

Example of heart of change book review

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Introduction

Organizations are being forced to change rapidly in order to survive today's technological world. Due to globalization, computerization and advanced communication, these changes are expected and must be acknowledged as the new norm. Today's world requires managers to understand, accommodate and use change as part of their jobs. If the reality of change is resisted, conflicts are bound to arise leading to job dissatisfaction, reduced performance, and reduced morale. Dan Cohen and John Kotter in their book, *The Heart of Change*, interviewed several successful leaders in order to discover what contributes to successful change. According to these successful change occurs when people are made to feel different. They lay emphasis on the dynamic of seeing and feeling change. Analysis and reports do not lead to successful change; rather people must see the problems and know how to change them. This will ultimately change their behavior (Kotter & Cohen P. 7). The problem must be seen physically and the urgency to solve them felt, only then does the process of behavior change begin. This process of seeing and feeling change has been analyzed in eight steps that Kotter and Cohen came up with in order to facilitate successful change in organizations. The major point of this process is to help the people to change in behavior, which happens mainly through speaking to people to know their feeling. These steps showcase the factors in a working environment that contribute to employees' motivational change and thus improved performance. The steps include; increment of urgency, guiding team building, getting the correct vision, buy in communication, empowering

action, short- term wins creation, not letting up, and making the changes permanent.

Discussion

Increase urgency

The largest obstacles to change are immobilization, complacency, hesitation and the mentality that one can not be made to move. These are behaviors brought about by fear, anger, pessimism and arrogance, all of which make people resist change. Overcoming these obstacles requires an urgency sense to be created by the management; this allows for creation of positive and new emotions in the employees (Ivancevich, Kenopaske & Matteson, 2005). This can be performed through giving an inspirational speech or showing a video of a once happy client who is now dissatisfied. This has to be done carefully since most people are sensitive to change and may develop different emotions on each method preferred by the management. The employees need to be shown the need for change through tangible evidence if necessary. This allows the employees to think and find a way of improving that. When at least 25% of the total number of employees is convinced about change and its necessity, there is a guarantee of successful change in the organization.

Building a guiding team

When a sense of urgency is created, the right people are brought together. This means these people are the right team who are trustworthy and can commit to doing the right job. This step shows how a team confronts the traditional issues of an organization that are avoided. This means that the

people involved are completely honest with their emotions and behavior, the unspeakable is spoken so that there can be a connection to the feelings of others without fear. For example if management does not admit that there is a problem the employees just speak in low tones and mistrust the company. Before building a team with capacity, right skills, credibility, and leadership, the issue must be faced. This is because successful change happens where there is honesty and openness. By having a dialogue helps to bring the best and worst of people on the table thus giving an opportunity for the leader of change to emerge. This is someone who feels the urgency to pull people together in defining a guiding team. This however is difficult to accomplish because in most organizations the management comes up with the project and approves it then hands over the responsibility to senior management who appoints the group to work on it. These structure are rarely a success because they are made up of wrong persons and complicated governance. Moreover the team members have other commitments required of them and so they can not give themselves fully to the effort of making change. Members of a guiding team should therefore speak what is on their minds without blaming one another. They must trust one another. Kotter and Cohen say that all problems of a team can be overcome through confidence and courage. With this the guiding team is set.

Getting the right vision

A good organization should know the vision for the future and what change is needed to achieve that vision. This makes the wanted future more probable. A vision that is conveyed in few minutes is catchy and makes people take action more efficiently than a detailed analysis can. A change in

transformation is difficult and requires an orthodox approach to avoid over analyzing anything. A vision that moves people and puts into consideration the speed of change introduction is developed. The vision should be prepared with a strategy to achieve it and plans made to implement the strategy in consideration with the budget of the organization.

Communicating for buy in

Initiatives on transformational change generate a lot of information. The message on change is often lost and most people do not see the need to have incorporated change. Organizational change aims at getting people on board to work towards the same goal. Information given should be relevant and give people the chance to question. This is because good communication is not just about transferring data. Change always comes with conflict and an honest and open dialogue is important. According to Kotter actions speak volumes. If a gap is left between actions and words, there is growth of a force of cynicism which is very destructive. This leads to change being undermined. The behavior of the people in the organization must therefore be in line with the vision and communication must be kept simple to avoid anger, confusion and distrust.

Empowering action

In an organization, some managers are the obstacle. People feel the urge to have change but the managers do not approve of it. The policies, processes and structure of the organization may also bind those people who want to make change (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). This is dis-empowerment which makes people program their mind to what and what can not be done. Such

bosses need to be showed the need for change through new roles. People with experiences regarding change should be used in the organization in order to boost confidence. Achievement should be rewarded and optimism built using inspirational stories. The experienced persons ought to be credible enough to convey stories of success. If this does not happen consultants could be ignored and new members crashed by the structure of the organization.

Creating short term wins

Momentum, optimism, and a sense of achievement are required for large scale change. Thus it should be attained quickly. Short term wins give feedback about the strength of the vision and strategies made, it recognizes and encourages those working towards achieving the vision, attracts those who are inactively involved through building faith in the effort, and it takes power away from cynics (Ivancevich, Kenopaske & Matteson, 2005). Starting too many projects at the same time should be avoided to prevent chaos and late wins. Instead wins that are short term and can be achieved easily and cheaply should be made visible and possible.

Don't Let up

Change should be a continued effort and it ought to be sustained till the vision comes to reality. Problems Situations and structures that empower people should be created to allow them to take risks and solve problems with no fear. Removing the obstacles in structure and policies of an organization is essential; empowers people and creates a leeway for them to be innovative and solve intractable problems in the organization. Successful

change tackles the problems of political and bureaucratic behaviors (Buchanan & Badham, 2008). Work that wears people down and with no relevance to today's world needs to be gotten rid of. This allows for time creation in order to continue with the change efforts and the daily jobs at the same time. However, according to Cohen these two duties should be assigned to different persons. This is because workforce diverts the urgency of change thus making people leave the change effort incomplete. For change to be successful people need to connect with vision.

Making change stick

In making change, culture should be put last and not first. To make change stick it is embedded in the organizations' culture. Change does not stop rather it looks for new methods of working successfully to obtain true culture change. Making change stick is about; attaining tangible results fast and ensuring the embedment of change, binding new behaviors and results together by showing people about the organization's care, strengthening the new culture by coaching and training of staff, rewarding those who act in line with the new norms through giving them visible and influential positions, and not quitting till the desired results and behavior are attained.

Conclusion

Kotter and Cohen indicate that successful leaders of change find problems and get solutions to the problems through compelling and engaging people to situations that allow the change of behavior. An approach that is driven by people is recommended to make it easier to see reasons for change. It is indicated that most people embrace change only when they are showed the

truth because it influences the feelings they have. Clearly the spirit of change lays in emotion. The eight stage model can be implemented in many large scale organizations in the world to bring change. This is because change is the need of time and all nations require these strategies to shine. It would be help achieve a lot if people work sincerely, collaboratively and enthusiastically to bring change. There should be honesty and open mindedness in organizations in order to achieve the visions stated. As Kotter and Cohen advised the core method to do this is see, feel and then change not analyzing thinking and changing.

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