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Managing at the Speed of Change

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Managing organizational change is the subject. Very insightful. Helps explain a lot. Easy to pick out those things which reinforce your ideas - which is what I've done.

studies the patterns of change and principles of resilience needed to reach the organization's optimum speed of transition. 13

Some principles:

- All change costs.
- All change brings resistance.
- Resistance occurs because of the loss of control or influence and the ambiguity which arises from unanticipated results.
- An organization should only take on changes that they can handle and will follow through to completion.
- Major change should be undertaken only when there is pain from continuing the status quo AND a remedy available to solve the problem or take advantage of the opportunity.
- Synergistic teamwork developed through open discussion in an environment where every worker's input is considered valuable is critical for successful, long term implementation.

Sponsor - The boss. Has position to enforce change.

Advocate - Person who wants the change. May be line or staff.

Agent - One who is responsible to get others to change

Target - Person who must change

Humans are control-oriented animals. 26

It is not the events of change that so confuse and overwhelm us, but the unanticipated implications these events bring into our lives. 27

Disrupted expectations and ambiguity bring on crisis. 28

The world is changing so rapidly that confusion and dysfunction have become more the rule than the exception. 35

volume - the amount of change

momentum - the time to readjust before new change

complexity - is on the increase 38

7 fundamental issues that contribute to the dramatic increase in the magnitude of changes we face:

- faster communication and knowledge acquisition
- growing worldwide population
- increasing interdependence and competition
- limited resources
- diversifying political and religious ideologies
- constant transitions of power
- ecological distress 39

Solutions have a shorter 'shelf life.' Obsolescence comes faster. 45

"Future shock is the shattering stress and disorientation that we induce in individuals by subjecting them to too much change in too short a time." Toffler 51

Levels of dysfunction brought on by future shock. copy list pp. 54-5

"When you make the right decisions but the lights don't come on, you may be dealing with people who are overwhelmed. A saturated sponge can no more absorb spring water than sewage; hence, the correctness of ideas or change objectives do not ensure effective response." 56

"The application of even a small amount of leverage can have a powerful effect." per Harold Willens, p65 Life is filled with innocent-looking minor issues or actions that actually play major roles in the outcome of events. 65

Whether change is viewed as positive or negative depends not only on the outcomes of the change, but on the degree of influence one believes he exerts in the situation. 70

Change is not perceived as negative because of its unwanted effects as much as because of our inability to predict and control it. 70

Control brings stability and comfort so powerful that attaining this state is one of the most potent motivators of human behavior. Inability to control results in disorientation. 72

When you sense control over your life, it stems from your ability to match expectations with perceived reality. 73

In every project plagued by resistance to the change itself, there is an underlying, negative personal implication for one or more people affected. 78

You perceive change as positive when you feel in control by being able to anticipate events and influence your environment. 78

Until people see a personal connection between their own behavior and resolution of the organization issue, the problem is simply an intellectual exercise. 81

It can be shocking to initiate what appears to be a little change only to face a tremendous amount of resistance. If the people involved are already experiencing an assimilation deficit, your little change that should not have been difficult to deal with can cause trauma. 83

A reliable indicator of how people will respond to change is how surprised by a change people are. 84

"I cannot overstate how frightening it is to lose a sense of control or influence."
89

Winners are selective about the changes they undertake. Major organizational change is too disruptive, time consuming, and expensive to approach lightly. 91

Two types of situations generate urgency for change: the high price of unresolved problems or the high cost of missed opportunities. 93

Most organizations jeopardize their ability to sustain imperative changes because they embark on too many good ideas.... 93

Two prerequisites for major organizational change:

- 1 PAIN: a critical mass of information that justifies breaking from the status quo.
2. REMEDY: desirable, accessible actions that would solve the problem or take advantage of the opportunity.

(Note that it is unwise to jump into change without having a remedy!)

Remedies without a costly status quo provide short-term interests which often dwindle. Pain without remedy produces only ulcers, not change. 98

Managers can sometimes remove observable *symptoms* of resistance with threats, insults, or by good-natured cajoling. But the underlying problem will not go away and, worst of all, the resistance will go underground where you can't detect it. 102

Change is expensive, and you *will* pay. 104

Any time there is a gap between strategic rhetoric and local consequences, targets (workers) will always be more responsive to the consequences. 117

Whenever there is a discrepancy between your leadership pronouncements and the day-to-day reality of the people you lead, a black hole forms and you lose twice; you not only don't get what you want but you also teach people not to listen to you in the future. 121

Don't engage in any more change than you can properly sponsor. 122

Don't participate in major change when you are unclear about what is expected of you, the consequences affecting you, and the sponsor's commitment to the effort. 123

Whenever we believe that the challenges we confront differ significantly from the capabilities we possess, we're threatened. 126

To change, a person must both be willing and able to do so. Deficiencies in ability result from inadequate skills and should be addressed by training. A lack of willingness stems from a shortage of motivation and should be addressed through consequence management (the combination of rewards and punishments). 128

Overt resistance is more constructive than its underground counterpart; open resistance can at least be heard and addressed. Hidden resistance can go unnoticed.

If employees sense that they are not allowed to discuss their true feelings or if they are not involved in implementation decisions, they are likely to feel disenfranchised from the change effort. 128

You can minimize negative effects by encouraging resistance to be expressed openly instead of secretly. 128

Winners do not just tolerate expressions of resistance, they encourage it and reward people for resisting in an open, honest, and constructive manner. Open resistance is healthy. 129

Changes viewed initially as positive also create resistance.

The 5 phases of resistance to positive change are:

- uninformed optimism
- informed pessimism
- hopeful realism
- informed optimism
- completion. 136

One reason so many change projects fail is that people have such unrealistic expectations. When they are disappointed, they 'check out' of the change. 141

In the early stages of a project when enthusiasm is high, you must intentionally tell workers what the true costs of the change will be. 141

It is essential to divulge up front the real price for change. 142

Unless key participants in a transition are committed to both attaining the goals of the change and paying the price, the project will ultimately fail. 146

Commitment is expensive; don't order it if you can't pay for it. 156

Once sponsors confront the heavy investment of time, money, and energy required to generate commitment in others, they often balk. They want the benefits associated with high target support, but they are not willing to pay the price to earn them. 156

Building commitment is a developmental process. 158

Forcing compliance may assure the technical implementation of a change, but often sponsors neglect to calculate the long-range cost of recurring resistance. Many times, the way people are approached--rather than the change itself--is what causes resistance. 158

Major change demands major commitment. 159

By slowing down, it is possible to have the time for opening communication, involving employees, fostering empowerment, and developing synergistic working relationships, thereby generating genuine commitment to the desired change. 159

A strong correlation exists between successful change and synergistic teamwork. 189

Two prerequisites for synergy: willingness and ability. Willingness stems from the sharing of common goals and interdependence. Ability is a combination of empowerment and participative management skills. 189

Diversity, with its tendency to generate disagreements, contributes much more to creative thought. Healthy, productive conflict among people with different perspectives leads to creative synergy. 189

Teamwork requires shared insights and ideas, **open discussion, and respect for the values and input of others.** p. 190

The organization must demonstrate its readiness to appropriately involve employees in change-related decisions affecting their work. 194

Empowerment means employees are asked to provide input to management as decisions are being made. You are empowered when you are valuable enough to others to influence their decisions. 195

Input is always considered important and it carries weight. 195

Empowerment represents both a person's willingness to provide input to decision makers and an environment where that input is valued. 195

When someone chooses to express his or her opinion despite the fact that the decision makers do not seek nor value such input, the act is referred to as courageous, not empowered. 195

To operate synergistically requires more than empowered people; one must also be in an environment that fosters participation. 197

An organization's greatest resource for vital information, creative solutions, and timely support is its human resource--its employees. 198

Today's workers want more information relating to the overall direction and goals of the organization, more input concerning the objectives of their own work, and a greater value placed on their ideas about how this work can be accomplished more effectively. 198

If an organization wants to increase its effectiveness during change, everyone in the organization must demonstrate a high level of commitment toward the new initiatives. Effectively using the participative approach will help produce the necessary commitment for successful change projects. 199

Participants in a team effort must value and take advantage of their own diversity. 203

You must understand *why* others see something differently from you. 204

Four elements to an appreciative understanding:

- create an open climate
- delay negative judgments
- empathize with others
- value diversity

Too often when agents or targets offer ideas about how a change can be handled, the situation resembles a skeet shoot, with sponsors overtly attacking input or using a subtle, placating style of ignoring the objections that they hear. In this kind of environment, the only ideas that survive are the ones the sponsor fails to pulverize. 208

Logic is the tool that is used to dig holes deeper and bigger to make them altogether better holes. But if the hole is in the wrong place, then no amount of improvement is going to put it in the right place. 210

Sometimes people don't need to change; plans do. Some fall in love with their own plan and perceive normal resistance to it as a personal attack. When resistance surfaces, a synergistic team applauds the open dialogue and redesigns the plan as necessary. 214