the leadership's vision, begins with a comprehensive implementation plan that outlines a strategy in daily operations and in organizational infrastructure.

8. Ownership



Ownership of tasks, roles, and expertise is essential in preparing for the Affordable Care Act implementation. The HSF work plan clarifies owners of tasks and expertise from the local government's point of view, specifying who is the expert in Medi-Cal expansion, employer contributions, and so on.

Lesson

In a complex delivery system, it is important to set the boundaries and clarify ownership of roles, responsibilities, and expertise. Ownership requires that an individual or local government department adopts these new responsibilities as part of their larger mission.

7. Local Collaboration



The City of San Francisco's departments and agencies naturally collaborate based on the nature of the ACA. Within the government, multiple city and county departments and agencies met and communicated regularly about the ACA. One of the first intra-government projects includes the ongoing development of a health care reform Website for San Francisco residents.

Lesson

Collaboration is critical between government agencies engaged in the preparation and implementation of a national policy innovation. Meeting and communicating regularly is the first step in building an effective network. Quick wins can help build the trust and confidence needed for more complex tasks.

6. Regional Collaboration



While the state of California has played a large role coordinated California's 58 counties in implementing the ACA, the City and County of San Francisco also took initiative to consult with other Bay Area counties on how they plan to implement the ACA.

Lesson

Cities and counties may turn to other local governments to learn best practices, policies, and strategies to implementing a national law. With national law reform, a local government has access to a wealth of examples and resources from local governments across the nation. In addition to consulting with other municipalities, local governments may also collaborate with other local governments to improve the law's implementation at a regional or even state level.

5. Community Engagement



The City and County of San Francisco values and commits to community engagement. For ACA implementation, San Francisco is preparing community outreach and education so that residents are ready for ACA changes, including health coverage expansion and enrollment.

Lesson

Successful implementation of a public policy innovation requires educating and involving the community through town hall meetings, media campaigns, press releases, and more.

4. Private Sector Engagement



The ACA involves private sector players, including health insurance companies, hospitals, employers, and small businesses. The City and County of San Francisco has engaged these private partners through meetings, public hearings, and other forums.

Lesson

Local governments should engage their private partners on how to best implement a new federal law. Examples include town hall meetings, public hearings, signed memoranda of understanding, and trainings. Local governments may also engage private sector and community partners in the same forum to get a fuller perspective on how to best implement a new federal law.

3. Anticipation



Although some elements of the ACA have already been implemented, most ACA changes will go into effect on January 1, 2014. This past summer, the City and County of San Francisco worked on projecting the demographics of the insured and uninsured. This information is useful in anticipating what care and enrollment services are needed in the coming months.

Lesson

Local governments facing new federal laws will want to anticipate the consequences of implementation and future events for which they may need to prepare. For example, forecasting revenue, costs, and client demographics.

2. Perseverance

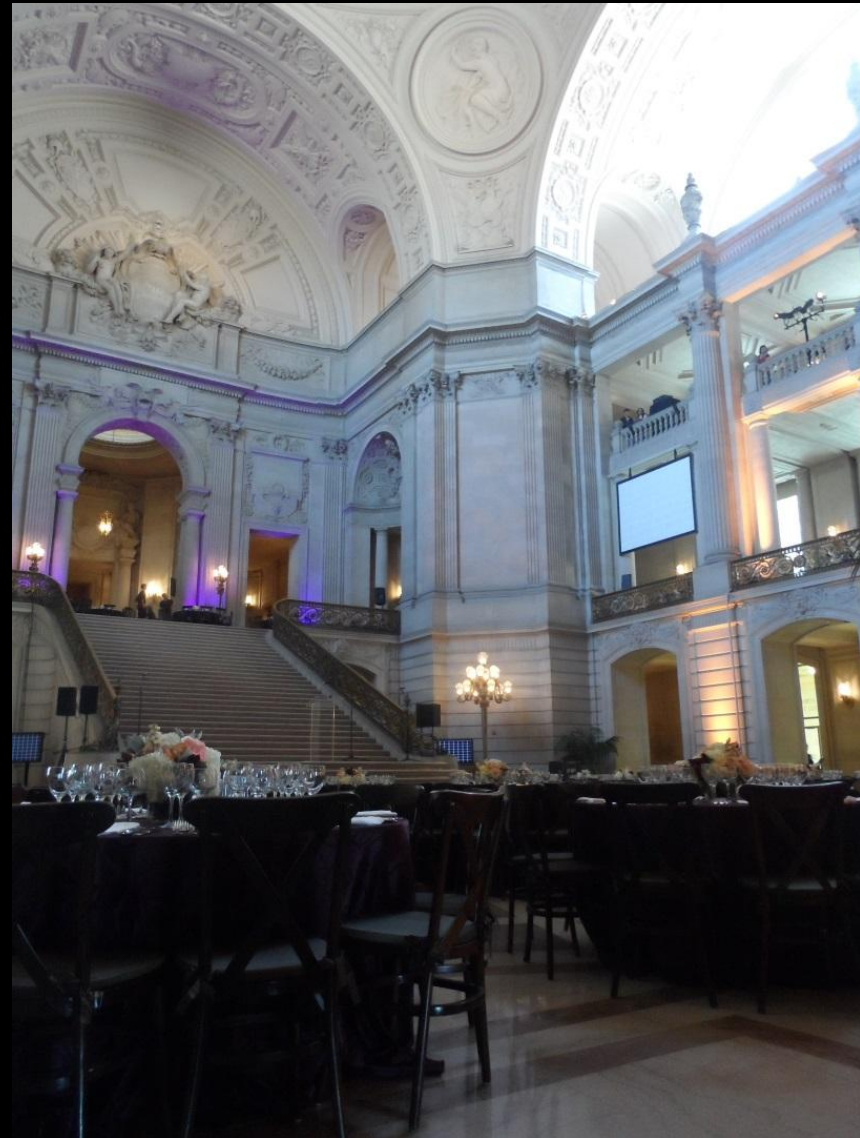


Since the ACA involves long-term and complicated changes, perseverance is an important quality for leaders, managers, and staff to have. San Francisco's commitment to universal health care coverage has fueled this local government's perseverance despite ACA implementation hurdles. Leaders in the Department of Public Health can also turn to past examples of successful long-term changes, including seat belt and tobacco cessation law reforms.

Lesson

Since most national laws involve major, long-term changes, perseverance is key to implementation, and includes ongoing initiatives such as strategic planning, succession planning, and regular monitoring and evaluations.

1. Celebration



The people of San Francisco have celebrated the ACA in various ways, including rallies in front of City Hall on March 23, 2010, press releases, and public addresses by public officials. Such celebrations are important to sustain energy and willpower to successfully implement the ACA.

Lesson

Local governments ought to host ongoing celebrations to sustain morale and motivation of residents and staff. Specific ways to do so include news coverage, public announcements, and festivals that educate the public on the accomplishments and progress of implementing the new law.

In Summary



Any local government with responsibility for implementing a national policy innovation can turn to these key ingredients, which fall into three categories: culture, partnership, and leadership. When implementing any significant reform, it is important to maintain a culture of celebration, perseverance, and anticipation. This culture should touch all departments and levels of civil service. A strong partnership with the public, private, and community sectors is key to supporting change. Finally, leadership can be found anywhere while ownership should be everywhere.