

Module: Leading & Implementing Workplace Change

Module Code: BMSW6103

Student Name: Joshua Magezi

Student ID: 2110652

Executive summary

The report explores the change management strategies used by the JustinTime care agency to deal with staff shortages post-COVID19. It examines several change management styles as well as models, analysing Kotter's 8-Step model and its application by the agency. A critical evaluation of Kotter's model, using a PESTLE analysis is carried out to assess the model's effectiveness. Several recommendations for alternative strategic change options were made as well as the provision of a more suitable leadership styles is done. Lastly, exploration of the impact of the implementation of change on organizational culture as well as the identification of the potential areas for improvement in the change management process was done and a conclusion drawn.

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1. Introduction

The economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have disrupted businesses worldwide and, in some place, still continue to do so. The need for change management has become critical in to the survival struggling companies. Several reasons have been cited to justify the relevance of change management such as these below.

Adapting to a new business landscape and Optimizing operations for efficiency

There have been major alterations in the supply chains, consumer behaviour, and technological needs as a result of the COVID19 Pandemic. Therefore, clinging to pre-pandemic strategies comes with a risk of becoming irrelevant in business. Change management remains a major player for organizations in the identification of such shifts and implementation of the required changes to remain competitive (Lauer, 2020).

Every penny counts during a downturn. Change management creates space for a company to analyse their operations, identification of inefficiencies, as well streamline their work processes. This can include automation, cost-cutting measures, or workflow restructuring as a means of saving resources.

Realigning with the shifting customer needs and Building employee resilience and buy-in

Buying habits and Customer priorities have definitely changed because of the pandemic. Change management enables organizations to understand the shifts and creates room for adaptation of their marketing strategies, product offerings, as well as customer service approaches in order to maintain their relevance as well as meeting the customers' evolving needs (Tronvoll et al., 2020).

Although change can be daunting, change management executed effectively can foster open communication among employees, empower as well as addresses their prevailing concerns. Therefore, building resilience, trust, and employee buy-in, are critical in implementing new strategies and navigating existing challenges (Kamal et al., 2020).

Embracing new technologies and digital transformation as well as re-evaluating risks and opportunities.

The need for digital transformation was accelerated by the pandemic. Organisations have improved efficiency and reached new markets by leveraging technology for data analysis, remote work, as well as online customer engagement. Change management has helped minimised resistance to new technologies and facilitates the organisations' smooth transition. The vulnerabilities in business models were exposed by the pandemic and thanks to change management, organisations have managed to re-analyse risk profiles, identify emerging opportunities, and adapt (Errida and Lotfi, 2021).

In the absence of proactive change management, organisations such as justintime agency risk falling behind competitors as they may be overtaken by more agile competitors willing to embrace change. Declining company revenue and profitability due to operation inefficiencies and inability to meet customer needs, leading to their financial decline. Ultimately, increased employee dissatisfaction as well as turnover due to strong lack of clear direction, resistance to change, and job insecurity. These are found to be a major cause of employee dissatisfaction and high turnover rates, preventing organisations to recover from the covid 19 pandemic economic effects (Yikilmaz and Cekmecelioglu, 2023).

1.1 Change Management.

Change management is made up of tools, techniques and several processes that can be applied in managing the change in an organization. It is the structured approach that guides and supports team members as well as the entire organization by facilitating transformation. Change, management is made up of several parts. Planning and preparation are as crucial as communication, and engagement in change management. It is important to define the change, assess its impact, and develop a clear implementation plan. In addition, everyone has to be kept informed, address their concerns, as well as actively involve employees in the entire change process.

By providing training, support, an organization is able to manage any resistance to change that might happen. Employees need to be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary in their adaptation to the required change. Therefore, anticipation and addressing resistance to change is inevitable and should be carried out by enabling an environment where open communication, addressing employee concerns is in the order of the day as well as explaining the change benefits (Mugge et al., 2020).

Monitoring and Evaluation of the change management process enables the actors of change to Track progress, measure results, and adapt the chosen approach to the circumstances in order to attain the expected results. Although several reasons exist as to why organizations conduct change management, the main objective is to maximize employee buy-in, by minimizing disruption, and ensuring a smooth transition into the Change (Mugge et al., 2020).

1.2 Company overview

Just In Time Agency is a care agency specialising in providing supported living and domiciliary care services to adults with Autism, learning disabilities, challenging behaviour mental health as well as other complex needs. The company is driven by the compliance to the Five Key lines inquires and the Essential Standards under CQC. In that Justintime Agency has been striving to provide high quality speciality support with the goal of meeting the unique needs of individual service users in their care.

Their supported Living services have been tailored and structured around the needs of their service users since inception with the intention of optimising choices, preferences with in their service users' person-centred plan.

I am currently working under with the administration as the oncall administrator. My role has been largely to provide on call support to the carers while on duty and coordinating the shifts. Managing the rota has been quite challenging recently due to the limited number of shifts available to staff. As a result, I have to deal with the dilemma of staff shortages since most carers will turn down short day shifts and prefer a block of shifts in a week, which the company is unable to provide. The company currently has 30 carers providing services in the Greater London area a number that drastically dropped down from 92 carers due to the recent financial difficulties as result of losing some of the big contracts they had in the past.

1.3 Change management styles

Although there are so many change management styles, every style has strengths as well as weaknesses. In this case the most effective approach would require adaptation to the specific circumstances as well as organization's needs.

Top-Down Change style.

While the Top-Down Change style has leaders dictating the change, communication plans, and expect staff to follow without fail, it may lead to resistance, reduced employee engagement as well as limited employee buy-in. This approach on the other hand if executed properly could be quickly implemented.

Bottom-Up Change style.

In the Bottom-Up Change style employees are given a chance to actively participate in the planning as well as the implementation of change. The biggest strength of this approach is in its high rate of employee buy-in, which encourages creativity as well as innovation. However, the slower rate of implementation, due to absence of clear direction in cases where there is minimal leadership guidance.

Although only two change styles have been mentioned in this report, there are many other change style. It can be quite difficult to choose the correct change as there is no one size fits all. However, management can choose the most suitable change management style basing on many factors, including the following below according to Baker (2007).

a) Employees' readiness as well as capacity

The highly skilled employees are often adaptable which makes the bottom-up approach a more suitable for them. They tend to be more reasonable and can quickly buy in into the change.

b) Urgent need for the Change

If the change is urgently needed the top-down approach, will be more suitable, leaving the changes that are not time sensitive to other change approaches such as participation change style.

c) Nature of the change

In a case where the required change is not a complex one, the changes can be made using a more directive approach, which may not be the case in a case where a complex change is required. A complex change may require employee involvement to ensure employees buy into the change.

d) The company's organizational culture:

In a company where the environment encourages a culture of open communication as well as collaboration, a participative style may be the most suitable approach.

1.4 Change management models

There are several change management models that the organization can use to bring about change. but for this report, only Kotter's 8 step change model and Kurt Lewin's change management model are discussed.

1.4.1. Kotter' s 8-Step Change Model

The 8-Step Change Model developed by John Kotter is a globally accepted change management framework which guides companies and organizations to implement change initiatives that are successful. The model is known for emphasizing that a sense of urgency should be created, build a guiding coalition, and also encourage a change embracing culture within the organization according to Hughes, (2006).

A breakdown of Kotter's eight steps model

1. *Creating a sense of urgency*

In this step establish the urgent need for the necessary change by producing compelling data and the following real-world consequences if change is not done immediately. In a nutshell create a feeling of a crisis to motivate the team to take action.

2. *Forming a powerful guiding coalition*

The change management team should gather a diverse team of change experts to lead change management and make sure they have the skills and qualifications necessary to make the change happen. This type of coalition helps to boost confidence in the change management processes.

3. *Developing a vision and strategy*

The team provides clarity by defining the how the organization will look after the change implementation. This can be done by developing a more solid strategy having clear goals and objectives as well as actionable steps to attain the overall change objective.

4. *Communicating the change vision*

By communicating the change vision, strategy in a clear and consistent manner to staff at all levels within the company, using several channels such as notice boards, emails, as well as team meetings, the management can make sure that all staff understand the main reason behind this change.

5. *Empowering a broad-based action*

Management removes all obstacles preventing employees from buying into the desired change. This can be done through task delegation, providing resources to empower staff in taking ownership and contributing to the overall change process.

6. *Generating short-term wins*

Management should encourage the celebration of milestones in the change process as a way of demonstrating progress and maintaining the momentum. Celebrating these short-term wins has a way of boosting employee morale, while reinforcing the reasons for the change.

7. Consolidating gains and producing more change

Using momentum gained from the early wins can solidify newly adopted behaviors as well as processes. This involves identifying and addressing any remaining resistance to ensure the desired change in the organization.

8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture

Articulating the new behaviors as well as values as a result of the successful change process. This can be done by hiring, promoting, and recognizing staff who represent the new culture as the normal way of doing things.

Benefits of Kotter's 8-Step Model.

According to Laig et al., (2021), Kotter's model has several benefits it brings to the organisation as listed below:

- It can provide a clear roadmap for management to navigate the change initiative.
- It can highlight why it is crucial to create a compelling need for the change as well as the state of the organization after.
- It can encourage clear communication and encourage staff in the change engagement in the change process.
- It is able to break down the process of change into manageable steps, enabling easier implementation.

Criticisms of Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

Although the 8-step model has several benefits it also has several criticisms as listed below (Laig et al., 2021);

- It is not able to account for the dynamic nature of change making it difficult to follow sometimes.
- It fails to fully address external factors influencing the change process.
- It is not readily adaptable to smaller changes.

In a nutshell, Kotter's 8-Step Change Model provides a framework for effecting change in the organization. Understanding its strengths and weaknesses of this model, enabling managers to adapt it to their specific context.

1.4.2 Kurt Lewin's change management model

This model is also referred to as the "Unfreeze-Change-Refreeze" model. It embodies the creation of a sense of psychological openness to change prior the implementation of new processes and solidifying them afterwards, creating a new stable behaviour (Cummings et al., 2016).

A breakdown of Kurt Lewin's change management model

1. Unfreeze

At this stage, preparations for change are done in the company by destabilizing the existing status quo. This creates a state in which staff are dissatisfied with the present organization

culture. Destabilizing the status quo is done by pointing out the inefficiencies, performance gaps, the potential benefits of the change.

2. Change

At this stage, the actual transformation is allowed to happen. New processes, behaviors, systems are introduced, and staff get the necessary training and support to adopt. Communicating effectively, having training programs in place, as well as clarity on the change management strategies are very important to minimize any disruptions as well as encouraging staff engagement.

3. Refreeze

Here the focus is on solidifying the changes as well as making them the SOPs. This engrains the new behaviors and processes into the company's organizational culture. Using recognition & rewards, to celebrate successes, and monitor progress are crucial in reinforcing the desired to sustain change for the for long-term.

Benefits of Kurt Lewin's Model

According to Hussain et al., (2018). Kurt Lewin's change management model has several benefits some of which are included in the list below.

- The three-stage model is simple and easy to understand because it provides a clear framework for managers to navigate change.
- By focusing on psychological aspects of change management, the model acknowledges the relevance of the staff's readiness in overcoming resistance to change.
- Because of the model's flexibility, it can be used in several change initiatives, inspite of the complexity.

Criticisms of Lewin's Model

Although Kurt Lewin's model has several benefits it also has some criticisms as listed below according to Hussain et al., (2018).

- The model can be overly simplistic yet change in the real-world tends to be complex and dynamic in nature.
- The model lacks the adequate Focus on Implementation because it doesn't delve deeper into the specific strategies of the change management process.
- The model tends to ignore external factors which influence and impact the change process.

In a nutshell, Kurt Lewin's change management model's value in understanding the psychological aspects of change remain acceptably high as framework for successful change implementation (Hussain et al., (2018).

1.4. Applying Kotter's Change Model to Address Staff Shortages in the Justinime Care Agency, Post-COVID19.

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model was applied to navigate the challenge of staff shortages in the JustinTime care agency after the COVID 19 pandemic.

1. Creating a sense of urgency

Clear data on the number of contract losses the agency was facing as well as the projection of how it affects the staffing levels was presented to staff. The potential consequences regarding the failure to address these shortages was including a poor quality of care, heightened burden on the present staff. Meeting where held and open discussions accepting honest feedback were held.

2. Forming a powerful guiding coalition

A team of senior managers was assemble including caregivers, and unit managers, representing diversity in perspectives as well as skill set necessary for the solutions development. The team was empowered to brainstorm on possible solutions, collect information as well as lead the change initiative.

3. Developing a vision and strategy

The vision for the future was clearly defined to staff, with continued emphasis on the high-quality care regardless of the staffing challenges. A strategy was developed to address the shortage which included cost cutting measures, employee retention strategies as well as recruitment strategies.

4. Communicating the change vision

The change vision was clearly communicated to staff, along with its challenges, as well as the proposed strategies. This was done through multiple communication channels to make sure that everyone is well informed and has a clear understanding of the reasons for the change.

5. Empowering a broad-based action

Staff were empowered to make contributions towards the solutions. This involved soliciting for ideas on how to cut costs as well as streamlining the workflows. Then staff were delegated to take on some tasks. More training and resources were provided to staff as a way of equipping them with skills and knowledge required for the implementation of new strategies.

6. Generating short-term wins

Celebrating of early successes, regardless of the size, recognitions were made to boost morale, as well as demonstration of progress.

7. Consolidating gains and producing more change

Continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of the strategies that have been implemented and making adjustments when needed. This involved addressing any remaining challenges and forms of resistance to change using open communication and providing ongoing support.

8. Anchoring the new approaches in the culture

Integration of the new cost-cutting measures, employee retention strategies, as well as recruitment approaches into the general culture of the organization. Staff who embodied the

values of innovation, efficiency, as well as collaboration were hired, recognized, and promoted in the workplace.

Using Kotter's Change Model, the agency was able to navigate the crisis of staff shortages in a more effective manner, ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality care as well as emerging stronger from the challenging economic crisis.

2- Critical evaluation of the Kotter's change management process as applied in the JustinTime agency.

Although the adopted change management process was able to address some aspects of this transition, a critical evaluation regarding the effective address of employee concerns, clear and consistent communication, as well as provision of adequate training and support for the required changes (Rajan and Ganesan, 2017). Evaluation of these elements reveals areas requiring improvement as well as ensuring a smoother, and future successful change implementation.

Strengths of Kotter's model in this case study

1. Pointing out how staff shortages impact the quality of care as well as the potential service disruptions effectively motivated action.
2. The open communication with staff about the existing challenges as well as the potential solutions encouraged collaboration alongside a sense of shared responsibility.
3. Celebration of the short-term wins in cost-cutting measures as well as recruitment allowed staff to maintain momentum as well as keeping staff engaged (Salman and Broten, 2017).

Weaknesses of Kotter's model in this case study

1. The model fails in addressing the broader economic challenges that impact companies as well as potentially limits their ability to extend contracts.
2. To find significant cost savings in the JustinTime agency whilst maintaining the quality is hard. This model therefore requires additional strategies to navigate this specific challenge.
4. The model fails in addressing the long-term change sustainability. The agency needs to consider continuous strategies on management of staffing levels in a dynamic economic climate (Salman and Broten, 2017).

2.1 Recommendations

5. A combination of Kotter's model with other approaches. The company should make considerations for integrating other change management models elements, for example, Lewin's Force Field Analysis, for a clear understanding of the driving as well as the restraining forces that impact staff retention with recruitment (Salman and Broten, 2017).

Besides emphasizing cost-cutting measures, the agency needs to prioritize initiatives in staff well-being as a means of reducing burnout and increasing retention. Such initiatives include recognition programs, flexible work arrangements, as well as mental health support.

6. Adaptation of this model, to incorporate additional strategies, as well as remaining adaptable, increases the agency's chances of being able to successfully navigate challenges as well as emerge with a staffing model that is sustainable (Salman and Broten, 2017).

2.1 Critical Evaluation of Kotter's Model for the Justintime Agency 's Staff Shortage using PESTLE Analysis

It is important to consider the impact of external forces on the application of Kotter's change management model on an organization (Ouma, 2017).

POLITICAL

There is a big increase in regulations. The pandemic has led to stricter infection control protocols, more staffing regulations, as well as the potential for mandatory vaccination of healthcare workers which in turn increases operational costs and complexity.

There have been potential changes in government funding. The UK government is reviewing budgets for care services in response to terrible economic downturn as a result of the Pandemic, which impacts potential available funding for Justintime Agency to implement the change.

ECONOMIC

Rising inflation in the UK has led to an increase in the cost of which also leads to higher operating costs in terms of supplies and utilities, reduced care services affordability for clients as well as salary pressures. There is a lot of economic uncertainty due to fear of a possible recession which can affect client budgets, and result in the reduction in the demand for care services.

SOCIAL

An increase in the aging population is a major factor as the UK's aging demographic has continued in driving the demand for care services. However, COVID-19 has raised more awareness of care home risks.

Caregivers are burning out due to significant levels of stress imposed on them during the pandemic, which increased the demand for professional care services, and also possibly led to difficulties in recruiting new employees. The shifting public perception because of the pandemic's highlighting of vulnerabilities in the care sector, which possibly led to an increase in the public scrutiny as well as the demand for higher-quality care.

TECHNOLOGICAL

There has been a global adoption of telehealth alongside remote monitoring, due to the increase in the utilization of technology. Remote consultations as well as monitoring has led to the reduced need for in-person care visits in many cases. Data analytics have led to an increase in the use of data to manage care plans, staff schedule, and risk assessments which could possibly improve the organization's operational efficiency.

LEGAL

Changes in employment law have impacted legislation regarding flexible working, sick pay, and mandatory vaccination which in return affects staffing practices as well as the Justintime Agency's obligations. Safeguarding regulations have been revised in the wake of the Pandemic.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The global world is focusing on sustainability due to the increasing public's environmental impact concerns. This is likely to increase the demand for sustainable practices in the health care industry especially when it comes to, energy efficiency, and waste management. There has been an increase in emphasizing the application of infection control measures regarding medical waste disposal. This is something that can greatly affect the implementation of a change management plan in the JustinTime agency.

The increased costs, complex regulations, as well as the shift in the social perceptions present significant challenges for the care sector in the UK. With changes in the landscape the demand for adaptation, specifically the area of technology, addressing the public's care quality concerns is very important (Gorran, 2013). The management of the care workforce is very important, therefore addressing employee burnout and recruitment challenges is a must.

2.2 Identification of the suitable strategic change option

There are several possible strategic change options that can be applied by JustinTime agency within the current economic landscape in the UK according to Ferlie and Shortell (2001). However, this report only covers three of the strategies below.

1. Specialize in a growing care industry

Currently, UK's aging population is creating an increasing demand in the area of specialized care services. Therefore, JustinTime agency should choose a particular segment of the industry and focus on that. Such segments include.

- a) **Live-in care:** *The live in care segment* provides services to clients who wish to receive personalized assistance within their homes.
- b) **Dementia care:** The rising dementia rates alongside the specialized care need could greatly improve the patient's quality of life as well as reduce the burden of caregiving.
- c) **Complex care needs:** The agency should focus on complex medical conditions clients in urgent need of advanced care management.

To implement this strategy, JustinTime agency should engage in conducting market research for easy identification of the potential segment. Invest in training staff, get the necessary equipment, as well as development of marketing strategies that target the selected care segment.

2. Use technology to Improve efficiency and service Delivery.

Technology has the ability to enhance the delivery of care, optimize operations while improving communication.

The agency can use telehealth and remote monitoring to conduct virtual consultations as well as remotely monitor the vital signs of their patients. Moreover, there are plenty of caregiver management apps which can be utilized to make schedules, communicate, manage tasks, as well as provide real-time updates between clients, caregivers, and families.

The agency can also use data-driven care planning methods to develop personalized care plans, improve overall service delivery by predicting potential health issues.

However, the implementation of this strategy requires careful evaluation of the different technologies, consider costs, data security as well as ender user friendliness (Ferlie and Shortell, 2001). So, staff must be trained on how to use the new technology and as well as ensure its smooth integration into the agency's daily operations.

3. Apply collaboration and partnership strategies

Through partnerships and collaborations, the agency will be able to expand reach, get access to new resources, as well as provide offer more comprehensive care solutions. Partnerships and collaborations can be done through the following ways below (Ferlie and Shortell, 2001).

Partnerships & Collaborations

The establishment of partnerships with hospitals and local community centers will enable a smooth transition of care as well as offer integrated services.

Mergers and Acquisitions

Using mergers and acquisitions through partnering with other care agencies in London will complement the agency's strengths and expand its geographic reach as well as their expertise.

Technological integration

Integration of Justintime agency's technology platform with other platforms that could connect clients with several service providers, can increase their visibility as well as access.

To be able to implement this strategy, the agency needs to engage in the identification of the potential partners that have strong reputations as well as shared values. The agency should start developing a specific collaboration strategy which outlines the responsibilities, roles, as well as benefits for all stakeholders.

2.2 Just in time agency Leadership styles for change management.

Just in time agency applied different leadership styles during their change management process.

a) Transformational Leadership

The agency leadership would use this leadership style in articulating a clear vision for the agency's future, by placing more emphasis on the commitment to the high-quality of care as well as the well-being of the staff members regales of the existing challenges. The vision would be used to inspire as well as motivate staff in embracing the necessary changes (Alqatawenh, 2018).

Although one cannot avoid difficult decisions, it is important to involve staff in the decision-making process if possible as well as empower them in the solutions finding to encourage ownership as well as engagement during the change management process (Alqatawenh, 2018).

2. Situational leadership

It is important to acknowledge the fact that all staff members can not react the same way to the changes, therefore adapting leadership styles to their needs is crucial. This involves the provision of additional support as well as guidance to members struggling during the

transition as well as empower those who are comfortable with change (Aksu, 2014). A combination of elements from the different leadership styles as well as adopting them to a particular context, Justintime Agency's leadership could be successful in creating a workforce that is more engaged as well as resilient enough to navigate the existing challenges.

3.Impact of the development and implementation of change on the organisational culture.

Developing and implementing change has a big impact on the organizational culture. while it causes disruptions in the established norms and routines, it also leads to confusion, resistance, as well as a decline in the staff morale (Teehankee, 1994). Staff members who are used to a particular way of doing things often feel threatened by the new structures. Such resistance often manifests in form of reduced productivity, breakdown in communication, as well as the sense of negativity.

3.1 Areas for improvement in the process of change management.

Implementing change calls a well-defined strategy in change management according to Maher (2000). As per the Justintime agency, potential areas for improvement in their change management process include the following below.

1. Ensuring that there is clear as well as consistent communication about the existing problem & the planned change to address it.
2. Framing change as the opportunity for improving the work environment as well as patient care in the Justintime agency.
3. Analysing workloads and implementing strategies for more effective task delegation, to prevent staff burnout.
4. Expanding recruitment efforts to attract talent with the specific required skills and experience.
5. Tracking the effectiveness of the change management efforts using surveys, and performance metrics.

If the agency focuses on the above areas for improvement, it can implement strategies that are more effective in addressing their problems.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, organizations can use change management as a structure approach in navigating the post-pandemic economic landscape. A properly change management process, allows effective navigation of transitions as well as achievement of company strategic goals. It is important to acknowledge the need to combine leadership styles for effective change management, bearing in mind the strengths and weaknesses of each style. Organizations like justintime agency are able to enjoy the benefits of change management once implemented effectively and efficiently.

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