



Exploratory Research on Change Readiness to Drive Organizational Excellence

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Abstract

Organizations that do not change cannot adapt to current and future market and customer needs. Examples of exogenous change are omnipresent, such as Artificial Intelligence, Supply Chain Disruption. The fact that change processes have been studied and several models have been advanced to explain the change process does not make change any easier for the person that needs to change, nor the organization. One definition of a high performing organization is that it continuously seeks better ways accomplish its mission, this implies that one characteristic of a high performing organization is change agility. This exploratory research seeks to build a framework for organizations to use in teams at multiple levels to better understand their ability to and resistance to change. Many, if not most, change models have three fundamental phases of the change process; an awareness of the current state, an aspirational desired state, a transition phase from current state to the desired state. This research focuses on building an assessment of the organization's readiness to change to is responsive to current exogenous change stimuli.

Key words: Change Management, Change Agility, Organizational Excellence, Assessment, Business Management

Project Design

Some of the most popular change management models are:

1. **Lewin's Change Management Model**, named for Kurt Lewin. Essentially, the model is "Unfreeze the current state", "change", "refreeze to a new current state."
2. **Kotter's Change Management Model**, created by John Kotter. The steps of this process are:
 1. Create a sense of urgency
 2. Build a guiding coalition
 3. Form a strategic vision
 4. Enlist a volunteer army
 5. Enable action by removing barriers
 6. Generate short term wins
 7. Sustain acceleration
 8. Institute change
3. **ADKAR Change Management Model**, developed by Jeff Hiatt is focused on 5 main goals for organizational change: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement
4. **Bridges Transition Model** created by William Bridges identifies three stages of change in organizations: Ending Phase, Neutral Zone, The New Beginning.
5. **GE's Change Acceleration Process (CAP)** recognizes five stages of change that need to be managed from the current state through a transition state to an improved state. Those five steps are:
 1. Creating a Shared Need
 2. Shaping a Vision
 3. Mobilizing Commitment
 4. Making Change Last
 5. Monitoring Progress

Broadly, each methodology suggests that understanding the current state, the desired future state, and managing the transition between the two is require for success. This research seeks to develop an instrument that assesses the awareness and alignment across the organization for the current state.

This research focuses on a specific dimension of the 'current state' – change Readiness. Change readiness considers three key drivers that impact readiness of an organization to change (Combe, 2014):

Commitment readiness—the degree of resolve and ability of the organization, through its leaders at all levels, to see the change through to successful and sustainable completion within the organization's overall strategic agenda. Measures the readiness to change of the Vision/Mission dimension.

Capacity readiness—the degree to which the organization is able to bring supportive work processes, historical knowledge and experience, current knowledge, skills and abilities, and resources to bear to aid in successful implementation and sustainability of the change. Measures the readiness to change of the Profitability dimension.

Cultural readiness—the degree of alignment between cultural norms and the proposed change. Measures the readiness to change of the cultural dimension.

Research also indicates that anything related to innovation/change will face employee resistance (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). The methods for addressing resistance – ranked best to worst are:

1. Education
2. Communication
3. Participation
4. Facilitation
5. Support
6. Negotiation
7. Manipulation
8. Coercion
9. Use of Authority

This research focuses on the education and communication to improve change readiness which can have a dramatic impact on organizational resistance to change. These will have the most value to provide insights for organizations who struggle with change.

Methodology

This study will use qualitative methods to assess an organization's readiness to change. Interviews will be conducted in the areas of commitment readiness, capacity readiness, and cultural readiness.

The focus of this study will be on businesses and organizations that are looking for insight as they undertake significant change.

Results

This research has not yet been conducted.

Objectives

This research focuses on an organization's change readiness and its resistance to change. There are several organizational change models and almost an infinite number of variations of those models to fit a particular niche organization or group.

There are three dimensions of organizational excellence. Working definitions of these dimensions of organizational performance:

- 1 – **Vision/Mission** – Excellent organizations define a distinctive virtuous aspiration and purpose (i.e., the compelling reason the industry/organization exists).
- 2 – **Budget/Profitability** – Excellent organizations design policies to support a reliable profit model based on accurate revenue-stream estimates and properly managed expenses.
- 3 – **Values/Culture** - Excellent organizations deliver an effective collaborative environment with aligned messaging to stakeholders that generates enthusiasm and esprit de corps.

References

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