LDG 750A Thesis Seminar III Assignment

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Preparing for Action Research

1. What is the difference between explaining your feedback to a predominantly right brain vs. left brain client?

When explaining feedback to a client that is predominantly left brained, the researcher should provide charts and graphs to appeal to the analytical and methodical way of thinking that left brained people resonate with. It would be a smart presentation to include charts and data that reflects the information that the researcher wants to get across. This would enable the client to have trust and believe in what is being presented. The left brain client thrives more on analytical reasoning and functions better when given concrete examples and ideas. The left brain client wants details and specific information so that they can logically understand what is being presented.

When explaining feedback to a client that is predominantly right brained, the researcher should provide big picture information, and create a vision for the client to see. The right brain client wants a visual representation of what the results look like, and would receive the information better that way than just presenting the facts and figures with no creative ideas as to what to do with the information. The right brain client wants to hear a good story, through story the client will understand what the researcher is trying to portray, and can open the client's mind to new ideas and envision success in their own organization.

2. What ethical considerations must you consider in designing and implementing your change management project?

Ethical considerations that need to be considered in designing and implementing change management projects can range from ensuring that diverse viewpoints are taken into consideration to ensuring that you report accurate data. First and foremost as a researcher the information that is presented must be accurate and fully share the picture of what information was gathered. If the researcher only shares a portion of the information collected, it could show an incomplete picture and steer the organization in a direction that may not be appropriate if they had all of the information presented to them. In addition, the consultant needs to ensure that the information shared with the company remains confidential. When a consultant is hired, the information that is gathered may be sensitive especially if the information is given to competing companies. That information could give competition an edge on the organization, knowing what it does well, what the company is struggling with, and what direction the organization may go in order to try to stand out among the competitors. Sharing researched information could be highly unethical if the consultant has not been given express permission to distribute the information to others.

Another ethical consideration must be to ensure that as a consultant, I am creating new ideas for this specific client, and not utilizing old ideas, perhaps utilized by someone else, and present them as a new fresh idea that I came up with myself. If I want to refer to another organization or company's way of doing things, I must ensure that I am giving credit to that, and then talking about how my client can use that information or idea as a benefit to their own organization.

3. Under what conditions would you use qualitative vs. quantitative research when giving feedback to the client

Qualitative research would be the first choice when the organization is trying to initially identify what problems exist or what opportunities may be waiting for discovery. Quantitative research is a good way to measure the problem or opportunity and how the company can understand it. When giving feedback to the client, quantitative research will help them identify what the issue is. This would be beneficial for an organization that is struggling with their financials possibly, and trying to understand what exactly is not working. This would help the company pinpoint potential issues that are directly related to their outcomes and could give direction on how to address it. Qualitative research will help the organization understand how individuals or departments feel about the problems. The research would show flexible answers instead of strict numerical data. It would also help the organization look for meanings within how people feel about how the company functions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

For example, if I were giving feedback to the client, I would start with the quantitative research that shows the relationship between my two variables, competitive mindset and servant leadership. This quantitative research would show statistically that there was a significant relationship between the two and that the organization should be on the lookout for those individuals who scored high on the surveys because they are individuals who may be able to serve the organization well. If I had qualitative research to share, it would include information on how individuals feel about the variables and their thoughts on how those variables fit within the organization's core values.

4. What role does culture vs. climate play in the success of your change management initiative?

Organizational culture is the broad picture of how the organization functions, and organizational climate is how employees perceive the way an organization feels. In an ideal world, the organizational culture should feed into what the organizational climate is, but they do not always line up. When I am presenting my findings to my client, I want to make sure that the change management initiatives that I suggest fit within the organization's culture, and ultimately fit within the context of the core values of the organization. When it comes to organizational climate, as the consultant, I want to make sure that employees understand what is being presented so that the climate feels comfortable to them and fits within the organization's overall feeling without creating too much of a drastic change that could potentially make people hesitant to accept the change ideas.

On the other hand, if the climate within the organization is heavy and not healthy, the ideas may be welcome additions in order to create a better organizational climate, which also could lead to an organizational culture change. So it is very important to understand how the organization feels about their climate and culture prior to giving the change management presentation. It could make the difference between a successful presentation and a presentation that is not well received.

5. What are the best communication practices to use for successful change management?

The best communication practices for a successful change management process is two-way communication. It is important for the organization to not only relay what information they want to get across, but also to listen to those within the organization and hear what they have to say. Sometimes the best ideas come from those who are in the midst of the day to day operations and see what works and what does not work. It is important that they feel comfortable talking with upper management about their ideas for change. If they feel an open line of upward communication, then when downward communication comes, the employees may feel more apt to take it in and run with whatever idea may come down in the process of change management.

Communication must also be frequent. It does no good to present ideas or suggest change, but then never follow up to see how the ideas and change is being interpreted or initiated. Follow up is important so that the organization and the people within it knows that you as the consultant care about how the process is going. When following up and including subsequent communications, it could also be important to reiterate that feedback, and two-way communication not only welcome, but important to the success of the organization.

6. If you were conducting your change management project in another country, outside the United States, what are the criteria for being successful?

Conducting change management in other countries means that as the researcher, I must take time to understand the culture of each country I am working with. Every culture has a unique way about approaching decision-making, so it is important to recognize and understand the way that country does business or functions. For example, my thesis surveyed student-athletes who participate in college athletics. In some countries, there are very few, or even no,

sports that women participate in. This would change my research as I would not be able to include females in my demographic for researching this same topic. In European and South American countries, soccer is not only a sport, but a way of life, so those countries may be more interested in the data derived from surveying those sports more than data collected from sports that are not as important to their cultures, like baseball.

If I present myself as an expert in the realm of the sports world in some countries where athletics is not a viable career path, such as countries who have no professional sports teams, they may not take the research that I present seriously. I would have to change the way I present the information and relate it to areas outside of athletics to prove that my research is meaningful and can help them and their employees succeed at a higher level.

7. How would you introduce an innovative idea for change, based on your thesis research? What would you do to increase early adopters? How would you address the lagers?

To introduce an innovative idea for change based on my research, I would first need to show the organization that I am confident in my research. If I don't show confidence the company could decide that they don't trust what I am saying to them and would be hesitant to take any suggestions given. In order to increase early adopters, I would follow the same path of building trust initially with the front information given. If people are able to look at the surface of the research and see value in it, then they are likely to jump into ideas presented for change. A good way to address the lagers would be to create a solid foundation of trust, and to find areas where the lagers relate or find agreement. Once a foundation is laid where the lagers can agree

on certain aspects of the innovative ideas, it opens the door for them to feel more open to other ideas because they can agree on or trust some of the basic ones that were presented.

As a consultant presenting my thesis, I can increase early adopters and address the lagers at the same point by getting everyone on the same page to agree that it is important to identify leaders within each team that have innate capabilities to be servant leaders, a trait identified by the organization as something they would like their student-athletes to embody.

8. What would be the criteria to determine if your action plans required a transformation, developmental or a transitional change. Provide examples

The criteria needed to determine if my action plans require transformational, developmental, or transitional changes starts with identifying what exactly the desired result is for change. Developmental change is an improvement on an organization's way of operating, changing what they currently do and make it better. An example of this is increasing the skillset of those who work within the organization, or developing their skills to better serve the company. A transitional change takes an organization from point a to point b, and knows what the end result is. It takes a way of doing something and puts in place actions that move the organization to a newly desired state of being. Transformational change occurs when an organization realizes that the current way of doing things does not work, and cannot be improved. It must be radically changed to create any difference within the organization. An example of this is Nyack College's consolidation into one campus. The board realized that the college could not continue on in its current state of operating at two, half-full campuses and realized that it needed to transform the way of doing business and create one strong campus.

This radically changed the way the college did business and needed to shift people's mindsets to accept the new way of functioning (Ackerman Anderson & Anderson, 2001).

In my thesis, the change suggested would be developmental changes. As a consultant, I would suggest the department finding ways to identify those who have a higher competitive mindset, and may be more likely to hold traits of servant leadership, and create and develop seminars and conferences to help those individuals better serve the organization as a whole.

9. In providing feedback to your client organization, how would you move the client from unconscious to conscious leader?

When providing feedback to my client, I would move them from being an unconscious leader to a conscious leader by first asking them to take a step back and think about the general landscape of their organization prior to my presentation. I would ask them for specific attributes that they would like to see changed. Upon learning that information, I would tailor my presentation to address their specific thoughts along with presenting information that they could see fitting into their way of business. After presenting my findings to them I would ask them to return to their initial thoughts and think about how the information I presented them with could have an impact on the direction they would like to go with their organization and the people within it. This could help bring them to a level of awareness about their company that they may not have had prior to my presentation.

A conscious leader takes responsibility, so it is important to move unconscious leaders into conscious awareness by making sure that they understand that as a leader it is their

responsibility to ensure that others are on board for the change initiatives taking place. It is also important that they are willing to take ownership of making decisions that are well thought out and made only after listening to feedback from others, and with the idea that they are not making the decision for the advancement of themselves, but for the betterment of the organization as a whole.

10. If you were asked by the client, what is your subject matter expertise as a change management consultant, what would be your specialty and why

My expertise as a change management consultant is in the area of athletics. I have almost two decades of experience working with student-athletes and advising them in finding ways to succeed in the classroom. Teaching time management skills and how to prioritize, this has taught lessons that expand beyond the classroom and the field. I am an individual who understands how important it is to communicate in an articulate manner, and know how to teach others to better communicate their wishes and ideas to a group of people.

Because many higher education institutions have limited resources and cannot afford to hire a full time staff member to ensure that necessary changes occur, as a consultant I am able to step in and identify areas where the organization needs to increase its effectiveness and better the student-athlete experience by creating an optimal environment for learning, growing, and leading. My experience in starting as a part-time assistant coach and growing into the Senior Woman Administrator and Assistant Athletic Director position shows that I have experienced all levels of leadership and can identify with where multiple staff members are coming from. This gives me the ability to relate and create relationships built on trust and understanding.

References:

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