

Change Management – Mitigating the Risk of Failure

A well designed process aligned with business goals and objectives that enhances productivity alone does not ensure successful organizational change. Nor does it ensure the return on investment promised in the business case. The implementation of the best in class, efficient, reliable technology, in and of itself cannot ensure the realization of a business case. Ensuing impacted stakeholders have the requisite training assists in the adoption of change, but will only get you so far.

Business process management needs to include the skills and knowledge to assist impacted stakeholders to adopt and incorporate change at all levels of an organization. Change management principals and methods should be a cornerstone for every organizational shift.

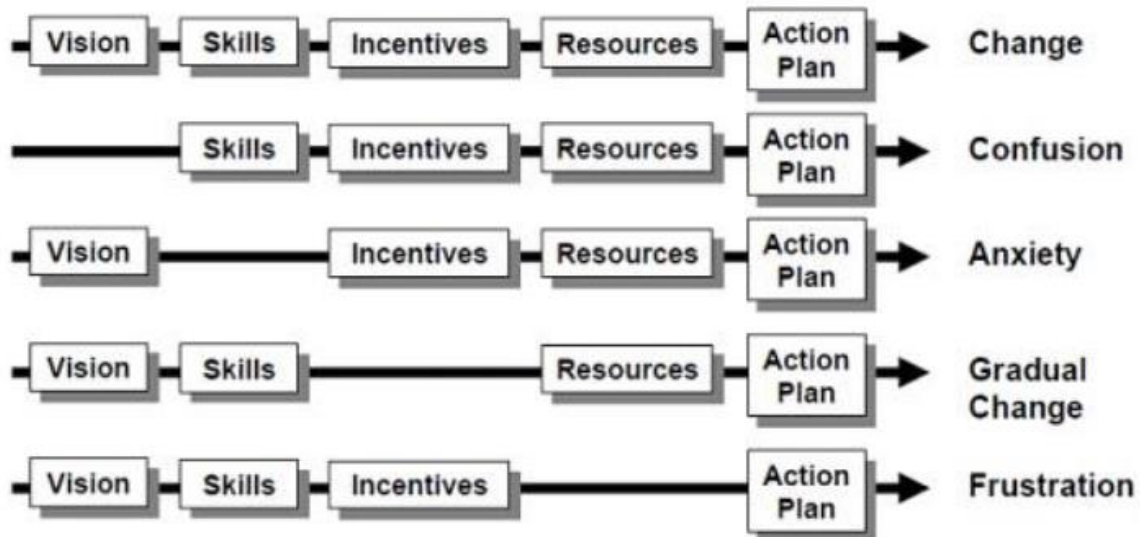
According to Proci®, "Change management is the discipline that guides how we prepare, equip and support individuals to successfully adopt change in order to drive organizational success and outcomes."

The practice includes:

1. Assessment of organizational readiness
 2. Detailed analysis of impacted stakeholders
 3. A comprehensive plan
 4. Measuring adoption
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1. Assessing organizational readiness, which includes the engagement level of the project sponsor and management at all levels of the impacted area, will help the analyst to understand the risk associated with the change. Studies have shown that where organisational leaders did not undertake a process of creating readiness for change, but instead overestimated the degree of preparedness within the organisation and its employees, the change effort either experienced false starts from which they might or might not recover, the change efforts stalled as resistance increased, or the effort failed altogether (Self & Schraeder 2009; Weiner, Amick & Lee 2008). 2
 2. Stakeholder analysis not only includes who and where but includes the employee's willingness to change. Evaluating the enablers for change vs. the inhibitors, identifying and training a competent change agent community, from within the organization to support employees, will increase the likelihood

of adoption. This includes clear, consistent communication to address the rumor mill and avoid confusion.

3. A comprehensive plan for change, embraced by senior management, who are actively engaged provides guidance, an understanding of the resources and effort needed to avoid surprises and mitigate risk. One key component is communication planning. My favourite diagram is from Carnegie Mellon University which sums up the need for a multifaceted approach to change preparation – e.g. just train them. If one of the elements in the first line of the diagram is missing, the organizational objectives will suffer. 3



4. Basically, know where you want to be, monitor for results and communicate success, address issues. The Australian and New Zealand School of Government, and ANZAM (Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management) have developed an organizational readiness assessment tool that addresses the identification of both micro and macro level indicators which include "... seven elements identified as making a difference ... were: Enablers: Clear Mandate and Central Leadership, Pattern Breaking Behaviour and Shared Understanding of Objectives and Outcomes; and Barriers: Organisational Focus, Operational Structure and 'Core Business', Staff Turnover, Decision Making and Capabilities, and Misalignment of Evaluation and Accountability (see Blackman 2014 for a full discussion).² Measuring these elements before, during and after implementation, will give the project team and management a clear understanding of where to apply money, time and effort to ensure success.

As a business process practitioner, it is up to you to communicate the inherent risks of not addressing change management as a critical component of project success.

The adoption of change, when planned and measured, provides vital information that will help to identify why process metrics are not being met. Change management, beyond training initiatives, engages management and employees at all levels of the organization through a well-trained internal change agent committee. An engaged and vocal sponsor is critical for adoption and provides guidance to all other elements of the change plan. Take some time to familiarize yourself with various change management methods and tools to increase your success ratio.

References:

1. www.proci.com
2. www.anzsog.edu.au/media/upload/publication/131_Flynn-and-Ugyel-Diagnostic-Tool-ANZAM-2013.pdf
3. "Managing Technological Change"; Carnegie Mellon University, SEI234561)

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