
AN INTER-RELATED MODEL OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT

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Effecting changes in a complex environment of organizations marked by internal pressures is to be pursued in the light of the recent models of change management. The models approach change from different theoretical view points. This paper suggests a model of change that attempts to encompass the complex and the dynamic nature of change in an inter-related manner. The sequential method follows a five step process which are systematically aligned to one another so that, in the end, real change is brought about. The CMBE method draws upon the MBE method to make change an inclusive programme.

Change, as we understand it, means making things different or new. It is an unceasing continuous or discontinuous activity that has backward and forward chaining. Management of change is always in relation to the current or existing, and future or to-be-introduced variables. Management of change which has scientific and artistic components, involves integration with the current (inherited from the past)-backward chaining and the future-forward chaining.

Successful management of a change situation requires a wholistic understanding of the circumstances surrounding a situation, understanding of the interactions and awareness of the potential impact of associated variables (Paton and Mc Calman, 2000). The process of change and its management is thus to be conceived on a wider plane. Different approaches to change management unravel the intricacies of change by drawing upon different concepts.

An Overview of Change Models

Lewin's model has three phases of change: Unfreezing, Moving/Changing and Refreezing. In the unfreezing phase individuals are encouraged to give up old and worn out habits and non-progressive attitudes. The mindset is changed from indifference to acceptance and willingness to accept change. Moving stage is characterized by the gradual acceptance of the organizational vision, mission and strategy. The learned behaviors and attitudes are reinforced and institutionalized in the refreezing phase.

The model of Gilley and Maycunich (2000), takes a cyclical form in that assumptions lead to choices, which lead to commitments

and actions, which are the products of reflection. Reflections as the first mental act entails 'thinking aloud' as to the realistic and unrealistic paths contained in the programme, the suitability and the range of application, the value and the utility of the change programme and the way of enlisting the commitment of all the participants. All the change programmes are to be guided by certain assumptions pertaining to the necessity of change, rate of acceptance by the members, the change components and the implementation process. These also clarify the path to be chosen in the total change management programme.

Based on the assumptions and the total content structure of the change, rational and realistic choices may be made. The choices have to reflect the capabilities at the infrastructure, human resource and the management levels. And each choice is to reflect the overall change objectives. Any lackadaisical methods of treating the choices made is not going to help the change programme. Total Unconditional Commitment, TUC, if generated among the change members will take the programme to higher and higher levels of efficiency. TUC refers to individual, group and organizational commitment that cannot be compromised in any part of the programme. The actions to be initiated as part of the change is an outcome of the reflections, assumptions, choices, and commitments made.

The Action Research Model of Change outlined by Cummings and Worley (2001) has eight phases: Problem Identification, Consultation with a behavioral science expert, Data Gathering and Preliminary Diagnosis, Feedback to a client/group, Joint Diagnosis of the problem, Joint Action Planning, Action and Data

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Gathering after Action. The planned change envisaged in the action research model has an iterative cycle of research and action in which initial research about the organization provides information to guide subsequent action (Cummings and Worley (2001).

In the model of Roberto and Levesque(2005), change is planned in the following manner: Chartering is the process in which the organization defines the goal of the change programme, its scope and the way people will work with one another, Learning refines and fine-tunes the ideas through experimentation before the full launch of the programme, Mobilising aims to engage and collect the hearts and minds of the people by the use of symbolism, compelling stories and metaphors, and Realigning is aimed at reshaping the organizational context through readjustment of a set of activities and redefinition of roles and reporting relationships.

The models explained above are characterized by formulations and abstractions that cannot be immediately applied to the change settings. Further they distance themselves from the reality of organizational action and development by concentrating on a stage approach, which, in actuality, introduces discontinuity into the scene. The relations mooted do not always hold well in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of the change programme. The pace of change increases at such alarming rates that it is difficult to cope with them. Businesses and managers are now faced with dynamic and complex operating environments (Paton and Mc Calman, 2000). Further, instead of understanding change in a segregated manner, change management can be said to be composed of numerous interrelated systems and subsystems (Paton and Mc Calman, 2000). Change is to be inclusive of the environment, organization and the members who are the actual carriers of change. In order to make changes inclusive and interrelated, a different model called an Inter-related Model of Change Management is suggested.

Inter-related Model of Change Management

The Interrelated Model does not discount the other models discussed in relation to the complex and dynamic organizational process that we term 'Change Management'. Instead it attempts to supplement the existing views so as to refine our approach to change management. The variables included are not entirely new, rather they are related in a different way.

Forces of Change

The triggers of changes are not mere trends but the workings of large unruly forces (Stewart, 1993, cf. Luthans, 1993) that demand radical and fundamental modifications in order to survive in complex environments. The triggers of change emanate either from the external environment or from within the organization that yearns for new adjustments and alterations. The specific triggers that stimulate change include the variegated nature of upcoming organizational structures, marked by horizontalisation and networking patterns, replacement of the manufacturing operatives by knowledge workers as worker elites, (Luthans 1993) and redefinition of work by constant learning, higher-order thinking and reconfigured relations. Globalization is deconstructing the traditional form of employer-employee relations, besides giving new dimensions to customer relations, quality perceptions, worker diversification and career paths. Information and Communication Technology has captured the imagination of individuals such that marketers have to redefine the strategy to cope with the fast spreading online purchase, retail boom and related innovations. Knowledge management in the context of knowledge explosion requires the use of modern technology and software in the actual running of the organization.

Management philosophy shapes the purpose, manner and procedure of change. We are on the threshold of world-wide, crucial shift in the management philosophy and practice, a radical paradigm shift that encompasses the changing consumerist

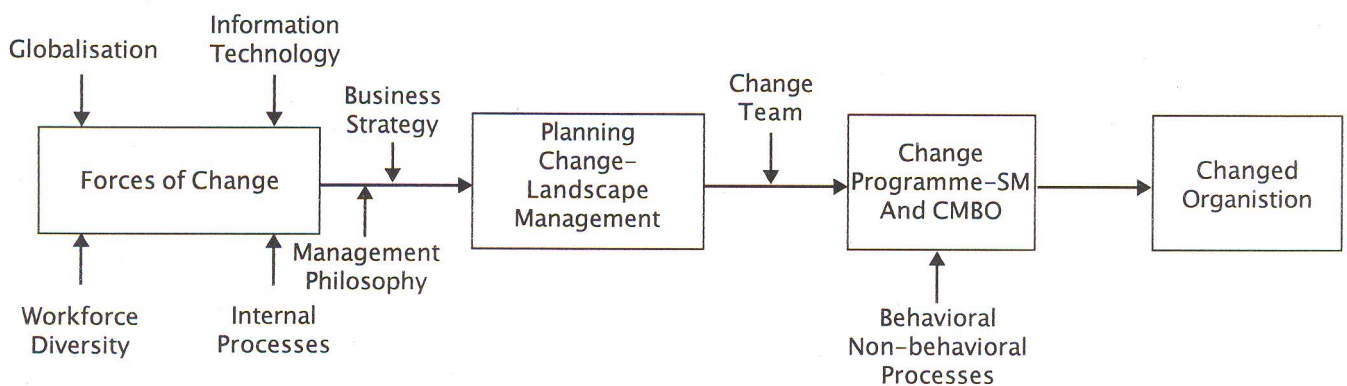


Fig.1. Interrelated Model of Change Management

tendencies, world-wide markets and greater accessibility to the consumers and the clients.

The underlying rationale of change is expressed in the philosophy that clearly explicates the goals and objectives of the organization in view of the paradigm shifts. The established mission and goals that the organization upholds always direct and guide the organization. The survival instinct in the face of innovation and expansion is contained in the philosophy of the top management.

Business strategy, formulated at the corporate level, business level and divisional levels always necessitate appropriate change programmes so as to meet the challenges thrown up by the strategy. Internal pressures or the internal chaotic situation that are likely to follow as a reaction to the organization's plans, are to be corrected or put in order. Organisational chaos is developed not in abnormal times alone; disorder can prevail in otherwise normal situations due to a sudden change in a particular aspect. An organization that works to the fullest capacity can well be at breaking point because of severe work pressure. Introduction of new methods of work/relationships keep the organization balanced and at an optimum state.

Change Initiative

Upon the necessitated condition of the change programme at particular level(s), planning change comes from the top management following direct knowledge or indirect knowledge regarding the absolute or the relative justification of, say, financial reforms, human resource reforms, etc. The sensed or the felt inadequacy in a certain area of functioning prompts the change management to initiate the change programme.

A core change team who are professionals in the field and experts in the art and science of change management undertake the responsibility of change. The external core change team may be assisted by the internal resource persons. In some cases the internal resource persons themselves may form the change team.

The drawing up of the Landscape of the Change Management implies the setting in which change is to be effected. The current and the existing configuration of the organizational activities, processes and the available resources constitute the landscape. Reference to the landscape enables the change consultant to acquaint himself with the state of the organization as and when required. Change Management Landscape contains the following:

- Nature and number of people working in the organization
- Organisation structure
- Communication process

- Decision-making process
- Leadership style
- Compensation structure
- Technology
- Work design
- Other identified processes

Change Programme: The Sequential Method [SM]

Unlike the stage method that divisionalises the change programme, the Inter-related Method follows a sequential form, in which the continuity of the programme is kept high.

• Search Analysis

The actual launch of the programme is to be preceded by a process of search analysis. It is conducted to find out the exact nature of the different facets of the organizational activity that has a preponderant effect on the implementation of the change programme. The search may be conducted in two ways: informal search analysis in which the change consultant/agent collects information using informal means like casual conversations, observations and participative meetings. Participative meetings with the key persons in the organization helps the consultant to gather vital information related to subsystems that affect change programme. The following are the subsystems searched to find out the nature of organizational functioning: functional groups, departments, work teams, reporting relationships, coordination and control systems.

Break Open

The search analysis yields information pertinent to the change management programme. In the process the consultant obtains information that blocks/prevents the change process. The blockages may be from the behavioral/non-behavioral processes. Behavioral processes, otherwise called soft factors (Sirkin, et.al, 2005) refer to personality processes, emotional resistance, and motivational tendencies. The hard factors imply non-behavioral stable processes like structural configuration, technological state or infrastructural patterns that are to be fulfilled to sustain the organizational change programme.

In the break-open procedure, the consultant exposes the deficiency that is characteristic of the individuals, groups and organization. Along with the behavioral exposure, the inadequate non-behavioral facets are brought forward for modification.

Change initiation

Introduction of change programmes proceed in a systematized manner so as to guard against any form of transition overload.

The gradual process of change initiation overcomes the strange syndrome that the members may be subjected to because of the internal and external negative movements that militate against change. The change initiation may have the following procedure: cognitive changes comprising concept learning and knowledge acquisition, behavioral modification programmes in which the principles of association and reinforcement are used to enhance behavioral repertoire and the nurturing of emotional intelligence that equips the members with the capacity to maintain self-regulation and the ability to understand the feelings of others. Once these general conditions are satisfied, the total change programme may be subdivided into different components of behavioral and knowledge arenas. The three broad divisions that emerge from this are structure related, people related and technology related. Generally the change strategy may have any one or all of these levels, namely individual level, dyadic level, group level, plant level, departmental level and organization level. Depending upon the number of members involved, the nature of the change strategy and the components, an appropriate level may be chosen.

Merging activity

This process of change management revolves around proper merging and integration. It basically means that change components are to be merged with the existing process of work flow and organizational practices. The old or the pre-existing pattern of work methods/processes, which are to be transferred to the current system, attunes to the new form so that the rhythm of work is maintained.

Merging, as such, is not easy considering the problems of transfer of learning and technology. Another difficulty encountered is one of interference, which can be retroactive and proactive interference. In retroactive interference the "new" interferes with the pre-existing one in that a new work design learned hampers the old and useful method. In proactive interference the old system creates difficulty for the new. Consequently, the changed method gets prevented. Interference and subsequent depletion of work efficiency may stem from work load, which is a natural outcome of any change programme. The overload may be either actual or perceived. In either case, special effort is required from the part of the change consultant so that it is reduced.

Follow –up procedure

Once the merger is accomplished satisfactorily, a period of time, say two months, may have to be allowed for consolidation. Consolidation and the stabilisation of the change programme depend upon the earnestness with which the previous steps

are enacted.

The follow-up procedure reveals the inadequacy and the faults that have cropped up in the change programme. The areas where the programme went wrong can be easily located by the consultant.

The methodology for the follow-up procedure includes interviews, questionnaires and observations. A situation has to be created that provides the participants with freedom of expression. Based on favourable or unfavourable feedback, the consultant may initiate steps in tune with the purpose of the change programme.

Change Management By Objectives [CMBO]

Another approach to change management is formed from the strategy of MBO. MBO as a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of work involves the joint participation between the management and the employees in setting goals and its accomplishment. This approach, referred to as the CMBO, is implemented in the following manner:

- Establishment of change objectives by the core change team
- Sharing and discussing of objectives with the members
- ABC (affective, behavioral and cognitive modification) Programme for the members
- Formation of change teams
- Joint goal allocation and target setting
- Periodic review and appraisal of progress
- Reinforcement and resetting strategies
- Stabilisation of the change programme.

Implications

The Inter-related Model in general contributes towards an effective change programme since it approaches the change process from a relational perspective. The change programme is to be effected by considering the ground realities of the environmental forces, external and internal, that initiate change. As the change programme aims at a tangible change, the inter-related model suggested adopts a participative method in which the members get the feel of the change about to be initiated and the cognitive clarity on the components of change. The sequential and the CMBO methods draw upon the resources of the organization, the landscape of which delineates the exact nature of the organization that is to encompass change in a meaningful way. The major features of the model are that it is flexible, responsive, accommodative and creative and works towards enhancing the organizational competencies.

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