Change Management Best Practices Guide

Five (5) key factors common to success in managing organisational change.

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1. Scope and Purpose

This Change Management Best Practices Guide is designed to give general guidance to public sector bodies undertaking change. It is not intended to be prescriptive nor exhaustive. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach to managing change is ineffective, as each public sector organisation is different, with its own structure, history, culture and needs, and each change event is different. The characteristics of each change (type, breadth, size, origin etc.) also influence the way change is planned and effectively managed.

Despite the range of approaches to change management, some common factors for delivering successful change exist. These factors apply across all large and complex organisations, whether public or private. This Guide is intended as a tool to disseminate ideas and best practice guidance on these common change success factors and the sorts of actions that public sector organisations can undertake to address them. It has been compiled based on research of change management literature and lessons learnt from change management projects both in Australia and overseas.

2. Change Management

2.1   Overview

Change can be a time of exciting opportunity for some and a time of loss, disruption or threat for others. How such responses to change are managed can be the difference between surviving and thriving in a work or business environment. Change is an inherent characteristic of any organisation and like it or not, all organisations whether in the public or private sector must change to remain relevant.

Change can originate from external sources through technological advances, social, political or economic pressures, or it can come from inside the organisation as a management response to a range of issues such as changing client needs, costs or a human resource or a performance issue. It can affect one small area or the entire organisation. Nevertheless, all change whether from internal or external sources, large or small, involves adopting new mindsets, processes, policies, practices and behaviour.

Irrespective of the way the change originates, change management is the process of taking a planned and structured approach to help align an organisation with the change. In its most simple and effective form, change management involves working with an organisation's stakeholder groups to help them understand what the change means for them, helping them make and sustain the transition and working to overcome any challenges involved. From a management perspective it involves the organisational and behavioural adjustments that need to be made to accommodate and sustain change.

There are numerous models and theories about change management, and it is a topic subject to more than its fair share of management fads and fashions. Popular

approaches include the linear, step by step methods exemplified by Kurt Lewin's[1] classic three-phase model of change -- unfreeze, move or change, and refreeze, John Kotter's[2] popular 8 step change model, the McKinsey's 7-S model[3], and the ADKAR model[4]. Other approaches such as Rosabeth Moss Kanter's[5] theories and change theories based on derivatives of the Kübler-Ross[6] model focus on the cultural and people aspects of change. Each approach has its pros and cons, however no one framework is "best" in all situations.[7] Indeed it is not so much the actual model or theory that is important, but more that the approach that is taken is relevant to the circumstances. In fact the best change approaches appear to use and adapt aspects of various models to suit the culture of the organisation and the context of the change. Fundamentally, the basic goal of all change management is to secure buy-in to the change, and to align individual behaviour and skills with the change.

2.2   Why is Managing Change Important?

Meeting milestones is not the primary determinant of the success of a change project. Successful change also involves ensuring employees' capacity to adapt to and work effectively and efficiently in the new environment.

The underlying basis of change management is that people's capacity to change can be influenced by how change is presented to them. Their capacity to adapt to change can shrink if they misunderstand or resist the change, causing barriers and ongoing issues. The rationale is that if people understand the benefits of change, they are more likely to participate in the change and see that it is successfully carried out, which in turn means minimal disruption to the organisation.

3. Factors Common to Successful Change Management

While each public sector organisation needs to consider the best way to approach change based on their particular cultural and stakeholder perspectives, factors common to successful change management (in both the private and public sector) involve:

- **Planning:** developing and documenting the objectives to be achieved by the change and the means to achieve it.

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[1] Lewin Kurt, 1951 Field Theory in Social Science Dorwin Cartwright New York, Harper; 1958 *Group Decisions and Social Change*, Readings in Social Psychology, New York, Holt Rinehart & Winston
[2] Kotter John, 1998 Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail, Harvard Business Review
[3] Developed by Tom Peters, Robert Waterman, Richard Pascale and Anthony Athos for McKinsey & Co. http://www.12manage.com/methods_7S.html
[4] Management research company Prosci first published the ADKAR model in 1998 after researching more than 300 companies undergoing major change. This model describes five required building blocks for change to be realized successfully.
[5] Kanter Rosabeth Moss, 1983 The Change Masters New York Simon & Schuster
[6] Kubler-Ross Elizabeth, 1973 On Death and Dying Routledge. The stages of Kubler-Ross's model describe the personal and emotional states that a person typically encounters when dealing with loss. Derivatives of her model applied in the workplace show that similar emotional states are encountered as individuals are confronted with change.
[7] Andrews Jane, Cameron Helen, Harris Margaret, 2008 *All change? Managers' experience of organizational change in theory and practice* Journal of Organizational Change Management, Volume: 21 Issue: 3.

- **Defined Governance:** establishing appropriate organisational structures, roles, and responsibilities for the change that engage stakeholders and support the change effort.

- **Committed Leadership:** ongoing commitment at the top and across the organisation to guide organisational behaviour, and lead by example.

- **Informed Stakeholders:** encouraging stakeholder participation and commitment to the change, by employing open and consultative communication approaches to create awareness and understanding of the change throughout the organisation.

- **Aligned Workforce:** identifying the human impacts of the change, and developing plans to align the workforce to support the changing organisation.

The extent to which each of these five factors is exhibited in successful change projects will vary depending on the nature of the change involved. Clearly where large whole of government change is involved the complexities will be increased and each of the factors outlined will require fuller consideration. In the case of a small, more localised change, the need may be less significant.

Further, while particular initiatives and projects have a finite timeframe, change is an ongoing process, so it can be hard to identify successful change. Moreover change programs that are initially perceived as a success can later be declared problematic as commitment wanes and people revert to old practices.

In the final analysis, change is successful when it becomes institutionalised and part of "the way we do things around here," and like other processes, benefits from ongoing monitoring to ensure continuous improvement and relevance.

4. Planning

4.1   Planning Context

Critical to successful change is good planning. Successfully managing the complexity of change is virtually impossible without a robust plan that is supported by strong project management.

The formal procedure of applying a planning process in preparation for change helps organisations to:

- Take stock of their current position;
- Identify what is to be achieved, and what the future position following the change is expected to be;

o Detail precisely the who, what, when, where, why and how of achieving and implementing the change objectives;
o Assess the impact of the change on the organisation and the people within it, as well as other stakeholders; and
o Ensure alignment with the organisation's business model/strategy

Fundamentally, planning ensures that organisations are aware of the implications of what they want to do, and are prepared for all reasonable eventualities. It can also be the point at which an assessment is made about whether or not a proposed change should proceed. However, even in situations where change results from a directive and is therefore not subject to testing whether or not it should proceed, planning is still an important way to scope out the likely impacts of the change and the strategies that can be used to accommodate them.

A good change planning process involves:

o Setting a clear vision for the change which is aligned with the organisation's vision and mission
o Documenting the case for change, and
o Developing the change plan.

4.2   Clear Vision

The starting point and focus of successful change planning is having a clear vision about what the scope and impacts of the future changed state will be. Stakeholders must be clear about their contribution to the desired improvement. If the change vision is not clear or shared, commitment is unlikely, and change efforts will be short-lived at best and will likely fizzle out. Further, without a clear vision, change efforts can easily dissolve into a list of confusing tasks, directives and sometimes incompatible projects that can take the organisation in the wrong direction or nowhere at all. The vision should provide the direction, which ties everything together, showing where individual projects and initiatives fit into the big picture.

The change vision must also align with and be seen to align with the organisation's and the government's overall vision and mission, with the desired culture and values of the change reflecting the vision and mission statements. Articulating a direction and desired behaviours/values sets up a sense of the ideal culture the organisation is striving to achieve with the change. A vision that is misaligned will bring about early resistance and a lack of support for resources and for change. Change management research[8] indicates that if a proposed change cannot be aligned with the core vision, mission or goals of an organisation then the collective commitment of organisation members to the change may be difficult to obtain.

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[8] See Branson Christopher M. 2008, *Achieving organisational change through values alignment*, Vol. 46 Issue 3, Journal of Educational Administration, and *Sustainability, governance and organisational change*, 2003,Greenleaf Publishing http://www.greenleaf-publishing.com/content/pdfs/lcch5.pdf

4.3 Document the Case for Change and the Vision

Change initiatives often flounder because not enough strategic thought is given to communicating the rationale and the expected impact of the change.

To ensure clarity about the change (and to provide a clearer picture of the magnitude and complexity of what is involved) it should be documented. This includes outlining:

- o Why the initiative is being undertaken - What are the business drivers?
- o What outcomes and objectives the change is seeking to achieve, and
- o How the change will benefit stakeholders, the organisation and the government overall

A clear and strategic message is needed about how stakeholders will be impacted, and how the future of the organisation will be improved. Importantly, the opportunity for people within the organisation to provide input into the development of this message and to participate in overall planning is a key factor in enlisting their support. The more that the vision has been developed in an explicitly inclusive way, the easier it will be to convince others to support it. Moreover the participation of organisational leaders in the development of the change vision will help determine what is strategically most important to the change effort. Without a shared vision of the change, other competing objectives may take priority, making it more difficult to align day-to-day operations with the change goals.

Successful change projects require a full, realistic understanding of the upcoming challenges and complexities, followed by specific actions to address them. The act of adequately defining and scoping the change ensures more realistic and therefore more credible change management plans. Lack of early insight leads to a high risk that complexity will be underestimated or even overlooked.

4.4 Develop Change Plan and Measures

A significant part of establishing the change vision, outcome and objectives is to identify and agree on the anticipated organisational support required for the change, e.g. revised business processes/policies, new infrastructure (including technology) or skills requirements. This then provides the foundation for the development of specific actionable strategies to achieve the change. Together these strategies form the Change Plan for the organisation. At its most basic level the Change Plan should state:

- o The objectives to be achieved by the change;
- o The agency's proposed new direction, core business, structure and staffing arrangements to accommodate the change;
- o How the change is to be implemented, including how the change will be communicated to the workforce and other stakeholders;
- o The resources to be used, and the timelines;

- o The relevant human resources principles and policies to be applied, particularly in relation to staffing issues; and
- o The means by which performance in the changed environment will be assessed in relation to the stated objectives; i.e. how the organisation will know when it has achieved the desired change (Performance indicators and measures).

Having established a case for change and an agreed way forward to achieve this future state, progress should be measured to prove that at the end of the change process that planned outcomes have been achieved and benefits realised. This is true of every project no matter what its size or nature. It should be noted however that as the Change Plan is communicated, tested and executed it needs to be flexible enough to adapt to unforseen circumstances. All change needs to be navigated and guided – setting the course once and defaulting to automatic pilot will not keep the organisation on course through the uncharted waters of change.

5. Defined Governance

5.1   Change Governance

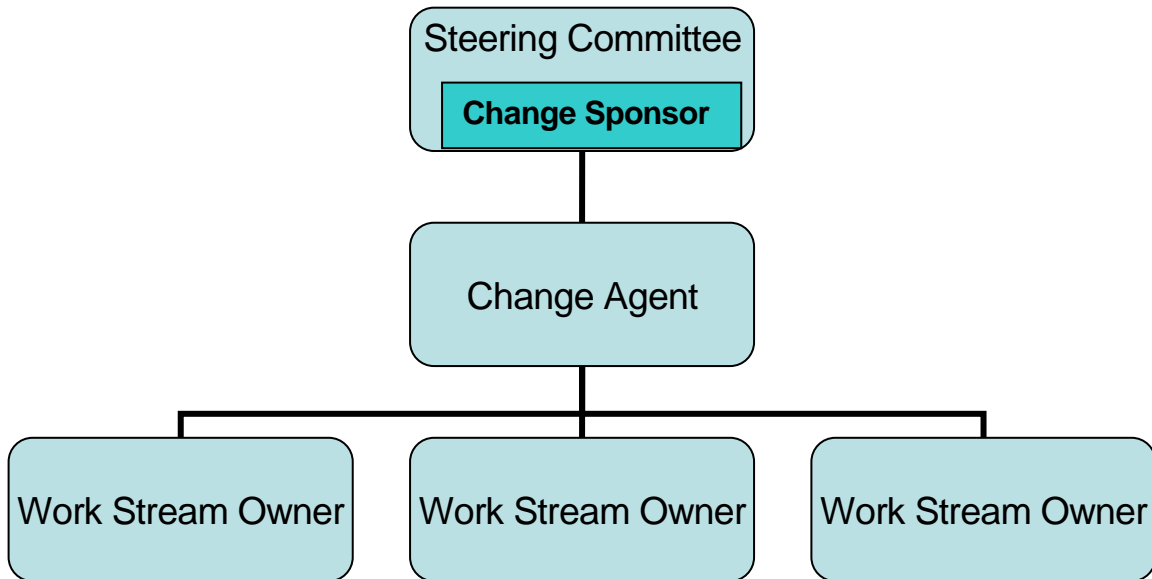Strong governance and associated reporting arrangements need to be established to drive and monitor change.

In change projects separate roles and/or lines of responsibility for the change are often established, resulting in the normal hierarchy of control being broken or modified. This is particularly the case if the change stretches across many parts of the organisation and specific managers take on the temporary role of providing the formal authority by which changes are made. It is important that these arrangements are well understood across the organisation.

Change management governance involves establishing appropriate roles, responsibilities and a structure within the organisation to ensure a successful change. While each change process will adopt a governance structure suitable to its specific context and goals, the following represent basic change governance roles that can be used as a model for establishing a change governance structure.

- **Steering Committee.** The Steering Committee provides overall oversight for the change process, setting the direction and providing leadership. It also ensures that the change process remains aligned with the organisation's strategic vision and direction.

- **Change Sponsor.** The Change Sponsor has ultimate responsibility for the change and for building commitment for the change, particularly from leaders across the organisation.

- **Change Agent.** The Change Agent is responsible for managing the overall day to day change management process and implementation, including coordination of any different work streams that may be required.

- **Work Stream Owners.** Depending on its complexity a change initiative may be broken down into work groups or streams, i.e. sets of activities that lead to an outcome, and to which clearly identifiable outputs can be associated.

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FIGURE 1 Basic Governance Structure for Change

5.2   Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is the key body within the change governance structure that is responsible for the business issues associated with the change. It ensures the achievement of change outcomes/benefits. Its responsibilities include:

- o   approving the budget,
- o   defining and realising outcomes/benefits,
- o   ensuring appropriate risk management processes are applied,
- o   quality and timelines,
- o   making any policy and resourcing decisions, and
- o   assessing requests for changes to scope.

It is highly recommended that the Steering Committee consist of representatives from the business areas that are affected by the change. A Steering Committee member from

outside the organisation, or from a part of the organisation that is not undergoing the change, to provide a 'reality check' is also beneficial.

The Steering Committee should meet at regular intervals, act as a forum to discuss critical issues and make decisions to ensure that the change continues to move forward.

5.3 Change Sponsor

The success of change will depend, to a large extent, on how well the person with direct responsibility for the change manages it. Direct responsibility and accountability for the change must be clearly defined and accepted at an appropriately high-level within an organisation. In most cases this will be the person who has discretionary control over the bulk of the resources that will be expended in the change process. For a large and/or complex project, it may be a member of the senior executive. For small projects, a Line Manager may fill this role. For the purposes of this Guide, this role is called the Change Sponsor.

High performing change organisations emphasise that the Change Sponsor must be readily identifiable no matter how small the change project, and they link the sponsor to the change from the outset ensuring his or her accountability through to completion. The Change Sponsor is ultimately accountable for the change and is responsible for exhibiting visible sponsorship and advocacy for the change effort, assessing and mitigating any resistance to the change, overseeing the business and project management issues that arise outside the formal business of the Steering Committee.

The sponsor's active and visible support of the change from initiation to completion is important to deal with the organisation's internal politics; to ensure that those who have a stake in the outcome continue to actively support the change throughout the process, and to build coalitions with others across the organisation to make the change successful.

Consequently the sponsor for a change effort should be someone who has sufficient authority, seniority, power, enthusiasm, and time to ensure that any conflicts that impede the change are resolved in a timely and appropriate fashion.

Typically the Change sponsor is the chair of the Steering Committee. With the support of the Steering Committee, it is also the role of the Change sponsor to gain commitment from the organisation's business owner(s) for any additional resources (outside the project budget) that may be necessary to achieve the required level of organisational change.

5.4 Change Agent

Successful change projects also typically appoint a dedicated Change Agent and team to provide day to day project management and support for the change effort. The Change team is responsible for planning, organising and coordinating the activities associated with the change including ensuring that the change management process

addresses business process, workforce and infrastructure changes, and monitors implementation progress and risks. High level project management skills are essential. Another key responsibility of the Change Agent and team is the coordination of communications relating to the change - ensuring that information is shared with all relevant stakeholders. The Change Agent commonly reports through the Change Sponsor to the Steering Committee to escalate issues for discussion and decision.

The number of resources that comprise a Change team will be largely dependent on the size, scope and complexity of the change effort. For example a Change team comprised of representatives from each work unit across the organisation may be necessary to manage a large organisational change. In other situations it may just be the Change Agent alone or with one other resource. In other change initiatives, there may be a need for representatives from specialty business areas. The composition of the team may also change as the project moves through its various phases, with different skills required for different phases of the change.

Clearly the Change Team's structure, composition and overall project management responsibilities would be determined in the planning stage, based on the scope of the change effort and the skills required to successfully complete the tasks, prior to embarking on the change project.

5.5   Work Stream Owners

Work stream owners may be organisational units, specific task forces or individuals, depending on the nature of the change. Work stream owners are specialist work groups responsible for implementing their work, delivering on the outputs assigned to them, delivering responsibilities within timelines and achieving the milestones. They report to the Change Agent on the progress of the work stream against the Change Agent's plan.

6. Committed Leadership

6.1   Role

The role of leadership in any change management effort cannot be underestimated, and is repeatedly cited as the number one contributor to change success. The earlier in the project life cycle an organisation's leaders engage in the change, the more useful they can be at building acceptance of the change by those who are affected by it. Change starts at the top and an organisation's leaders must be the visionaries, champions and role models for change. Whether change comes easily or proves difficult to achieve depends in part on the atmosphere – the organisational culture and climate – that an organisation's leaders create.

6.2　Visible Support - Setting the Example

Successful change management requires a large commitment from an organisation's leaders, regardless of whether the change is occurring in one section or across the whole organisation. Change is inherently unsettling for people, and when it is happening all eyes turn to the organisation's leaders for support and direction. They play a key role in promoting and sustaining the impetus for the change, (sometimes even coaching other executives) and in developing and communicating a shared sense of the way forward. Fundamentally the onus is on the organisation's leaders to change first, motivate the rest of the organisation, set the example and model desired behaviour.

However, it is not just support from senior leaders that is required, support from leaders at all levels is critical to the acceptance of change within an organisation. Capturing the hearts and minds of key informal and formal leaders, having them commit to the change and empowering others to act is a critical success factor. Change efforts need to be "pushed" throughout the organisation, with leaders delegating both the responsibility and authority to make decisions about the change, grounded on a clear change vision, to managers at *all* levels. This delegation of decision-making authority helps both to reduce blockages and increase buy-in from individuals affected by the change.

Leaders and managers throughout the organisation should be expected to support and communicate the benefits of change to their peers and employees - change needs to be "cascaded" through the organisation, with real change happening at each level. This requires more than mere buy-in or passive agreement that the direction of change is acceptable. It demands ownership by leaders willing to accept responsibility for making change happen in all of the areas they influence or control.

6.3　Continuous Engagement

A key role of the Change Sponsor is to ensure that the organisation's leaders continue to be involved throughout the change. Their engagement is necessary throughout the full change project life cycle, as acceptance of the change must be evident in each phase, from initiation, and planning through to implementation, with leaders exhibiting stamina and patience throughout the project to continuously engage with stakeholders. Key responsibilities for an organisation's leaders throughout the change process are to:

- **Assess readiness and make adjustments.** The state of readiness for change will shift over time, and may differ in different parts of the organization. It is dynamic and will require adjustment/correction to achieve desired outcomes. Organisational leaders play an important role in monitoring, assessing and understanding different area's capacity to take on and succeed in change. This can be put together to form a highly accurate picture of the way the organisation is progressing with the change, and what specifically needs to be done to enhance the likelihood of change success. By assessing change readiness across the organisation, potential roadblocks, areas that require remedial actions and areas of best practice can be identified.

- **Take action to resolve issues.** Throughout the change, issues will arise that will require the organisation's leaders to intervene and take decisive action Leaders must maintain their authority to decide on issues that may impact not only their team/group but others within the organisation, escalate issues, as appropriate, to more senior leadership and push for timely resolution, or delegate this decision-making authority to others and support the final decision.

7. Informed Stakeholders

7.1   Communication Context

Fundamentally it is people who make change happen - nothing moves forward without engaged, motivated stakeholders. Stakeholders are the people that are directly involved in and affected by the change project. Typically they are the organisation's workforce or those whose interests may be positively or negatively affected by the change including other agencies with whom the changing organisation partners, service providers, vendors, or the public.

An organisation needs to engage its stakeholders, in order to implement changes effectively. To do that, stakeholders need to understand the reasons why the change is happening and its benefits. They also need to have an opportunity to express their views and contribute their own ideas about how it might be implemented. Even if the change is non-negotiable, cooperation and collaboration to achieve the change is more likely if stakeholders are involved and kept informed. Experience shows that approaching change in an open and consultative manner assists in more effective implementation.

Accordingly, it is important that everyone in the organisation and those interacting with the organisation, both internal and external stakeholders, are kept informed and provided with messages and information that allow them to feel engaged, thus paving the way for involvement and adoption.

7.2   The Purpose of Change Communication

One of the most challenging and demanding aspects of any change project is communication. Communication is the key way that people are engaged in the change. Introducing successful change relies heavily on how the participants in the change view it. Poor change communication is a common cause of complaint and change research emphasises that change can be derailed if the communication plan is ineffective.[9] It has
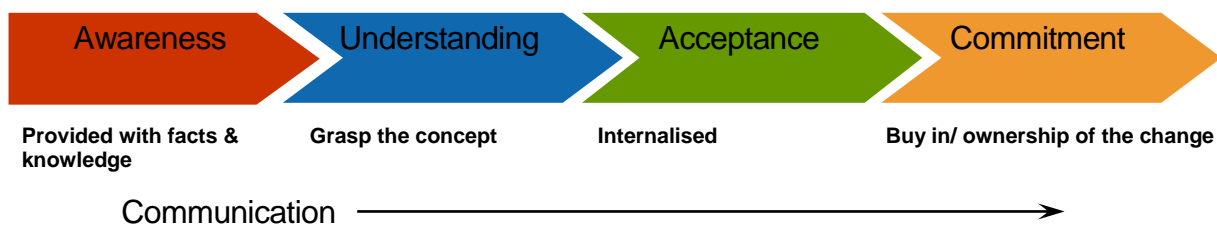
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[9] Prosci, 2007 Change Management Best Practices Benchmarking Report, http://www.change-management.com/tutorial-communications.htm

also been said that "you cannot over-communicate when you are asking your organisation to change."[10]

When any kind of change is announced, people are hungry for information. In the absence of sufficient information and opportunities to digest it through two-way 'conversations', change can be stalled. People will continue to work as they have done in the past; or rather than risk doing the 'wrong' thing, they do nothing. Effective communication is designed to create awareness and understanding in order to get subsequent supportive action. The rationale is that if you want people to change, they need to invest in the changes you are asking them to make, and they are more likely to do that if they understand the benefits of the change.

While not everyone has to be deeply committed to the vision for change to succeed, the majority of stakeholders must accept the need for change and commit to the direction that the organisation is taking with it.

Effective communication engages the hearts and minds of all stakeholders by facilitating movement along the continuum presented below:

Awareness	Understanding	Acceptance	Commitment
Provided with facts & knowledge	**Grasp the concept**	**Internalised**	**Buy in/ ownership of the change**

Communication ⟶

FIGURE 2 Communication Continuum

To achieve effective communication requires a deliberate plan for determining who needs to understand the what, why, when and how of the change. The best time to map out what communication is required to ensure people understand, accept and positively contribute to the change is in the early planning stage for the change. Good communication should never be an afterthought, but rather a significant part of the Change Plan. It should reflect the specific needs and complexity of the change and therefore may be formal or informal, highly detailed or broadly structured. As with all other planning documents prepared at the start of the change, the communication plan should also be a live document and subject to regular review.

7.3   Understanding the Audience - Stakeholder Analysis

Designing meaningful stakeholder involvement in the change initiative is not an insignificant task and a stakeholder analysis is typically performed as a foundation for overall communications planning for change. The larger and more disruptive the change, the more vital it becomes to assess different participants' influence on the change.

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[10] Heathfield Susan M, *Communication Is Key in Change Management,* 2009 About.com,
http://humanresources.about.com/od/changemanagement/a/change_lessons2.htm

People can resist change for a number of reasons: self-interest, denial, fear of the unknown or different perceptions. If you understand the root of possible resistance to change then you can often plan for it before it becomes a significant obstacle. Stakeholder analysis is an important means of uncovering potential resistance or other risks to the success of the change. Whether a change is large or small a stakeholder analysis is a useful way to:

- o Determine specific stakeholders or stakeholder groups, and their relationship to the change
- o Identify their current attitudes toward the change and level of influence,
- o Identify their communication needs, and any risks associated with not meeting their needs,
- o Determine the general means for delivering change messages that will meet the needs, as well as appropriate timing.

By understanding the array of attitudes and feelings towards the change effort, the change team will be better able to define the appropriate communication for each audience. Without a stakeholder analysis and evaluation of the risk involved, the change team risks communicating inappropriately, resulting in stakeholder conflicts and uncertainty. Without understanding their motivations, needs and expectations, it is difficult to move a 'change blocker' out of that category and they will continue to be confrontational and cause conflict throughout the change.

7.4   Change Communication Fundamentals

While there is no one perfect way to communicate change, and each organisation should plan and determine the approach that best suits its culture and style, the following elements are common to successful communication approaches:

- **Clearly Communicate the Change Vision and Do it Early** – As referred to in section 3.2, by clearly communicating the change vision for how the organisation will look and feel at the end of the change, the foundation for the change is established. The vision should be clear, compelling, able to be described in simple terms and capable of acting as a guide for change decisions and outcomes. The earlier in the change process that the end goal is communicated, the easier it will be for people to adapt. People may work at cross purposes if they are unaware that they are pursuing dissimilar goals.

- **Outline the Benefits and Impacts of the Change** –Communication is important to overcome the fears and concerns aroused by change, to explain why the change is happening and what the whole thing really means in the long run. People wonder what effect it will have on them - will they still have a job after the change, will they maintain their position, will they have an interesting role, what will their future be? Because these questions will always be asked, and uncertainty in a working environment reduces productivity, it's important to

communicate what is changing and why. This is the crux of the message for many. Stakeholders need to know who will be affected and how, why it is happening and what the timelines for the change are.

- **Ensure the Organisation's Leaders Actively Communicate throughout the Change Process** – The message from an organisation's leaders need not just be about the progress of the change – important as that is – it is more about showing that the organisation and its leaders remain committed to the change. The personal and visible involvement of the organisation's leaders in communicating the change, sends a powerful message to stakeholders about how serious the organisation is in implementing the change. This is not something that should be delegated. Active and visible management commitment gives credibility to communications, demonstrates management's ownership to doing business in a different way and encourages a greater degree of stakeholder acceptance.

- **Use Multiple channels to communicate the change message** – Some people are visual learners best approached with written material. Others do better by listening and responding to the spoken word.

- **Provide Opportunities for Dialogue -** The more dramatic the change the greater the need for two way communication with stakeholders. Providing opportunities to discuss and directly respond to stakeholders helps to promote a sense of ownership and tells stakeholders that their opinions are important and their comments and suggestions are valued.

- **Repeat Change Messages Often -** Once the case for change is communicated and it is clear that change is going to happen, regular communication is a priority. People also need multiple opportunities to hear and question information. Repetition of clear and compelling change messages via multiple channels greatly increases the probability that it will get through to those who need to hear it.

- **Monitor and measure the effectiveness of communications -** The effort of monitoring and measuring results may seem time-intensive, but sampling key stakeholders' reactions to communications is vital. It is rare that people hear exactly what is intended in a message the first time, and monitoring provides an opportunity to determine stakeholders' level of awareness and attitudes, address instances of misinformation, identify and address ongoing issues and adjust and tailor the information to suit the needs of the change participants.

8. Aligned Workforce

8.1   People Impacts

It is essential to identify the human capital impacts of a change effort on the workforce. Organisations that successfully manage change typically develop a workforce plan specifically designed to steer their organisation toward achieving its change vision. Workforce planning ensures the organisation has an adequately skilled workforce to support its post-change needs. The plan should also address the issue of redirecting resources in situations where the change creates a gap in the skills and needs of the organisation.

8.2   Organisational Needs Assessment

A first step in the workforce planning process is conducting an organisational needs assessment. Through this assessment, organisations can determine the desired workforce size, skills and competencies needed in the future to support the changed environment and it can determine the staffing required. The following are examples of the types of basic assessment questions that might be required:

- **Future resource roles and needs:**

  - What new roles are needed?
  - What are the responsibilities assigned to each role?
  - How many people are required in each of these roles?
  - Are work location changes required?
  - Will a different work structure focus people on what is important?
  - Is there an adequate supply of people for the new roles?

- **Skills and Competencies:**

  - What new competencies will be required for the roles?
  - What skills, education, knowledge, or work experiences should the resources have for each identified competency?

After determining the organisation's workforce needs in the changed environment, it is then necessary to determine the competencies of the organisation's current workforce, and identify and address the gaps between future needs and current workforce competencies. Gaps can include the number of resources required; or lack of skills. There may be a decreased need for some competencies and an increased need for others, or new specialist knowledge and learning may be required. Based on these gaps, the organisation should then, as part of the development of a workforce transition plan, identify workforce strategies to close the gap through recruiting, hiring, deployment, retention, education and training, and other staffing and development initiatives.

8.3 Workforce Development

Perhaps the most important key to mitigating the gaps between organisational needs and current workforce competencies is workforce development. This may involve:

- **performance management** – to reinforce and sustain the change, performance management assists the organisation to develop workers with skills that align with the organisation's change goals and to determine employee skills deficits that require development and strengthening

- **creating individual development plans** - identifying a combination of developmental activities to assist affected employees in developing designated competencies and knowledge

- **training and education** – some organisations implement on the job training, mentoring and classroom or computer based training strategies to improve competencies, and encourage professional development by setting aside part of the budget for training.

It is worth bearing in mind that while an essential component of achieving change is appropriately skilled employees; change success depends on employee performance as much as it depends on employee qualification and training. Accordingly to reinforce the change and embed a culture that motivates and sustains the change it helps to:

- Develop employee performance plans that align with the change goals
- Assign quantifiable and measurable objectives for employee performance that support the change; and
- Recognise and reward positive approaches and performance in the change process.

To successfully implement change, organisations need to align the performance of their workforce with the change – that is people must understand what they need to do, be enabled to do it, and be supported in doing it by appropriate incentives and rewards. Aligning individual and organisational performance management systems drives new behaviour and gradually shifts the organisational culture in support of the change vision.

Appendix One

Committed Leadership

Change starts at the top
- Leaders must visibly support the change
- Ensure continuous engagement regarding the change
- Assess readiness for the change and make adjustments accordingly
- Take action to resolve issues

Defined Governance

Strong governance promotes positive change
- Establish appropriate organisational structures, roles and responsibilities for the change, that encourage stakeholders and support the change effort
- Ensure these roles and structures are well understood

Planning

Planning is Critical
- Set a clear vision
- Identify the case for change
- Develop a change plan and measures
- Document your plan

Managing Change - The Key Factors

Informed Stakeholders

Poor Communication = Poor change
- Communication should be integral to the change plan – not an afterthought
- Know your stakeholders
- Communicate the vision, benefits and impacts
- Communicate frequently, actively and across multiple channels
- Monitor the responses

Aligned Workforce

Understand the human impacts
- Conduct proper workforce planning, involving:
  - Needs assessment based upon the change
  - Workforce development that aligns with the change

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Public Sector Change References

A number of Queensland government organisations have developed guidelines, processes and checklists to help analyse, document and plan for change. A sample is provided here for general reference.

The Queensland Department of Public Works has developed a comprehensive Change Management workbook and templates:

- *The Queensland Government Chief Information Office Change Management Plan Workbook and Template*

Available at:
http://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Architecture%20and%20Standards/Information%20Standards/Toolbox/Software%20Licence%20Management/Templates/slm_change_management_plan_template.doc

Queensland Health has developed a series of 'How to Guides' in relation to Organisational Change including:

- 1998, *Managing Organisational Change – How to Guide*
- 1999, *Supporting Employees through Organisational Change – How to Guide*
- 1999, *Tools and Processes for Implementing Organisational Change – How to Guide*

Available at: http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/change_management/

Queensland Transport's in-house change guide:
- 2007, *A Toolkit for Change Champions*

Queensland Department of Main Roads in-house change guide:
- 2003*, Change and Transition - A Manager's Toolkit*

Both provide useful insights about change management generally as well as the roles and responsibilities of change participants. Available by contacting the department.