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2020 Organisational Change Management (OCM) Handbook

In a world of constant change, organizational change management has become an important part of every transformation plan and strategy.

Today's environment of digital transformation of offices requires offices to constantly undergo change if they want to remain effective and meet the needs and expectations of clients.

To adapt to new trends, technologies and processes, employers need to change their approach to implementing change in their organisations.

What is Organizational Change Management?

Organizational change is the process of **transitioning from the current state of an organization to a desired future state**. Organizational Change Management requires planning and implementing change in organizations to **minimize employee resistance** and cost to the organization while maximizing the effectiveness of change efforts.

According to much research, one of the main reasons for project failure is employee resistance and resistance to change, as well as poor internal communication.

Therefore, proper employee training as well as **open and honest communication are key elements** in minimizing negative employee reactions. Before implementing a change **employees should be informed** of the nature of the change and the logic behind it.

Why should we rethink traditional change management models?

There are two main reasons why employers need to **rethink traditional change management models**:

1. Employees are the main drivers of change

In traditional management models, **top management and leadership** are the main and only originators of change ideas. In this approach, employees are seen as passive objects of change. In this case, many important employee insights about how the organization can be improved are **missed or neglected**.

Newer models of organizational change management see employees as the main drivers of successful change. When employees are actively involved in the process from the outset, they are much more likely to become passionate about change, their resistance to change is removed and their attitudes are **aligned with the strategic goals of the organisation and the whole of government**.

2. Organizational change is an ongoing process

Traditionally, organizations have viewed organizational change as only **projects with a start and end date**. Within these projects, organizations would address one area for improvement at a time, such as implementing a new IT system. Once the project was completed, the organization would simply revert to the old way of doing things until a new project came along.

A newer approach to organizational change management says that it is an ongoing process that never ends. The role of organizational change managers is therefore less to push discrete change projects, but rather to **design the organization in a way that allows for continuous adaptation** to an ever-evolving environment.

Pillars of successful organisational change management

In the past, many projects and associated organisational change have failed. Therefore, **best practices or pillars of successful organizational change management** are collected below.

1. Top management must be on board, leading the way

Although employees should be at the center of any change initiative, successful change starts at the top. Ministers, chairmen, CEOs and other top executives are important because their empowerment allows them to **create a sense of urgency**, which is often necessary when implementing change.

It is recommended that organisations establish a team of top-level experts who report to the Minister, CEO and are tasked with developing a focused vision and strategy for change. They should also be able to **communicate the strategy** in a way that is simple enough for all staff to understand.

2. Clear objectives should be set

Initiating change without a clear strategy and defined objectives is one of the main reasons why organizational change management initiatives fail. Because change is usually implemented to correct or improve the current level of public service performance and organizational operations, organizations should **always identify specific, measurable outcomes** expected from the change.

This is the only way employers can manage organizational alignment and get all employees to achieve the same goals.

3. Understanding the impact of change

Once clear goals and metrics are established, the next step is to determine the **impacts the change will have** at different organizational levels and even for individuals.

The organization must review the effect on each organizational unit. This type of information and insight helps determine where training, motivation and support are most needed to mitigate the impact.

Ask yourself these 4 questions in turn:

- What are the impacts of the change?
- Who will be most affected?
- How will it be received?
- What will we do to improve acceptance of the change?

4. A change-focused approach needs to be introduced to staff

As mentioned earlier, without employee alignment it is very difficult to successfully implement change in organizations. However, it is the responsibility of employers to help employees adapt and **develop a new change-oriented mindset**.

This is where it is important to mobilise middle management to identify with, support and drive change in the organisation. Managers need to make sure that employees understand their role in implementing the vision and are fully on board.

Offices need to build the capacity of change experts while strengthening the capacity of all disciplines so that part of every officer's job description (some more and some less) is to play a part in implementing change in their environment alongside carrying out their daily routine.

5. It is important to understand the psychological needs of staff

Self-determination and self-actualization are some of the basic needs of people that we need to better understand in order to successfully lead change in organizations. In public administration, unfortunately, these needs often include the need for a sense of security, the preservation of the status quo of familiarity and safety, and the minimization of assigned tasks.

Overcoming fears and preservation can lead to people who are to be part of the long-term future of the authorities precisely through recognising and reinforcing the needs for self-determination and self-realisation of staff, as well as **their involvement, hearing and empowerment is important**.

So what can organisations do to create change management processes that **take into account the basic human needs** for autonomy and competence?

- We can meet employees' needs for autonomy by challenging them.

to contribute their ideas for change to projects.

- We can empower employees to collect change requests.
- By **giving** staff space to contribute ideas for change, we are also validating their competence.
- We provide employees with **easy access to the skills and tools** needed to meet the challenges that the change process brings.
- We can **cultivate a work environment** in which people feel a **sense of belonging**, care about themselves, and perceive their relationship with the organization as reasonably stable.

6. Desired employee behaviors should be reinforced through recognition

When we talk about employee recognition, we usually think of it as a tool to improve and enhance employee motivation, engagement and performance. However, **recognizing an employee is the best way to convert them to new behaviors** and change the culture of the organization.

Therefore, the best way to reinforce change in organizations is to **reward desired behaviors** of employees. To do this, it is important to anticipate and address resistance to change from the outset.

Since most **employees like to stay in their comfort zone**, employers should know how to help them get out and embrace new ways of doing things differently.

7. Transparent, frequent and honest communication is a must

Most employees say their employer is not always truthful and open with them. This lack of trust can be deadly when it comes to organizational change management initiatives. Not only must **employees be well informed** throughout the change process, but this communication must be **honest, transparent and go both ways**. This means that sending a newsletter to the entire organization is simply not enough.

Because most employees don't feel comfortable with change, transparency at every step of the change

management process **helps build trust and connection with employees**. Employers also need to have a strategy for **how to prevent poor communication in the workplace**.

Therefore, employers must now turn to newer employee communication solutions that allow them to have the main source of communication, documentation and conversations in one central location, typically an intranet or internal social network.

8. Managing organizational change requires collaboration and co-creation

The above talks about the **importance of employee engagement and empowerment** throughout the change process. By **encouraging employees to share their ideas** and participate in the project, the whole process is much more successful.

However, employees must have a way to collaborate and communicate easily. This is where **choosing internal communication channels** is key. For example, email as a primary communication channel is not recommended. Because many employees suffer from information overload that often causes them to ignore their email and intranets, it is imperative to choose **more effective communication channels**!

9. Change efforts must be measured

Throughout the organizational change management process **the results and impact of initiatives** should be measured. This does not just mean measuring the impact of change on costs or headcount.

Instead, internal communicators and managers should track and measure the employee engagement created by new processes. **Effective manager communication** is extremely important here.

Understanding how engaged employees are with shared change messages can help **employers assess their change management plan** and determine its effectiveness, and document any lessons learned.

Findings

Projects and processes for the digital transformation of authorities towards eGovernment are not just projects to implement ICT solutions. They are mainly projects to change the way public administration works in an organisation.

Such projects must be underpinned by organisational change management (OCM) methods to be successful.

The ability to manage organisational change needs to be embedded in authorities as a permanent internal capability of the organisation and part of its culture, not just as a component of selected projects delivered by external consultants.

HR and all levels of office management are becoming a key success factor in the digital transformation of offices. Digital leaders in offices need to get them on board and actively involved as soon as possible.

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