Change junctures in the change management process

Critical change junctures in the change management process at Spectrum sun-Glass Company

1. Introduction

In the simulation undertaken, I am the Director of Product Innovation under the unit handling Research and Development for a company called Spectrum sun-glass Harvard (2012). I am very passionate about sustainability and would be very like the company to offer " green products to its clients. At a recent company retreat, I tried sharing the discussion I had had with the Vice President of our biggest retail customer, Bigmart; in which he had intimated that Bigmart was about to require all their suppliers to, " go through the Green Certification process." As I proceeded, most of my colleagues were displeased; with the Chief Finance Officer, Paul D'Arcy and the Vice President for Operations Luke Filer, coming out very strongly, against my proposal. I however received support from the Vice President (VP) of Sales and Marketing, Leslie Harris and Vice President (VP) for Human Resources, Mary Gopinath. As a compromise, the CEO appointed me as the head of a team from the different departments to develop a plan that is acceptable to all. As I lacked any formal authority, I had to rely on my personal credibility which was quite high at this point.

2. 0 Section 1: 1 st decision: Hosting a town-hall meeting in week 25 and the reasoning behind.

To start with, I undertook a range of decisions to raise my personal credibility and increase awareness. For instance, in week 0-24, I had private interviews with colleagues (particularly those opposed to the initiative), I received

support from a consultant, and I received the CEO's support, to mention but a few. However, the decision that most advanced my change management process, was the town hall meeting that I held in week 25. This town hall meeting alone moved the following individuals from the awareness to the trial stage: Andrew Chen, Walt James, Bob Ingram, Yao Li, Mark Robert, Anne Thompson, Louise Crysh and Dianne Mcnatt. The reasoning behind this decision was informed by Robert Ciadini as quoted in Cliffe, S (2013) who says that ; if one intends to persuade people, one needs to appeal to six human responses namely; people will follow through with commitments that they have made publicly, people will do things that they see people similar to them do, when people are uncertain about certain things, they tend to look towards experts and other possible sources of information, people are more likely to accept proposals from someone that they like, people tend to respond positively to people who have helped them in the past and people value things whose supply is limited. The town hall meeting was therefore a perfect lever for me to use, as it enabled people to accept my proposal, if other people in the group were to accept. Secondly, it enabled colleagues to make a public commitment to my proposed change, than say, in the private interviews. In addition, the town hall meeting was a perfect opportunity for me to share my extensive knowledge on the issue of sustainability and why it is important for our company and future growth. In the face of uncertainty, my colleagues were then more likely to defer to me and agree to my proposal. Looking back, at the levers that I used, I should also have continued with personal interviews, particularly with the key opponents of my plan. This strategy of " co-opting antagonists" is well elaborated in Pfeffer, J (2010), as a way of winning over opponents and giving them a

stake in the process of change. Personally, this could also have involved making concessions to the CFO and the VP-Operations in private, so that they start to own a part of the plan.

3. 0 Section 2: How I would implement the change action above in practice

In practice, I would seek to utilize the levers provided in a concurrent fashion. Whereas, in the simulation, I could only hold a town hall meeting, for instance; I would in practice, seek to complement this with a public statement of support from the CEO. I would also look at having the consultant's report delivered during the townhall meeting. In addition to these formal avenues for influencing my colleagues, I would seek out opportunities to help out colleagues. In this way, I would create an obligation on their part to reciprocate. This would therefore ensure that when they are called upon to support my proposal, they would feel conflicted, not to support it. Similarly, I would try to make every effort to get myself liked by colleagues, in very casual settings. This liking would them make it more likely, that they would support my proposal. I would focus less on the means, and focus more on the end. That is, I would be extremely flexible with the levers and concentrate more on the goal of having management agree to Spectrum-sun glass making " green products." I would also seek to appreciate the arguments of my colleagues, in Finance and operations. To allay their fears about the financial and operational challenges of the new proposal, I would invite their contributions on how these can be addressed. I would be willing to accept these suggestions as it helps me attain my overall goal-albeit with certain changes. In addition to the personal interviews and town halls, I would also look-out and encourage opportunities for my

colleagues to air their views and even reservations about my proposal. This would help me to understand the main issues that my opponents value and would then enable me to respond appropriately.

4. 0 Section 3: 2 nd decision/Juncture: Building a coalition of support in week 43 and the reasoning behind

In week 43, I sought to build a coalition of supporters among the staff, as a way of trying to move the organization from the awareness to the movement stage of the change process. Not only did this decision, have no effect on the organization; it also resulted in a loss of my credibility as some staff were not enthusiastic about the idea. In making this decision, my assumption had been that there was then sufficient interest, in my proposal, among the team. In fact, this result (the failure to build a coalition of support) could be explained by the various theories about organizational culture. For example, Chatman, J, & Eunyoung Cha, S (2003) posit that organizational culture is very powerful as it energizes and rallies employees around common perceived goals or objectives. The lack of interest by the employees of Spectrum sun-glass in joining a coalition of support could therefore be partially explained by the culture of the organization. This view is supported by, Goffee, R, & Jones, G (1996) who explains that organizations can be grouped on the basis of their cultures, as follows: " Networked Organizations"-in which there is a lot of informality, cliques and limited commitment to company goals, " Mercenary Organizations",-in which decisions are made by top management and enforced swiftly throughout the organization, " Fragmented organizations"-in which there is limited solidarity

and collaboration across departments and " communal organizations", in which there is a lot of socializing at work and solidarity. Based on the above metric, I would classify Spectrum sun-glass as a Fragmented company where there is limited solidarity and collaboration across departments. Alternatively; and as explained by Prof Tim Morris in his lecture on leading through culture; company cultures can be assessed on five dimensions, namely; whether it has a single or multiple cultures, whether decision making is low or high consensus, whether there is an internal or client focus, whether the performance orientation is high or low and whether there is internal cooperation or competition. Based on the above criteria; I would rate Spectrum sun-glass as having a single culture, high consensus decision making, client focus, a high performance orientation and internal competition. With the above information and in retrospect; I should not have sought to create a coalition in such an organizational culture, at the time I did. Instead, I should have concentrated on enabling change through consolidating and relying on my personal credibility, communicating my proposal and making the necessary emotional connection and training.

5. 0 How I would implement the change action above in practice

In practice, I would start by analyzing the existing organizational culture. I would then craft a very " convincing slogan" to motivate my colleagues to adopt my approach. For instance, " Go Green, More Profits, and More Pay". To further promote interest in my proposal, I would create a sense of urgency, by making the slogan action oriented, Goffee, et al, (1996). As this is a fragmented and mercenary organization, I would also try to organize dialogues on my proposal in informal settings; like lunch, parties and so on.

As these parties are enjoyable for those who attend, this tends to increase my likability and the social dynamic within the group. It would also be critical for me to create a place of " psychological safety" to ask questions about my proposal, to receive honest feedback, to discuss any reservations and errors of approach openly. In this way, I would reinforce the solidarity of the group and its ability to socialize Chatman, et al (2003).

6. 0 Conclusion

In the end, I was able through the use of the various levers to have eighteen adopters by week 56. This translated into a change efficiency ratio of 0. 32, which is high. My change leadership skills (the mishaps, notwithstanding) ensured that I was able to convince a critical mass of managers to adopt the initiative on sustainability. This significantly improved the financial prospects of the company and my professional prospects.

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