CHANGE MANAGEMENT – A New Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Change management is a planned loom for the transitioning of individuals, groups, and organizations from an existing state to a required future state. Change management (or change control) is the definitive process of initiation of the change of a system which is implemented in a controlled structure by adopting a pre-defined framework with, to a large extent, appending required modifications. This research believes and asserts that that, managing a change process is as vital as the change itself. In the post liberalization era, Social science scholars have explored the possibilities of employing multiple techniques of Organization Development to initiate the desired organizational changes. We also assert that, proper diagnosis of the change environment could allow for the application of many a strategic intervention technique namely role playing, team building, feedback, process improvisations, amongst others. It essentially highlights primary domains of research, conceptual and incubating issues, spanning many subjects and well established policies of creating opportunities and satisfying needs for an organization. The domains of research considered are (not limited to):

- The process of study of learning, innovation and effecting change in organizations
- The conduct of inter-organizational relations, alliances and social capital.

Change management is as essential to success for the individual leader as it is to the organization. Change management, first needs to be examined from an individualistic point of view and then from an organizational outlook. An individual needs to carefully ascertain all the allied and converging points that are involved in the change management process itself to eventually navigate dramatic change in the applicable personnel lives. On the other hand, on the organizational platform, an adaptive leader needs to ascertain the importance of change management as a process whilst also being proactive in change implementation by concentrating on developing a stress-free work environment. One has to strike a profound balance between having people feel the demanded need to change and having them feel overwhelmed by the said change. It is apt to quote here that, leadership is like riding on a sharp edge.

This paper embarks to evaluate the key steps taken by an adaptive leader encompassing the entire change management process. This is to ensure that all steps taken (by the adaptive leader) are analyzed and has the result been “effective implementation of organizational change” in a process that had a profound positive impact on the organization’s line and staff functions.
INTRODUCTION

What are your first thoughts when faced with a new change?

In a dynamic business environment, change is a predictable part of subsistence for an individuals, organizations and leaders. The change management process, provide direction, protection, orientation, and the shaping of norms for adaptive leaders. Environmental factors and planned implementation are the two sources for managing the Organizational change. The main objective of the change management is to maximize the combined benefits for all people involved in the change and minimize the hazard of stoppage of implementing the change. It deals with the human aspect of change, which is related to the pure and business psychology.

The paper estimate change management as an essential for success for the individual leader and organizations. Change management, first needs to be examined from an individualistic point of view and then from an organizational outlook. An individual must recognize that the various stages involved in change management to successfully navigate spectacular change in their existence. In the organizational level an adaptive leader must understand the important change management process while also being proactive in change implementation by focusing on developing an adaptive work environment. An adaptive leader needs to ascertain the importance of change management as a process whilst also being proactive in change implementation by concentrating on developing a stress-free work environment. One has to strike a profound balance between having people feel the demanded need to change and having them feel overwhelmed by the said change. It is apt to quote here that, leadership is like riding on a sharp edge.

SCOPE OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The idea of defining these change management vicinity is to ensure that there is a common understanding among persons who read. Components of change management include:

- Change management process
- Readiness assessments
- Communication planning
- Coaching and training for change management
- Employee training development
- Sponsor activities
- Resistance management
- Data collection, feedback analysis and corrective action
- Celebrating and recognizing success

1. Change management process

The change management process is the series of steps or activities that a management of change and the project leader would follow to concern change management to a change.

Stages of change:

- Unfreezing – An activity where the participants attempt to change
Changing – The point of time where actual change occurs
Refreezing – The changed paradigm gets locked with parameters.

In general change management processes contain the following three segments:

**Segment 1 - Preparing for change** (Preparation, assessment and strategy development)
**Segment 2 - Managing change** (Detailed planning and change management implementation)
**Segment 3 - Reinforcing change** (Data gathering, corrective action and recognition)

These phases result in the following approach as shown below in Figure 1.

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**Preparation for Change**

- Collect and analyze feedback
- Diagnose gaps and manage resistance
- Implement corrective actions and celebrate successes

**Managing Change**

- Develop change management plans
- Take action and implement plans

**Reinforcing Change**

- Define your change management strategy
- Prepare your change management team
- Develop your sponsorship model

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Change Management Process

Change management is not an individual process for manipulative a business solution. Change management is the processes, tools and system for managing the personnel - side of change. Change management is not a process upgrading method. It is a method for reducing and supervision of conflict to change when implementing process, technology or organizational change. Change management is not a stand-alone technique for improving organizational performance. Change management is about managing change to realize business results.

2. **Readiness assessments**

Assessments are tools used by a change management team or project leader to assess the organization's readiness to change. Organizational, culture and history, employee, sponsor and change assessments are included in Readiness assessments. Each tool provides the project team with insights into the challenges and opportunities they may face during the change process.

3. **Communication planning**

Communication planning begins with a careful analysis of the audiences, key messages and the timing for those messages. The change management team or project leaders must design a communication plan that addresses the needs of front-line employees, supervisors and executives. Each audience has particular needs for information based on their role in the implementation of the change.
4. Coaching and training for change management
   Managers play a key role in managing change. Ultimately, the direct supervisor has more influence over an employee’s motivation to change than any other person at work. Unfortunately, supervisors as a group can be the most difficult to convince of the need for change and can be a source of resistance. It is vital for the change management team and executive sponsors to gain the support of supervisors and to build change leadership.

5. Training and training development
   Training is the cornerstone for building knowledge about the change and the required skills. Project team members will develop training requirements based on the skills, knowledge and behaviors necessary to implement the change. These training requirements will be the starting point for the training group or the project team to develop training programs.

6. Sponsor activities.
   Business leaders and executives play a critical sponsor role in change management. The change management team must develop a plan for sponsor activities and help key business leaders carry out these plans. Sponsorship should be viewed as the most important success factor. Avoid confusing the notion of sponsorship with support. Sponsorship involves active and visible participation by senior business leaders throughout the process. Unfortunately many executives do not know what this sponsorship looks like.

7. Resistance management
   Why do people resist change?

   “It has been said that the only people who want to change are babies who have wet diapers.” “Resistance isn't an indication that something is wrong with what you are trying to change. It is an indication that something is happening.”

   Resistance from employees and managers is normal. Persistent resistance, however, can threaten a project. The change management team needs to identify, understand and manage resistance throughout the organization. Resistance management is the processes and tools used by managers and executives with the support of the project team to manage employee resistance.

8. Data collection, feedback analysis and corrective action
   Employee involvement is a necessary and integral part of managing change. Managing change is not a one way street. Feedback from employees is a key element of the change management process. Analysis and corrective action based on this feedback provides a robust cycle for implementing change.

9. Celebrating and recognizing success
   Early successes and long-term wins must be recognized and celebrated. Individual and group recognition is also a necessary component of change management in order to cement and reinforce the change in the organization.

   The final step in the change management process is the after-action review. It is at this point that you can stand back from the entire program, evaluate successes and failures, and
identify process changes for the next project. This is part of the ongoing, continuous improvement of change management for your organization and ultimately leads to change competency.

These eight elements comprise the areas or components of a change management program. Along with the change management process, they create a system for managing change.

**THE ADAPTIVE LEADER’S PARADIGMATIC MODEL**

As mentioned earlier, the adaptive leader’s role in the change management process is a razor’s edge because they must balance between making employees feel a need for change and ensuring they don’t become overwhelmed by change. To attain success in this balance, the adaptive leader must focus on three specific considerations. According to, these three considerations include “creating a holding environment in which the pressures generated during the change process is neither unbearable nor too weak to be effective; maintaining responsibility for direction, protection, orientation, conflict, and shaping norms; and maintaining presence and poise while regulating distress”. Next, the paper presents an overview of the Adaptive Leadership Model.

**Leadership for Change**
- Change is hard work.
- Leadership begins with values
- Intellectual leads physical
- Real changes takes real change
- Leadership is a team sport
- Expect to be surprised
- Today competes with tomorrow
- Better is better
- Focus on the future
- Learning from doing
- Grow people
- Reflect

**The Adaptive Leadership Approaches**

**Systems approach.**
The systems approach provides an excellent framework for observing and analyzing how change impacts inter-related sub-systems within an organization’s structure. This systemic paradigmatic perspective provides a lens, or focus, for the effective observation of structural components and organizational dynamics. This perspective is critical to maintaining a critical and objective mindset concerning the level of pressure exerted by the change process and ensuring it is neither too strong nor too weak.

**A Multi-dimensional Adaptive Approach**
Based on the previous discussion, the adaptive leader must observe and analyze change from a combination of different paradigmatic perspectives to ensure they consider the change management processes from both an organizational systems perspective and an actors individual and group perspective.
First, the systems approach assist the adaptive leader in dealing with the issue of change management by addressing the organizations structure from a systemic perspective in attaining an understanding of the interactions and interconnectedness of the many organizational sub-systems.

Second, the actors approach provides the adaptive leader a perspective that provides an understanding of how change influences the level of distress for the many organizational actors and their role within the organization’s culture. The adaptive leader efficiently and effectively implements an adaptive work environment by using both paradigmatic perspectives. An adaptive work environment requires the adaptive leader to manage and control direction, protection, orientation, conflict, and norms within the organization’s systems and its actors. The analysis will address these key considerations.

- First, direction requires the adaptive leader identify the specific change management issues that need addressing to guide employees through the change process.
- Second, protection entails the adaptive leader willingness to allow employees to experience the pressures of change within a controlled range they can handle.
- Third, orientation allows the adaptive leader to challenge current organizational roles while simultaneously resisting the potentiality of quickly changing existing roles in a reactionary manner. This component provides stability and reassurance for employees and managers and stabilizes the culture.
- Fourth, managing conflict focuses on exposing existing personal, structural, and systemic conflicts and resolving these issues before they emerge into an unmanageable state.
- Fifth and last, shaping norms is critical as the adaptive leader strives to challenge and improve existing norms that exists within the organizations culture.

**DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

Within the adaptive leader’s operative paradigm discussed thus far, the adaptive work environment consists of four basic types of organizational change to address. These four types of organizational change include precision, functional, cultural, and power. The systemic approach premises that each of these four primary types of change is both interconnected and interacting at the systems and sub-systems levels.

Whereas, the actors approach premises that each type of change impacts the various organizational actors at varying levels and to varying degrees. The adaptive leader’s challenge is to use these two paradigmatic perspectives combined with the adaptive leadership construct to create an adaptive work environment. Next, the analysis addresses the four types of change, precision, functional, cultural, and power, to determine their impact on employees and organizational performance.

**Precision Change Type**

Precision change involves change management that focuses on the flow of inputs to outputs, or throughput. Precision change may involve activities across the organization’s functional boundaries, how raw materials are transformed to finished goods, or how information is transformed to knowledge. Thus, process changes typically include many internal structural
improvements that enhance the organization’s throughput but most importantly, enhance the value of products and/or services for customers throughout the value chain. Many management methodologies have emerged to deal with precision change in an effort to adapt to dynamic environmental variables and enhance quality. Regardless of the methodologies involved and because process change is about throughput, employees are significantly involved at every level. The majority of the process improvement methodologies fall under the total quality management (TQM) movement. Definitions of quality vary significantly and can be very detailed to very simple. Other definitions of quality emphasize conformance to an established set of final product or service standards and/or specifications. The dichotomy of the various quality precision change methodologies has varying impacts on employees functioning in an adaptive work environment.

Functional Change Type

Functional change requires a strong systems approach and involves coordination and control within the organization. Changes in the functional area include horizontal and/or vertical structural shifts and how organizational units report to one another in the hierarchical structure. One example of functional systemic change is the shift from rational, bureaucratic structures to flexible, network-based configurations with a flat authority structure. Some of the current models, in addition to the adaptive leadership model, that illustrate how leaders and followers work together throughout the functional change process include the leader–member exchange model (LMX) and the and the leader-follower model (LF).

Leader – Member Exchange Type

In this type, the term exchange refers to the leader – follower relationship, which varies from high quality to low quality. The method premises that there is a high exchange level when certain characteristics exists in followers including attitudinal similarity, extraverted personality, a strong internal locus of control, and a strong growth need. In essence, a high level of exchange, or a high quality relationship, is most likely to develop when the follower demonstrates one or more of the aforementioned characteristics. Understanding this method can significantly enhance the adaptive leader’s ability to develop an adaptive work environment.

Leader – Follower Type

The Leader - Follower type is a social psychology construct and adds new dimensions to the analysis of leadership and organizational change. The Type falls within the actor’s paradigmatic approach and provides a unique perspective for the adaptive leader during the norm shaping process. As a group relationship develops within organizational social situations, a leader emerges within the group based on group dynamics. That a leader emerges from within the social structure because they are prototypical of the group’s norms, values, and beliefs. The argument is that the leader’s prototypical characteristics are as important for leadership development as any traditionally defined leadership traits, characteristics, or attributes. Although this model affects functional change, it is very important to both the cultural change type and the power change type and can enhance the adaptive leader’s ability to develop an adaptive work environment.
Cultural Change Type

What is the organizational culture?

The culture of a group is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved problems ... that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Changing Culture

“You cannot create a new culture. You can immerse yourself in studying a culture ... Until you understand it. Then you can propose new values; introduce new ways of doing things, and articulate new governing ideas. Over time, these actions will set the stage for new behavior. If people who adopt the new behavior feel that it helps them ... The organizational culture may embody a different set of assumptions, and a different way of looking at things ...

Cultural change is concerned with values, beliefs, norms, traditions, and human behavior within the organizational structure. One component of adaptive work involves the adaptive leader challenging and re-shaping unproductive norms. Organizational culture is one of the most difficult dimensions of change management and involves both formal and informal structural components. An organization’s culture is the sum-total of the employee’s shared values, beliefs, norms, and traditions and thus, the adaptive leader must use the actor’s paradigmatic approach when dealing with the cultural change type.

Power Change Type

Power change involves the power distribution as it relates to factors that significantly influence organizational decision-making. Power type change focuses on creating an environment in which the dominate coalition is representative of all the organizational participants, or actors. This area of change management is typically the most difficult to manage and presents a tremendous challenge to change management process. The adaptive work model does not effectively deal with this particular type of change. Adaptive leader’s can mitigate the power change issue by developing team coalitions throughout the organization as they seek followership at all functional levels. Additionally, the adaptive leader can focus on the actors approach to enhance the organization’s culture and shape norms to enhance commitment to the change process.

Summary

The adaptive leader faces a dilemma of establishing a delicate balance between having people feel the need to change and having them feel overwhelmed by change. Hence, leadership in a change management environment is a razor’s edge. Change tremendously affects both employees and organizations, and consequently, both are highly resistant to its inevitability. Adaptive leaders implement change in an adaptive work environment by providing direction, protection, orientation, conflict control, and shaping of norms. In addition, steps that help eliminate the resistance to change include maintaining disciplined attention to the various actors, giving the work back to the people, protecting the voices of leadership from below, and practicing leadership as learning. Thus, the adaptive leader must be proactive and strive to create an adaptive work environment that is conducive for change. To become proactive in the change management process, the adaptive leader can implement an adaptive work...
environment based on the premises presented in this paper. First, the adaptive leader must attain an understanding of change’s influence on both the individual and the organization by understanding the steps as detailed in the preceding sections.

References
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