

Promoting Organizational Change

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Abstract

This case study discusses the promotion of change within an organization. This paper identifies hindrances to change, notes several opportunities for change and discusses various possible reasons to plan for change within an organization. Change is something that is inevitable within all organizations if the organizations desire to remain relevant. Organizational change is something that is best when properly planned however, in many cases organizations go through unplanned change as well. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033] In both cases, whether planned or unplanned, there will always be hindrances to change just as there will be opportunities for change. Some hindrances to change include things such as failure to communicate, issues involving timing, a failure to trust, skepticism, cynicism, pessimism, issues involving power, financial issues, issues of persuasion, technological issues and the list goes on. [CITATION Fen06 \l 1033] During the life of an organization there will be many opportunities for change however, change will not happen until leaders both see the need and implement the change. Some possible opportunities which ultimately lead to change include the conduct of spot trends, opinion polls, assessments, conduct of organizational diagnosis, use of various change models and use of various diagnostic frameworks. Once a leader determines that change is required they then begin to plan for change. Planned change per the author is “deliberate, a product of conscious reasoning and action. In contrast, change sometimes unfolds in an apparently spontaneous and unplanned way (Lewin, 1947).” [CITATION Hod15 \p 20 \l 1033]

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Introduction

Organizational change is something that all organizations will undergo to remain competitive. Change whenever it is not properly implemented will likely lead to various hindrances to change. Hindrances may happen in areas where they are least expected such as areas related to communication, trust, finances and other such areas. There are many, many opportunities that present themselves for change however, it is the responsibility of a good leader to recognize the need for change, whether planned or unplanned. Finally, once an organization's leadership determines the need for change they must then develop both a change plan and a plan for implementing the change. Leaders must be careful to make themselves aware of the hindrances to change, the opportunities available to them for change and they must be able to plan and implement change within organizations, especially today. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Hindrances to Change

As noted earlier in this document, change within an organization may be either planned or unplanned. Planned change is something that is thoughtful and deliberate in nature. Whereas on the other hand, unplanned change is something that tends to unfold without any thought. As quoted by Hodges & Gill (2015), Burnes stated that "This type of change is known as emergent change. (Burnes, 2009a)" [CITATION Hod15 \p 20 \l 1033] Regardless of whether the change is planned or unplanned, it is very likely that there will be hindrances to the change whether intended or not. A few of the potential hindrances to change include things such as issues regarding change itself, issues involving power granted or the lack of power, issues surrounding

financial shortcomings, technological issues and numerous other factors. Some other factors may involve the failure to communicate properly, or even not at all with stakeholders, issues involving timing, a lack of trust by stakeholders, skepticism, cynicism and pessimism [CITATION Fen06 \l 1033] These are but a few of the issues which could serve as hindrances to change within an organization.

The first hindrance to consider is the fact that people tend to exhibit a fear of change. Change is something that is always required but it is something that people never seem to or even want to become accustomed to. Change is nothing more than the act of transitioning. The text authors, Hodges & Gill (2015) state “Transition is the process or period of adapting to the change. Transition involves shifting from the current state or phase to another, for example, an individual changing from one role to another, a group changing from one decision process to another, or an organization going from one structural arrangement to another. (p. 11) The authors go on to state “For example, individuals may fear the chaos and uncertainty caused by change. They might feel threatened by the risk of a new beginning – of doing and being what they have never done and been before.” [CITATION Hod15 \p 11 \l 1033] Considering this it is important to do level best to put all stakeholders at ease regarding the impending transition. To do a good job as this the leader must be a good communicator so that pertinent information may be properly passed from change leaders to stakeholders. Based upon information by Fendt (2006) communicators tend to have different styles. They may be the Cartel communicator or the Aesthetic communicator or even the videogame communicator. According to Fendt these are the communicator concerned with getting the job done while showing off their power and there is the communicator who wants to do their best to get the job done and still be liked and there is the communicator who is the technological leader who possesses a high level of energy, respectively.

[CITATION Fen06 \l 1033] Regardless of the change or transition that is happening the ability to communicate properly is critical to the success of change. As noted by Hodges & Gill (2015) change communication is very important to both leaders and managers alike. Understanding change has everything to do with how it is communicated, and everyone must understand that the flow of communication must be in all directions; up, down and laterally, to facilitate understanding. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033] Whenever the flow of communications is obstructed this will be a major hindrance to change.

Another hindrance to change involves the power or the lack of power granted due to a proposed or implemented change. This situation would be of most concern to the change leader identified as the Cartel Communicator. (Fendt, 2006) The Cartel Communicator is identified as that individual that is most concerned with power in the areas of “gaining it, wielding it and maintaining it.” [CITATION Fen06 \p 3 \l 1033] Whenever there is change within an organization there is generally a change in the power structure within that organization. Whenever change is planned and/or implemented within an organization is very important that leaders understand where the power and authority will reside within the newly change organization. Part of understanding the newly transitioned organization means understanding the who and where regarding the new balance of power, understanding the new mobilization requirements and realizing where there may be resistance, as well as, how to deal with any resistance. The authors Hodges & Gill (2016) also mention the areas of personal power and negative power as being factors related to power within an organization. During an organizational change there is generally a change of power at the highest levels in the organization such as at the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer levels and so on. This type of power is identified as personal power by Hodges & Gill. In some cases, per Hodges & Gill

(2016), offices and individuals may lose power during a transition and the authors in this case identify this as being “risky” and state that “consultation and compromise are likely to be more effective ways of neutralizing opposition.” (p. 69) In other words, it is very important that the change leadership communicate this fact and work out any differences prior to moving forward with change, otherwise the transition will likely be met with resistance.

Another major issue associated with change involves financial shortcomings. Without funding it is practically impossible to get anything done in an organization and this is also true with respect to change. Whenever we consider financial issues with respect to hindrances to change, two areas that we consider are the availability of financial resources for change and the fact that the economics of running the organization may lead to a need for change within the organization. Whenever it is possible to plan for change, it is critically important to ensure that the appropriate resources are available to succeed at the change or transition. The authors, Hodges & Gill (2016) under the section entitled ‘Types of Fit’ ask the question “Investment fit. What financial resources will be required; . . .” (p. 266) To ensure that change happens the appropriate amount of money had to be invested into the transition to achieve success.

[CITATION Hod15 \l 1033] Another issue involving finances is regarding economics. In the case of economics leading to transition, we must consider whether an organization is functioning appropriately, financially. Whenever an organization fails to function properly financially, this is very likely to lead to change within that organization in order ultimately lead to the organization’s success.

The change leadership must also be aware of the various technological issues which could hinder the implementation of change within organizations as well. It is possible for the organizations stakeholders to become so familiar with the various technologies in an

organization's day to day operations and whenever there is a need to either change or improve upon the technology stakeholders may be against such change simply because they are so familiar with its current operation and do not desire change. Meanwhile, the change leadership may both see and understand how change will improve upon the organization's bottom line. The authors, Hodges and Gill (2016) state "Change comes in many guises including: modification, development, metamorphosis, transmutation, evolution, regeneration and revolution. For some, change is inherently messy, confusing and loaded with unpredictability." (p. 10) Unfortunately change is necessary in all organizations as noted earlier. Many times, stakeholders become reluctant to change even when the change is beneficial to them. Shockley-Zalabak (2015) mentions "As contemporary organizational environments become increasingly complex, new technologies change the ways in which organizations communicate and conduct business." (p. 304)

Though there are numerous factors involved that could be considered hindrances to change, we must note the areas of trust, skepticism, cynicism and pessimism [CITATION Fen06 \l 1033] These are issues which are clearly hindrances to change. The area of organizational trust it is defined by Shockley-Zalabak (2015) as "The belief that another individual, group, or organization is competent, open and honest, concerned about employees, reliable, and identifies with common goals, norms, and values." P. 362) Several key areas identified in this definition, absolutely related to change, involve the mention of the term competent, honest and concerned. Employees and stakeholders tend to become less guarded when they believe that change leadership is concerned about them and their wellbeing. As stakeholders become more confident because they believe that they are being appropriately cared for by someone concerned about their interest they are then able to feel at ease. Whenever

stakeholders feel this way organizational change becomes much easier because there will be fewer hindrances facing the change leadership. [CITATION Sho12 \l 1033]

We cannot close this discussion on hindrances to change without discussing the areas of skepticism, cynicism and pessimism. Here are three terms whereby just the pronunciation of each of the terms even sounds negative. When considering the meaning of each term we see the following:

Skepticism - an attitude of doubt or a disposition to incredulity either in general or toward a particular object [CITATION Mer17 \l 1033]

Cynicism - Cynicism about change involves an individual's negative attitude towards the purpose or potential success of change efforts. [CITATION Hod15 \p 439 \l 1033]

Pessimism - an inclination to emphasize adverse aspects, conditions, and possibilities or to expect the worst possible outcome [CITATION Mer \l 1033]

As we see in all three cases above concerning skepticism, cynicism and pessimism they each carry a negative connotation. As noted above we see that whenever a person is skeptical we see that they are uncertain or in disbelief and thereby exhibiting distrust. Whenever a person is cynical we see that people have an adverse attitude in this case. Whenever individuals exhibit a negative attitude at the start of change, the leadership is faced with an uphill battle to bring such individuals on board with the required changes. And finally, we see that whenever an individual is pessimistic they are already expecting bad from a situation. Whenever leaders attempt to implement change within an organization their desire is that most individuals will be on board with the necessary changes. It is always best whenever stakeholders are not skeptics, pessimists or cynical regarding forthcoming changes. This will allow change to go much smoother and it is

also a sign that the leadership is doing a good job at communicating the required changes to all stakeholders. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Opportunities for Change

During the lifetime of an organization there will be numerous opportunities presented for change. However, even though opportunities will be available for change this is only a good thing if the organization's leadership is able to recognize the need for change and capitalize upon it, thereby wholly improving upon the organization. According to Hodges & Gill (2015), leaders can recognize the need for change either through proactive recognition, through performing some type of diagnosis, through use of a model designed to determine the need for change or by use of a framework which determines the need for change. Hodges & Gill (2015) mentions that "Recognizing the need to change involves complex processes of perception, interpretation and decision-making, which, if not managed carefully, can lead to inappropriate outcomes." (p. 135)

Whenever leaders recognize the need for change proactively they generally analyze their external environment, perform an internal assessment, they can closely analyze the situation and identify trends and ultimately the leadership is sure to obtain and apply the opinions of the workforce. To identify needed change through proactive means the leadership must perform both an external and an internal analysis of the organization. Conduct of an external analysis is quite extensive as leaders are required to obtain and study information in the areas of social, technological, political, economic, legal and environmental. As well, leadership must study the competition, look at the marketplace in general and consider current trends and forecast how these trends may affect the marketplace. Being proactive requires change leadership to identify, track and employ various trends as appropriate. As well, as part of proactively recognizing change leadership must also perform an internal analysis of the organization as well. As part of

this analysis the organizations leadership must identify and highlight those things which the organization does well and those things which are a challenge. These areas must be taken into consideration when determining the necessary changes which will improve upon the organization overall. As well, it is very important to highlight any organizational trends of the various departments or sections. This allows the leadership look deep into the organization and highlight those changes which will make a difference and improve upon overall operations. Finally, change leaders must allow the organizations workforce to express their opinions regarding those things that are going well and those that are not so well. Also, allowing the workforce to express their opinions shows the workforce that the leadership cares about them and is concerned about their individual thoughts. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Another method for determining the need for change is by diagnosing the organization. Diagnosing an organization, according to Hodges & Gill (2015) is defined as “a formal process that enables leaders and managers to understand an organization better and to identify areas for improvement. This formal approach to diagnosis is important because managers and leaders in an organization carry around in their heads their own views as to how things work and what causes what within the organization.” (p. 148) To implement change, it is most important to first fully understand the organization that is about to be changed. The process of diagnosing an organization allows leaders to get an understanding of an organization by breaking it down into manageable pieces so that they can gain a better understanding at the micro level, in a sense. The authors, Hodges & Gill (2015) states explicitly that “diagnosis exists whether or not models are used.” (p. 148) This highlights the fact that a diagnosis is something separate and distinct from models. When utilizing the process of diagnosis this mode can impact the thoughts of leadership, impact a leaders’ manner of speech to the workforce and thereby influence when and

how the leadership intervenes into various situations. Under the diagnosis mode, both implicit and explicit approaches may be utilized. The implicit approach in most cases is not formulated based upon extensive experiences but instead is based on limited experiences. On the other hand, the explicit approach involves the collection, integration and analysis of organizational data. As noted by the author Burke (2008) in the text by Hodges & Gill (2015), in the study of diagnoses use of models and frameworks are only able to assist in this study. Use of the diagnosis study is designed to break down an organization into more manageable portions to:

- reduce the organizational complexity which may scare leaders
- determine where work is required most in the organization
- connects the dots in specific areas thereby making the organization more understandable
- ensure that leaders and stakeholders alike understand the language across the organization
- ensures that change is undertaken in the most appropriate order

Use of the diagnostic approach is designed to not only break things down to a manner that is most understandable, but it is also designed to ensure that change is ordered in a manner that is most effective and makes sense to both change leaders and stakeholders. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

In determining the need for change, another possible method for use is the model. Hodges & Gill (2015), highlights the component and holistic models. As well, the authors note that there are two types of models, the theoretical and the prescriptive models. According to Hodges & Gill (2015) the theoretical model is used in analyses while the prescriptive model is used to identify the actual approach for the change, respectively. In the case of the above models, both the component and holistic models identified here would both be defined as theoretical models as they would be used to determine the change required within an organization. The only difference here would be the type of model used. The component model is used to investigate the requirement for change down to the component level within and

organization. While on the other hand, the holistic model is used to investigate requirements for change while looking at the organization as one; as a whole. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Finally, when determining the need for change another possible method available for use is the diagnostic framework method. The diagnostic framework method, per Hodges & Gill (2015) is designed around the areas:

- understanding complexity, interdependence and fragmentation
- identifying and understanding the true and real purpose for implementing change
- determine the change that needs to take place and identify the best possible approach/framework to use in identifying the change
- determine what is required to ensure that change is initiated in various areas

To close the door on change there are several things that must take place:

- Define the need for change
- Initiate the change
- Implement the change
- Institutionalize the change

It is very important to define the need for change because this is what both leaders and stakeholders alike desire. To do this, the change leadership must determine state of the current organization and determine where exactly the organization must be to be effective or profitable then assess the gap, or in other words, identify those things that are missing and must be fixed. The fact that leadership can see the gap means that the leadership is able to recognize the need for change. Once the need for change is acknowledged, leadership should then be able to define a new vision that identifies what the organizations will look like after the change. The fact that leaders can define the gap and prepare a vision essentially takes care of the first step to change. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Now that organizational change has been defined and determined this is a great first step toward change. The next thing that must be accomplished is that leadership must initiate the

change process. To initiate change it is important to build a change leadership team for both backing and obligation to the cause of change. During the change process there will be enough hindrances to the cause of change for reasons that are many and varied. Therefore, this change leadership team must be one that both believes in the change and fully understands the cause for change. As well, this leadership team must be able to communicate the reasons for this change to all stakeholders. As highlighted by Hodges and Gill (2015) “This is the stage at which the plans for change are defined. Leaders can adopt solutions that they have either previously used or seen used elsewhere, or alternatively, create new and innovative solutions.” (p. 178)

The next step in the organizational change model is the actual implementation of change. Hodges & Gill (2015) states “Implementing change is about putting into practice the vision and specific goals that address the need for the change. It is also about influencing and involving key stakeholders and employees and dealing with their reactions to the change.” (p. 178) During this stage we see that the leadership uses the already prepared vision and goals to begin implementing organizational change. It is during this stage where stakeholders will likely begin to better understand the change that is taking place which will most likely spur on increased hindrances to the change process. Therefore, change leadership must ensure that they are well prepared to both communicate and defend the change as necessary. The more that stakeholders feel as though they are a part of the process the more likely it is that there will be few hindrances to the process. One possible technique to use at this point is the Force Field Analysis which according to Hodges and Gill (2015) states “The force field analysis, developed by Kurt Lewin in 1947, is a diagnostic technique which can be used in identifying the forces that will help or hinder a change. It is based on the concept of forces, a term that refers to the perceptions of people in the organization about a particular factor and its influence.” (p. 158) The more

information attained by the change leadership team means the higher the possible chances of success or a minimum number of hinderances.

The final step in this process is to institutionalize the change. According to Hodges & Gill (2015), “This is when the change becomes the norm – business as usual – and is no longer an initiative, programme or a project but the way that things are done in the organization. It becomes part of the way that people work and behave in the organization. This is about sustaining the change and continuing to monitor and measure the benefits and costs as well as manage the risks.” (p. 178) At this point the organization is operating under conditions that are essentially identified as the new normal for the organization. Even though at this point the new normal is realized, it is imperative that leadership maintain a keen eye to ensure that operations continue based upon the changes that have taken place. At this point there has been extensive time and effort give toward making required changes so therefor it is very important that the new process is maintained. In some cases, this may require retraining and reiteration, so it is very important that leadership continue communicating the change to the organization. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

The final area to consider regarding the topic, Sustaining Change in Organizations is Planning for Change. On this topic, we will look at some approaches to planning change, the project management approach, the change plan as well as the high-level change plan.

Some approaches to planning change include things such as:

- Improves quality of information
- Overcome personal pressure
- Overcome political pressure
- Impacts lead time
- Sequence problems
- Build awareness
- Build understanding

- Build commitment
- Ensures implementation

The project management approach, based upon information provided by Hodges & Gill (2015) “comprises the activities of planning, communication, setting clear, measurable objectives for the change, and evaluating their achievement by using clearly defined success measures as well as monitoring and control to keep the project focused and on track through to completion so that all intended potential benefits are delivered.” (p. 184) Using this approach the actual change is a project whereby leaders simply manage the actual organizational change as projects. The project management approach can be viewed as having three distinct structures: an objective, a degree of uniqueness and available resources. Just as it is when managing a project, for each project there is a measure of performance, time and cost factored just as this is a factor of project management. Some major facets involved with project management include a purpose for performing the project, completion goals for each project, development of a plan of attack, a method for tracking progress and a method for monitoring progress. (p. 184)

Also, whenever utilizing the project management approach there are some specific tools which have proven helpful over the years and are currently used by many: [CITATION Hod15 \p 185 \l 1033]

- *Work breakdown structure (WBS)*. This defines the scope of the project, specifying the work that falls within its remit. WBS is used to break objectives down into detailed elements of work until activities or tasks that can be undertaken by project team members are defined. WBS is the first step in the production of the project’s plan and, if costed, can be used to identify the necessary budget.

- *Milestone plan.* This shows the deliverables that build towards the final objectives of the project. By linking dependent milestones it shows the sequence of states a project will pass through.
- *Responsibility chart.* This defines the responsibilities of various groups involved in the project, differentiating between: those who execute the task; those who take decisions about it; those who need to be consulted or kept informed; and those who can provide advice and expert guidance.
- *Gantt chart or activity schedule.* This is a combination of the milestone plan and responsibility chart. It shows each task in terms of estimated duration, the activities on which it depends in order to be completed and subsequent tasks that depend on its completion to proceed.
- *Network diagram.* This involves mapping of the dependencies between the tasks in the change process. This should enable the identification of a critical path of activities that need to be completed on time if the overall project is to meet its deadline.
- *Risk matrix.* This plots the likelihood of the occurrence of an adverse event against the impact on the project if it does occur. The development of a risk matrix encourages managers to look for possible consequences of change. It facilitates the development of risk management strategies either to reduce the likelihood of unfavourable consequence or to develop contingency plans to deal with effects if the risk is realized

The change plan is developed by focusing on and thinking through the required changes for the plan while recording them. At end state, the actual plan for change should marry with the actual vision and goals for the desired change. Upon completion of the change plan it should be adaptable, agreed upon and certainly cost effective. Any inaccuracies in the plan are destined to

cause future problems so therefore it is very important to ensure that the change plan is as accurate as possible. As well, the change plan is a document that should be designed with purpose in mind; should contain goals which are crafted in a manner that is more specific rather than broader; and the actual plan should show linkages and display more of an integrated approach. As well, the change plan is a document that is based upon a timeline and not something that has no required dates. Finally, the change plan is something that is adaptable to what could very well be a changing situation. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

On the other hand, the high-level change plan is a plan built around the eight phases of:

[CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- The current state of research
- The ability of the organization to communicate with all locations
- Utilizing all key stakeholders to develop a design plan
- Preparing the organization for implementation
- Touching base across the organization with all stakeholders to prepare the final design plan
- Ensuring that all are aware across the organization regarding changes
- Reviewing the changes to determine if other processes must be implemented
- Ensure that leadership and stakeholders remain aware of changes, ensuring that change is according to plan and rewards are processed and given

Conclusion

This paper is centered upon the subject of Sustaining Change in Organizations. The topic areas discussed are centered around the areas of hindrances to change, discusses some approaches related to the hindrances to change, opportunities for change and planning for change. These are three areas which are extensive and essentially covers the class lesson for this semester. When discussing the hindrances to change some of the areas covered relating to this subject were areas such as trust, communication, skepticism, cynicism, pessimism, power

granted or the lack of power, issues surrounding financial shortcomings, issues involving timing, a lack of trust by stakeholders, technological issues and other factors. Some other factors may involve the failure to communicate properly, or even not at all with stakeholders, issues involving timing, a lack of trust by stakeholders, skepticism, cynicism and pessimism.

[CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

Some of the areas discussed concerning opportunities to change include areas such as Proactive recognition which involve the areas of: [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- Analyze external environment
- Internal assessment
- Spot trends
- Seeks opinions

Another area which is used to identify opportunities for change is diagnosis. This method involves the areas of: [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- Identify underlying causes
- Identify appropriate intervention
- Identify needed change

Component and holistic models which identifies another method for explaining change opportunities. It is imperative that change leaders understand how to determine when change is necessary which involve the following identified areas: [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- Motivation
- Decision making
- Group dynamics
- Organizational structures

The final method discussed regarding the diagnostic frameworks include the following:

[CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- Understanding complexity
- Why change
- Who and what must change
- What is required

The final area discussed under Sustaining Change in Organizations involved the actual method of Planning for Change. Under planning for change the methods discussed were the project management approach, the Change Plan, the High-Level Change Plan and some varying methods for planning change. Some areas discussed under the subject Project Management include the features of project management such as performance, specification, timing and cost; varying degrees of uniqueness and resources. [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

The change plan and the high-level change plan involved such issues as purpose, goals, plan, monitoring and control processes, evaluation, purposeful, task-specific, integrated and temporal. As well, the change plan is something that must be adaptable, agreed upon and cost effective. The high-level change plan covered the areas involving the current state of research, communication and engagement, design, preparation, final design, communication, education and engagement, re-align processes, begin measurement and development and reward.

Some areas covered under planning for change included: [CITATION Hod15 \l 1033]

- Improves quality of information
- Overcome personal pressure
- Overcome political pressure
- Impacts lead time
- Sequence problems
- Build awareness
- Build understanding

- Build commitment
- Ensures implementation

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