

LEADING AND IMPLEMENTING WORKPLACE CHANGE

Module: Leading and Implementing Workplace Change

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Executive summary

The report leading and implementing the changes in workplace has showcased a range of different conceptual dynamics which are based on the Zara which is a fashion business operating internationally. Different issues which Zara is suffering in the organization has been identified and different change management approaches to deal with the same has been explored. Also, the impact of such change strategies on the organization's culture has been evaluated along with the recommendations to deal with the same has been suggested. Leadership style and culture has been focused upon for adapting the change management strategy effectively in the organization.

Table of Contents

Executive summary	2
INTRODUCTION	4
MAIN BODY	4
Section 1: evaluation of the change management process and identification of strategic change option	4
Section 2: change management models	8
Section-3 proposal and implementation of change strategy	12
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	15
REFERENCES	1

INTRODUCTION

The report of “leading and implementing change in workplace” will comprehensively evaluate different changes and its implementation in the organization by exploring a range of different frameworks. As change is the only constant in the business which needs to be incorporated so that organization can remain competitive and relatable in the industry. The chosen organization is Zara which is a high end fashion brand (Zara, 2023). This organization is apt for the report as it operates globally and has over the years faced many changes in the workplace which are significant.

Most relevant Business analytics tool such as power BI, tableau, big data and a range of theories of change management such as Lewin's change management, ADKAR change management model and McKinsey 7s model will be elaborated in the report. There will be 3 sections in the report where under the 1st section change management process adapted and strategic change option will be determined. Further, under the second section 3 significant change management models will be evaluated. At last under the 3rd section, proposal and implementation of the change strategy for the organization will be illustrated. Also, a detailed conclusion highlighting the key findings along with the recommendations will be stated.

MAIN BODY

- **Section 1: evaluation of the change management process and identification of strategic change option**

Overview of Zara:

Zara is large scale internationally operating high end fashion brand which operates in more than 96 countries with its 3000 stores. It offers the fashion apparel, accessories, footwear, cosmetics to customers from all age group and all gender. It is an undisputed king when it comes to fashion. Zara believes in remaining top of its competition due to factors like fastest supply chain and fast implementation of the changes. Zara is a fast adaptor of changes happening in both its internal and external business environment. It started its journey in 1975 and it belongs to Inditex, the largest distribution group in the world (The Success Story Of Zara: From Starting With Just 30 Euros To Owning Nearly 7,000 Stores Today, 2023). Company has on several occasions in past adapted changes and became the change leaders in the industry which has allowed it to gain a significant unbeatable edge. In 2010 when Zara sensed a change in the external business environment where technological advancements were flooding the market and e-commerce came

in to business. It immediately adapted the same and launched its first online boutique/ store and currently as per the data company generates more than 75% of revenue from the online sales. Hence, change has been the significant part of the business which positively reflects in form of profit and revenue on its annual reports.

Change drivers and PESTLE analysis

Zara has a range of external change drivers which triggered the changes in the organization at the time of the covid-19 pandemic. The PESTLE analysis will analyse the external business environment the time of covid-19 and how it triggered the changes.

- **Political factors:** During the times of pandemic, there was political instability on global level and supply chain was massively impacted due to restriction on movement of the goods. This triggered the Zara's strategy to bring change in the way it manages its supply chain and distribution centres (Christodoulou and Cullinane, 2019).
- **Economic factors:** rate of inflation, unemployment was very low which reduced the disposable income of people which made the sales of the business very low. For this Zara adapted the strategy to launch massive basics collection which was low in prices and advertised the same in its affordability.
- **Social factors:** customers liking and preferences in fashion is changing at a fast pace and it has incorporated many designers with different strengths and niche which is offering it an edge in delivering up to the customers' expectations and remaining up to date with trends in the market.
- **Technological factors:** technological evaluation where online selling, customer care, feedbacks and fast deliveries, returns and supply chain has been totally digitalized which is offering an edge to the business in the global market place (Avdeeva, Golovina and Polyanin, 2021).
- **Environmental factors:** Zara is guilty of undertaking a lot of different measures which are harming the environment yet it has eliminated all types of plastics from its packaging of the products and this is in a way acting as the major step towards incorporating the change.
- **Legal factors:** it has been guilty of copying the designs of Balenciaga and Adidas which impacted its stand in fashion. Also, labour laws and trade laws remain major factors which can impact the supply chain of the business.

Overall, all the factors in the external business environment of the business are acting as the drivers for the changes in the business.

Leadership style at Zara to manage changes

Zara has evolved to undertake the democratic style of leadership unlike times when it used to have an autocratic leadership style. As autocratic leadership style made the concentration of power to the owner and it did not suit the organization when it started to expand. Hence, it adapted democratic style of leadership where all the employees are free to be the part of decision making and expressing their opinion towards the change. Company believes that change will be significantly influencing the employees work and performance hence they must be the part of the change process which can effectively implement the change in the organization (Kouloukoui and et.al., 2020).

Change management is specifically done by inculcating the democratic style of leadership where equal opportunity is offered to the employees and this has also fostered the innovation and creativity within the organization. Democratic style of leadership is also successful in fostering the innovations and creativity in the way jobs are performed in the organization. Being the in the fashion industry, Zara needs to have an active front with innovation in designs and way it satisfies the consumers. Democratic style of leadership creates great scope for business to look at the innovative ways it can meet the customers demand.

Impact on organizational culture due to changes

sweeping technological advances, demographic shifts, geopolitic complexities and competition pressures are threatening the security, changing customer preferences and organizational way to incorporate the high business profitability amid all this is creating significant changes and alterations in the culture of the organization. Zara has been in business for almost 50 years now and it has seen its culture getting highly impacted due to the different types of changes which organization promotes. Such changes are like supply chain management, digitalization, expansion, recruitment, customer base etc. Organizational culture is shaped by the values, practices and expectations which guides the actions of the employees within the business (Mansaray, 2019). As Zara adapts each change, it changes the way employees perform their jobs in the business which ultimately impacts the organizational culture. Culture holds a vital importance as it determines the long term success and sustainability of the business. Zara adapted a digitalized system for its supply chain management and it has impacted the jobs of the store employees as they have to put in more efforts for arranging the large number of apparels.

This has made the organizational culture of high performance and work. Such aspect leads to impacting the culture prevailing at Zara.

Areas which could have been done better while change

while Zara has an apt leadership style which is highly supportive in the change implementations it needs to look to be careful about the way it is managing and implementing the changes. It seems to ignore the communication needs of all the employees in the organization. The digitalization of business processes and operations during the time of pandemic and covid-19 was one of the complex times which could have been made easier by communicating effectively with the employees and knowing their needs for adapting the change (Martínez-Caro and et.al., 2020). As Zara keeps its customers before anything else, it tends to ignore the needs of the employees which are ultimately going to embrace or suffer from such changes. As employees were not offered proper trainings due to lack of time management and communication. This resulted in improper change management where workforce took more time to adapt the change than usual due to rigidity and lack of awareness. On analysing the change properly, it can be well comprehended that definitely covid-19 could not have been well predicated by anyone yet organization should have forecasted the needs when covid-19 hit the business and stores were totally closed generating zero revenues. Therefore, Zara lacked efforts in managing the change at the organization in effective way by giving right training and communication to the employees at all the levels.

Current areas of improvement in change management

there are some areas which needs to be changed and improved in order to remain successful in the business environment which is highly uncertain and complex. Very first is the organizational culture where employees are not offered right training and communication channels which keep them updated about the practices. Organizational culture needs to be shaped in such a way that people working for the Zara should be also prioritized equally, as they are the one pushing themselves to work hard so that business can attain success in the market place (Gheorghe and Matefi, 2021). Further, the leadership style at the organization may be apt for the normal business environment yet at the times of uncertainty such as pandemic and covid-19 at global level business must remain highly flexible and adapt the contingency leadership style where it is taking decisions and making strategies as per the need and demand of the situation.

Using democratic style and seeking for the opinion of all the employees when organization faces such critical times overnight will be a very non effective and non competent way to conduct the

business. Also, there are multiple ways a business can communicate about the change to the employees by enabling them to know the benefits and reasons for the changes which will offer them perspective to take such immediate decisions. This will make them support the changes very significantly. Overall, leadership and culture at organization needs to be changed so that they have higher preparedness to deal with the changes which are triggered by the factors in external and international business environment.

- **Section 2: change management models**

The change management models help the businesses to systematically implement the changes in the organization eliminating the hurdles and rigid points (*10 Proven Change Management Models in 2023*, 2023). There are 3 significant models of change management such as Lewin's change management models, adkar change management models, McKinsey 7s change management models. Each model is highly impactful and relatable in the modern world.

Here 3 of these models are as follows:

Lewin's change management model

This model was developed by Kurt Lewin who gave the 3 stage model for smoothly implementing the changes in the organization. There are 3 strategies such as unfreeze, change and refreeze which allows the business to introduce and implement the changes in the business in an organized and effective way. The 3 stages are as follows:

- **Unfreeze:** this is the very first stage in change management in the organization which suggests that it is very important to check the preparedness of the employees in the organization. On checking the existing preparedness of the employees they are thoroughly prepared for the upcoming change. The aim is to bring everyone on same page where they are smoothly adapting the change (Cone and Unni, 2020). For the same they will be show the reason for this change and how this will benefit them. Showing them the tangible and loud aspect such as productivity, performance, financial result to show the importance of bringing the change is an effective way to prepare them for change. Also, knowing the most rigid employees and breaking their pattern of being rigid. This will unfreeze them for the change and from the existing rigidity.
- **Change:** this is the second stage where change is implemented for real. Once the reason and need for the change is communicated to the employees. Now is the time for implementing the actual change. Under this stage employees are showcased how their work is changed and what they have to practice due to change. Here, training and

developments which equips them with right skills, knowledge for operating under such changed environment will be offered along with the platform where they can solve their concerns, doubts will be offered. This stage performs the job of transition (Galli, 2019).

- **Refreeze:** after duly incorporating the changes in the organization employees should be offered proper ways to stabilize the changes. As it is important to keep the change only constant in the organization while abiding by the changes which are implemented in the organization. A business needs to keep the flexibility of the employees intact even after implementing the change as it helps to keep the employees highly flexible for the future changes.

ADKAR change management model

ADKAR change management model which stands for awareness, desire, knowledge, ability and reinforcement. It is a bottom-up approach which emphasizes on people who are behind the change. It believes in eliminating the resistance to change and fostering the implementation of the change. ADKAR believes to undertake the opinion and ideas of the employee for the change rather than just implementing the change without considering the views of the workers. The resistance in the workforce regarding the change can be dealt with by involving them on every stage of the change (Houben and et.al., 2020). As change is for them hence it must be by them which makes the change significant. Employees must be made aware and well communicated about the need for change in the organization. Further, their support for the change should be concreted which depicts their desire to change. They must be given enough knowledge by offering trainings, communication, sessions which enhances their knowledge for how to change and makes the changes.

Ability to meet the requirement of the change implement is necessary which will need skills, expertise and knowledge of the employees. At last reinforcement of the change will dictate that organization must make the employees aware about the fact that change is the only constant, and they must not refrain from it as it will restrict their own growth (Ali and et.al., 2021). This is a significantly a people centric method which promotes the fair opportunity for all and incorporating their suggestions, opinions in making the changes. ADKAR model indicates that change should be done by consulting well with the employees only when they also realize that need for change is real. This way there will be no rigidity and resistance to change. As those who will feel the need for change will also believe that change is only for good. Employees are the most precious and unbeatable asset of the company, and they must be made to feel just like that when it comes to any changes under which they have to change way they work.

McKinsey 7 s change management model:

This model is destined to detect the internal situation and dynamics of the organization which shapes the change in significant manner. There are 7 key elements define the success of the organization by aligning all of them to the need of the organization. All of these elements are vital for change management in the organization. There are 3 hard elements such as strategy, structure and systems and 4 soft elements such as shared values, style, staff and skills.

- **Strategy:** it is a blues print that organization follows for attaining its goals and objectives. Strategies are designed by organization to gain competitive edge in the business by shaping the ways to perform the jobs.
- **Structure:** strategy is the reporting patten of the organization which suggests the superiors and subordinates within the entity whom to report for their jobs. This is a hierarchy based patten followed by organization. This helps in keeping the flow of information in the organization (Odeh, 2021).
- **Systems:** systems includes daily based activities in the business for which workforce involves themselves for meeting the deadlines and completion of the respective assigned tasks.
- **Shared values:** these are the core values that get reflected on the organizational culture and prevailing code of conducts. Each organization has set of conducts which states practices which are appreciated and practices which are not permitted in the organization. This is a driving factor in keeping the value system of organization high.
- **Style:** organizational leadership style forms the way decision making in the organization is carried out. Also, leadership style prevailing in the organization helps in shaping the way leaders guides and motivates the employees for attaining th aims and objectives.
- **Staff:** staff represents the most valuable asset of the organization which is its workforce. Workforce decides the strengths, innovation, creativity, motivation and competencies of the organization which makes it very important (Sung and Kim, 2021).
- **Skills:** skills states the core competencies and set of capabilities of the organization which is contributed by the employees. It is very important to for the organization to know the skill set of the workforce and organization must be aligned with the change as lack of skills will lead to poor implementation of the changes within business.

All these hard and soft elements in the organization needs to be looked at prior to implying the changes within the organization. As each of these elements will depict the success and failure of the change management in the organization. Before a change is being implemented in the organization, business must be aware of the prevailing strategies, systems, organization

structure, leadership style, competencies, value systems etc. so that it can adapt such change management measures which have positive impact on the organization. An overall development of the organization is aim of the organization with the help of change and these elements helps in uplifting the change implementation along with its success.

Suitable change management model for organization

Looking at the above 3 models of change management it can be said that all 3 models have different approaches to the change implementation within the organization, yet they have the goal of successfully implementing the changes without any resistance to change and hurdles to change. Zara has evolved to be a large scale organization over the years and it makes organization very significantly plan its change management as it can lead to have an impact on the entire organization. Lewin's change management model seems to be the most suitable model for change at Zara due to 3 major reasons. Very first is the elimination of the resistance to change by creating the urgency for change in the organization (Meng and Berger, 2019). This is very important shade the inhibition for changes in the workforce. Second reason is this models ability to lay the implementation of change in phases. As initially it suggests in making the employees realize the different issues, that organization faces without the change. This will be an eye opening for the workforce and in the second stage when every one can sense the need for change they implement the change. Third reason for Lewin's change management model's implementation is its ability to offer trainings and development to the employees in the organization which makes them efficient for working amid such changes.

- **Section-3 proposal and implementation of change strategy**

Change management plan

As discussed above the Lewin's change management plan will be the most suitable model for Zara as it will support an overall positive impact on the organization as whole. The plan will be segregated in 4 stages such as identifying the areas where changes are needed, exploring the changes which can solve the problems, communicating about the need for change to the workforce, introducing the changes to the workforce, offering guidance, training, development to the workforce, taking feedbacks and checking their progress for adapting the change (Bouwman and et.al., 2020). This is the plan which is highly suitable for Zara. As Zara seek to lay out the implementation of the changes in phases and stages which can simplify the implementations and make the employees comfortable with such changes. Often changes make the environment of

the organization very uncertain. This change management plan is highly equipped to keep the employees highly communicated with the entire plan for change from the very beginning which leads to different types of betterment of the organization. Workforce is a priority in this change management where they are well communicated, their opinions are well received and incorporated in the strategies of the organization. There are different ways which suggest offering right guidance to the employees for adapting the changes easily. This change management plan also eliminates the rigidity on employees and resistance to change in them which uplifts the entire process of change (Isensee and et.al., 2020). Zara is a leading fashion company having a very highly efficient staff which often faces changes in the organization that is projected to be adapted by the workforce which can foster the growth and development of the organization as whole. In this change management plan communication is the key aspects which needs to be practices as this will help in successfully managing the changes in the organization.

Leadership approach and style

The change management plan needs a significant guidance and decision making process which is defined on the leadership style and approach of the organization. The current change management plan highly thrives in the democratic approach of leadership in the organization. Democratic approach of leadership suggests that leaders consult with the employees in the organization before the decision making and bring changes in the organization. Leaders at Zara undertakes the opinion of employees before making any changes which will make the employees in the organization feel that they are being consulted with as their opinion and ideas matter. Further, the leadership style in the organization should be participatory style of leadership which suggest that employees are being guided in a way that their participation in each decision making is considered and appreciated (Fakhri and et.al., 2021). Democratic style of leadership develops and promotes the sense of responsibility towards the organization in employees which makes employees adapt to change faster. Democratic approach and participative style appreciates the two way communication in the organization which makes the decision making and change implementation very easy. There is an elimination of top down approach where subordinates are just being informed about the different decisions, and they have to follow that. Participative style of leadership empowers the employees in the organization by putting them at the centre of the decision making process. They are the flag bearers of change as they sense the need for change which will only uplift their performance growth and success. This is a very significant way to align the organizational goals with the personal goals of the employees leading to the overall growth of the business as whole. Hence, it can be very precisely said that for the implementation of the

strategic changes participative style of leadership and democratic approach of leadership is the most suitable one as this will be able to lead a smooth implementation of the changes where employees and leaders are on the same page in the organization.

Process of implementation of change strategy

There is a systematic process of implementing the change strategy which makes the entire plan to implement the changes in phases very effective. This process of implementation will be as follows:

- **Creating awareness for need for change:** At first workforce at Zara need to be made aware of the different areas where business is facing challenges which in turns negatively impact the efficiency, productivity and performance of the organization. This will make the foundation for employees to support the upcoming changes as they already know the challenges which are faced by the business in the absence of changes.
- **Placing the communication channels:** Zara will place open communication channels for workforce where they can directly indulge in conversation with individuals at different hierarchies regarding the changes (Hayat Bhatti and et.al., 2019). This will generate a sense of transparency in the employees leading to an overall impact and acceptance towards the changes. Employees will also be given the right guidance for expressing their opinions, concerns, suggestions and issues with the changes using this communication platform which will address their issues. Communication channels will be online which can save time and efforts of employees while keeping their identities private.
- **Introducing the changes:** finally when the workforce is made aware of the need for change and communication channels now workforce is already in “the unfreeze” stage and time to implement the changes which will be adapted by them without any resistance towards the same. All the employees will be gathered together and shared right manual, brochure or policies which can precisely tell them about the changes which they have to adapt in the organization. As change in strategy, policies will be inculcated by employees in performing their daily jobs.
- **Offering trainings and guidance:** as the change is being implemented in the organization, many employees might face slow down in their efficiency and down fall in their productivity and for the same they need to be given proper training facilities which helps them deal with the issues they are facing. These trainings will be offered as per the need of the employees (Eayrs, 2023). Different employees in the organization may find different requirements of training which will help them function well and adapt well to the

changes. Leaders must extend their guidance and support to the workforce which makes employees empowered enough to work hard and mould as per the fit in the organization.

- **Taking feedbacks:** as the changes are made and trainings are offered, it is very important to know the opinion of employees on such changes and its impact within the organization. Taking feedback on a timely manner is important as it will make the employees in the organization able to express their thought, issues and problems effectively, this will lead to an overall significant implementation of the change within the business entity.

Impact of change strategy on culture of Zara

the change strategy is aimed to make the organization, structure, leadership, culture and communication better by undertaking the variety of strategies which are addressing the issues prevailing at Zara. Culture of the organization suggests the values, practice and expectations which guide the actions of the teams working at the organization. Zara believes in keeping an updated organizational culture where they are participating the greater value system and code of conducts while performing the jobs. Zara does not believe in attaining the objectives of the organization by any means, it believes in accomplishment of the goals of the business by undertaking the valid means which uplifts the image of the business and brings out the best in culture of the organization (Tang and Tang, 2019). Culture impact how people in the organization are getting impacted. The change management strategy may lead to offer workers at Zara a shaky and unsatisfied experience which will make them inefficient in their job roles. As their satisfaction will be lowered it will impact the way they perform in initial phase when change is being implemented in the organization. This will be the only negative impact that change management can have.

The current change management strategy will be positively impacting the culture of the organization as it encourages the communication channels which are real time, fast and have greater connectivity. The change strategy is creating a transparent organization culture where issues of the subordinates are definitely addressed by prioritizing the same. Further, change strategy is also positively impacting the leadership style as it promotes the participation of the employees from all level within the organization decision making which makes the leadership style highly democratic in nature. Also, it has tendency to improve the performance of the employees which will positively reflect on the organizational performance (Larsen, Boje and Bruun, 2020). Change management strategy is very well equipped in enhancing the employees motivation and performance as employees will not just be performing this jobs and work, yet they will be also taking part in the decision making and important aspect by communicating well with the reporting

managers and co-workers it will enhance their satisfaction with the work place driving the motivation and retention higher in the organization. The indicators of the organization success such as profitability, growth, employees stratification, employee motivation, creativity, innovation, retention will be significantly increasing due to the effective change management strategy of the business. Hence overall, it can be stated that the change management strategy adapted by the business is very impactful and drive the business towards the success.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above report has critically discussed the different leadership and change management concepts under the organisational context in detail. Zara which deals in the fast fashion clothing, accessories and footwear has identifies some changes which need change implementation in the organization. The external environment of the business has analysed along with their leadership style and approach. Areas which needed the change management has been determined. Further, 3 significant change management models such as adkar, Lewin and mickeys 7s has been analysed in detail and Lewin's change management is suggested as the most suitable change management model for Zara. Change management plan and leadership style/approaches has been stated where the process of change strategy has been depicted in detail. A detailed step by step process of change implementation has been suggested to the organization. At last several impacts that the change management will have on the culture of the organization has been stated in detail. Overall, the report has been concrete and informative which has shaded light on may dynamics of the change management and leadership. There are some recommendations which can be followed by the organization in order to eliminate the negative impacts of the change management strategy on the organizational culture.

Direct communication should be encouraged in the organization and collaborative working style can be implemented where employees have access the organizational resources and information freely for completing the organizational goals. This is a great way to uplift the entire way of working in the organization. Further, Zara can also offer employees freedom to choose the trainings they think they need which will enhance the scope of betterment. In case these aspects are not adapted by Zara, management might face backlash for fostering the changes in the organization without ensuring the proper availability of the resources. Hence, it is important to adapt these suggestions.

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