

Change management essay essay sample

[Business](#), [Management](#)



' Assumptions about the nature of managing and the nature of change outcomes are associated with different images of managing change' This essay has been devised to offer discussion points to ultimately challenge ones perspective in regards to the notion of managing change as a coach. The essay attempts to introduce the concept of change management through the sphere of coaching. A comprehensive study into the role of a coach is provided whilst exploring key theorems such as classic organisation development as well as other more modern advancements to the theories. In the context of exploring the role of coaching itself, the essay then attempts to identify suitable areas or occasions for when managing change as a coach may be appropriate. Ultimately all issues that are raised for debate are done so whilst considering; peer reviewed, accredited, academic opinion.

Change management could be seen as a wide reaching and potentially all encompassing concept for individuals, or indeed organisations. Particularly when considering that many organisations now exist within a modern and dynamic globalised business landscape. Indeed change itself could be viewed as an essential part of a progressive society. With this thought in mind one may be drawn to the view that it would be prudent to obtain a firm grasp of the issues and challenges that change inevitably offers. Yet it could be naive to suggest that this task is entirely void of complexity. It could possibly be the case that each particular challenge may require a certain style or image of managing for change. For this particular study we focus on the role of managing change as a coach.

According to the McKinsey survey of 3, 199 Executives conducted in 2008, as noted by Kotter (2012), more than 70% of change efforts fail to achieve the

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goals they originally set. This particular statistic is somewhat alarming, yet perhaps conceivable when considering the vast complexities associated with adapting to change scenarios. Hutchins (2013, p. 2) extends upon this notion to highlight the most common contributory causes of change failure, being; ‘ employee resistance, weak project management office and too many competing initiatives’. With this knowledge in mind one may be drawn to the idea that planning for change is not only essential, but needs to be comprehensive and relevant.

Perhaps the specific strategies employed, or methods adopted, rely heavily upon the particular stage in which the change scenario falls. As previously mentioned the focus of this essay is on the role and suitability of managing change as a coach. The role of a coach in managing change may require a unique set of endeavours. Indeed the coaching image of managing change appears to focus upon the relationship; development and nurturing of employees, as they will ultimately be the ones called upon to play active roles in participating in change.

As such, one may be drawn to the view that establishing a charter of; trust, shared values and benevolence may increase the likelihood of positive, successful outcomes (Ladyshevsky, 2010). However, achieving such an outcome may require the consideration and ultimate implementation of change management theory. One such established theory which includes various periods of advancement and contributing developments is that of organisational development.

Palmer et al (2008), provide a comprehensive study on the evolution of classic organisational development theory and practice. A brief summary of this evolution includes the contributions to development from; Lewin, McGregor, Black, Beckard, Collier, Whyte and Likert in the 1940's to 1950's era. A summary of the main 'take outs' of focus from this period include the emphasis on; interpersonal relationships, leadership quality, group focus, team building, as well as involvement of individuals within the researching process (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). Likert then extended upon these notions in the 1950's-1960's focusing particularly within the participative management realm. The outcomes of these studies could be viewed as the reiteration or further confirmation that best practise within an organisational sense includes an overall focus and commitment towards human relations.

Further contributions throughout the 1950's to 1960's period from the likes of Trist, Deming and Juran paid greater attention to the productivity and quality of work-life. What could perhaps be perceived as the revolutionary aspects of these studies is the more micro or operational specificity application, from an implementation perspective. That is, notions such as; creating self-managing workgroups, more challenging jobs and total quality management are brought into spotlight to perhaps provide greater practical or operational guidance to managers (Collins et al, 1989).

The final key evolutionary contribution to classic organisation development theory, as detailed by Palmer et al (2008), includes the notion of strategic change - as developed by Beckhard and Worley. The focus of these contributions centre around the requirement of change needing to be

strategic, aligning with organisational culture as well as the adaptability to the technical and political environment. An empirical observation of the classic organisational development theory as a whole may draw one to the belief that organisational development requires a longer term focus and an 'all participating' approach. Particular focus may need to be paid to the development and maintaining of relationships between individuals as a means of harmonising, in an objective sense. This is where the role of a coach may be critical (Cummings & Worley, 2013).

From a coaching perspective, one may need to be aware of the potential drawbacks or shortfalls that may exist, when seeking to apply the classic organisation development theory. French et al (2005) detail widely acknowledged problems or shortfalls to the classic organisation development model. This includes the perceived difficulties surrounding establishing the relationship link between organisation development and creating a clear ability to identify organisational effectiveness.

Additionally French et al (2005) focus on the difficulty to quantify where other external or internal factors may be of lesser, equal or greater influence to overall outcomes. An apparent lack of theory in this regard may make it difficult for the manager (coach) to identify where particular methods employed led to specific outcomes. Additionally one may need to consider the universality of organisation development and whether it is indeed relevant and workable in all cultures, or perhaps limited to the western sphere, particularly when operating in a globalised business landscape.

Perhaps it could be said that classic organisation development provides foundation principles or guidance for managers (coach). Indeed this could be said when considering the Lewin Change Management Model, and the underlying notion of unfreezing the established methods, implementing change to then refreeze after change has occurred (Burnes, 2004). Whilst this may appear abstract or lacking a degree of substance it could be viewed as a potential mission statement when seeking to implement change. However, one may deem it prudent to explore additional theories that could offer further substance and ultimately assistance when seeking to implement change, from a coaching perspective.

As previously mentioned one may find faults or limitations in the traditional organisation development theories and feel compelled to study the advancements of the original themes. One such area could be that of appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry seeks to focus on what is currently working best, to build further from those foundations (Watkins et al, 2011). This process seeks to achieve the optimum future design. The steps in this process are outlined by Palmer et al (2008), as discovering, building, designing and sustaining. By its very nature appreciative inquiry is inclusive in an operational wide sense.

That is, individuals within the organisation are encouraged to take an active role in participating in change by creating a landscape which attempts to harness positive change and self-organisation. However Coach's may need to be aware that appreciative inquiry does have the potential to be limiting in scope of assessment as result of the catalyst for change relying heavily

upon the underlying individual's assertions or response (Bushe & Kassam, 2005).

The concept of organisation development theory, known as positive organisational scholarship, is an emerging phenomenon that could be described as being in its infancy. However what this theory may appear to lack in age or breadth of applied experience, it potentially makes up for in intrigue and interest to prompt further consideration. Cameron et al (2003, p. 4), explore the emergence of positive organisational scholarship and state that positive organisational scholarship ' does not represent a single theory, but it focuses on dynamics that are typically described by words such as excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, resilience, or virtuousness'. In short, positive organisational scholarship could be seen as seeking to understand what the best approaches of the human condition are by providing a heavy tilt towards positivity.

Whilst the positive organisational scholarship approach may differ to the classic operation development theories, it does appear to provide somewhat of a framework for managers to study and identify areas of positivity. The ability to highlight such areas could be crucial when seeking to implement change, particularly when focusing on the notion of seeking to manage change as a coach.

With considering the aforementioned theories and discussion points, it may now be prudent to offer a more focused debate on the role of the coach itself. Wales (2002, p. 275) discusses coaching through the sphere of ' the inner and outer model of development' whilst stating that ' internal qualities

of self-awareness and confidence enable and stimulate the five external competences of management, assertiveness, understanding difference, stress management and work/life balance’.

Wales (2002, p. 275), concludes that ‘ coaching substantially increases the effectiveness of the links between self-development, management development and organisational effectiveness’. It is perhaps with these comments in mind one may be drawn to the view the coaching (potentially unlike other change management images) focuses heavily on encouraging the underlying employee’s to utilise their initiatives. It is then perhaps the imperative of the manager (coach) to create an environment of positive influence to ultimately encourage individuals to perform at their best.

Implementing change in an organisation, from a coaching perspective, may increase in likelihood of positive outcome where individuals take ownership of the change by embracing the ultimate objective. Perhaps the coach’s role is less authoritative and more supportive and embracing of the individual’s unique set of attributes. The coach may still play a role in shaping an individual’s progress, yet perhaps ultimately relies upon the synergising of a variety of individual’s skills and talents. This may lead one to the view that the role of a coach may be best suited to facilitating incremental change over the medium to longer term, as opposed to more swift changes in organisational direction. This point could be further advanced to suggest that the role of coaching includes that of human resource development and management whilst encouraging an environment that is inclusive to all the players within the change process.

In conclusion, this essay has attempted to offer a historical view of the organisation development theory that underpins the role of a coach, whilst also exploring the more modern day advancements in academic theory. Arguments have attempted to be substantiated through the consideration of accredited, academic opinion, to suggest that organisation development theory is dynamic and subject to ongoing change and advancement. It is ultimately argued that the role of a coach could be to embrace the relevant ongoing academic research and findings, whilst remaining focused on utilising the underlying attributes of the individuals in which they are seeking to take along the change process. Many hands may lighten the load, though the direction provided by the coach may provide the conduit to success.

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