



CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Changing the strategy and conversation about change

Author

Christoffer Hansen
ch@hanei.se

HANEI
CONSULTING GROUP

How do we work with and plan for change when everything is constantly changing around us?

The key components of organizational change are effect and impact. If the organization doesn't reflect on the new ways of organizing they will continue to struggle to obtain the desired effect and impact of change.

It's common knowledge that over 70% of all change projects fail to achieve the impact desired from what was described in the business plan. This is partly due to management's inability to provide clarity and engagement throughout the process. Project managers solve the challenges with designing another workflow which includes change management and change communication. These initiatives are targeted toward the people of the project to help the organization adapt to changes faster and better.

CHANGE IS CHANGING

Some of the essential activities needed in organizations to create a change are divided into four categories: **Change strategy, leading change, engaging stakeholders, and sustainability.**

CHANGE STRATEGY

Often the people at the top of the organization set the scene for the change from the beginning of the change process by defining the impact of the change and assessing how the change will affect the company. Afterward they involve the management who oversees implementing the change on the employees who are then expected to change the way they work. The top-level management needs to make room and involve next level management and employees in the communication in how the change should work from the beginning, thus making the chance for a successful change increase.

By involving the right employees and leaders early in the process, the organization gets a more precise view of how the change will impact them. Everyone involved in the change process needs to be aware that change is changing. The identified key parameters might change and turn out to be something else. The impact is therefore not a one-time identification. The impact case is not only about identifying the business impact, but also the behavioral changes that need to happen.

LEADING CHANGE

A focus area in change is changing the conversation about change because what the leaders are talking about, determines the culture and priorities of all employees. Leaders must also consider that the truth about change management is that employees listen to what resonates with them and what they are personally worried about throughout the change.

Leaders are critical in building support for new initiatives. This is especially the case for first-line management as they are close to the employees and set the tone in daily operations. The entire leadership structure and their shared understanding of the importance of the change to happen are crucial to how likely it is for the change to be a success and bring along the desired effect and impact.

Identify the pros and cons of today's situation and the future situation. Identify the right platform and the desired vision. Ask yourself and your employees these **four questions:**

1. **What are we doing today that works?**
2. **What will be challenging on our journey towards our desired future?**
3. **What is sufficiently good today about the way we work?**
4. **What will be better in our desired future?**

With these four questions the management should start a dialogue with their employees to get a greater understanding of different perspectives on the change. Leaders will be able to adapt and lead the change in a more agile way with faster feedback.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

To achieve a successful change process is engaging the right people at the right time.

Addressing the people that will be affected by the change like the employees or end-users of a new system, and the people in power to affect the change.

Involving and engaging stakeholders can be the most time-consuming part of a project. From a structural approach, we would use a three-step approach of first identifying stakeholders, prioritizing them, and finally deciding on actions to engage them and building it into our project plan. This helps us understand who the stakeholders in the change process are and what is at stake for them.

In an agile approach, we would engage the stakeholders through the lens of their relations and interconnectivity, i.e. tap into their network to utilize the information circulation that exists in that organization.

SUSTAINABILITY

From a **structural approach** we must identify new skills and competence the employees, leaders, and stakeholders must learn to navigate in connection with the new changes. Identify learning objectives with senior leaders and key stakeholders and link them to the impact case. Design, build, and execute training.

From an **agile approach** we build training programs through simulations. This way teaches people how the change impacts their manual tasks and ways of working. However, this understanding will not be achieved in one day's training. The understanding will be achieved when you design the training around your employees' feedback, co-create, and letting them simulate and test the new solutions and ensure continuous knowledge of how to work in their changing environment. This collective understanding of the new ways leads to a strive to continuously make the work process even better.



CHANGE COMMUNICATION

Getting the organization onboard when implementing a new strategy, system, or process continues to be difficult for management due to poor communication.

Most change intends to improve or optimize the organization's everyday operations. The challenge is that more than 70% of change initiatives fail to meet their original intent.

Part of the challenge is that executives often consider themselves to do better in their communication strategy than they are. A well-designed communication strategy that prepares and engages the organization in the change from the start is more likely to succeed. For change to be successful, it requires vocal and engaged personal who take ownership for the success of the change. Management needs to provide a clear picture of the perspective and purpose of change. Otherwise, the employees will do a lot of guesswork and speculation. Facts, figures, and plans are important in change communication as it lays the foundation for understanding the change rationally.

Do you have the organization onboard?

7 STEPS TO CHANGE COMMUNICATION

1 Understand the organization and the people who must change

- Understand how the organization feels about the change
- Identify obstacles or resistance to the change
- Identify communication needs in relation to the change

2 Create a common language about the change

- Set a clear direction by establishing a common language about future change
- Frame the project in a rational and emotionally appealing story
- Articulate the how, what and why behind the strategic aspirations

3 Identify segments and develop key messages

- Develop the segments based on the most relevant parameters
- Develop the right messages for the right segments

4 Plan how to communicate with impact

- Define principles for the communication
- Plan how to introduce the communication to the organization
- Identify what channels to utilize

5 Launch communication

- Introduce the core story and put it in the center of all communication activities
- Introduce communication through the organization
- Apply a multi-channel approach

6 Evaluate Impact

- Track how the organization is accepting the change
- Define barriers and opportunities

7 Reinforce

- Adjust the communications plan as the project mature with new inputs
- Launch new initiatives targeted for specific segments

A STORY FROM THE REAL WORLD

DO WE NEED TO USE THE SAME FORMAT?

A global manufacturing company implemented a new CRM system in its Asian sales companies and faced an unexpected challenge regarding how system training. One sales company wanted to do like all previous sales companies, which was classroom training using Power-Point, another sales company wanted to use a good old binder with printed detailed training material, and a third sales company wanted to use video tutorials. A relevant question to ask is why. The answer is quite simple. We are different and have different preferences and perspectives. Most companies fail here as they will go ahead with the “one-size-fits-all”-approach. It is important to understand the purpose here.

The main purpose is to onboard the sales companies and get them to use the new CRM system. Which way of training is most suitable for sales- and customer service people? It doesn't matter as long as they adapt to new ways of working. All roads lead to Rome so focus on the result rather than the process. Flexibility and the 80/20 principle are most often the best ways forward.

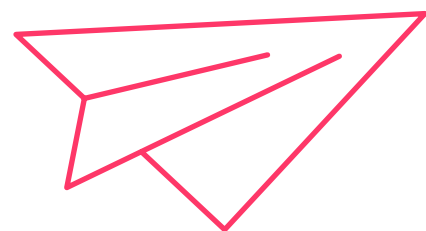
SO WHAT?

We know that 70% of all change initiatives fail due to the executive's inability to provide and communicate a clear picture of the change project. By changing your strategy on how to go about the change and involving managers and employees to get insight your chances for success will increase.

Communication is key. You need to understand the organization and the people who must change. Create a common language and ground so that everyone is onboard on what change needs to occur. Leaders must be a driving force of how the change is communicated and have an ongoing conversation involving everyone's thoughts.

By doing this you will get everyone in the organization on board and experience a successful change project.

If you want to learn more about Change Management, feel free to reach out to us at Hanei Consulting Group.



ABOUT US

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