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How to Successfully Implement Change within Carmarthenshire County Council

By
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Introduction

- What is Change Management?

“Change management is a structured approach for ensuring that changes are thoroughly and smoothly implemented, and that the lasting benefits of change are achieved.”

(Source: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_87.htm)



Introduction

This presentation will take a look at how Carmarthenshire County Council can successfully implement change within the organisation. It is therefore important that we understand exactly what we mean by change management. Mind Tools (2019) define it as, *“Change management is a structured approach for ensuring that changes are thoroughly and smoothly implemented, and that the lasting benefits of change are achieved.”* Once we understand what change is we will look at the different stages of implementing change. These will include identifying factors that will drive change, looking at potential barriers to implementing change, as well as aspects that will have a positive effect on enabling the change process. Following this we will look at a couple of change models in order to get an idea of how these can support change, before looking at the importance of communicating thoroughly and developing positive relationships when implementing change. Finally we will look at what factors we need to consider when thinking of changing an area of the business by looking at best practice and identifying what will need to be put in a change plan, and how we then assess how successful the change has been.

Internal & External Drivers for Change in CCC

External Drivers

1. Budget Allocation
2. Customer's Feedback
3. Technology

Internal Drivers

1. New Leadership
2. Agile Working
3. Re-Structure/Re-organisation

1.1) potential internal and external drivers for change in organisations (at least 3 of each)

Within a business environment change is inevitable whether it's as a result of something that is enforced on an organisation or something that they are driving from inside. Factors that will affect change come from both internally and externally which include;

EXTERNAL - Budget Allocation - CCC gets their budget allocated by the government which means that planning for the future is difficult. This is because if funding is cut it will have a domino effect on the Authority. As evident in an article by the BBC (2018) funding to local government is to be steadily cut in the next couple of years. As a result of this savings will need to be made. This will inevitably mean enforced change to the Authority through avenues such as redundancies.

EXTERNAL - Customer's Feedback - as with any company the way a customer feels about an organisation is imperative to how it operates. This is the same with an organisation such as CCC. As there are so many different services provided it's hard to keep all stakeholders happy. However, when there is an issue with a particular area this will be identified and actions will be taken to rectify any problems. An example of this could be CCC changing the way the Museum staff operate following a customer

survey.

EXTERNAL - Technology - one of the biggest drivers for change is the advancement in technology. This has resulted in jobs that used to be done manually being completed by new systems. As a result of this there is less need for as many staff to complete certain tasks. An example of this within CCC is the introduction of ParentPay (2019) which allows parents to pay for their child's school meals online or through an app. As a result of this there is no longer a need for staff to collect the dinner money meaning there has been a change within the service.

INTERNAL - New Leadership - CCC has recently appointed a new Chief Executive (CE). As the first ever female CE she has identified areas within the organisation that need to be changed and drawn up ways in order to action these. This is evident by Walters (2019) where she states her vision for the future and gives details on how she intends to return these goals. One of the first things on the list is to engage with employees with a survey. This shows that by having a new person at the head of a company it will identify a new vision on which way they want to take an organisation.

INTERNAL – Agile Working – the working environment is changing dramatically as identified by Zheltoukhova (2014). She states that the changing needs of employees means that working in an agile way is becoming increasingly popular in order to keep up with competitors as well as help promote a better work life balance for staff. Carmarthenshire County Council (2018) gives an outline of the vision of the Authority and how it has looked to adapt to an agile workforce which is evident when they say, *"We are striving to develop modern working practices."*

INTERNAL – Re-Structure/Re-Organisation – another common reason for change is re-organisation within a company. As stated by Carmarthenshire County Council (2019), *"Change happens constantly. Some change is minor and will have little impact. Major organisational change may include departmental re-structuring or the transfer of services within the Authority."* There are different reasons for organisational change and re-structures. Some reasons are enforced as a result of having to reduce staffing costs, whereas other reasons are planned to try and change a way of working to gain a competitive advantage.

Factors that might Enable & Hinder Change within CCC

Enable Change

- Good Management
- Technology

Hinder Change

- UNIONS
- Culture

1.2) organisational factors that might a) enable and b) hinder change processes (at least 2 of each)

In order to successfully implement change within CCC it is important to identify factors that will potentially enable and hinder the process. These include;

Enable Change

Good Management – as with many areas within an organisation the role of management will play a huge factor when implementing change. This is evident ACAS (2019) when they state that providing good leadership is imperative when dealing with the uncertain times that change bring. It is therefore important that managers understand the process of change thoroughly and are able to be approachable for staff at all stages. By doing this it will help to enable a smooth transition when implementing change. On the flip side of that if management is poor then it could have a negative effect on change.

Technology – without the advancement in technology many aspects of change would not be possible. Areas within CCC such as home carers have benefited from being able to use purpose built tablets when completing their care plans and checking in at

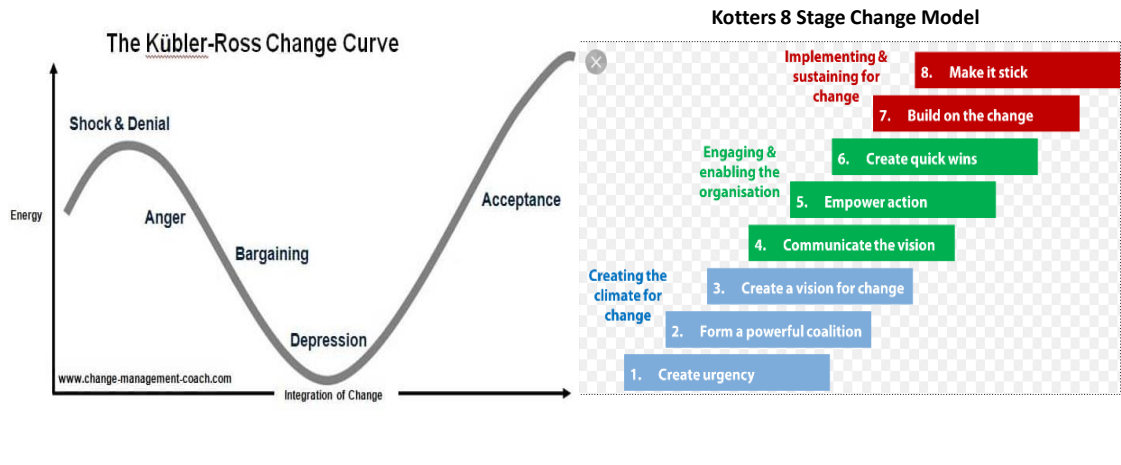
clients houses. Also, areas such as agile working would not be possible without the advancement of laptops and systems that can be accessed from any location.

Hinder Change

UNIONS – as stated in Carmarthenshire County Council (2019) the Authority places a high importance of a good working relationship with the Trade Unions (TU). As a result, before any changes occur there will be consultation with the TU. This has the potential to hinder change as TU are often quite challenging and reluctant for new ways of working, particularly if it means a detriment to one of their members.

Culture – the culture of an organisation will have a huge impact when it comes to implementing change. This is evident by Rosin (2018) where she explains that, *“According to [McKinsey](#), 70% of change management efforts fail due to employee resistance.”* As CCC is a very large organisation made up of different departments offering different services the culture can vary quite dramatically. Services that have previously been through change and have bad experiences with it will develop a culture that is against further change.

Current Theories & Models Relating to Change



1.3) an explanation of 2 change theories/models and how they can support change management

In order to give the best chance of implanting change successfully it is a good idea to look at different change models.

An example of two change models commonly used are;

- **Kubler-Ross – Five Stage Model** – As detailed by Connelly (2018) Elisabeth Kubler-Ross came up with '*the five stages of grief*' in 1969. This theory suggests that employees who go through change go through five different stages when change is implemented within the workplace. These stages are;

Denial – this stage would be when staff are in disbelief at the decision to implement change. They take up the thinking that if they ignore it then it will not happen

Anger – when staff accept that change is happening the anger stage will set in. They will go into a mind-set of, "*Why me? It's not fair!*" "*NO! I can't accept this!*"

Bargaining – this stage would be when staff try to bargain with their employer in order to get the best deal possible from the planned changes. Staff may

start to go the extra mile within work to prove themselves to the employer in order to influence the change.

Depression – within the depression stage staff will become disengaged with their employer. This could result in higher absenteeism within the workplace. The attitude will shift to the way of thinking of, *"I'm so sad, why bother with anything?"*; *"What's the point of trying?"*

Acceptance – once staff have accepted the change and understand there is nothing they can do to stop it their attitude changes once more in knowing they need to make the best of the situation. They understand that they need to go with the flow and hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

- **Kotters 8 Stage Change Model** – another model commonly used when implementing change is *Kotter's 8 Stage Change Model*. As stated by Mind Tools (2019) this model is different to the Kubler-Ross model in the fact that where Kubler-Ross gives details of how employee's will react during the change process Kotter gives an 8 stage action plan in how to successfully implement change which are;

Create Urgency – Kotter states that a company needs to first ensure that all staff understand the change and buy into it.

Form a Powerful Coalition – this stage would be to identify change champions who will be the driving force of the change. You would then get these staff in place who completely buy into change to lead the process.

Create a Vision for Change – this is a vital stage in the process where Kotter says that by creating a clear vision everyone will know what you plan to do and understand what is expected of them.

Communicate the Vision – once the vision has been drawn up it needs to be communicated to staff. They need to have regular communication to ensure they are kept in the loop. It is important that staff see that management *"walk the talk."*

Remove Obstacles – once the change process is ongoing Kotter states that is important to identify and remove any barriers to change. An example of this could be having one to one meetings with staff who are reluctant to the change and convincing them of the need and benefits.

Create Short-Term Wins – this stage would be to give success feedbacks to staff to show that the change is working. It does not need to be anything major but will give staff who are maybe not overly convinced about the change feedback that it is working.

Build on the Change – Kotter states that even when you get a win during change you need to evaluate it and look for anything that can be improved. This will ensure that a company can build on the change going forward.

Make it Stick – this stage is to ensure that the change is successful by continuing to look at the process and implement anything that will help to

ensure it works. This may be replacing any change champions who have left the organisation.

how positive work relationships can support change processes and how they can be built and maintained.

French et al (2011)

- **Benefit** – ‘a better way’ of working.
- **Compatibility** – ‘compatible as possible’.
- **Complexity** – as easily as possible and communicated as simple as possible to staff.
- **Triability** – implement slowly
- Identify Stakeholders
- ‘form a powerful coalition’
- Give clear vision to gain trust

2.1) how positive work relationships can support change processes and how these can be built and maintained

One of the main aspects when implementing change is to ensure that staff are on board with the process. It is therefore vital that an organisation concentrates on developing good working relationships. A good way to do this is to identify the stakeholders that are involved within the change process. Once these have been identified it is a good idea to look at the staff with the most influence and get them on side. This would be in conjunction with Kottler’s theory where it states to ‘*form a powerful coalition*’. These staff can then support with helping to develop further relationships with staff who are reluctant to change which will help ensure that the change is successful. This is evident in Rees & Hall (2016) when they quote French et al (2011) as stating it is important to let the staff effected by the change know the;

Benefit – ensure staff know the advantage of the change and that they understand it is ‘a better way’ of working.

Compatibility – ensure the values already in the organisation are ‘compatible as possible’ with the new ways following the change.

Complexity – the process of the change should be done as easily as possible and

communicated as simple as possible to staff.

Triability – the process should be implemented slowly allowing staff to get used to the new ways and make any adjustments possible to allow a smooth transition.

In order for staff to completely buy into the change process there needs to be trust between all parties. If staff feel like they are being treated fairly and their vision for change is clear from the top down they will be more inclined to support the change. Alternatively if staff feel that an employer is hiding information then there will be a little to no trust which will cause barriers to the change.

the different communication needs and types of support that might be required by different stakeholder groups

- Frahm & Brown (2005), *“organisational communication can significantly help alleviate problems often associated with change fatigue and change resistance.”* (Rees & Hall 2016, pp113).

Forms of Communication

- E-mail
- Letter
- Social Media
- Face to Face

2.2) the different communication needs and types of support that might be required by different stakeholder groups

Communication is a huge factor when trying to successfully implement change within the workplace. As identified with the Kubler-Ross theory employees are reluctant to change and will therefore resist it. It is therefore important for a company to again identify the stakeholders affected by the change and look to communicate thoroughly and regularly with them. This is evident in Rees & Hall (2016) when they quote Frahm & Brown (2005) in saying that, *“organisational communication can significantly help alleviate problems often associated with change fatigue and change resistance.”* (Rees & Hall 2016, pp113). There are many different methods of communication that will need to be used depending on who the stakeholders are. For example, within CCC if it was decided to change the opening hours of one of the Leisure Centres it would be appropriate to meet with staff in person regularly to keep them updated. It would also be important to send out regular written information to staff. This could come in the forms of e-mail or letters. Alternatively, it would be a good idea to communicate with the public who use the service through social media. Adams (2019) gives details of how the best way to communicate with different stakeholders when going through change in order for them to be fully engaged. She suggests that people at different

levels of the organisation will need to be communicated with differently which is important when change is being implemented. It is vital that staff are kept up to date with the process to ensure that they remain positive about the change. It is also a good idea as stated by Kotter to create and communicate quick wins. This will ensure that staff feel that the change is beneficial. By continuously communicating the reasoning for change and more importantly the negative effects that could come as a result of not implementing change it ensures that staff continue to understand the need for change. One of the main aspects about communication when implementing change regardless of the stakeholder is to ensure it is two-way. Although it is vital to keep everyone updated on the change it is also important to receive feedback from the stakeholders which can be taken on board and assist in the change process going forward.

factors to be considered when planning for change and what should be included within a change plan.

‘three phases of change management’

1. Designing Change

2. Enacting Change

3. Sustaining Change

Austin (2015)

3.1) factors you would consider when planning for change and what a change plan looks like

When planning on implementing change a company will need to draw up a change plan which will allow them to identify the path that needs to be taken during the process. In order to do this there are steps they need to take. These steps can be broken down as identified by Austin (2015) into *three phases of change management* which would include;

Designing Change – at the start it is important to look at the current situation within the area of the business. In order to do this HR would be able to assist with tangible data that can be used in the planning stage of change. There needs to be a rational drawn up for the need for change and the reasoning for it. It is also important to take into consideration the ever changing external environment and plan the change for the future rather than for now. During the planning it is also important to set out realistic goals that are achievable.

Enacting Change – when implementing change it is important to identify the best suited employees to lead the process and become change champions. By having someone who is senior and has the required expertise it will give change the greatest

chance of success. It is then good practice to identify and fully engage with key stakeholders. This is important as it will not only get them on board with the change but will create a two way relationship which will enable stakeholders to have input into the process. It is also a good idea at to create a separate project team with a team leader specifically appointed to see through the change. It is then important that all involved continue to monitor the working environment to see if any factors will have an impact on the change. An example of this would be if new legislation is introduced during the change process that has an effect on the business area it would mean alterations would need to be put in place.

Sustaining Change – once change is implemented it is vital to continue to communicate with staff and gage with them the effects of the change. This can be done in different ways such as focus group or staff surveys. It is important to regularly monitor different stats provided from HR to see if there are any patterns to show the change is working or failing. Once this information is provided then it may mean either having a re-think and making some adjustments or if the change is positive and there has been a culture shift it is important to build on that to keep the momentum up.

best practice for implementing change processes within an organisation.

Prosci (2019)

1. Mobilize an active and visible executive sponsor
2. Dedicate change management resources
3. Apply a structured change management approach
4. Engage with employees and encourage their participation
5. Communicate frequently and openly
6. Integrate and engage with project management
7. Engage with middle managers

Anand & Barsoux (2017)

1. *Global presence*
2. *Customer focus*
3. *Nimbleness*
4. *Innovation*
5. *Sustainability*

3.2) a summary of best practice for implementing change processes

In order to ensure a company follows best practice when it comes to change they need to have ticked all the boxes. Prosci (2019) state they have, “*researched change management best practices for twenty years*” and state their findings show that, “*Collectively and consistently, participants’ responses point to seven straightforward factors that impact the results of a change initiative.*” These are;

Mobilize an active and visible executive sponsor

Dedicate change management resources

Apply a structured change management approach

Engage with employees and encourage their participation

Communicate frequently and openly

Integrate and engage with project management

Engage with middle managers

This is echoed by Anand & Barsoux (2017) who give details of why change fails and how if you follow best practice it will aid the chance of success. They go on to place an emphasis of the importance of knowing exactly what the outcome required is. In doing this they suggest that companies need to consider five prototypical quests which consist of;

Global presence – this would be to look at a wider range of sources when planning change in order to get the best ideas possible

Customer focus – this puts the needs of the customers at the forefront of change.

Nimbleness – this would be to look at culture and work processes to get the best possible ways of working

Innovation – this would be looking at fresh ideas from both internal and external sources to freshen up the way of working

Sustainability – this would be to ensure that the ways of working are implemented and sustained.

Both Prosci and Anand & Barsoux emphasise the importance of having a structured plan in place when implementing change to ensure the best chance of it working. It is therefore vital an organisations such as CCC look to best practice when deciding what change is required and how they are going to action it.

techniques for monitoring the implementation of change processes and for assessing the impact of change

Staff Feedback

- Staff Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Staff Interviews

Data Analysis

- Financial Data
- Staff Turnover
- Absent Rates

3.3) an evaluation of at least 2 techniques for monitoring change processes and assessing the impact of change.

In order to get an understanding of whether or not change has been successful a company can gather a variety of data. This would come from both qualitative and quantitative data such as;

Staff Feedback – once change has been implemented it would be a good time to gather feedback from staff that were involved in the process. This will give an indication of how they felt the change process went and how they feel about the change following implementation. The feedback could be gathered in different ways including staff surveys, staff focus groups and staff interviews. By getting this information back from the staff it will give a clear indication of what effect the change has had on the workforce. Ideally the change would result in staff having positive things to say about the process and understanding that although at first they may have felt reluctant the change has benefited them. However, if the feedback received is not favourable of the change it may mean that the organisation need to look at whether or not it needs to make any adjustments to ensure they don't push the employees further away resulting in the relationship being irreparable.

Data Analysis – another way a company can look how successful the change process has been is by analysing different forms of data. This would include looking at key financial data at the beginning of the change process and then again at a later date following the change and seeing if it has had a positive or negative impact financially. For example, if change was implemented within CCC to reduce costs and following the change costs had gone up then it would show that the change has been unsuccessful. Other data that can be evaluated is staff turnover and absent rates. It would again be a good idea to record data prior to the change and then again following implementation. If there has been a reduction in these figures then it would suggest that the change has been successful.

Although this information will give an indication on how successful the change process has been it is important that an organisation looks to continue monitoring the effects of change and adapting anything when necessary. This is because following the change costs may fall or staff may be happy but the business environment is consistently evolving meaning attitudes and data will also evolve.

Conclusion

- What is change?
- How to best implement change.
- Factors that effect change
- Examples of best practice to ensure change is a success

Conclusion

To summarise it is important that you as manager's understand what change is and the reason for changing something within the company. It has shown factors that will result in change being needed and what will support and hinder change. It is vital that a plan is put in place to make sure staff are on board and ar kept in the loop when implementing change.

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