EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN SERVICE OF ALFUENT BUSINESS DECISION MAKING PROCESS

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Abstract:The pace of change of thebusiness scene in the 21st century is so rapid and the degree of obsolescence if organizations resist change is so ruthless that the only way out for many companies is to change or perish. In this framework, it becomes critical that organizations develop the capabilities to adapt and steer change in their advantage. The most effective approach to resolving this issue is through understandingthe significance of clear and effective communication, its effects on human resources in a process of managing change- all for the purpose of adequate decision-making process.This paper has been written using an analytical approach, based on previously developed facts and analysis, while applied to contemporary market challenges. Firstly, the paper will reflect on introducing change management as a discipline to a modern market environment, the challenges companies are facing through itsimprovement, while exposing its effects on decision making processes in a business strategy. In conclusion, the paper summarizes facts of previous analyses of change management aspects as well as models of decision-making processes, leaving a space to a reader to make an educated conclusion on the importance of developing and implementing change management principles into company'sstrategies.

Keywords: change management, decision making, leadership, organizational change management, decision making process models

1.INTRODUCTION

For a long time, effective leadership in a business environment considered management that had laid out the plans for a 5-year period as well as the long-term strategies, which the organization through all of its departments could follow and complete. These plans and strategies included projected outcomes, based on the results and analyses from previous years. A good manager was able to "*read*" the trends of previous periods and based on the results enhances upcoming goals. This was a good aspect, and the leaders who would be able to fulfill predicted goals, would have been considered effective managers. Is this still true? Considering rapid technological, economic, political and social changes, contemporary managers need to be real magicians. It is expected of them to be alert, resourceful and capable of addressing any upcoming change.Is this possible? What are the skills a contemporary manager would need to possess in order to respond to these needs? What does an organization need to do in order to equip itself with an adequate tool to efficiently answer change?

In the current world where changes are happening moment to a moment, change management represents a challenge and a necessary activity, while extremely hard for implementation. The main reason why change management is important is the fact that the change initially and foremost affects human resources in the company. If this aspect hasn't been dealt with appropriately, the end results are usually negative. Furthermore, this will result in overall dissatisfaction, loss of productivity and performances. If the change has been handled adequately, the people are excited and enthusiastic about the ways they will be able to contribute to the organization. The process of managing change demands defining certain principles and their efficient and effective implementation in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Understanding how the change affects certain parts or members of organization foremost affects how those will accept and deal with the change, and how their work or the role in the organization will influence effectiveness and the end results. This paper will present findings of how change affects the organization, define areas of significanceof managing change properly and explain the reasoning behind it, which lead to adequate decision making.

2. CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ITS PRINCIPLES

What is change management? Change management is the discipline that guides how we prepare, equip and support individuals to successfully adopt change in order to drive organizational success and outcomes.The business landscape of the 21st century is characterized by rapid change brought about due to technological, economic, political and social changes. It is no longer the case that the managers and employees of firms can look forward to more of the same every year. In this framework, the pace of change is so rapid and the degree of obsolescence if organizations resist change is so ruthless that the only way out for many firms is to change or perish. In this context, it becomes critical that organizations develop the capabilities to adapt and steer change in their advantage.

The role of senior managers becomes crucial in driving through change and ensuring that firms are well placed with respect to their competitors. However, it is the case that in many organizations, senior managers actively resist change and in fact thwart change initiatives due to a variety of reasons which would be explored in subsequent sections (Juneja, P. "Change Management – Meaning and Important Concepts"MSG Content Team, 2016.)

Bringing managers on board with the change

It is critical to understand that unless change is actively embraced, organizations in the 21st century risk obsolescence.To resist change is as basic as human nature and hence the change managers must adopt an inclusive approach that considers the personality clashes and the ego tussles. It is often the case that in large organizations, changes tend to create power centers, hence the issue why organizational change must address the group dynamics as well as the behavior characteristics of an individual.Only by understanding of the means by which managers can be brought on board, can there be a foundation for suitable methods. The approaches include a combination of pressure tactics and coordination, instead of competition and cooperation. Change agents must realize that wherever possible, they must deal with consensual decision making and if that is not possible, they must walk the talk and be firm in their approach. Managers at all levels have a tendency to resist change and in the high stakes game of change management, they are the ones who can articulate and communicate the change in a clear and coherent manner in order to succeed.This is one of the fundamental approaches in change management – understanding the importance and the role of communication.The sooner the proactive approach and communication is accepted, the organization is more likely to be able to involve the main seven elements in its decision making process.

1. One of the fundamental steps in the organization, while answering the needs of a rapid change, is to identify and address a time frame for implementing changes. This means that all expectations and the anticipated effects will be clearly and promptly communicated throughout the organization and that everyone will understand and expect these new approaches to be dealt with. Furthermore, these newly implemented alterations will certainly affect many individuals, as well as the departmental procedures. This opportunity should be used to present to all members of the organization the insights of how the change might affect them and what these changes could mean for them. This could be viewed as a prospect, which is presented to all employees to take a charge of a newly developed situation and see how they can contribute more and createmore valuable input. This should be an opportunity for them to increase their performance and express their proactive attitude.

2. The actual meaning and the purpose of the change need to be clearly communicated to all levels. This way, human resources will be able to compare their obligations and rapports they are responsible for at this moment, to the foreseen situations. Another benefit of these conditions is that they would be able to include the changes in their prospective development plan. Some people might find all the upcoming changes extremely beneficial to their professional growth. On the other hand, certain people might fear these alterations as they are not as open

to the change and variations in their routines. This opportunity will allow them to prepare themselves for the future development and find ways of dealing with their daily tasks. It is crucial that the expected modifications are clearly presented to all levels of organization, because it is in human nature to seek to know how the changes will affect them personally and professionally. It is important, as well, to pay close attention to confidentiality in these cases, since the human nature pushes the employees to the point to explore to their maximum.

3. As the impact on each individual employee is communicated, employees should be able to find out how the change will impact their environment and the organization as a whole. Once they are clear about the effects the organization is expecting, they would be more inclined to find their spot in the forthcoming changes and take part as the most productive contributors. Many people do not appreciate surprises. Therefore, clear and open conversations explaining effects of the change on them or their contributions will allow them to appropriately prepare for the potential change. Thus, timely and open conversation on the prospects, changes and time frames give to employees is an opportunity to betterprepare and offer their maximum to achieve set forth expectations.

4. Another important aspect of a change is for it to be clearly communicated and explained, so that members of the organizations are fully prepared to experience different approaches. Each member of the organization is important in the production chain and it is crucial for each link of the chain to know what to expect and realize the best ways to prepare themselves. Being aware of the expectations and the reasons of the change, they will be more inclined to take initiative and learn best ways of producing expected outcomes. Explaining change, communicating expectations and offering support throughout the change is an important aspect in any change management.Effective communication can put all these things in place.

5. Employees need to know where they can go to get help if needed, and to explore opportunities to adjust to the change through different training sessions or upgrading. Support can be offered by immediate supervisors, human resources sector, peers or specifically appointed individuals who will guide the whole organization through the change. However, even if this is clearly communicated and established, leaders have to be up-to-date and available through the whole organization. All leaders ought to set examples for their employees, since having leaders take initiative and giving an example is best encouragement for many employees to follow through and feel the same sense of accomplishment and eagerness to follow through. Employees are usually main carriers of the change and they are the ones who feel the change in their daily routines. Being able to feel confident by being approved by their immediate supervisors, strengthens the effects of change and maximizes chances for successful outcomes.

2.1 Ten principles in service of delivering successful changes

1. As already established, **the key in a change process in every organization is a human component.**In order for a change to create an inviting and rewarding atmosphere, people who are directly affected by it need to be able to thoroughly understand, accept and communicate their needs through this unknown process. Everybody who is affected by the change of the routine or even more, by the work processes and expected outcomes, are reluctant toward it, and most of the time, unwilling to accept the unknown outcomes. People feel frightened by change, simply because their habits are being questioned. Therefore, creating such reactive relationship between employees and the organization can bring certain hesitancy and it will most likely reflect on the speed of completing tasks, employees' moral as well as overall performance. Taking a highly organized and disciplined approach towards the expected changes has to be fundamental of any alteration. This can be accomplished through gathering as much data as possible, its analysis, planning and implementation in service of re-designing strategies, systems and processes within an organization. All this needs to be incorporated into the program or carrying out changes and decision-making processes. It is mandatory to develop a formal approach to change management which comes from the managing team, and further affects relevant stakeholders and leaders. This program needs to be thoroughly developed at the very beginning of the process of change, so that it can be altered and adjusted during the sole change implementation.

2. **The changes need to start from the top down**. Given the fact that the changes are quite stressful for everybody involved, all the employees will be naturally focused on their supervisors for support and direction. The leadership team needs to be focused on motivation retention, concurrent in promoting changes and lead by their own example. At the same time, managers are going through the changes themselves, and they need to make sure that they are on the same page as the rest of the members of the leadership team. If the leadership team is working in a unison, and is focused on implementing altercated processes, while systematically understanding the needs and wanted outcomes of this change, they are on the best path to succeed in their intention.

3. **The real changes are happening at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder**. During the transformation process through setting the clear strategies and goals, designing and implementing change affects all levels of the organization in a different way. The effort of implementing changes needs to be created so that each organizational department has its own hierarchical level determining who is in charge of facilitating the change. Implementation of changes are dependable on line managers and individual contributions of each of the organization's members. Each of these levels need to be identified and members of the department who are keen and understanding of the change outcomes, should be actively involved in facilitating these changes.

4. **Importance of the vision.** Each individual is driven by their own rational reasoning; therefore, it is understandable that hey question of the actual need for the change and if the newly introduced organizational vision is something they feel comfortable with and are willing to pursue. These questions are usually aimed toward their supervisors. Articulating efforts and needs for the change, as well as clearly established vision is the key in presenting the new opportunities to create loyalty toward the changes. Leaders must adjust this message according to the internal audience, clarifying changes in a way that is most acceptable. This can be done through confronting reality and creating a picture of the need for the change; demonstrating the faith in company and its ability to lead its team toward the brighter future in a competitive market, and by offering support and direction which can help to direct behaviors and decision making processes.

5. **Creating ownership of changes**. Big change programs require distributed leadership with wide spread effect on visible decision making processes, abut invisible on the top level management. Mangers need to be the individuals who will invest most in the process of change, creating the critical mass needed for implementation of change among all the employees. This requires more than passive approach to accepting the changes. It is necessary to create ownership of leaders who are ready to take responsibility for implementing changes in all areas of their expertise or control. Ownership is best created by including people in the process of identifying problems and pursuing solutions. This is strengthened by a combination of tangible (financial) and psychological (a sense of belonging, sharing the fate) awards.

6. **Practicing targeted communication.** The best design of a plan can be seen in the organization's ability and willingness to understand, accept and implement changes. Often, leaders of change are mistaken by the notion that everyone understand the importance of change, feel the need for it and see clearly the newly opened paths in accordance with the change, as they see it. The best programs of change management strengthen the core message and intention of the change through regular inspiring and actionable advice. Communication should be steered in a way so that it offers proper and concise information in the right moment, while carefully paying attention to the emotional reaction of the employees regarding what has been said to them. Programs of change sometimes need implementation of several different channels of communicating, in service of reinforcing the effect of the message. Nevertheless, communication has to be carried out in a timely fashion, personally and with consistent standpoints of the personnel who is enforcing the message. The best leaders are speaking from the heart and embody the personal commitment level to the change they are advocating for.

7. **Explicit exposure of culture and effects on cultural centers.** The culture of an organization represents a blend of joint history, explicit values and beliefs, joint stances and acceptable attitudes and behaviors. Programs of change implementation often require meaningful modifications in existing cultures of the organization so that the changes could be properly implemented. The organizational culture requires significant attention and all of its elements need to be assessed and analyzed. This process requires creating basic competencies through a diagnostic of a culture and the organization, defining desired cultural outcomes as results of the change as well as delivering a detailed plan of how to get there. After delivering the clear picture of where an organization wants to go, leaders need to assess current culture and identify differences in which organization needs to overcome, and identify strategies which will help in delivering and creating a new culture. Leaders need to be explicit in defining a new cultural outcome, and lead by their own example. Further, the new cultural outcomes will be delivered throughout the whole organization and to encourage new cultural behaviors. By confronting the cultural center of the company, one acquires the best position to start applying new activities based on implementation of a new organization culture.

8. **Cultural reorganization needs to be assessed on time**. Successful programs of change are more effective if its implementation is coming from the top and through the hierarchical level, which gives the process of change certain weight, importance and understanding it at the all levels of the organization. Business often make mistakes because of the lack of the preparation phase and are not assessing cultural changes timely or ever. The overall analysis can show the readiness of the organization for a change, and can produce important uncertainties which need to be addressed. Furthermore, it can clarify cultural factor which could help or distract the process of implementing change. Cultural analysis identifies basic values, beliefs, behaviors and perceptions which need to be taken in consideration in order to implement change successfully. The organizational culture offers fundaments for creating key elements of the business such as vision, but also for developing infrastructure and programs needed to apply those changes.

9. **Readiness for the unexpected.** There are no change implementations which go smoothly. People will react in an unexpected way, there is going to be resistance within the organization and the overall environment will suffer its effects. Successful change management requires constant analyses of change effects and preparedness to respond to every next wave of the change. Based on the relevant on-site results and information needed to make appropriate decisions, the leaders can create needed adjustments of the pace of change and create positive outcomes and a healthy atmosphere.

10. **Continuous conversation with individuals and institutions.** Change does not only affect the organization but also the individuals within. Individuals or groups of the individuals want to know in advance how change will affect their personal position within the organization. Leaders need to be upfront and honest as much as possible. This process can include obvious rewards (promotions, awards, bonuses) which will serve as an encouragement to carry out the change process. Sanctioning or removing individuals resistant to change will reassure individuals that change needs to be carried out and everybody needs to be aboard.

Change management can be defined as a proactive pursuit for new ways of undertakingactivities, behaving, believing and implementing new strategies. The change has been implemented only at the moment when all of the involved have accepted it, and when it got a lasting character. Generally, change leaders have the information they need to manage changes in the organization, and if they do not, they are in a position to reach them. How, when and to what extent this information is used, determines the extent to which the changes in the eyes of those who follow the leader will be effectively managed.Changes inevitably cause shocks because they lead people to behave and react differently. Expecting change in behavior causes anxiety in the vast majority of people affected by it. If they do not have all the information available to them, people are not sure what is expected of them, how they will have to react, what new behavior patterns they will have to establish and what are the consequences the change of others will have on them. Inevitably, once the changes are made, there is going to be a better understanding of its purpose and people will be adapting to changes and returning a sense of normality.The major problem in implementing the changes lies in the fact that they cause earthquakes, but the degree of these earthquakes can be minimized by early communication. Individuals who are timely and thoroughly informed about upcoming changes and their nature, will react in two ways. As the change is still far away, they will feel that it has little impact on them in the present and will not be perceived as a threat, nor will they be overly excited about it. Bearing in mind that the change comes, they will immediately start, subconsciously, to make small changes to their behavior in anticipation of that change. As soon as the information is passed on to everyone affected, the change process will be better served by those affected by it. Communication is more effective when there is more detail provided. As the change approaches, anxiety will remain at the same level, taking into account that the unknown has become known. Instead of guessing, worrying about what will be the anticipation of the worst, they will know what is happening and accordingly will make mental progress.At a time when events that involve changes happen, if the communication between all participants in the process is maintained on the truthful grounds, the process of transition from old to new will be relatively imperceptible, so that the entire event will not be perceived as a "change" either.How does this translate to and affects decision making process?

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Decisionmaking is the **process** of **making** choices by identifying a **decision**, gathering information, and assessing alternative resolutions. If looked at it closely, one can recognize that decision making is very similar in its nature to a change management – the ability to have different/new outcomes with the existing infrastructure.

Decision making process involves seven basic steps:

1. Define the problem.
2. Identify limiting factors.
3. Develop potential alternatives.
4. Analyze the alternatives.
5. Select the best alternative.
6. Implement the decision.
7. Establish a control and evaluation system.

1. **The decision-making process begins when a manager identifies the real problem**. The accurate definition of the problem affects all the steps that follow; if the problem is inaccurately defined, every step in the decision-making process will be based on an incorrect starting point. One way that a manager can help determine the true problem in a situation is by identifying the problem separately from its symptoms.

2. **The most obviously troubling situations found in an organization can usually be identified as symptoms of underlying problems**. (See Table for some examples of symptoms.) These symptoms all indicate that something is wrong with an organization, but they don't identify root causes. A successful manager doesn't just attack symptoms; he works to uncover the factors that cause these symptoms.

TABLE 1 Symptoms and Their Real Causes

Symptoms	Underlying Problem
Low profits and/or declining sales	Poor market research
High costs	Poor design process; poorly trained employees
Low morale	Lack of communication between management and subordinates
High employee turnover	Rate of pay too low; job design not suitable
High rate of absenteeism	Employees believe that they are not valued

Table 1.Decision Making, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 2016

3. **All managers want to make the best decisions**. To do so, managers need to have the ideal resources — information, time, personnel, equipment, and supplies — and identify any limiting factors. Realistically, managers operate in an environment that normally doesn't provide ideal resources. For example, they may lack the proper budget or may not have the most accurate information or any extra time. So, they must choose to **satisfice** — to make the best decision possible with the information, resources, and time available. Time pressures frequently cause a manager to move forward after considering only the first or most obvious answers. However, successful problem solving requires thorough examination of the challenge, and a quick answer may not result in a permanent solution. Thus, a manager should think through and investigate several alternative solutions to a single problem before making a quick decision.One of the best known methods for developing alternatives is through **brainstorming,** where a group works together to generate ideas and alternative solutions. The assumption behind brainstorming is that the group dynamic stimulates thinking — one person's ideas, no matter how outrageous, can generate ideas from the others in the group. Ideally, this spawning of ideas is contagious, and before long, lots of suggestions and ideas flow.

4. **Entertain all ideas.** In fact, the more ideas that come up, the better. In other words, there are no bad ideas. Encouragement of the group to freely offer all thoughts on the subject is important. Participants should be encouraged to present ideas no matter how ridiculous they seem, because such ideas may spark a creative

thought on the part of someone else. Although brainstorming is the most common technique to develop alternative solutions, managers can use several other ways to help develop solutions. Here are some examples:

Nominal group technique. This method involves the use of a highly structured meeting, complete with an agenda, and restricts discussion or interpersonal communication during the decision-making process. This technique is useful because it ensures that every group member has equal input in the decision-making process. It also avoids some of the pitfalls, such as pressure to conform, group dominance, hostility, and conflict, that can plague a more interactive, spontaneous, unstructured forum such as brainstorming.

Delphi technique. With this technique, participants never meet, but a group leader uses written questionnaires to conduct the decision making. No matter what technique is used, group decision making has clear advantages and disadvantages when compared with individual decision making.

The following are among the **advantages:**
- Groups provide a broader perspective.
- Employees are more likely to be satisfied and to support the final decision.
- Opportunities for discussion help to answer questions and reduce uncertainties for the decision makers.

Disadvantages:
- This method can be more time-consuming than one individual making the decision on his own.
- The decision reached could be a compromise rather than the optimal solution.
- Individuals become guilty of *groupthink* — the tendency of members of a group to conform to the prevailing opinions of the group.
- Groups may have difficulty performing tasks because the group, rather than a single individual, makes the decision, resulting in confusion when the time comes to implement and evaluate the decision.

The results of dozens of individual-versus-group performance studies indicate that groups not only tend to make better decisions than a person acting alone, but also that groups tend to inspire star performers to even higher levels of productivity.

The answer depends on several factors, such as the nature of the task, the abilities of the group members, and the form of interaction. Because a manager often has a choice between making a decision independently or including others in the decision making, she needs to understand the advantages and disadvantages of group decision making.The purpose of this step is to decide the relative merits of each idea. Managers must identify the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative solution before making a final decision.

5. **Evaluating the alternatives** can be done in numerous ways. Here are a few possibilities:
   - Determine the pros and cons of each alternative.
   - Perform a cost-benefit analysis for each alternative.
   - Weight each factor important in the decision, ranking each alternative relative to its ability to meet each factor, and then multiply by a probability factor to provide a final value for each alternative.

Regardless of the method used, a manager needs to evaluate each alternative in terms of its

Feasibility — Can it be done?
Effectiveness — How well does it resolve the problem situation?
Consequences — What will be its costs (financial and nonfinancial) to the organization?

After a manager has analyzed all the alternatives, she must decide on the best one. The best alternative is the one that produces the most advantages and the fewest serious disadvantages. Sometimes, the selection process can be fairly straightforward, such as the alternative with the most pros and fewest cons. Other times, the optimal solution is a combination of several alternatives.

Sometimes, though, the best alternative may not be obvious. That's when a manager must decide which alternative is the most feasible and effective, coupled with which carries the lowest costs to the organization. Probability estimates, where analysis of each alternative's chances of success takes place, often come into play at this point in the decision-making process. In those cases, a manager simply selects the alternative with the highest probability of success.

6. **Managers are** paid to make decisions, but they are also paid **to get results from these decisions**. Positive results must follow decisions. Everyone involved with the decision must know his or her role in ensuring a successful outcome. To make certain that employees understand their roles, managers must thoughtfully devise programs, procedures, rules, or policies to help aid them in the problem-solving process.

Ongoing actions need to be monitored. An evaluation system should provide feedback on how well the decision is being implemented, what the results are, and what adjustments are necessary to get the results that were

intended when the solution was chosen.In order for a manager to evaluate his decision, he needs to gather information to determine its effectiveness.

7. **Was the original problem resolved**? If not, is he closer to the desired situation than he was at the beginning of the decision-making process?If a manager's plan hasn't resolved the problem, he needs to figure out what went wrong. A manager may accomplish this by asking the following questions:
   - Was the wrong alternative selected? If so, one of the other alternatives generated in the decision-making process may be a wiser choice.
   - Was the correct alternative selected, but implemented improperly? If so, a manager should focus attention solely on the implementation step to ensure that the chosen alternative is implemented successfully.
   - Was the original problem identified incorrectly? If so, the decision-making process needs to begin again, starting with a revised identification step.
   - Has the implemented alternative been given enough time to be successful? If not, a manager should give the process more time and re-evaluate at a later date.

3. CONCLUSION

When we think of change in organizations today, it could bring about a variety of responses. Change could result from something as simple as a dress code or something as complex as a new President being elected. The modern manager must be aware of the various forms of change as they come to an organization and then be prepared to deal with them. To make a successful transition in an organization, change should be ushered in with proper communication. Employees and their stakeholders have concerns about how change will impact their lives both at home and at work. One of the strategies that organizational behavior experts promote is that of transparency on the part of leadership. The more that employees understand change, the less fear or resistance. Managing decisions among large groups can take more time and involve more issues.In the process of making a decision, people have two general methods at their disposal. A group may come to a decision based on what would create a satisfactory outcome for all the stakeholders. The rational method differs in that the decision made by either the leader or a group comes by way of whatever information is available at hand. There may be some boundaries which have to be accepted or ignored depending upon the situation.The ability to involve others in decision making is a change from the old "command-and-control" style of management and capitalizes on the reality that everyone involved will acknowledge the purpose and the benefits of the new approach. Therefore, effective implementation of change management leads to enabling organizational management to make sound and appropriate decisions through already established principles of a change.

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