

FINDING THE FUTURE—TO ACCELERATE YOUR CHANGE EFFORT

Found Pilots

Seeing the Future in the Present

Organizations often get in the way of their own success. They can get stuck when trying to make a major change. But your organization almost surely has the hidden assets and strengths to move in the direction you want to go. And the beginnings of the change you want to make are already emerging in your organization and in its relationships with customers, suppliers and the wider environment.

CFAR’s “campaign” approach to change helps you find and use those sources of energy and momentum.

ARPANET WAS A FOUND PILOT FOR THE INTERNET

This cumbersome early network that connected a few research scientists was a harbinger of the Internet. Flying under the radar at first, it tested a new way of communicating, and led to a change that reshaped the world economy.

Discovering Found Pilots

Found pilots are projects, people and efforts already moving in a new direction.

- ▶ **We call them “found”** because you discover them.
- ▶ **We call them “pilots”** because you learn from them and use them to make things happen.

These hidden assets are key to building direction and scoring the early results you’ll need later to engage the enterprise more broadly and sustain the gains.

Your Job as a Leader is Active and Strategic

You’ll need the strategic radar to see the future in what’s around you—and the skill and will to shape it.

It’s the work of a strategist who is also an opportunist.

Ask Yourself, “Where is it Already Happening?”

Found pilots can be elements of the new behaviors you’re trying to create in service of change. Or they can be elements of supports for those behaviors or forces for the change.

Parts of projects, events, and roles where **specific new actions and behaviors** are beginning to show up



Existing tools, practices, and organizational structures that make the new behaviors easier, more attractive or more enduring

Forces in the larger environment that pull the changes along

Changing the Culture by Finding Where the Culture is Already Changing

A useful definition of culture is **“the way we do things around here.”** New behaviors are the building blocks of an organization’s culture. Each behavior by itself may be small, but together they can move the organization’s culture in the direction of change. Trying to “replace” an organization’s culture almost never works. The changes don’t fit, so they don’t last. The best way to change an organization’s culture is to look for where it’s already changing. Found pilots point you toward those places.

Working with Other People’s Energies

As in all campaigns, which draw strength from the interests and passions of a few people to start, found pilots are a source of early allies for your change effort. By linking and leveraging people who are already committed to doing things in a new way, you have a big head start. The more you can work with “other people’s energies” in this way, the more owners your change effort will have and the more it will sustain and stick.

“I like that it **doesn’t take a big infrastructure to get started** on a project.”

— University executive

Learning What It Will Take To Make Change Happen

You can learn a lot from the found pilots about the change you’re trying to create. They’re like mini-labs that let you probe for texture and detail: What do the new work practices look like on the ground? How can you describe them so others know what you’re trying to do?

“It helps you **pay attention to things you might miss.**”

— Health system executive

Found pilots let you figure out what structures and skills will be needed for the new ways of working to thrive. And they let you understand differences and similarities: How much of a stretch will it be? How is it like what we’re already doing?

Who We Are

CFAR began as a research center inside the Wharton School and was established as a private management consulting firm in 1987. We combine a deep understanding of business with insights into the human systems that comprise organizations. Our consultants integrate their academic expertise in diverse disciplines with pragmatic ways to help leaders solve new or stubborn organizational problems. We give our clients new ways of thinking about their organizations, and the skills and tools to sustain lasting performance improvement.

We serve organizations nationwide from offices in Philadelphia and Boston. Our consultants leverage their diverse academic backgrounds in strategy, finance and the social sciences to help clients resolve complex organizational issues.

For more information about CFAR and our expertise, please visit our website at WWW.CFAR.COM.

A FOUND PILOT TO REVAMP COMPUTING SUPPORT

The University of Pennsylvania wanted to redesign computing support so that everyone has a computing “home,” with local support and local knowledge. They found that in some dorms, students already provided computer support for their friends, informally.

The university began to pay those students, supervise them, and connect them to the central computing organization.

GOOD NEWS FOR LEADERS

The future is already here. In fragments you can seed, shape, extend and connect.

You’re farther along than you think. By the time you locate and build on a collection of found pilots, your change initiative is already underway.

Your organization’s culture is a renewable resource. The raw material for culture change is already emerging inside your organization and in its relationships with customers, suppliers and the wider environment.

Named one of **America’s Best Management Consulting Firms** for the fourth year in a row by Forbes

