



Envisioning Organizational Change as Inevitable Mechanism for Excellence

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ABSTRACT

Organizational change is the movement of an organization from one state of affairs to another. Organizational change can take many forms. It may involve a change in a company's structure, strategy, policies, procedures, technology, or culture. The change may be planned years in advance or may be forced upon an organization because of a shift in the environment. Organizational change can be radical and alter the way an organization operates, or it may be incremental and slowly change the way things are done. In any case, regardless of the type, change involves letting go of the old ways in which work is done and adjusting to the new ways. Therefore, fundamentally, it is a process that involves effective people management. This article presents an overview on the concept of organizational change and the related factors.

Keywords: Organizational change, change management, change agent

INTRODUCTION

Organizational change is both the process in which an organization changes its structure, strategies, operational methods, technologies, or organizational culture to affect change within the organization and the effects of these changes on the organization. Organizational change can be continuous or occur for distinct periods of time. The study of organizational change is interdisciplinary in nature and draws from the fields of psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and management.

The Carnegie School Theory of Organizational Change

The Carnegie view of organizational change was developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It focused on studying sources of stabilization and change in an organization. The Carnegie School made three important contributions to organizational change:

Failure-induced change: The theory of failure-induced change is rather simple. An organization will change its strategies, technology, culture, and other features of the organization in response to failure in an attempt to reach its goals. For example, if your company's old computer systems are wreaking havoc on your company's productivity, you may upgrade the systems to reach productivity goals.

Routinization of organizational activity: According to the Carnegie School, standard procedures, programs, and routines provide stability to an organization. Organizational change occurs when these standards are changed. Standard routines and processes can also help with organizational change, according to the dynamic capabilities approach to management. Under this approach, processes and routines are used to help an organisation facilitate and adapt to change.

Model of Organizational Learning: The Carnegie school also proposed a model for a leading organization. Learning is a different concept from change. You can learn without changing and change without learning. However change including fear induced change can influence learning.

Concept of Change Management and Change Agent

Change management is the process, tools and techniques to manage the people side of change to achieve the required business outcome.

Change management incorporates the organizational tools that can be utilized to help individuals make successful personal transitions resulting in the adoption and realization of change. Change affects...

- Processes
- Systems
- Organization structure
- Job roles

While there are numerous approaches and tools that can be used to improve the organization, all of them ultimately prescribe adjustments to one or more of the four parts of the organization listed above. Change typically results as a reaction to specific problems or opportunities the organization is facing based on internal or external stimuli. While the notion of becoming “more competitive” or “closer to the customer” or “more efficient” can be the motivation to change, at some point these goals must be transformed into the specific impacts on processes, systems, organization structures or job roles. This is the process of defining the change.

Change agent

A change agent is anyone who helps an organization transform by improving business processes and interpersonal interactions. Leaders focused on change management or change control are often labelled change agents. There are two types of change agents: internal and external. Internal change agents are people already in the organization who are familiar with the company's culture and operations. External change agents are consultants from outside the organization who re-evaluate operations. To be effective, external change agents must first research the company's structure, culture, processes, finances and existing technology. Both internal and external change agents must be proactive about anticipating and initiating transformation within an organization.

There are several categories change agents usually fall under:

Facilitator: Sets up brainstorming meetings and helps determine which changes need to occur

Planner: Identifies steps, stages and timing of change implementation

Cheerleader: Motivates people who are changing; works directly with resisters and questioners

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Educational Change and Orders of Educational Change by Robert Marzano

Educational change is a broad term that refers to both shifting paradigms within education and efforts of reform within education. The former is often a part of the latter, since most change within the field of education is initiated for the improvement of the institution. Similarly, shifting perspectives within the field of education are most often a result of an awareness of new ideas and new needs. The efforts taken to adjust to those new ideas and meet those needs can be categorized as educational change.

First-Order Change

According to educational researcher Robert Marzano, there are two kinds of educational change. First-order change refers to any surface level change that is a response to new ideas. In this level of change the response as well as the new ideas must fit into the current conceptual framework within education. If it does not, the change is rejected in favor of maintaining the current framework. This change does not drive reform as it is only accepted if it is compatible with accepted norms.

Second-Order Change

Second-order change refers to what more closely resembles reform and actual change within the field. It concerns itself with the accepted norms and current conceptual framework but works with those for change rather than change to those norms. The current paradigm is part of the change process, but compatibility with it does not determine the success of the change.

The findings of Marzano's research suggest that second-order change is the more substantive and genuine change and that failed reform is usually a result of a failure to address second-order change.

Change at a Local Level

In addition to orders of change, there are levels of change. Change at the local level addresses the daily needs and realities of education. This would refer to change effected at the school or district level. This local change, although limited to specific location, can reflect the successful reform that is the goal of second-order educational change since the change is tailored directly to a specific community.

Change at the National Level

This level of change is of a broader, top-down variety. Educational change at the national level involves governmental mandates and initiatives and often originates outside of the field of education itself and in the hands of policymakers. Since this level of change is large and seeks to effect broad sweeps of change, it may fail to result in genuine reform and may instead fall into the category of first-order change.

Change as Related to Trends

Many changes within education are results of national initiatives born outside of the world of education. That they are external does not invalidate them; however, it does often make these initiatives harder to realize. These moves toward educational reform are direct responses to trends within education by policymakers outside of education. The difficulty is that when this change is activated it often takes time to trickle down to the regional and local level. Occasionally, by the time it does, it is no longer as relevant and vital as it first was. This results in shelved initiatives and failed reform.

CONCLUSION

Adopting and implementing change in organizations can create a certain extent of dissatisfaction among employees. But, once change brings in a favorable effect, everybody start accepting it. Eventually, change plays a very positive role in building up healthy competition which leads to a desire among organizations to develop themselves more than their competitors. Also change can serve as springboard for excellence.

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