

BMSW6103 Leading and Implementing Workplace Change

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Table of Contents

Contents

Introduction	1
Current State of St Giles Hotels	1
Overview.....	1
Current Operations	1
Involvement with St Giles Hotel.....	2
Recent Change Initiative	3
Background to Change Initiative	3
Description of The New Change	3
Roll-out of the System	4
Benefits and Challenges	4
Recent History and External Impacts	5
Changes in Hotel Industry	5
Impacts of Economic Uncertainty	5
Rise of Digital Disruptions.....	6
Evaluating Change Management Models.....	7
Kotter's 8 Steps Model.....	7
Beckhard and Harris 3 Phase Model	7
Burke Litwin Model	8
Incorporation of Strategic Change Issues	8
Evaluation of Impact of Culture	9
Existing Culture at St Giles	9
Impact of Recent Change Initiatives	10
Required Cultural Shift.....	10

Overcoming Resistance to Change	11
Development of Future Change Plan	11
Details of Proposed Plan	11
Staff Training Plan	12
Communication Plan.....	13
Evaluation Approach.....	14
Conclusion	14
References.....	15

Introduction

With the rapid expansion of technology, the competitive dynamics of business are rapidly shifting. Therefore, organisations are facing new challenges which is making it increasingly difficult to stay ahead of the competition. St Giles hotel is one of the major medium sized hotel chains which has seen some major growth in recent times. As the growth and technological development is occurring, the organisation needs to change their approach which needs to go through a major change management. This report will discuss all these aspects in order to identify and suggest change management which aligns with the contemporary trends. Furthermore, in relation to this transition, conceptual frameworks for managing organisational change are explored. Lastly, a tactic for the ongoing transformation of ST Giles Hotels is proposed after an examination of the change's cultural dimensions.

Current State of St Giles Hotels

Overview

In 1975, the first ST Giles Hotel opened in York, a city in the United Kingdom, with sixty rooms (Rose, 2014). The hotel was built by the Giles family. Around the next three decades, the company steadily grew by acquiring smaller, independently owned hotels all around the UK and Ireland. As of 2010, ST Giles Hotels' portfolio included twelve hotels with a combined total of over 800 rooms (Denning, 2020). The charity has long been known for its hospitable and personalised care in historic homes in both urban and rural settings. With over a thousand employees in 2015, ST Giles Hotels was under pressure to update some parts of its operations to be competitive in the rapidly evolving digital hospitality industry. This was done by ST Giles Hotels even though the family still owned it.

Current Operations

In 2022, ST Giles Hotels will have 7 sites across the UK and Malaysia with a combined capacity of 1143 rooms in London, alone (Price, 2016). A private interest in the company is maintained by the Giles family. Hotel sizes vary, but predominantly the

properties would be mid-range sized in general, from a hundred plus rooms to 400 odd rooms, with the Central London property also being the largest of all. Consisting of an inventory of 732 guest bedrooms, St Giles London benefits of a remarkable location in a prime spot of the Capital City. Customers for business and pleasure alike may take advantage of ST Giles Hotels' prime locations in picturesque cities and towns. In most cases, guests may take advantage of a variety of services, including on-site dining options, bars, and restaurants, as well as private meeting spaces and complimentary WiFi. As a provider of high-quality service that has managed to preserve its classic charm, the organisation has earned a stellar reputation.

The majority of clients used to prefer contacting ST Giles Hotels via phone, email, or snail mail to book their hotel rooms before the present transformation initiative. In addition, several properties were accepting walk-in bookings. The tariffs were set in the same way in all the hotels. The company's inability to optimise pricing or connect customers through new digital channels was a direct result of its antiquated computer system (Khoo, 2023). The workers also voiced their displeasure with the tedious process of manually maintaining bookings and data. While ST Giles Hotels did keep turning a profit, its management saw the need to update its systems and software to keep up with the dynamic hospitality industry.

Involvement with St Giles Hotel

As part of my room divisions management role within ST Giles Hotels since 2018, the system transition project implementation of 2023 gave me invaluable experience in the hospitality industry and allowed me to participate directly in overseeing the inner workings of the company related to phased out systems updating process, enabling me to play an important role during the pre-assessment stages and roll out. In preparation for the upcoming transition to a new booking platform, my duties included assisting several departments with research and administrative tasks. I worked out of the London headquarters. In order to assess the requirements and opportunities of the system, I worked closely with the IT department. In addition, I collaborated with other department heads to learn about staff needs and identify parts of the present process that may be

improved with the use of new technology. During my internship at ST Giles Hotels, I learned a lot about the inner workings of the firm and about the challenges and opportunities of implementing large-scale organisational transformation.

Recent Change Initiative

Background to Change Initiative

ST Giles Hotels understood the importance of appealing to millennials and the need to improve their interaction with this generation of customers who value digital experiences highly. While the firm had always focused on serving the elder generation, its executives felt that a new booking system was essential to entice families and younger clients (Carlino, 2017). Millennials are more inclined towards online purchases, UI friendly approach and customised experiences. Hence the organisation undertook a change initiative based on this focus which allowed them a more modern and unified communications and addressed the needs of their desired consumer base.

Description of The New Change

The change management option occurred in such a notion that there will be a system overhaul which will be provided by Stayntouch. This will allow the organisation to design their offerings in a more personalised fashion which customers can dynamically adapt to. On top of that, the system allowed for integrated social media channels, so businesses could promote sales and ask for feedback (Silver, 2017). In an effort to provide a touchless convenience, contactless check-in options were added alongside a mobile key feature for cell phones. Employees enhanced marketing tactics and customised the in-person experience to cater to millennial interests by gaining information into customer demographics and preferences through back-end capabilities. Using performance metrics, they were able to determine how well ads and web listings recruited younger clients. Finally, ST Giles Hotels were able to build a mobile app with push alerts and plan virtual events thanks to the new platform. All of these things are crucial for capturing the attention of this tech-savvy generation and keeping it throughout their interaction with the business.

Roll-out of the System

The transition strategy was phased in to begin the execution of the shift at the beginning of 2022. Each hotel's backend operations and website were transferred to the new Stayntouch system in two months in waves of five properties each. Because to this, the simultaneous interruption across locations was lessened. After receiving thorough training, employees were equipped with the expertise to utilise the latest technology tools and digital marketing techniques. In June of 2022, the entire system migration was complete. Online traffic and conversion rates on promotional campaigns both improved, and the number of contactless reservations made by younger visitors increased, as predicted by early statistics. Careful implementation not only allowed ST Giles Hotels to effectively incorporate the unique technology, but it also reduced risks.

Benefits and Challenges

There have been certain challenges with the new Stayntouch system, but there have also been many benefits. Simplified processes and the consolidated dashboard have been well-received by the workers, who report more cooperation as a result (Zabin, 2022). Guests are even more satisfied as a consequence of the enhanced mobile experience, which allows for quicker reservations, more payment options, and more customised contact. Data analytics is allowing for a more personalised approach to marketing that focuses on millennials. However, there were several difficulties along the way to the new platform. Offering comprehensive training to staff was critical for maximising the system's capabilities. The new technology and the third-party solutions that were already in use were confused at first due to integration issues. Customers who had been utilising digital services for a longer duration also had an adjustment period. Overall, ST Giles Hotels is getting ready for the future by updating both its backend systems and the technologies that guests use to engage with the hotel. On the other hand, extending integrations and consistently making smart use of links are crucial for maximising long-term benefits. The reason for this is the rapid digital transformation happening in both the hotel industry and customer preferences.

Recent History and External Impacts

Changes in Hotel Industry

Changes in consumer tastes and technological capabilities have both contributed to dramatic upheavals in the hospitality industry in recent years. Modern travellers, especially those in the Millennial and Gen Z groups, want seamless and individualised digital experiences, much as in other service sectors. Most customers use their smartphones to look for information, book rooms and check in. The norm now is mobile-first interactions. In the same breath, review platforms like TripAdvisor have elevated the importance of a company's reputation and happy customers to new heights. These trends were already well underway when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, but the need for contactless services to guarantee safety drove them even farther (Aksoy et al., 2022). Hotel managers had little choice but to quickly transform their services into digital or virtual counterparts as travel ground to a standstill. Touchless rooms, mobile keys, remote check-in/check-out, and digital amenities have become regular features as a result of this. And because of the epidemic, a lot of property owners rushed through system upgrades that were on their to-do lists for a while. For hotels to thrive in the future, they need to be experts in data-driven personalisation, predictive marketing, and creating flexible work and meeting spaces to accommodate the needs of people with hybrid lives. In order to stay ahead of the competition, platforms need to be updated to accommodate the ever-changing industry.

Impacts of Economic Uncertainty

There are a lot of problems that have arisen because individuals and businesses are cutting back on spending on luxury things like vacations since the probability of a recession is rising. In order to adapt their dynamic pricing plans to the changing demands of their customers, hotels use advanced revenue management systems that allow them to closely monitor macroeconomic indicators (García-Gómez et al., 2023). More focus is being put on loyalty programmes as a means to support the retention of current customers and the rise of bookings from groups that are less impacted by

economic downturns. Businesses faced uncertainty and dangers due to the long-term effects of the UK's unfinished Brexit deal, which delayed important investment decisions and international travel for a number of years. Worldwide, operating costs are pushed up by double-digit inflation, which happens at the same time as increases in the prices of food and products, labour, and financing rates. Within this inflationary environment, hotels use highly efficient technology to better manage increasing expenses, streamline operations, and maximise revenues. To further fight inflation whenever possible, strategic alliances also aim to secure bulk discounts.

Rise of Digital Disruptions

The impact of the internet has been enormously disruptive to the hotel industry during the last 20 years. Travel agencies and guidebooks were formerly the go-to resources for vacationers looking to plan their trips and book accommodations. More than 80% of all reservations and plans are now done online (Buhalis et al., 2019). The rise of hotels' websites as their primary point of sale has prompted the creation of advanced digital platforms to streamline the reservation process on mobile devices and desktop PCs. First impressions matter, and visually attractive information and user-friendly interfaces go a long way towards making a good one. How simple it is to shop around and how straightforward the checkout process can have a significant impact on conversion rates.

Social media has further transformed the marketing field by facilitating two-way communication between businesses and their consumers. Hotels may keep up a consistent presence on major channels by creating accounts on sites like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. In this way, hotels may advertise specials, boost their image, and address guest inquiries in a timely manner. Strategic social advertising efforts can create emergency reservations by targeting customers who are very important to the company (Lee et al., 2023). Inbound links and engagement are two more components that play a role in the vital organic search results. At the same time, many tourists now rely on internet guest reviews more than any other factor when deciding where to go and what kind of hotel to stay in. Websites like TripAdvisor, which compile millions of reviews and posts, empower consumers but also expose them to new risks to their

reputation. Predicting and fixing customer service issues before they happen is essential for keeping online photographs intact. On top of that, feedback may be used for ongoing product enhancement by analysing the sentiments and words included in reviews. If handled properly, review systems can eventually help businesses and customers become more loyal.

Evaluating Change Management Models

Kotter's 8 Steps Model

The 8 Steps change management model by Kotter is often mentioned by hotels as a useful foundation for evaluating methods to handle strategic changes. Starting with creating a sense of urgency, the phased technique moves on to building a strong coalition that will propel the process forward. Next, a plan for transformation is created and shared, while obstacles are lowered to allow for broad participation (Pollack and Pollack, 2015). From there, it's all about achieving short-term successes to build momentum, and new projects are constantly built upon the success of previous ones. To keep improvements going strong over the long haul, it helps to solidify the gains and incorporate new methods into the company's culture. To increase buy-in from internal stakeholders and decrease risks associated with the transition to new property management systems, ST Giles Hotels should follow Kotter's methodology to each component in a systematic way.

Beckhard and Harris 3 Phase Model

A more systematic approach, such as the Beckhard and Harris 3 Phase Model, would have helped ST Giles Hotels build its Procedure Management System (PMS). While Phase 1 vision setting was the responsibility of senior leadership, early concerns may have been mitigated if department heads had been more actively involved in communicating the need for change and gathering feedback from frontline staff (Errida and Lotfi, 2021). Making sure the new system design was better suited for operational procedures may have been achieved using this participative approach. The second phase of pilot testing the project management system (PMS) with a small set of users

before implementing it company-wide allows for refinement based on real lessons learned. Shortening the pilot at ST Giles raised the risk of ignoring user experience and technical issues that would affect adoption in the long run. Finally, transitional coaching methods were underutilised, even though Phase 3 stresses making change "part of the furniture" via ongoing training support. This meant that the new technology couldn't permanently become part of the way things were done. For ST Giles Hotels, a more seamless strategic transition and management of employee concerns would have been possible with a mix of directive and participative leadership styles. Selected applications of the Beckhard and Harris model's methods for stakeholder engagement and change facilitation best practices may have achieved this.

Burke Litwin Model

Organisational performance and change as seen via the Burke-Litwin model reveals factors that could influence transformation efforts. Both transformative and transactional impacts are a part of these factors. The PMS implementation at ST Giles Hotels may have overlooked important transformational components because it mostly dealt with transactional factors like training, objectives, and regulations. The model highlights the interdependence of various leadership styles, organisational culture, and climatic conditions during periods of strategic shift (French et al., 2021). Staff morale would have been less affected by a stronger adaptable leadership approach that tracks the shifting dynamics inside the company. A more thorough diagnosis of cultural norms at the outset of the change and more regular analysis of changing attitudes during the process may have helped senior executives address the underlying resistance. A more orderly transfer may be possible with the help of cultural change management strategies based on the Burke-Litwin model.

Incorporation of Strategic Change Issues

To keep up with the demands of the dynamic hotel industry, ST Giles Hotels' owners realised they needed to modernise their ageing property management system. Opportunities to streamline processes, enhance the customer experience, and increase profitability through data-driven insights are emerging as a result of technological

advancements. To add insult to injury, ST Giles' competitive advantages were under jeopardy since rivals were implementing new PMS systems. But there were many human factors that needed to be considered in order to spearhead such a massive organisational change.

The capacity of top-down companies to effectively implement strategic change hinges on their leaders' openness to different perspectives and willingness to adapt. Instead of just directing the transition, management needed to give employees the authority to identify requirements, get buy-in for ideas before implementing them, and own the results. To effectively handle uncertainty while still reaching one's goals, one should use a mix of individual-centred coaching methods and strategic visioning.

Similarly, it was useful to conduct an in-depth examination of the present organisational culture to learn about the anticipated reactions to disruption and the places to focus change management initiatives. Deploying the PMS had an immediate impact on the hotel's operations due to the time and resources available, thus it was crucial to keep guests informed of any changes and minimise service delays. Finding a happy medium between delivery rate and organisational readiness was key to overcoming these challenges during the transition.

Evaluation of Impact of Culture

Existing Culture at St Giles

As a local chain that had been around for a while, ST Giles Hotels had established a fairly consistent organisational culture. The importance of continuity and interpersonal relationships was highlighted because the firm has historically been run by a family. The organisation's core values centred on being dependable and consistently delivering high-quality service to its dedicated customers. Both the longevity of their employment and the breadth of their collective knowledge of the needs and preferences of local consumers were sources of great pride for the staff (Hotels, 2016). Deliberative and centralised decision-making was common in an effort to keep regular activities running

smoothly. Although this culture had served ST. Giles well in the past, it also made it difficult to welcome new ideas. Strategic improvements that relied on technology ran the risk of upsetting long-established practices that workers had come to rely on and saw as fundamental to the company's character. Because of this, the necessity of regulating the development of cultural activities became apparent.

Impact of Recent Change Initiatives

St. Giles Hotels' long-standing tradition of stability-oriented attitude helped and hurt the PMS implementation effort. A positive aspect is that workers were able to adapt to new technologies and adjust their job responsibilities due to their loyalty and self-control. However, despite these long-standing conventions, the endeavour also ushered in an enormous shift in the centre of authority, predictability, and repetition. Important parts of the culture that had been around for a long time might have been weakened by this. Some residents were reluctant to embrace technology because they associated ST. Giles with continuity and individualised care, which they felt would be jeopardised by its introduction (DOONEY, 2024). Staff members who were having trouble adapting to the new environment resigned and workflow was disrupted because change management failed to adequately address these cultural consequences. If leaders had encouraged a spirit of adaptability and conducted a more thorough assessment of the change's cultural implications from the start, perhaps the transition period's effects would have been less severe.

Required Cultural Shift

To fully take advantage of the new PMS system and meet future business expectations, ST Giles Hotels has to undergo some cultural transition, even if its current culture is focused on stability. Staff members needed to be encouraged to think creatively, adaptably, and continuously develop during the transformation if the strategy changes were to be sustained. Adapting to new comfortable habits, data-driven decision-making, and updated processes were constant demands on the personnel. This culture shift presented difficulties for some long-term employees who had become used to following standard operating procedures. The leadership's capacity to communicate and be

honest was vital in encouraging small changes in thinking by highlighting the long-term advantages of cultural adaptation for the success of the organisation and employees' job security. The leadership of these groups was essential in facilitating these reforms. St. Giles Hotels had to foster a culture of adaptability if it was to thrive when the market conditions changed.

Overcoming Resistance to Change

Because of the essential cultural shift, several people at ST Giles Hotels had difficulties. Leaders realised that views don't change suddenly in the mindset of people, but rather evolve over time as a result of life's experiences. They put much of their energy on getting the word out about how flexibility may help the company weather digital disruptions in the future. There was an initial emphasis on how cultural flexibility increased overall job security through improved competitiveness. Leaders facilitated workers' adoption of change by highlighting commonalities wherever they might be found. This allowed for the smooth rollout of new technologies while simultaneously reinforcing crucial continuity traits, including individualised service. As time went on and employees saw directly how new procedures increased productivity and satisfied customers, resistance to cultural shift decreased. Promotions were more readily granted to younger workers who were already used to the rapid pace of change. It was beneficial to gain buy-in for new initiatives from employees by being patient and understanding while dealing with cultural differences.

Development of Future Change Plan

Details of Proposed Plan

In order to maximise operational efficiency, enhance the quality of the customer experience, and cultivate an innovative culture, the leadership team has proposed a comprehensive set of modifications to be implemented over the next three years. A major focus was the installation of Provider XYZ's sophisticated forecasting and allocation tool as part of their new revenue management system. The manual pricing approaches were replaced by this system since they had grown outmoded. This state-

of-the-art technology would provide the staff with sophisticated analytics that would boost revenue all year round by letting them set dynamic room rates in response to specific performance metrics, market tendencies, and upcoming events. In addition, the design proposed integrating the iOi door lock system—supplied by Vendor ABC—to enable contactless processing, which would allow for mobile check-in and keyless entrance. Through a revenue-sharing arrangement with a food operator, an underutilised banquet space may be transformed into an all-day café that is open to the community. Within a span of six months, the room would undergo renovations. The objective of this third-party-administered store was to gain new consumers while releasing resources for the corporation. Managers meticulously planned installation dates, associated expenses, and contingencies to guarantee that improvements be executed without interruptions. ST Giles Hotels proposed a bold three-year renovation to foster a future focused on customers and a culture of adaptability. To achieve this goal, they implemented modern technology, optimised the state of facilities, reevaluated roles and procedures, and enhanced support for lifelong learning.

Staff Training Plan

There will be three phases to the training approach. First and foremost in Phase 1 is the rollout of the revenue management system. Provider XYZ will be offered a five-day instructor-led course that is necessary to become a certified user. No manager, assistant manager, or front desk supervisor will be exempt from taking this class. Following that, they would hold two-day basic training courses for linked staff members. New technologies are the main emphasis of the second phase. Every single employee has completed the online training on mobile check-in and keyless entry devices within two months of the installation. Additional virtual reality training will be provided to the front desk workers in order to enhance workflow efficiency. Aiming to enhance booking estimates, revenue managers were provided with personalised coaching. Advanced skills will be established in the third phase. Directors were offered the chance to participate in a leadership curriculum that specialised in facilitating agile transformation. Among them are virtual challenges that participants might overcome in order to develop their coaching and engagement techniques. Only a select few would be able to become

internal instructors by successfully completing an officially approved training evaluation course. Participants will also be asked to demonstrate their understanding through implementation projects and assessments administered at the conclusion of each session. They measured the impact using anonymous peer feedback on leadership and customer satisfaction scores on newly deployed systems. In order to iteratively adjust the training design based on the lessons learnt, the department leaders will review the analytics. The goal of the personalised and staged strategy is to deliver comprehensive role-specific training over 18 months.

Communication Plan

As part of their commitment to open and consistent communication during the transition, ST Giles Hotels will create a comprehensive strategy to include all relevant parties. An internal communication working group with representatives from several departments will be tasked with coordinating future change updates. General managers will receive training on how to effectively communicate progress and resolve concerns with their colleagues face-to-face. An intranet portal will be set up expressly for the purpose of hosting detailed project schedules, commonly asked questions, and feedback mechanisms for personnel. Along with the page, managers and trainers will be able to reinforce programmes and solicit input to address any gaps through monthly all-staff video conferences and departmental town hall meetings. In order to highlight noteworthy accomplishments, digital screens and banners will be strategically positioned around the hotel buildings. They will construct one-pager profiles that showcase the experiences of pilot teams to inspire additional individuals to participate. Conversations on personal progress will integrate the influence of change. Executive summaries written by members of the external advisory board will provide valuable information, and positive press will inspire fresh approaches to rallying community support. These two changes are inevitable. St. Giles Hotels will continuously evaluate its communication channels and modify its message based on feedback to ensure that clear, multichannel communication promotes understanding and involvement in its strategic change.

Evaluation Approach

In order to keep tabs on how far down the path to change they are, ST Giles Hotels will employ a thorough evaluation process. Key performance measures will be regularly monitored against targets in order to quantify the financial and customer experience effects. Monthly occupancy rates, average daily rates, revenue per available room, and guest satisfaction scores obtained from online reviews and surveys are some of the indications here. Interviews, focus groups, and surveys of both staff and consumers will be used to gather preset success indicators for the purpose of evaluating pilot programmes for new initiatives. Improvements in operational efficiency may be better understood with the use of internal process metrics, such as the amount of time saved by automated systems and the amount of productivity gained by workers. Staff engagement, understanding, and views of the changes and how they will impact their duties will be evaluated through training assessments, management discussions, and quarterly focus groups. An outside advisory group will be brought in to offer a dispassionate assessment of the changes. Results will be frequently assessed to see whether adjustments are necessary, and leadership will get frequent updates to make responsive improvements and stay on pace to meet their strategic goals. By consistently monitoring and improving, this thorough and multi-layered review method will ensure that the change plan's components all contribute to the anticipated goals.

Conclusion

St. Giles Hotels has begun an extensive transformation effort with the goals of modernising operations, enhancing financial performance, and improving the entire client experience. Through investments in IT modernization, employee education and development, data analytics, and a supportive work environment, ST Giles is positioning itself to maintain its competitive edge in an ever-changing industry. We overcame obstacles related to change management, cultural shifts, and stakeholder buy-in by being transparent and strategically planning ahead of time. By consistently evaluating its success and refining its approach, ST Giles may thrive despite changing market conditions, thanks to the improvements mentioned in this article. By focusing on change

management methods and utilising creative solutions, they are laying the groundwork for long-term competition.

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