

# Who is a Successful Leader

We have seen leaders emerge at all organizational levels in our case studies. First, we observed the very top level of leadership - often elected officials - who espouse a particular cause and engage others to follow.

- Among the Canadian cases, many initiatives under the Connecting Canadians program have the imprimatur of the Canadian federal government. These leaders created this umbrella program in order to "make Canada the most connected country in the world." At the Partners in Change project in New Brunswick, the strong and steadfast leadership from the Premier and the Minister were "greatly appreciated and helped with getting through hard times" during the project.
- In the United States, President Clinton created the necessary conditions for a federal portal; Clinton announced his support of this policy in the "first ever Internet address" by a U.S. President, a highly symbolic statement of the importance of electronic government.
- In the City of Bremen the Mayors who represent the dominant political parties gave their personal attention to the project. In Belgium, the Hotjob project, a public employment and training service, was created by a Walloon Regional Council decree - and fit into the Wallonia government's strategic plan to modernize public services.

At the agency level, many instances of leadership emerged that proved critical to project success.

- The New York State GIS project was given life by the leadership from several state agencies. Project participants averred that the early involvement of these agencies was crucial to convince other agencies to become active in this statewide coordination effort. This agency-level leadership gave the project the necessary credibility for success. The GIS project further benefited from strong leadership from its Program Director at the NYS Office for Technology. His leadership style was to promote consensus, and his willingness to do so was seen as accounting for "a large part of the success of the collaboration."
- At the IRS, the Commissioner for the Electronic Tax Administration was viewed by all as a superlative leader. He was willing to take risks and to be innovative, and his passionate support for this project gained the necessary operational support from a staff that was seen as neither risk taking nor innovative.

In other instances, leadership emerged from within the project team, at a peer level.

- In the Service Canada Initiative, the lines of authority were "fuzzy" and the project itself was experimental in nature. Team members had to step up to the plate, make sense of where they were headed, and then lead the way for their colleagues. The Ontario Business Connect project was successful in part due to the ability of the stakeholder team to call upon its own leadership skills and be given the necessary "room to operate" on its own merits.