Practicalities of KTP – ’propping up’ or catalyst for change?

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Knowledge Transfer in an established business cluster- practical challenges

Background

• Set up with SWERDA funding to give maritime a ‘voice’ in Plymouth, withdrawn after 2yrs
• Leading to -
  • Reduction in activities
  • Lack of commitment
  • ‘downward spiral’ as membership reduced and further loss of funds
• More funding seen as only solution
• Lack of understanding on sustainability and best practice
• Turned to University of Chichester for help
Why did they ask us to help?

- We had a CAMIS project studying cluster initiatives in the maritime industry
- Collaborative work with Northern France looking to enhance economic sustainability within marine clusters

So it seemed like a good fit with the potential issues and a likely KTP opportunity.
Our methodology- consultancy approach

3 days of interviews with Maritime Plymouth members and local business, identified significant communication problems between companies within the cluster and also with Local Authority.

We also found a lack of vision with short term needs overriding long term sustainability.

Members were ‘stuck in a rut’ regarding ability to see alternative solutions and displayed negativity towards other Stakeholders – laying blame

A report was prepared for cluster group members with some suggested actions.
Solution or Response?

A report on the findings of the interviews and observations suggested activities to take forward to increase membership and hold a visioning event (KT)

This would be a facilitated, interactive workshop with all major Stakeholders to brainstorm solutions, barriers and secure personal commitments

We then completed a follow up report on the event and advised on the next steps
What were the goals of the visioning session?

Attendees were mostly –

Cluster members
Academics (Robins and Ellis)
Cluster ‘executive’
Local political representatives
Other cluster members, (along the coast)
Chamber of Commerce

*All with different goals*

• Questioning the sustainability of the cluster
• Identifying the *desire* of the cluster members to contribute
• Flagging up barriers and some solutions
• Highlighting the advantages of maintaining the cluster – WIIFM?
The forces at work in a KTP

Driving forces:
- Energy and unity of those involved
- Clarity of purpose
- Size of potential benefits
- Ability and willingness to change
- Experience of previous KTPs

Restraining forces:
- Funding and resources
- Skills of the members
- Interest in the status quo
- Fear of the new
A model to assist- the 4 C’s of KTP