

This thesis explores how digital transformation strategies are made in the Swedish public sector and how to improve strategy formulation. It suggests that purposeful dialogue is critical in creating a collective shared understanding, known as consensing. Consensing helps to align planned and actual strategies and organizations to adapt to rapid technological advancements and environmental pressures. The novel concept of consensus debt explains what can happen when not all stakeholders are involved in making the strategy. Consensus debt represents the accumulation of unresolved issues, bypassed discussions, and unaddressed disagreements within an organization.

When strategic decisions are made without achieving a broad, informed agreement and shared understanding, it may expedite action in the short term but at the expense of long-term alignment and commitment. Consensus debt, like other forms of debt, can hinder organizational agility if not properly managed. Consensing offers a solution to mitigate consensus debt by providing a more collaborative and deliberate approach to strategy formulation. Building on two decades of public sector experience, the thesis provides recommendations for organizations embarking on digital transformation journeys. It concludes that consensing is a vital tool for enhancing the effectiveness and quality of strategy formulation and implementation.



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The Consensing Approach to Strategizing:  
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