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# Leading Change Management in Business

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## Introduction

It is a common observation that business conditions keep on changing, one state of business does not last forever. There are various factors such as economic cycle, competition, sociological or technological changes etc which influences the conditions of business. As a result, change becomes an integral part of any business. It could be reactive or proactive. Sometimes businesses require proactive changes in the implementation of their system due to various reasons, for instance, to become more productive etc. Therefore, they use change management to stay competitive and attain the required results. (Diefenbach, 2007, p. 126-144).

For a business, leadership or management is quite responsible for its overall performance. Efficient and competent leadership or management can enhance an organization's outcomes. Therefore, if the management is not performing its duties in the manner it should then appropriate changes are required to be made in the management style and function (Britain, and Learning, 2005, p. 71-88).

The top-level of an organization involved in decision making is known as management. It is also a job title. Management is also a function through which managers get things done by others to achieve desired results (Almaraz, 1994, 06-14).

Change management is a transformation process through which the current state and function of individuals, teams and the whole organization is changed into a future desirable state. It is essential to plan and systematically implement the whole process of change management as this may mean different to different

people. Leadership or management plays a vital role in bringing any change in the business (Cameron, and Green, 2004, p. 85-158).

“In this essay, we will find out what change management is. Different models of change management would be critically analyzed. How different people respond to different changes would be identified. Furthermore, various types of leadership and management styles would be discussed and all this would be done to identify how leading change business.”

## Change Management

Change management is a process by which the management of an organization changes its operational activities, functions, structure or procedures etc. It is important that the desired change is implementable, realistic and measurable. Obtaining employees acceptance is essential for the change to take place successfully. Therefore, to gain employees acceptance and participation in the change, it is essential to make plans and strategies which will help in bringing the change successfully (Paton, and McCalman, 2008, p. 39-124).

While considering the change, first of all, it is important to clarify the purpose of a change and what would be the expected outcomes. Then management is required to ascertain the yardstick to measure that the change is successfully achieved. It is also quite necessary to recognize that who will be affected by the change, how individuals would respond and who are required to participate in bringing the change (Britain, and Learning, 2005, p. 71-88).

Moreover, the management or leadership of an organization should realize what proportion of the change is to be achieved by us and what proportion is required to be achieved by others. Change must not be forced upon others because forcing the change will not give the desired results. These aspects are to be known by the management so that they can take appropriate steps to counter their effects to carry out change management effectively. (Hiatt, and Creasey, 2003, p. 146)

Change in a business is inevitable, as circumstances keep on changing, as a result, one strategy, plan or way of doing business etc cannot be used forever. As, it becomes mandatory to bring changes due to financial and other constraints, cut-throat competition, technological advancement, social or cultural changes etc. Therefore, it becomes far most important to give the appropriate response required for the survival of the business. However, change management can also be desired on another basis such as to attain more profitability, to capture a high proportion of market share, to improve efficiency and performance etc. (Hickman, 2009, p. 33-118)

## Change Management Principles

There are certain change management's principles and guidelines that must be followed by managers to bring any change. Managers must have the support and agreement of others all the time in the organization. The current situation and circumstances of the organization must be known. It is vital to recognize what, why, when and how we want to achieve the change. (Cameron, and Green, 2004, p. 85-158)

To measure that how much proportion of change has been achieved it is imperative to establish measurable yardsticks. It is better to divide the success evaluation process into different measurable stages so that any deviation could be identified and hence treated. This is the most important principle of change management to involve and communicate with all the individuals. Such steps should be taken which will facilitate the participation and involvement of others. These steps should be adopted openly, with the optimum level and as early as possible. (Paton, and McCalman, 2008, p. 39-124)

## Different Models of Change Management

To achieve acceptance and participation of employees different plans and strategies are required according to the desired change. Transformational, developmental and transitional changes are the three types of changes that take place in organizations frequently. Theories of change management deal with transformational change less effectively than the other two types of changes. It is essential to determine each type to identify the most effective approach which should be adopted in different situations which will successfully bring the desired change. (Diefenbach, 2007, p. 126-144)

## Developmental Change

When an organization brings an improvement in their present business it is called developmental change. Improvements in the current business can be in the

form of expansion in business procedures and processes of doing things or in the standards of performance. All these improvements are included in the developmental change. In simple words, new procedures are added along with the existing old ones. To remain competitive, all organizations perform developmental change at a certain extent. (Hiatt, and Creasey, 2003, p. 146)

Unless the rationale for the change is conveyed effectively and a reasonable time is given to employees to understand and implement the change, existing employees should not be overstressed. Unnecessary stress would decline employees' morale and so management would not be able to achieve the desired change through them. Moreover, the required education and training should be provided regarding the change. (Hickman, 2009, p. 33-118)

For instance, if the development change is implemented to streamline the business operations so that divisional closure can be prevented. The employees would tend to adopt the improvement so that the division could be prevented from closing down. (Zink, Steimle, and Schroder, 2008, p. 39)

## Transitional Change

Replacing the present procedures and processes of an organization with some new ones with which employees are unaware or unfamiliar with than this type of change is called transitional change. Although, there is no cultural or social change as a result of the transitional change, however, this change is difficult to implement as compared to the developmental change. The period during which new

practice is introduced and the old practice is dismantled is called the transitional period. Transitional change can be as a result of an acquisition, merger, reorganization structural change, technology advancement or creation of new commodities etc. (Doppelt, 2003, p. 127)

Employees may feel instability in their jobs as the future outcome of transitional change would be unknown so they may become insecure. At every stage of the change, required education and training should be provided to the employees so that they can be engaged and actively involved in the change. The resistance of employees may reduce as they become more and more involved in carrying on the new procedures. Implications and stress of transitional changes on employees are to be recognized by the management so that management can provide appropriate help, support, motivation and adjustments required to implement the change successfully. (Stanleigh, 2008, p. 34-37)

## Transformational Change

After the transition period, transformational change takes place. Developmental as well as transitional change may involve transformational change. Transformational and transitional change usually occurs in a cycle one after another. It is a common practice that businesses often require change due to unexpected changes in demand and supply, technology, competition, financial constraints, or due to change in business practices. (Kovač, 1999, p. 57-62)

Due to time constraints and other financial or social factors, it becomes difficult to develop and implement a new systemic process. Therefore, transitional and developmental change may not be so effective to provide the required solution to remedy an issue. On the other hand, transformational change is easy to make and implement as we just have to alter old existing processes and procedures rather than changing the entire process. (Stanleigh, 2008, p. 34-37)

## **Eight Steps of John P. Kotter for Successful Change**

John Kotter in his two books "Leading Change" and "The Heart of Change" explained what change management is and how it should be managed or implemented. He evaluated and analyzed different approaches and responses of people regarding a change. According to Kotter every stage of change has some recognized features which people sense, observe and then implement. (Wilson, 2008, p. 11)

Kotter suggested eight steps to bring some change successfully which are (1) getting the vision right, (2) building the guiding team, (3) increasing urgency, (4) empowering action, (5) communicating for buying-in, (6) creating short-term wins, (7) Make change stick and (8) Don't let up. (Kotter, and Cohen, 2002, p. 1-20)

First of all, managers should increase urgency by establishing realistic and achievable performance which will motivate employees to achieve the change. Choosing the right blend of individuals having appropriate skills, knowledge and emotions to bring the change is an important aspect. Involvement of people is



essential and it should be maximized by communication, providing support and clarifying issues. Identification of people resistance and perceptions is vital so that they can be superseded or countered. It is essential that management obtain feedback, provide a response and remove obstacles. Short-term goals with measurable checkpoints should be established to ratify deviations and evaluate performance. Such steps should be adopted which will foster change. Change can be strengthened through promotion, recruitment and changing leaders or leadership styles. (Sirkin, Keenan, and Jackson, 2005, p. 18-108)

## Individuals Who Likely to Resist Change

Change management is often a difficult task to achieve successfully. As every individual is different so, it is possible that the desired change which is to be brought through the management would not be liked or accepted by all. Forcing the change is a possibility although it will not bring the desired outcome. Therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of managers to unite, convince and motivate such individuals resisting the change so that their issues could be resolved. (Hiatt, and Creasey, 2003, p. 146)

People often fear change for instance due to lack of qualities or personal inabilities of doing certain things. If the intended change is social in nature which may alter the social life of individuals at work then individuals may become dissatisfied and demotivated. For instance, changing the structure of an organization from open type office to the closed one in which individuals would be

sitting in individual cabins rather than sitting in a room together with their team members. (Paton, and McCalman, 2008, p. 39-124)

Moreover, individuals may resist change if that change is likely to reduce on and off the job benefits enjoyed by them. People resisting the change are possible exist in all the organizational levels and managers should adopt measures to resolve them. (Mohan, Xu, Ramesh, 2008, p. 59)

Another aspect is an age which can cause resistance to change. People with old age are more likely to resist change as it becomes difficult for them to change their views, behaviour or to adopt new things. As it becomes difficult to adopt or to change old ways of doing things instantly, therefore, management should be patient and should allow some time to such people so that they can adjust their selves according to the change. (Almaraz, 1994, 06-14)

Employees should be motivated in such a way that they start participating in the process. Before implementing the change, it is important to discuss the issue with others who would be affected by the change. Individuals who may have different opinions are more likely to resist the change, therefore, it is important for the management to communicate and discuss the issue with those individuals. Their viewpoint and perceptions are to be identified in order to recognize the cause of their opposition or resistance. After recognizing the causes of resistance, managers determine the ways to eliminate those causes. (Sirkin, Keenan, and Jackson, 2005, p. 18-108)

## Forcing Change upon Others

When people oppose or resist change, it is possible for management to force the change upon them. However, forcing change on others may cause problems. People may become de-motivated, frustrated and annoyed. As a result, the performance of an organization will be decreased rather than improved. Due to which eventually the whole performance of the organization will decline. Therefore, it is essential to consider many factors before implementing the change. (Doppelt, 2003, p. 127)

Different aspects of the change are required to be considered and most importantly individual's expected responses are to be identified. After identifying those responses, management needs to address them in order to prevent possible or potential resistance or differences. (Britain, and Learning, 2005, p. 71-88)

## Skills and Roles of Managers in Bringing Change

Changing something is not an easy task and it requires many skills. Therefore, managers must possess such qualities which can influence others to change their views, beliefs and hence behaviours and decisions. People often resist change due to fear of losing the benefits enjoyed by them as a result of that change. (Barrie, 2008, p. 40-41)

Usually, management can be divided into three levels. At the top level, it is senior managers who are mainly the decision-makers, therefore, the final decisions regarding bringing any change is dependent upon them. Middle managers are both

change recipients and change implementers. While the lower level of managers are mostly change-implementers as their job is to supervise others and implement the orders coming down through the organizational hierarchy or a system of communication. (Meisinger, 2008, p. 8)

From top to the bottom level of management all managers are required to perform certain similar tasks although a particular level of manager also requires certain specific qualities to perform their specific duties. There are many roles and duties performed by all the managers such as leading, motivating, planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling, communicating etc. (Cameron, and Green, 2004, p. 85-158)

By being a leader, managers can influence the decisions of others. Leaders promote communication and participation of individuals in decision making. The individuals will feel involved by participating and as a result, their morale will increase. Managers possessing leadership qualities will impress others and people will have trust and faith in his/her opinion and decisions. Due to this, people will tend to follow him/her willingly under their own free will. Moreover, people would perform their duties with all their efforts and feel satisfied by performing the task. (Paton, and McCalman, 2008, p. 39-124)

As management involves getting things done by organizing and directing others and managers alone can not perform all the tasks of a business therefore, they rely on others too. So, it is imperative that managers satisfy individuals on which the change will have an effect. As managers take care of and are responsible for the operations of the business. Therefore, it is their duty to bring any change

effectively. For doing so managers are required to plan and devise strategies that will overcome any hurdle and will prove to be successful. (Doppelt, 2003, p. 127)

## Different Leadership Styles for Different Situations and People's Responses to Them

It would be wrong to use the same leadership or management style in all situations. It is mandatory to employ the appropriate style of leadership according to the given circumstances. There are five different leadership styles namely authoritarian, delegative, participative, bureaucratic and charismatic. (Wilson, 2008, p. 11)

The authoritarian style of management is characterized by a direct and more control-oriented environment, rigidity, lack of communication, orders being forced on employees, less participation of employees in decision making. The bureaucratic leadership style is somewhat similar to the authoritarian style and both would not be successful in changing the business in the long run. (Ostroff, 2006, 7-141)

In participative style, communication is encouraged and employees are welcomed to participate, share their views and decisions are consensus-based. In delegating leadership style authority of higher managers is passed on to the middle or lower management level however, the final responsibility remains with the higher management. (Diefenbach, 2007, p. 126-144)

Charismatic leadership is one in which people follow some one on the basis of exclusive qualities and appealing views etc. people tend to follow charismatic

leaders under their own free will as they have trust and believe in charismatic leaders' qualities. As each leadership style employs dissimilar principles, therefore, everyone will achieve a different proportion of change depending upon a particular situation. However, the participative and charismatic style of leadership is more effective in bringing change. (Sirkin, Keenan, and Jackson, 2005, p. 18-108)

## Conclusion

It is clear after analyzing the whole essay that leadership change business. Nowadays, the only thing which is constant is change. Therefore, businesses require coping with the fast-changing environment in order to survive. As bringing any change is the responsibility of management and so all the development, transmission and implementation of change management is dependent upon the qualities, proficiency, competence and capabilities of managers. Therefore, leadership or management would be responsible for bringing any change to a business.

The success or failure of a business is considerably dependent upon the competency and style of leadership. It is important that required change should be evaluated, planned, organized, communicated and clarified to employees so that it can be implemented effectively. Employees should be motivated to get involved so that they should not resist the change. Appropriate time should be provided to them so that they could adjust to the change or modify their behaviours. Appropriate help and guidelines should be delivered by managers to employees and their feedback should be obtained to measure the achieving percentage of a

change. Moreover, an appropriate style of leadership is essential for different situations to bring change management successfully.

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