

**BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the
Workplace**

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

LEADING AND IMPLEMENTING WORKPLACE CHANGE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an analysis of the challenges faced by the British global fashion retailer, called NEW LOOK outlining the change management plan which could be used in the navigation of the constantly changing retail landscape in the UK.

NEW LOOK is currently operating in a very competitive market with a high threat of new entrants because of the low barriers to entry caused by the rising number of online platforms facilitating the emergence of new competitors. It has a strong buyer power with its consumers

having a variety of choices and at the same time being the price-sensitive type because of the easiness of access to information as well as price comparisons. The high threat of substitutes is activated by the consumers ability to access alternatives like secondhand clothing. The Intensifying competitive rivalry faced by NEWLOOK is based on the crowdedness in this fast-fashion industry full of both established as well as emerging players.

Furthermore, the PESTEL analysis conducted on NEWLOOK shed more light on the impact of external factors like, technological advancements, the changing consumer preferences, as well as changing environmental regulations on the company's business operations.

Addressing these challenges, has required NEWLOOK to embrace digital transformation by enhancing an online presence, expanding e-commerce capabilities, and leveraging social media. The company must now focus on innovating new products by introducing trend-driven designs, collaborating with influencers, as well as offering personalized experiences.

NEWLOOK should start prioritizing customer experience through the provision of seamless omnichannel customer service, developing loyalty programs, as well as utilizing personalized marketing. The company needs to start improving operational efficiency by streamlining its supply chain processes, making technological investments, and implementing cost-saving measures. NEWLOOK is working on addressing sustainability as well as ethical concerns, prioritizing sustainable sourcing, reducing environmental impact, and ensuring ethical treatment of workers.

A change management plan involving the utilization of Kotter's 8-Step Change Model as a framework, placing more emphasis on the importance of urgency creation, a guiding coalition building, as well as effective communication of the vision to the whole company. It is as important to address the existing challenges in the organizational culture of the company in order to have a successful change implementation. An effective implementation of this plan, will enable NEWLOOK to navigate the evolving retail landscape, challenges solidifying its position as a major player in this fast-fashion industry.

1.INTRODUCTION

Workplace change is an ongoing process in any business these days. It involves number of initiatives, ranging from small adjustments to major company transformations, including mergers and acquisitions. To lead and implement workplace change, management must be able to deal with all aspects of the on going transition. An effective leader is one who has good problem-solving skills , communication skills and interpersonal skills. By creating a shared vision, building consensus among stakeholders, as well as communicating effectively the reasons plus benefits of the change they are proposing. A leader builds a culture of trust, open communication, and collaboration ensuring employee engagement, support, and empowerment in the process of change according to Cappelli (1997). They take a proactive approach in dealing with any expected resistance, and provide training while supporting and acknowledging the achieved success. By doing this the leader smoothens the transition, achieving the desired outcomes of change in a workplace.

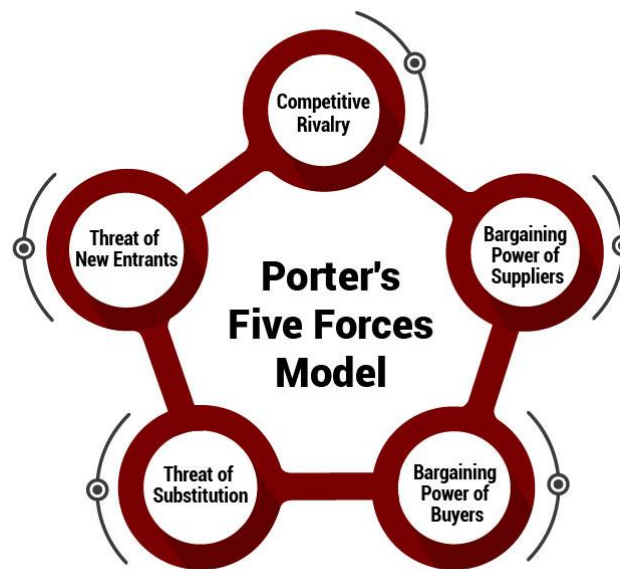
2. NEW LOOK'S BUSINESS HISTORY

Being a British global fashion retailer NEW LOOK has been a major player in the high street fashion industry for more than 50 years. However in the 2010, the company started facing challenges because of the increasing number of competitors at the same time their consumer

preferences were changing rapidly. The company sales started declining because of the online retailers' competition. So, NEW LOOK came up with a transformation strategy, which focuses on making an improvement on their online presence, revamp the formats of their stores, and expand their product range adding menswear as well as childrenswear according to Steele (2000).

Although the company has seen some success, NEW LOOK has not stopped navigating UK's complex retail landscape. Facing financial difficulties in recent years, has made it restructure its debts and close some of its stores. NEW LOOK continues to adapt to the changing customers needs as it maintains its position as a leader in the high street fashion industry.

2.2 .Analaysis of NEW LOOK using Porter's five forces



The strategic management instittue(2025)

An analysis of NEWLOOK through the lens of porter's five forces indicated the following below accoding to Grundy (2006).

Threat of new entrants

NEWLOOK is faced with a high threat of new entrants because of the low barriers to entry. New brands can easily emerge. The rise of social media influencers that has come with the increasing number of online platforms has made this very possible. That means that NEW LOOK needs to remain in a state of constant innovation to maintain its competitive advantage.

Bargaining power of suppliers

The impact of NEWLOOK's bargaining power of suppliers is moderate mainly because ethe company has estalishde a large supply chain, which minimising dependence on individual suppliers. However the company must maintain strong relationships with suppliers to ensuring consistency in quality and pricing.

Bargaining power of buyers

NEW LOOK is faced with a high bargaiing power of buyers since consumers now days have a variety of choices in market, and they have become more price-sensitive. Online platforms give buyers easy access to information, allowing them to make price comparisons. Which

means NEW LOOK has to offer exclusive styles on a competitive price while maintaining a strong brand image.

Threat of substitute products or services

NEW LOOK experiences a high threat of substitute products. Consumers have easy access to substitutes products, like secondhand clothing, as well as products from other fast-fashion retailers. As such, the company must focus on differentiation of itself by producing unique designs, as well as strong brand identity.

Competitive Rivalry

NEWLOOK experiences a high competitive rivalry power because of the already existing highly competition in the fashion industry, with many established players as well as emerging brands competing for the same market share. For NEWLOOK to remain relevant, they should constantly adapt to changes in market trends, by investing in to stay ahead technology and marketing at the same time maintaining a strong brand presence.

If the company effectively addresses the above challenges, it will be able to navigate the competitive landscape as well as maintain their position as one of the leading players in UK's fast-fashion industry.

2.3. PESTLE analysis of NEWLOOK.

An analysis conducted on NEW using the PESTLE framework was able to provide the following information below according to Venkatachalam (2018).

Political

Changes in the UK government regulations such as environmental regulations, Labor laws, as well as trade policies are impacting New Look's operational costs. Moreover, political instability in key markets geographical areas is also disrupt their supply chains, hence affecting consumer confidence.

Economic

Europe's economic downturns are leading to a decrease NEWLOOK's consumer spending, ultimately impacting sales, with inflation can increasing production costs and reducing consumer purchasing power. Furthermore, the fluctuating in exchange rates are affecting the profitability of the company's international operations.

Sociocultural

Fashion trends change constantly, which requires New Look to adapt its product offerings to meet the changing customer preferences, with social media platforms playing a crucial role in trends shaping by influencing consumer behavior. Today's consumers are more concerned about environmental and social issues, which impacts their demand for fast fashion.

Technological

The rise of e-commerce led to a transformation in the retail landscape, which requires New Look's investment in its online presence. Digital marketing channels have become a key tool for NEWLOOK to reach its target consumers as well as build the brand awareness. Technology is being used in the optimization of supply chains, improving efficiency, and reducing costs.

Environmental

The changing climate change is impacting the supply chains and increasing the cost of raw materials. Furthermore, the changes in waste disposal and pollution regulations are impacting the production processes.

Legal

Consumer protection laws about product labeling, safety, and advertising are impacting NEW LOOK's operations. Protection of intellectual property is key in the fashion industry to preventing counterfeiting. While data privacy and security laws are impacting how NEW LOOK is collecting and using customer data.

What new look should do

Because of the above issues, NEWKLOOK should do the following to survive according to Buye (2021).

- NEW LOOK should adapt to the changing trends and consumer preferences.
- NEW LOOK should invest in e-commerce and digital marketing which is key for them to reach the target audiences.
- NEWLOOK must adopt sustainable practices and address ethical concerns to attain long-term success.
- NEWLOOK must Mitigate risks associated with political, economic, and environmental factors is crucial.
- NEWLOOK must Adhere to legal as well as regulatory requirements to maintain a strong brand image.

3. EVALUATING OF KOTTER'S AND LEWIN'S CHANGE MANAGEMENT MODEL

Both Kotter's 8-Step and Lewin's Three-Step Change Model are largely recognized frameworks used to guide organizational transformations. Although they have a common goal of facilitating a successful change, they use different approaches with their own weaknesses and strengths according to Mendy (2022).

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model has the following strengths below

The model is comprehensive in a way that it offers a detailed, step-by-step guide that covering key aspects of change management, from creating a sense of urgency to anchoring new approaches in the culture.

The model is action-oriented by emphasizing the importance of proactive leadership and continuous communication in the entire change process.

The model focuses on people by recognizing the crucial role of individuals and teams in driving and sustaining change (Laig and Abocejo, 2021).

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model has the following weaknesses below

In terms of complexity, the eight-step process can be perceived as overly complex and time-consuming, particularly for smaller or less complex change initiatives.

In terms of linearity, the model may not adequately address the iterative and cyclical nature of change, where adjustments and revisions are often necessary.

The model offers limited guidance on resistance by acknowledging the need to address resistance, however it doesn't provide specific strategies for overcoming it (Laig and Abocejo, 2021).

Lewin's 3-Step Change Model has the following strengths

In terms of simplicity the model offers a straightforward and easy-to-understand framework for to help people understand the change process.

The model focuses on psychology by emphasizing the importance of addressing the psychological and emotional aspects of change, such as resistance and fear of the unknown. In terms of flexibility the model is applicable to a wide range of change situations, from small-scale adjustments to major organizational transformations according to Alvarado (2024).

Lewin's 3-Step Change Model has the following Weaknesses

The model has oversimplification and it may not adequately capture the complexity and nuances of real-world change initiatives.

The model offers very limited guidance on implementation where by it outlines the three key stages, but it doesn't offer specific tools or techniques for implementing change.

The model has a high potential for resistance because during the "unfreezing" stage, if not handled carefully, there is a possibility of the creation of significant resistance and anxiety among employees according to Alvarado (2024).

How best to choose the right change model

Choosing the most effective model is highly dependent on the specific context plus nature of the change initiative.

Kotter's model is more suitable for large-scale, complex transformations requiring a structured as well as comprehensive approach. On the otherhand, Lewin's model is more appropriate for smaller-scale changes where a simpler and more flexible framework maybe needed.

On the whole, a successful change management strategy requires a combination of elements from different models, tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the company according to Nwachuku et al (2023).

However when choosing the most appropriate model , the company must consider the following below.

When selecting the right model organizational culture of the company is very important. The existing culture significantly impacts the effectiveness of any change management approach. The commitment of the organisation's leadership to change plays a very important role. Strong leadership support is vital in driving and sustaining desired change. Employees of the organisation must be fully engaged because this increases buy-in and reduces resistance.

Clear and consistent communication should be maintained throughout the change process and at the same time regular evaluation and adjustment of the change management approach is very important for the successful change.

Careful consideration of these factors and selection of the most appropriate model or combination of models, will increase the organisation's chances of successfully navigating change and achieving their desired outcomes according to Nwachuku et al (2023).

3.1 Applying change management in NEW LOOK using Kotter's 8-Step change management model.

Applying Kotter's 8-Step Change Model to New Look requires the company to carefully follow the steps below as suggested by Trawick and Carraher, (2023).

1. Creating a sense of urgency

Start by highlighting the need for change by emphasizing the increasing competition, while sales are declining as well as the need for the adaptation to changing consumer preferences. Use data in the demonstration of the urgency, like the declining market share, increasing customer churn rates, and competitor analysis. And ensure open communication by engaging in open as well as honest discussions with employees, where they highlight the potential consequences of inaction.

2. Build a Guiding Coalition

The company should assemble a cross-functional team, including all stakeholders, such as marketing, operations, design, and technology, through which they should select the most influential leaders with credibility and influence within the organization, ones capable of encouraging open communication, collaboration and trust, among team members.

3. Develop a Vision and Strategy

NEW LOOK should define a clear and compelling vision by articulating a shared vision for the future of the company, they develop a strategic plan, outlining the main initiatives and actions required for the achievement of the vision, including digital transformation, product innovation, and supply chain optimization. Stakeholders' input and feedback should be sought to ensure buy-in and alignment.

4. Communicate the Vision

The company should maintain a clear and consistent communication of the vision and strategy to all employees, using various communication channels, such as meetings, newsletters, and intranet platforms. Making sure that the organization's leadership buys into the idea of change in order for them to champion the change vision.

5. Empower Action by Removing Obstacles

Identification and removal of barriers that could hinder the implementation of the change, such as inadequate training, outdated systems and resistance from certain departments is crucial for the success of the change process. NEW LOOK should empower employees to take ownership of the change and make decisions, as well as provide them with the necessary resources, such as tools, training, and budget, that supports their efforts.

6. Generation of Short-Term Wins

The company should get into the culture of celebrating early successes no matter how small, so as to maintain momentum and motivate employees. By acknowledging and rewarding the contributions of individuals and teams driving the change and communicating successes throughout the company reinforcing the positive impact of the change.

7. Consolidation of Gains and Producing More Change

NEW LOOK should capitalise of buildin on early successes as a foundation for further change and improvement by continuously identifying and addressing remaining challenges and obstacles and reinforcing new behaviors and practices through training, coaching, and performance management.

8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture:

NEW LOOK should integrate new approaches into daily operations and processes by developing new leadership roles and responsibilities supporting the new way of working. At the same time there should be continuous celebration and recognition of success to reinforce the positive impact of the change.

If NEWLOOK can carefully follow the steps above, the organisation will get an effectively navigation of the challenges of change and in the end emerge as a stronger, more competitive player in the UK fashion industry.

3.2 Evaluating the leadership style applied by NEWLOOK in the change management process.

New Look's success in the navigation of change would largely depend on its leadership style. As per NEW LOOK the transformational leadership approach would be the most likely to generate the effected desired results.

For the effective change management NEW LOOK should have the required visionary leadership capable of articulating a compelling vision for the future of New Look, emphasizing the need to adapt and innovate. Such a vision provides inspiration and motivation to employees, embracing the necessary changes.

Since open and transparent communication is crucial, NEWLOOK's Leadership should effectively communicate the rationale for change, addressing employee concerns, and celebrating successes to maintain momentum. Empowering employees in the making of a bugger contribute to the change process. Leaders need to actively seek input, delegate responsibilities, as well as foster a culture of ownership and accountability.

The leadership should maintain a supportive approach by providing the necessary support, resources, and guidance to employees as well as addressing challenges they face in the journey of change. They should provide training and development opportunities, and recognize and reward individual and team contributions accodring to Cai, (2023).

However implimntaion of the desired change comes with many potential challenges as shown below.

There were mainly chanlenges in the appication of the change, including the rsistance to change, adaptation to the evolving circumstances and maintainanc eof the momentum Employee resistance to change is often experinced when applying a A top-down approach or when there is limited clear communication. Also, maintaining momentum or sustaining the momentum during the change process is challenging andhence the leaders are required to constantly reinforce the company vision, by addressing setbacks, and celebrating successes. Furthermore adaptation to changing circumstances very difficult since the retail landscape is constantly evolving. Therefore leaders need to be agile and adaptable, in making adjustments in their strategies as needed in order to respond to new challenges and opportunities.

Embracing a transformational leadership style where the vision, communication, empowerment, as well as support, are prioritized will enable NEW LOOK to increase its

chances of conducting a successful change management process where its long-term goals are achieved regardless of how dynamic and competitive the UK fashion industry they are operating in is according to Cai (2023).

4. THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON THE CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS AT NEW LOOK

In any company the organizational culture plays a very important role in the success or failure of the proposed change management initiative. As per NEW LOOK, its existing organizational culture could significantly influence the employees perception, reaction to, as well as embrace of change as suggested by Errida and Lotfi, (2021).

Some of the potential Cultural Factors influencing change at NEW LOOK include the following below.

The existence of a culture that prioritizes avoiding risk, in NEWLOOK could potentially create resistance to change initiatives in cases where there is a lot of uncertainty or disruption.

For a case where there is a high score on the Power Distance index, a hierarchical culture could potentially hinder open communication and bottom-up innovation, which is very important in the implementation of a successful change.

If NEWLOOK encourages a culture that prioritizes experimentation and learning from failures it is more likely that the employee would quickly adapt to the new challenges.

Maintaining an open and transparent communication channel in NEWLOOK could build trust as well as understanding, which reduces resistance to change.

By maintaining a culture where employees feel empowered to take ownership and make contributions to change initiatives could increase engagement as well as drive successful change outcomes as suggested by Errida and Lotfi, (2021)..

NEW LOOK's strategies for addressing the cultural factors

For NEWLOOK to address the organizational cultures affecting change within the organization, they should do the following.

- a) NEW LOOK's management needs to conduct a thorough assessment of its existing culture to assist in the identification of potential barriers and change enablers.
- b) NEWLOOK's management should ensure that leadership behaviors and communication styles are well aligned with the desired cultural values.
- c) NEW LOOK's management should tailor their communication strategies to the specific cultural nuances of the organization.
- d) NEWLOOK should maintain employee involvement by actively involving employees in the change process as a way of increasing buy-in as well as ownership.
- e) NEWLOOK's management should make continuous celebration and recognition of individuals as well as teams embracing change and making positive contributions.

Careful consideration and addressing the cultural factors at play could increase NEWLOOK's possibility of attaining the successful change management and achievement of the desired business outcomes as suggested by Errida and Lotfi, (2021)..

4.1 NEWLOOK's change management plan.

For NEW LOOK to attain the desired change, a well structured Change Management Plan is very important. Therefore NEWLOOK's changes management plan goes as follows.

Vision

NEWLOOK's vision is to become the leading omnichannel fashion retailer, which will be known for its stylish, sustainable and affordable products, and also deliver an exceptional customer experiences.

KEY INITIATIVES

NEWLOOK will implement the following initiatives below to for a successful change management .

1. Digital Transformation

NEWLOOK shall enhance the company's online presence by improving their website functionality, user experience, as well as mobile optimization.

NEW LOOK will expand their E-commerce capabilities by investing in omnichannel capabilities, that include buy online, pick up in-store as well as click and collect. The company is set to boost their social Media engagement by leveraging social media platforms as a means of expanding their marketing, customer service, as well as trend forecasting.

2. Product Innovation

NEWLOOK will be focusing on the production of new fashion trends in a sustainable and ethical way. This will involve making exclusive collaborations where the company partners with influencers and designers in the creation of a set of unique and exciting collections. The idea is to personalize experiences by offering personalized product recommendations as well as styling advice.

3. Customer Experience:

NEW LOOK will be providing seamless customer service across all channels, whether online, in-store, or on social media. Loyalty programs will be developed and enhanced as means of rewarding repeat customers. Moreover marketing will be personalized by utilizing data analytics to personalize marketing campaigns as well as product offers.

4. Operational Efficiency

NEWLOOK will conduct a supply Chain optimization where by the supply chain processes will be streamlined to reduce lead times and create an improvement in inventory management. An investment in technology will be done to improve inventory management, point-of-sale systems, and data analytics and identification as well as implementation of cost-saving measures across all areas of the business will be done.

5. Sustainability and Ethics

The business will engage in sustainable sourcing practices, by using recycled materials and conducting ethical manufacturing, to minimize environmental impact through the waste reduction and energy efficiency initiatives. All this will be done whilst ensuring that transparent about sustainability practices are done ensuring ethical treatment of workers throughout the supply chain.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

As per NEW LOOK. Kotter's 8-Step Change Model will be applied and the following steps will be followed.

1. Create a sense of urgency by highlighting the idea of increasing competition, while sales are declining as well as the immediate need for adaptation to changing consumer preferences.
2. Build a guiding coalition by assembling a cross-functional team of leaders capable of driving the change initiative.
3. Develop a vision and strategy where a clear and compelling vision for the future of New Look is defined.
4. Clearly and consistently communicate the vision and strategy to all employees within NEWLOOK.
5. Empower action by removing obstacles and empowering employees to take ownership of the change.
6. Generate short-term wins ensuring the celebration and recognition of any early successes to maintain momentum.
7. Consolidate gains by building on successes and addressing remaining challenges.
8. Anchor new approaches through the integration of new approaches into the company culture.

ADDRESS CULTURAL FACTORS

- a) Conduct a cultural assessment where the company gets to identify potential barriers and enablers to change.
- b) Alignment of leadership behaviors with the desired cultural values.
- c) Tailoring of communication strategies to the specific cultural needs of the organization.
- d) By actively involving employees in the change process.
- e) By celebrating and recognizing individuals and teams willing to embrace change.

THE CHANGE MANAGEMENT'S KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Achieving the desired change will entirely depend on the listed factors below.

- Strong leadership support and commitment.
- Consistent and clear communication
- Employee engagement to ensure buy-in
- Stakeholders' adaptability as well as flexibility
- Continuous learning and improvement

IF NEW LOOK implements this comprehensive change management plan, the company will be able to navigate the challenges of the fast-changing retail industry effectively as well as achieve the desired long-term goals.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, for workplace change to be successful at NEW LOOK, a multi-approach that is also long enough, addressing both the external and internal factors impacting the organization is very necessary. This report reveals a dynamic fast-paced UK fashion industry where competition is intense, consumer preferences evolving, and technological advancements rapidly taking place. By leveraging Kotter's 8-Step Change Model which serves as a structured framework for guiding the transformation, NEWLOOK can be able to successfully implement the desired change and objectives. The company would be able to create a sense

of urgency, build a strong guiding coalition, and effectively communicating the vision, as well as increase employee engagement and drive buy-in.

Furthermore, is it important that NEWLOOK addresses the cultural factors that may hinder the successful implementation of the desired change. Encouraging a culture of innovation, open communication, as well as employee empowerment are essential in overcoming the possible resistance and ensuring the successful implementation of change initiatives.

An effective navigation of these challenges, prioritizing customer experience, embracing digital transformation, and placing more emphasis on sustainability, will enable NEW LOOK to solidify its position as a market leader in the fast-evolving UK fashion industry.

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