



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Paulette Canegan

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Leading and Implementing Workplace Change

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Lecturer Nadeem Mirza

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Executive Summary

This paper contains a review of "Marks and Spencer's" (M&S) change management strategy. The organization's recent history, recent reform, and present status of operations is all highlighted in the report. A succinct description of how changes in the external environment affect M&S is provided below. An assessment is conducted on various models of change management, strategic change-related concerns, change management techniques, and leadership styles. The organization's change management plan and program are created with the influence of organizational culture.

1.INTRODUCTION

The most constant thing in a competitive business environment is change. Organizations must constantly implement changes to improve their performance in the market and achieve a competitive edge. Effective implementation of the change utilizing the right change management model at work can make it productive (Newman and Ford, 2021). Organizational change is mostly driven by external variables found in the business environment, such as customer trends, political unrest, and unstable economies.

This report summarizes a change management study that was carried out at "Marks and Spencer" (M&S). The company is a prominent global retailer of British goods, with its headquarters located in London, England, UK. The company operates in the clothing, home, and food product areas. The report will highlight recent initiatives for transformation, the company's recent history, and its current status.

The impact of changes in the external environment on the M&S is also explained. A variety of change management models are assessed, along with strategic change-related concerns, change management techniques, and leadership philosophies. Ultimately, the impact of organizational culture on the change management plan and program is created for the organization.

Covid-19 has been the main driver of transformation within Marks and Spencer in the past few years. The COVID-19 pandemic severely damaged the clothing sales of Marks and Spencer, which caused the company to struggle during the outbreak. The company revealed a 90% decline in annual profits (M&S profit seen collapsing 90% in the year" 2021).

Relationship with the company

I have a connection to the company because I work as the store manager at the London M&S retail location. Among my responsibilities include handling client complaints and inquiries,

keeping an eye on and grading staff, and organizing stock records. I have benefited greatly from working at Marks & Spencer, and I'm determined to support the company's future growth (Hagger et al., 2020).

.MAIN BODY

1.1 An overview of the company's present situation

Marks and Spencer are a retail chain located in the United Kingdom. With its current headquarters located in London, UK, the company has grown to operate in 150 countries. The business suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic and recently revealed a 90% decline in yearly profits as a result of the pandemic's devastating effect on the company's garments sales (M&S profit seen plunging 90% in "lost year" of pandemic, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a hurdle for companies seeking to optimise their digital sales, as consumers have shifted to online shopping over physical store visits. Marks and Spencer have not yet fully recovered from the losses resulting from the pandemic and was unable to meet this task.

2. Outline of the recent change initiative.

A new turnaround program named "Never the same again" has been introduced by the company. This campaign will result in the closure of between 100 and 200 stores. Through its partnership with Ocado, the firm will also focus on improving its digital skills. It intends to introduce online meal delivery by the end of (2021)(M&S to expedite latest reinvention in 'never the same again' strategy,(2020). This organization-wide change program's primary objectives are to get the company ready for the digital future and to restructure the organizational structure to remove positions that duplicate duties and assign more unique leadership accountabilities. This will let the company focus more on the needs of the consumer and bounce back from the COVID-19 disaster quickly.

2.2 Recent history of the organisation

Thomas Spencer and Michael Marks founded Marks and Spencer in Leeds in 1884. The corporation operates about 959 locations throughout the United Kingdom. With a pre-tax profit of about £1 billion, M&S was regarded as the first retailer to do so in 1998. Sales of food have increased at the corporation in recent years while sales of apparel have dropped sharply. Over the years, the company has maintained its reputation through acquisitions and mergers with numerous other brands. For example, in 1998, it bought the well-known American apparel company Brooks Brothers and the well-known US grocery chain Kings.

M&S experienced severe financial declines up until 2001 as a result of the company's share price decrease. The company's supply chain was also problematic, and in its 2008 annual report, it was noted that it had failed at fundamental shopkeeping. The corporation therefore intended to restructure its small, unproductive food stores in order to bring about change.

In 2010, the company also intended to improve the perception of its brand by aiming for sales between £800 million and £1 billion throughout the course of the fund plan for the following three years. However, the corporation closed a large number of its locations in 2015, which had an impact on many employees as well. There was another store reduction of eight outlets in 2017–2018. 2020 saw the appearance of the corporation has to lay off 7,000 workers because to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the company's managers declared that there will be cuts to regional management, UK stores, and support functions, which accurately represented the shift that has been felt across the entire enterprise. Due to the Covid-19, the corporation also recorded a loss in 2020—its first in 94 years. Due to supply chain issues resulting from the political unbalance of the UK and EU the outcome of Brexit, the company stated in May 2021 that it would be closing thirty stores as part of its turnaround transition program.

3. Effects of the external environmental changes on Marks and Spencer

The business organization's external environment is made up of a variety of elements that are

always shifting and can directly or indirectly affect how the firm operates. Numerous elements, including shifting political landscapes and economic volatility, are part of the external environment (Amis and Janz, 2020). The following section discusses the use of the pestle analysis framework to analyse how changes in the external environment have affected Marks and Spencer:

3.3 Analysis of Pestle

Political factors

The primary alteration in the UK's external environment is the political unrest in Europe and the UK that led to the EU and UK splitting out, a phenomenon commonly referred to as Brexit. Because this modification directly impacted the company's supply chain, it had a severe detrimental effect on Marks and Spencer's business operations. Additionally, this has caused the corporation to generate an excessive amount of paperwork because the pressure brought about by this shift in the external environment of the UK retail industry caused numerous shop lines to be reduced.

Economic factors:

The global pandemic led to significant changes in the external environment, which in turn generated economic instability. The business of Marks & Spencer has been significantly impacted by COVID-19. Businesses were forced to close as a result of COVID-19, and for the first time in 29 years, Marks and Spencer also suffered a significant economic loss. The decline of M&S's business and the need for employment cuts by the company are both results of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the GDP, the economic crisis, and other changes in economic stability

Social factors:

Fast-changing consumer trends in the retail sector often compel organizations to modify their ways of doing business in order to meet those demands (Naeem, 2020). Regarding Marks and Spencer, there has been a significant shift in the fashion business after COVID-19, as consumers are now more inclined to purchase clothing online rather than in-person, which has an impact on the company's sales at its physical locations

Technological factors:

Rapid technological advancements are putting constant pressure on retail industry organizations to adapt to these developments to streamline operations and improve customer service. The emergence of e-commerce retailing due to technological advancements has affected Marks and Spencer and its business practices (de Lucas Ancillo, del Val Núñez, and Gavrilá 2020). Through technological adoption, the company has partnered with online food service brand Ocado to launch its online food retailing venture. Thus, technology has benefited Marks and Spencer by raising revenues and making the company more competitive in the e-commerce market and technologically aware.

Legal factors:

Regarding Marks and Spencer, the UK's recent changes to employment law have resulted in significant adjustments to the company's HRM practices, as it is now required to pay employees more to comply with the minimum wage statute. Additionally, as a result, Marks and Spencer's salary costs went up. Since the organization is an international corporation with operations outside of the UK, any changes to a nation's legal requirements will inevitably result in complications and modifications.

environmental factors:

Marks & Spencer have all become more involved and aware of the company's operations that could harm the environment as environmental safety and conservation have become increasingly important concerns. Marks and Spencer have taken the initiative to eliminate plastic

consumption within their organization due to the growing state of environmental damage. The corporation has developed a clothing segment known as "organic clothing," which is constructed of natural textiles free of chemicals, in response to the changing environment (Beare et al., 2020).

4. Evaluation of different change management models

The necessity of changing, each of these three management models explains how it approaches change management.

The first models: In order to minimize resistance and expedite implementation, the ADKAR technique canters on staff. Staff assistance and contribution are valued in the ADKAR approach. Rather of giving your staff a change instruction, have a discussion with them to show them the advantages of the change and why it is necessary. This will increase their motivation to take part in the execution.

Knowledge is more concerned with comprehending how the change may be accomplished, whereas ability is more concerned with providing staff members with the assurance they need to see the transition through to completion. The knowledge and ability goals of the strategy are connected. When compared to techniques that do not actively involve the individuals affected by the change, this people-centric approach guarantees a higher success rate for long-lasting change. Using this framework, it is ideal to make small, gradual modifications that lessen the degree of abrupt disturbance of everyday activities.

Second models: According to Kouzes and Posner (2017), individuals in charge of overseeing and directing change require:

The capacity to motivate a common goal	The capacity to interact and incorporate stakeholders	Capability in communicating	Interpersonal skills that work well	The capacity to dispute the procedure
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Possessing all of these abilities will help the organization transition successfully.

The most crucial abilities of a change leader are communication and ensuring that employees are encouraged to accept the need for change.

Even with meticulous planning, there's a good chance you'll run into some opposition or difficulty. People may object to change for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Fear of the unknown/loss of authority, such as worries that job roles could be negatively impacted or in danger;
- Incapacity to cope (real or perceived); workers may feel unfit to perform new tasks or approaches;
- Ineffective communication from change leaders, a lack of empathy and support for those in need;
- Past bad experiences with change

Third, Lewin's three-phase approach for managing change

Many theories exist on change management. The belief held by many of these is that leading change requires a set of actions that comprise the change process.

The three steps in Kurt Lewin's paradigm are "unfreezing," "changing," and "refreezing" to represent the changes that occur.

Unfreeze	Change	Refreeze
Stakeholders must get ready to accept change at this point.	At this point, work begins to take new, diverse approaches.	After the modification is accepted, it fully integrates into the organization.

Organizations must swiftly adapt their operations and functions in response to the notable shifts in external environmental conditions. To thrive and reduce the risk of disruption, Marks and Spencer uses Lewin's change management model to manage change. According to (Turner et al. 2020), Lewin's change management model provides a framework for the most straightforward analysis and management of organizational transformation. According to this

approach, the M&S can implement a successful change by doing the three things that are covered below:

1. Unfreezing. Executives at the company check that all employees are ready for the change at this stage. The proper rationale for the modification is therefore determined. The management of the company then draws attention to the workers' endorsement of the analysis of the main stakeholders (Nitturi et al., 2021). This phase will assist the organization in preparing its workforce for change. Additionally, through this phase, the company's stakeholders, using a transformational leadership style, will inspire the workforce to adjust to the changes as they arise, reducing employee resistance and fostering successful change implementation (Bissett, 2020).

2. Change: Individuals can find this stage difficult at times because they are unsure of what lies ahead because it takes time to understand change and adapt to it (Dagnone et al.,(2020). The second and most crucial step is the implementation of the change, which happens once the staff is informed of its necessity and urgency.

In the case of Marks & Spencer, the business runs into problems with employee mismanagement when assembling a team to carry out change during this phase. Therefore, the organization has developed this change management approach, wherein personnel with the necessary skill set would build a team for the successful implementation of the change, to mitigate and address this issue with care.

3. Refreezing: According to Dominguet al. (2017), this model's third and last stage is when the organization reaches equilibrium or a stable state.

It is the final step, where the modifications are absorbed and accepted, that aids in bolstering and supporting the adjustments made to the company's employees' working practices.

a plan that may support Marks and Spencer's organizational culture while still embracing change. This problem during the freeze phase, when the business is planning to alter its organizational culture going forward, may result in an imbalance inside the organization and in the launch of an online meal delivery service via digital media.

To address this problem, Marks and Spencer plans to implement a participative leadership style. This is because when employers and employees collaborate, motivation increases and there is less anxiety about new changes because it is easier to manage any changes when employers and employees work as a team(Rathee and Rajain, 2020).

It has been determined through critical analysis that Marks & Spencer's change management strategy is straightforward, requiring only a few simple stages to comprehend and successfully implement inside the company. However, it is also determined that throughout this model's refreeze stage, employees are extremely concerned about a fresh shock of change that could lower their performance.

4.4. Identify and incorporate issues that may be related to strategic change in the organisation

Initiating Transformation

implications of changes for individuals, teams, and leadership.

Several important factors might forcefully alter an organization's business operations procedures in this era of changing environments. These variables impact not only the company's process management but also several other components, such as:

Influence on Leadership: The process of persuading a group of individuals to pursue an organization's objectives is known as leadership. It is clear that when the organization changes (Cameron and Green, 2019). There will be an impact on the organization's leadership style. Therefore, it is advisable in these circumstances for the company to employ transformational

leadership, as this will assist in inspiring and motivating the staff to implement and innovate changes in the organization to achieve the organizational goal with higher productivity.

- Impact on Individuals: Marks and Spencer's change management has had an impact on the company's staff members as well. That is, the business must offer its staff the proper training and development if it hopes the changes will be successful (Fenthaler, 2020).

For them to successfully execute the change and raise both their own and the company's productivity, inspiration and guidance should also be offered to them

- Impact on group dynamics: According to Brunes and de Senzi Zancul (2017), fostering positive behaviour is crucial to implementing change management within organisation. As a result, appropriate leadership must be given to foster cooperation and coordination among the organization's employees. Changes made to the M&S may also have the unintended consequence of making team members less motivated or causing some employees to rebel against the changes.

5. Evaluate the impact of organisational culture

The collection of beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and practices that help to provide guidance and information to every team member is known as the organizational culture. A company's work environment is crucial to ensuring that its employees feel valued and appreciated by the organization (Doppelt and McDonough, 2017). The organizational culture has a significant impact on how changes are implemented within a corporation. The culture of a corporation plays a crucial role in shaping its environment and influencing the nature of its long-term objectives. The following is an explanation of how company culture impacts:

Performance of employees

The company's workforce is essential to creating a positive work culture within the organization. Employees who are dissatisfied with their current roles will fight any adjustments the corporation

tries to implement to promote them. The organization must adopt a participative leadership style so that staff members may engage in corporate affairs and feel fulfilled in their roles.

Unwilling to adapt

The process of implementing change may be impacted if the organization is not prepared for any changes. To successfully navigate that process, the organization's culture must be adaptable when implementing changes (Prasad, 2020).

Diversity

The organization won't be able to comprehend the necessity for market adjustments if there isn't diversity in the workplace. To comprehend the needs and desires of each community, organizations must establish a varied workplace culture. It is essential to ascertain the requirements of each community within society for corporations to make internal changes based on that information. Consequently, businesses must hire individuals from a variety of backgrounds to assess the diverse community's demands.

5.5 Leadership style

The transformational leadership style is a style that will assist in inspiring and motivating the organization's staff to adopt and innovate changes in the organization, to reach the organizational goal with improved productivity.

How Marks & Spencer has managed change has also affected the employees of the company. That is, for the reforms to be successful, the company must ensure that its employees receive the appropriate training and development (Fenthaler, 2020). Additionally, provide them direction and inspiration so they can carry out the change successfully and raise both their and the company's productivity. This may be achieved by using the transformational leadership style, which will aid in inspiring and motivating the organization's staff.

Marks & Spencer could improve their business by improving their productivity and, as a result, growing their market share, if they receive the right leadership and advice to assist them in reaching this stage of balance. It is possible to objectively assess that changes that are implemented inside the organization may have both positive and negative long-term effects on the business (Mobtahej, 2020). With the advancement of technology, it will help Marks and Spencer increase their efficiency and visibility.

Enhancing the Method of Production. Therefore, a decrease in production costs has an impact on the company's profit margin.

Critics can, however, assess that adjustments may potentially have a detrimental effect on the organization (Attah and Isaac, 2017). That is, the company's growth will be hampered if the adjustments are not implemented correctly. This means that M&S will have low-profit margins and suffer from poor market positioning. If the change is not successfully implemented, the organization's employees' motivation will likewise decline, and productivity will decline.

6. Suggestions for reducing the implications of changes

organization must embrace change to function successfully and smoothly. In particular, the organization must support change in response to the ever-changing demands of the external environment. Additionally, by giving the business a competitive edge, these modifications aid in improving the company's market placement (Droge, Calantone & Harmancioglu, 2008: 281).

But to minimize the bad effects of the changes, M&S is advised to make sure that its staff members receive the right training and development so that the changes may be implemented in a way that maximizes their productivity. It is also advised that the business makes adequate plans, properly analyses the market, and determines the possible danger of such changes.

6.6 Develop a Suitable Change Management Plan

Training and Improvement.

A company's ability to handle change may be significantly impacted if it does not organize fundamental and mandatory training programs for its staff members.

Businesses must offer their staff appropriate training and development opportunities in preparation for the changes they are considering. Employee performance will suffer during the change implementation process if appropriate training is not given to them.

Therefore, businesses must give their staff the right direction and training so they can implement changes successfully.

Plan for Change Management

Every time an organization makes a change at work, it is crucial that they put a change management strategy in place to help the staff adjust to the changes and prevent misunderstandings or disruptions (Husain, Bloom, and McPherson, 2020).

The primary goal of implementing a change management strategy is to accomplish several goals, including promoting change, organizing opposition, managing hurdles, facilitating communication, and demonstrating progress. A negative attitude among employees and an unstructured, methodical approach are the main causes of change projects failing or being unproductive.

Describe change and make sure it fits with the goals of the organization.

It is among the most crucial elements required to implement changes that support organizations in conducting critical reviews against organizational objectives and achieving goals to make sure changes will steer business operations in the proper direction (Tang, 2019). Ensuring that the organization is implementing changes ethically and strategically is crucial. At this stage, the

business must explain the need for changes and the resources needed to implement them. For example, the corporation is making this adjustment to become more flexible in response to emerging technological adjustments, and implementing this change will call for resources including cutting-edge technology, a skilled labour force, funding, and others.

Determine the impacts

Examining the impact that a change might have comes next, after determining what adjustments the organization needs and why, together with the resources that will be used, must be evaluated.

According to(Marianne, 2018), the organization must evaluate the effects on all facets of the business and how those effects will flow down through the organizational structure to the person. The most important factors that a firm must consider when implementing change are the people it will most directly affect, the implications it will have, and how well it will be welcomed. The desired adjustment, for example, will have a significant effect on the traditional offline stores of the selected organization. Improvements in online purchasing are among the consequences this move will have.

Plan a communication strategy.

It is critical to establish a robust communication channel between the organization and its staff to properly execute changes. A successful communication plan specifies the channels and methods for disseminating information regarding the change. The main questions that come up at this stage are how feedback will be handled and how change-related information will be disseminated (Dhilip and Babu, 2019). To implement the chosen change project, the relevant organization must continuously solicit employee feedback to enable them to carry out the necessary adjustments.

Their ability to properly execute those adjustments and create an efficient communication pathway is aided by the input they receive. The organization could communicate changes to its

staff by being transparent and truthful with them. Employees must be informed by the organization about their future roles and responsibilities during the transformation process.

Training guidance

Training employees appropriately is essential whenever a company implements changes. The organization must impart to them the skills and information needed to carry out these changes in an efficient manner. The organization must prioritize the selection of the most effective training approach and identify the abilities and behaviors of its employees in order to achieve the desired results (Crook, 2020). . Programs for training and development help businesses increase employee interest in and involvement with accomplishing goals. For example, the corresponding organization must plan personnel training and development programs to carry out the necessary modification.

Technology-related training programs that could improve staff members' understanding of cutting-edge technologies must be implemented by the organization. To handle the rapid growth of technology, personnel must upgrade existing skills and pick up new ones. Workers must also develop greater tolerance and flexibility to assist customers with their online purchases.

Implement the support system.

For employees to adjust to changes and achieve emotional stability during the process, businesses must have a strong support network. To accomplish the intended results, organizations must also develop workforce proficiency in behaviour in addition to the necessary technical abilities.

Offering help to employees in their tasks or establishing an open-door policy are important ways to ensure their productivity throughout change implementation. What kind of support would be most effective at this point and where this help will be most needed are the main questions that come up (Mulambya, 2020). One example would be the necessity for the business chosen to implement the change to offer its staff a support system. To know how each person is feeling and whether they are happy with the change or not, it must monitor their every move. It would

be beneficial for managers to regularly inquire about workers' experiences throughout this transition and offer appropriate counsel for adjusting to new changes.

It is the manager's or supervisor's responsibility to provide the appropriate guidance to an employee who is finding it difficult to adapt to the change or who is not able to fully understand technologies.

The process for measuring change

Organizations must use a suitable framework while performing the change management process in order to gauge the potential effects of the change. Additionally, it is critical to keep an eye on these changes since doing so will enable the business to investigate potential. In (Freeman, 2018)

What the organization could have done differently, if the change management process was successful, and how changes help achieve business goals are some of the major questions that the corporation must define. To achieve profitability, for example, the concerned organization needs to look at how the transition from brick-and-mortar to e-commerce has benefited it. Along with analysing how the change management process has given it a competitive edge, the organization needs to look at how it could implement the intended changes in more original ways.

7. CONCLUSION

The conversation above has highlighted the importance of a change management plan implementation for a business looking to boost employee engagement and create a long-term competitive edge. To manage external environmental issues that could affect its business operations, a corporation must also take the required steps to create change. Positive workplace cultures have also been noted as being necessary for businesses to enable their staff to adjust to changing circumstances. Effective change management plans for organizations should include communicating with staff members about changes and offering appropriate

training, according to evaluations. Research has found that organizations encounter numerous challenges or obstacles when adopting changes, which can be reduced by employing strong leadership.

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