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Student Name: Natalie Thomas

Student Number: 1810239

CIPD Membership Number: 53274196

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Signed: N. Thomas

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UNDERSTANDING THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

NATALIE THOMAS

WHAT IS CHANGE MANAGEMENT?

Change management can be described as a structured approach to help ensure that changes are implemented smoothly and results in a positive outcome for the organisation. It can be applied in various situations from a simple process change, to major organisation changes or restructures. It focuses on the wider impact of change and particularly how people move from the current situation, to the new, desired state (Mind Tools 2020).

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

There are numerous factors that drive change within an organisation, and these can follow as the result of carrying out a PESTLE analysis of the organisation. Some of the drivers of change can be described as Internal drivers, or External drivers:

- PESTLE factors
- Re-structures
- To gain a competitive advantage
- Change in government legislation
- Organisation growth opportunities

(CIPD 2019)

1.1

Internal drivers

- ✓ Restructure due to factors such as redundancies
- ✓ Cost efficiencies – to run more efficiently
- ✓ Change of internal processes
- ✓ Technological developments – needs to keep up with the times
- ✓ Consumer pressure
- ✓ Issues identified about current ways of working – such as health and safety concerns/employee feedback

External Drivers

- ✓ BREXIT – driving changes in processes such as recruitment, requiring changes to policies and procedures.
- ✓ Competitiveness
- ✓ Change to financial situation within the organisation

- ✓ Consumer feedback
- ✓ PESTLE factors
- ✓ (CIPD 2019)

CIPD (2019) suggests that many organisations are changing their priorities in wake of BREXIT and considering other tactics. It is discussed that emerging technology is a major driving force in changing the way in which businesses operate. Organisations need to introduce and manage change effectively in order to achieve success and overall organisational objectives as well as maintaining 'business as usual' and maintain normality for its current employees.

FACTORS WHICH ENABLE/HINDER CHANGE

Enablers of change	Hinder change
Early communication & stakeholder involvement	Trade Unions/employee representatives
Appropriate skills to enable the change	Management style
Tools and resources	Time scales
Better employee rewards and benefits	Negative organisational culture - resistance
Access to training	
Transparency	
Technology	

1.2

For change management to be successful, it is important that HR professionals can identify factors which may enable or hinder change (Taylor and Woodhams 2016).

Some factors which may enable change are as follows:

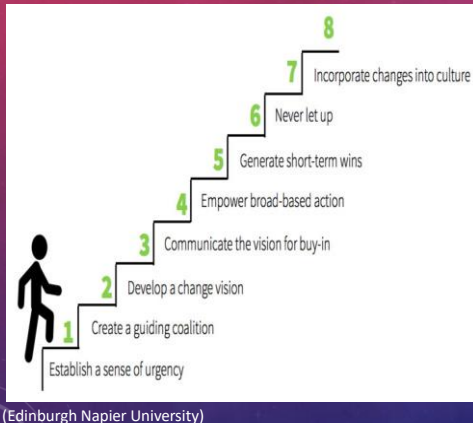
- ✓ Early communication – ensuring employees and managers are involved in the decision making process from the outset can help to enable a smoother transition in implementing the change
 - ✓ Tools and resources – ensuring appropriate tools and resources are available to facilitate the change and considering additional people and role changes.
 - ✓ Appropriate skills to enable the change
 - ✓ Access to training – ensuring individuals can attend training courses to provide them with the correct skills for the change
 - ✓ Transparency – ensuring the organisation is open and honest in areas such as pay and rewards by supplying access to clear PayScale frameworks
- (Taylor and Woodhams 2016)

Factors which can hinder change:

- ✓ Trade unions – can encourage employees to resist temptation of certain changes within their employment, resulting in a requirement for re-negotiation which can extend the length of time it takes to implement any changes (business Case Studies 2019).
- ✓ Management style – some managers can be ill-equipped with the skills to facilitate change effectively and fail to act as role models to ensure the change is successful (Go MAD thinking 2019).
- ✓ Time scales – requiring sign off from senior management teams within a hierarchical structure which can prolong the change process resulting in employees becoming less enthused
- ✓ Organisational culture – existing negative organisational culture can result in a resistance to change, undermining of change initiatives and in more extreme cases – employee strikes can occur (CIPD 2019).

The CIPD (2019) suggests that identifying factors which enable or hinder change, allows the organisation to plan appropriately and produce the change management plan around the factors which will have a positive impact. Considering individual's thoughts and feeling prior to the change, and the possible effects it can have on individual's emotions can aid the employer in building a trusting relationship and result in a smoother implementation. Organisations should be fully prepared and design a strategic process and organisational goals which individuals are able to work towards.

USING CHANGE MODELS AS A GUIDE CAN HELP PRACTITIONERS THROUGH THE CHANGE PROCESS. 1 OF THE MOST WIDELY USED WAS CREATED BY PROFESSOR JOHN KOTTER



Kotter's 8 stage change model

- 1 – sense of urgency
- 2 – powerful coalition
- 3 – create a vision for change
- 4 - Communicate the vision
- 5 - Remove any obstacles
- 6 - Create short term wins
- 7 – build gains and never let up
- 8 – anchor the change

1.3

Organisations and HR departments need to be aware of change models which can guide them through the change process. There are numerous models of change which can guide HR professionals and be applied to the organisation including: Kotter's 8 stages of change

1 – sense of urgency – for change to occur, there must be a need for the change, with organisations producing a sense of urgency. Strategies which include providing statistical evidence and holding open and frank discussions around the consequences of not implementing the change can help whole organisations understand the need for the change. Once people discuss the proposed change, it assists with building an urgency. Identifying the requirement for change can include looking at potential threats facing the business.

2 – powerful coalition –consists of convincing individuals that the change is necessary. Often, a requirement to **lead** the change is vital at this stage and strong managerial leadership needs to occur with the appropriate support of key stakeholders. To lead the change, organisations should create a team of influential people within the organisation with the correct status, expertise and influence/power

who work towards building momentum around the need for change.

3 – create a vision for change – creating a clear and easy to understand vision so employees can understand why the change is necessary. Once people understand the end goal, the introduction of the change is easier to understand. Making information short and ‘simple’ to understand and capture and how this will be achieved will support change success.

4 - Communicate the vision –It is important that the change is communicated often and embedded in day to day discussions and activities. It is vital that the vision is used every day in decision making and problem solving to ensure it is thought of and employees remember to respond to it. This stage is also associated with being a role model for the change – ensuring you ‘walk the walk’.

5 - Remove any obstacles – Looking at whether current practices or structures which could stand in the way of the change, and consider any individuals/groups of employees who are resisting the change. Put mechanisms in place for change and constantly reassess any barriers to it. Encouraging the use of change leaders who can drive the change, as well as taking quick action to remove any barriers can assist with ensuring the change process can move on to the next stage.

6 - Create short term wins – this can be encouraged by creating short-term goals which are easily achievable as an approach to motivate employees. Ensuring success provides individuals with a feeling of victory early in the change process and encourages positive behaviour and acceptance of the change.

7 – build gains and never let up – Kotter discusses that many change initiatives fail because success is declared too soon into the process and ‘wins’ need to become long term. Building on the current successes, identifying the positives and also looking at the requirement for improvement helps to continue the success. Building gains includes continuously setting goals, adopting the idea of continuous improvement and keeping ideas fresh.

8 – anchor the change – Ensuring the change is successful in every aspect of the organisation will assist in embedding it in to the organisation culture, whilst also ensuring key stakeholders and senior management continue to support the change. Communicating success stories about the change process and workforce planning that considers the effect of individuals leaving the organisation.
(Mind Tools 2016)

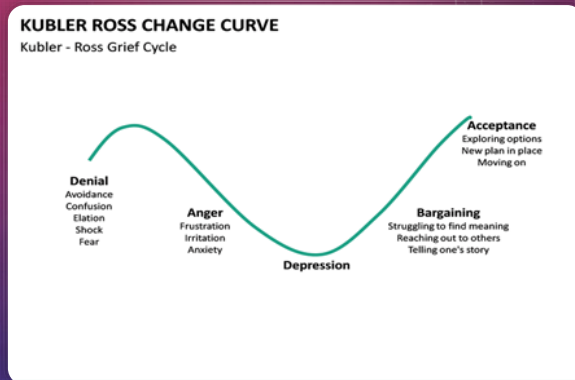
Organisations can use this as a template for implementing change and as a guidance

for maintaining change.

KUBLER ROSS CHANGE MODEL

Originally developed as a model of grief, the following 5 stages are often experienced when dealing with change:

- Denial
- Anger
- Depression
- Bargaining
- Acceptance



(Connelly, M. 2018)

Developed by Kubler-Ross and described as the five stages of Grief, it is now widely accepted that these stages are often experienced when dealing with change in the workplace. HR professionals need to understand that change usually involves a loss of some kind at that individuals react differently to change and at different times within the stages.

The Kubler Ross change curve involved 5 stages:

Denial - usually involves shock. Individuals often act like change isn't happening if they behave like it will go away

Anger – upon acceptance that the change is real and will affect us individually. Often, employees can look to blame others for their feeling of anger

Depression – the reality that the change will happen and individuals begin to associate the potential losses alongside. People can feel very down, with low moods and low energy/commitment and result in the employee beginning demotivated and lead to increased sickness levels.

Bargaining – often seen when individuals are trying to postpone the inevitable – which is the change. Employees can start 'bargaining' to find a way out of the situation by working harder or changing their way of work to try and alter the outcome.

Acceptance – where the individual realises that the change *will* happen. Once acknowledged, employees explore new possibilities and consider any positives the change may include.
(Connelly, M 2018).

Using the change curve can be useful to identify and understand how employees are dealing with change and why they are behaving in a particular way. Considering the affects of change on behaviour, prior to planning the change, can aid HR professional's in planning and implementing the change to increase the chances of success.

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

Tips for building a positive relationship:

- Develop your people skills
- Establish the relationship needs
- Ensure there is time to build a positive relationship by prioritising and putting time aside
- Show appreciation for the efforts of others
- Be positive
- Listen

(Mind Tools)

Tips for maintaining a positive relationship:

- Ensure the change is communicated clearly, providing a clear rationale for this
- Understanding the impact on individuals
- Forecasting what people's reactions will be to the change
- Providing opportunities for consultation –regular, clear and honest communication
- Be positive when dealing with conflict
- Establish supporter's of the change and developing 'change champions'
- Actively work to maintaining a positive relationship and overcome any negative impact ASAP (CIPD 2019).

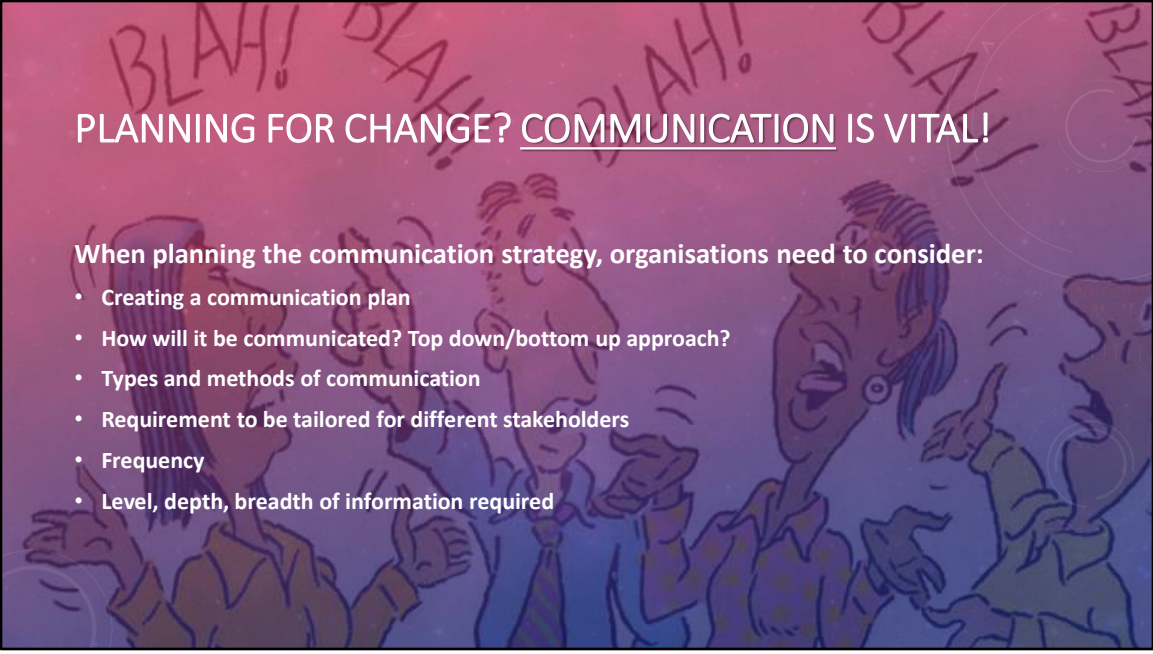
2.1

Building and maintaining positive relationships is vital when initiating change. Good working relationships provide some benefits including being happier at work which can lead to more productive individuals. People are also more likely to accept changes if trust and good relationships are already in existence with seniors (Mind Tools).

Geraghty (2019) states that successful change is linked to the behaviour and mindset of individuals and organisations need to consider this when delivering change and look at the '4E's principles of human change.

1. **Educate** – inform people of the rationale for the change so that they are able to understand the reasons why
2. **Engage** – helping people to accept the change and be ready to support it in a positive way.
3. **Empower** – encouraging people to take responsibility for their own contribution to the change through factors such as trusting relationships, appropriate delegation and guiding expectations
4. **Enable** – equipping people with the correct skills/tools and removing any barriers.

Building on the expertise and confidence of individuals, is vital in delivering lasting change.



PLANNING FOR CHANGE? COMMUNICATION IS VITAL!

When planning the communication strategy, organisations need to consider:

- Creating a communication plan
- How will it be communicated? Top down/bottom up approach?
- Types and methods of communication
- Requirement to be tailored for different stakeholders
- Frequency
- Level, depth, breadth of information required

2.2

When planning for change, communication needs to be built in to the planning process from the beginning. Looking at any issues, the objectives and the audience, whether the organisation is large or small, well informed employees can have a positive effect to the change being implemented (ACAS).

Some of the approaches used to ensure change is communicated effectively include:

- The Top down approach – change is communicated direct from senior management on a whole organisational approach through channels such as notice boards, Intranet announcements or from middle manager's direct in environments such as team meetings etc. this isn't always the best form of communication as it usually excludes the reason behind why the change is required etc and so less likely to gain 'buy in' from those involved.
- The bottom up approach – involves involvement from individuals/teams at all levels of the organisation and looks at gaining support from all stakeholders. The bottom up approach often creates a sense of involvement and responsibility and can be beneficial in creating motivation for the change process to be a success.

- Two-way discussions – offers the opportunity for one to tone meetings with line managers to discuss any concerns in relation to the change, which provide line managers the opportunity to answer the employee's concerns. (management study guide 2015).

When communicating the change process, organisations will need to consider the following:

- Level – how much do employees need to know, whether there is a requirement for manager's to know more in-depth information for operational needs and workforce planning for instance. A decision needs to be made as to whether the same information is given to all employees – regardless of their level.
- Type of communication – considering what method of communication will be used to communicate the information, such as organisation newsletters, individual/team meetings, Intranet etc.
- Frequency – organisations need to decide how often employees will be updated of any developments/progress made. Regular meetings -weekly or monthly is the best way to ensure that employees of all level are up to date on specific developments.
- Support requirements – training needs, mentoring, advice and employee representation

Organisations will need to develop a communication plan to monitor each stage of the change. Within large organisations, communicating change through technology such as social media platforms allows for quick, efficient and accessible information and can be a successful method to use (CIPD 2016). McKinsey (2016) identifies that when organisations are communicating via social media, the content should have a specific purpose/meaning and include eye catching tactics which captures the interest of the audience. It is also suggested that employees would generally ignore generic organisational emails and by posting precise, eye catching information via social media, more people would be likely to read it.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING FOR CHANGE

Change is complex and has many factors to consider when planning and so there is no 1 solution to managing it effectively. There are however various factors identified which can be applied to a variety of change management situations to encourage the success of change programmes (CIPD 2019) which include producing a change plan.

There are 3 main phases when planning change:

1. Designing
2. Enacting
3. Sustaining

Change plans can assist in monitoring the success of the change

3.1

When planning change, organisations need to understand the 3 main phases of change management:

1. Designing change – developing a change communication plan which is achievable and sustainable for the future of the business. When designing the change, goals need to be realistic and measurable to allow the organisation to monitor the progress and identify any changes required along the process. Factors to consider at this stage include the level of HR support required and identifying any support or resources that will be needed. Organisations should also consider identifying change champions who can influence employees to accept the change more easily.
2. Enacting the change – usually involves identifying change leaders who can aid in communicating the main goal for the change and engaging key stakeholders. It also means that they are up to date on the most recent progress and able to easily communicate this to their teams/departments.
3. Sustaining change – involves maintaining the change continuously which may mean adaptations in the original initiative to ensure the change to continue its

success.
(SHRM 2015)

The CIPD (2016) explain how developing a change plan, can assist the organisation on staying on track and should include:

- ✓ Vision and objectives
- ✓ Activities to achieve the objectives
- ✓ Stakeholders – including employees and their roles
- ✓ communication strategies – communication plan and list of change champions
- ✓ Support required – advice, counselling, mentoring, re-training
- ✓ Timings and milestones – keeping the change on track
- ✓ Resources required – equipment, people, time etc
- ✓ Constant monitoring of activities
- ✓ Success measures

BEST PRACTICE TIPS



(365PSD.com)

- Identify stakeholders
- Planning
- Support
- Assess the impact
- Early communication
- Encourage employee participation
- Resources
- Building trust/good relationships

(Mind Tools 2019)

3.2

There are many 'best practice' approaches to implementing change within an organisation:

- ✓ There are many 'best practice' approaches to implementing change within an organisation:
- ✓ Identify stakeholders – consider all those whom the change will affect, how it will affect them and ensure that senior managers support the change
- ✓ Planning – ensuring the correct people are in place to design and implement the change
- ✓ Support – gaining a 'buy in' from those who the change will affect directly or indirectly, including identifying 'change champions' to see through the change and support those who are resisting the change
- ✓ Assess the impact – considering the impact the change can have both positive and negative
- ✓ Early communication – often, honest and clear
- ✓ Encourage employee participation – allowing regular feedback from employees and motivate employees to continue with the change process

- ✓ Resources – ensuring individuals are equipped to adapt to the changes by ensuring the correct resources, training and support is available
- ✓ Building trust – HR professionals can assist in this area by ensuring there is an awareness of how change affects people as well as understanding the importance of effective change planning.

(Mind Tools 2015).

Upon implementation of the change, it is important that organisations remain agile and monitor the changes in order to identify any needs for further adaptations to sustain the change. HR professionals can contribute in promoting a change ready culture by accepting the above factors can all contribute to successful change management.

MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CHANGE

There are various methods which can be used to monitor and assess the impact which the change has had on the organisation with both qualitative and quantitative tools. These include:

- Consultation – eg. interviews, focus groups etc
- Using technology – large scale surveys, feedback on internal social media, internal apps etc
- Process/performance assessments
- Feedback – via customers/stakeholders, employees, outside agencies
- HR data – turnover figures, sickness figures, training data levels
- Comparisons – against internal objectives, success measures

Upon implementation of change, it is vital that organisations monitor the change progress ongoing and regularly review the impact the change has had. By assessing the impact it allows the organisation to identify benefits brought by the change, and also identify any risks.

There are numerous ways to monitor and assess change, with one of the widely used methods of holding staff consultation groups to provide feedback. This allows instant feedback from employees to evaluate employee's thoughts and feelings about the implemented change. It also provides an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns about the change to the organisation, as well as allow employees to feel valued and listened to. Holding staff consultation groups also allows the organisation to provide regular updates about the change to employees and the opportunity to discuss any successes to encourage the participation in the change. Holding departmental groups as part of this process also allows to identify pockets of any issues with the change in particular departments and allows the organisation to discover adaptations for individual departments as part of the change process (Fair Work Ombudsman).

Another method would be using statistical HR data to assess the impact of change. Considering factors such as recent employee turnover figures and sickness figures can give some indication of whether employees have embraced the change or not. Organisations require data to assess the progress and assess any risks associated with the change implementation as well as any change in behaviours to identify key drivers of change. Organisations can use various tools including data reports, communication tools such as email or internal communication platforms to engagement surveys. Together, the data collected can provide organisations with an understanding of trends and an insight for any adaptations needed to ensure the change is successful (AIHR Digital).

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