Leadership to Enable Change in the Organization

Dr. Vinay Chaitanya Ganta

MBA, MA (Psy.), Ph.D. Assistant Professor,
Institute of Management GITAM University
Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract—*Organizations constantly have to undergo change. Today organizational change has become more and more common in all organizations and forces them to change or die. The only thing that is constant is change and shows that the only thing we can be certain about is that everything changes. Organizations have a dominating role in today's society and have become more complex and thus harder to manage.As a result, it is important for companies to focus on the ability to have good change management, i.e. the ability to manage and perform a change. Leading organizational change is the most important task for a manager in today's society. This emphasizes the importance of the leader's role in organizational change which is the main focus of this paper. Leadership could be seen as the art of guiding an organization through change. I would like discuss the leaders' role during the change in the organization.*

Keywords: *Change, Change Management, Leader, Leadership and Organization.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every organization is affected by change, especially during times of economic volatility. However, project managers tasked with leading change initiatives are all too aware of the alarming failure rates that can occur. The critical missing piece is largely the failure to consider how change affects an organization's people. According to a study by Price Water house Coopers, research shows that nearly 75 percent of all organizational change programs fail because they don't create the necessary groundswell of support among employees. Organizational change has been an issue of growing interest among scholars and practitioners. For Asian companies striving to become world leaders, change is imperative to achieve success in the globalized world that is attributed with stiff competition from both developed nations, and emerging economies such as China and India. Therefore, in many developing countries major organizational change is required to compete in this globalized world. Rapid technological advancements, high expectations of customers, and ever-changing market situations have compelled organizations to incessantly reassess and re-evaluate how they work and to understand, adopt and implement changes in their business model in response of changing trends. The role of leadership in the phenomena of organizational change and innovation. The leader as a change agent can manage the process of organizational change more effectively and successfully.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Terry, Carey and Callan, (2001) it is true that an organizational change may create job insecurity to individual self-esteem. Thus, the adaptive leader's first step in dealing with change centers on understanding its effect on individuals. Buono, Bowditch and Lewis (1985) claim that the subjective impressions of the individuals involved should be the primary focus in studies of organizational culture and of the changes that occur in business. Bass (1985) states that leaders must promote change by creating vision. Generally, leaders must possess a clear understanding of the strategic objectives for their organization, identify the actions needed to reach those objectives and conduct an analysis of the organizations existing ideologies. According to Kouzes and Posner (1987) when facing significant change, "Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations". Leaders therefore must be skilled in change management processes if they want to act successfully as agents of change.

3. LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE PROCESS

Nowadays the interest is focused upon the effects leadership generates for the organization. Today managers consider leadership as an instrument with great potential for shaping the organization, of course through directing the employees. Their attention turns toward the determination of that style/model/strategy of leadership that should lead to the wanted results in organizational change. Leadership is a process of generating change, not maintaining the status quo. This change is not imposed by the leader, but it is a sharing process of the same purpose and values. Inside the organization, leaders must be promoters of change. Leaders have the power to influence others and motivate them in order to achieve certain goals. A leader of change is an individual with the ability to influence and ultimately change behaviours of employees, teams, and/or organizations; an individual who influences the commitment of any key group within the organization. In many turns, we have observed that in practice leadership plays a central role when it comes to implementing organizational change. The arguments in favour of this statement are many, as it follows. According to Gardner

(1993), leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a person or a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. Considering this definition, then leadership style is the way in which that process is carried out. "Change is toward an outcome that leader and followers both want a desired future or shared purpose that motivates them toward this more preferable outcome. An important aspect of leadership is influencing others to come together around a common vision. Thus, leadership involves the influence of people to bring about change toward a desirable future"

4. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Organizational leadership employs a three-phase Organizational Change Management Life Cycle methodology and techniques to address the stages of change, change management initiatives stand a much greater chance for success.

Before examining the Organizational Change Management Life Cycle, it's important to consider the three organizational elements that both drive and are affected by change:

- **Processes** – Business processes, including maps, policies and procedures, and business rules, which are redesigned or realigned for new customers, or provide improved service to existing customers.

- **Technology** – Driven by process, technology ensures greater organizational efficiency in implementing change.

- **People** – Those responsible for developing and implementing new processes, and specifying and using new technology.

These elements are closely linked to the three stages of the Change Management Life Cycle: identify the change, engage the people, and implement the change. From the outset of any change management initiative, people must recognize and buy into the need for change. Leaders must recognize that an organization cannot successfully adopt change unless its people understand and support the reasons for creating the change.

Phase I: Identify the Change

While it may seem obvious, clearly articulating the proposed change in common, consistent language is the fundamental first step for any change initiative. Leaders need to identify and communicate the need for change so that it is understood and supported by people at all organizational levels. Project leaders should also be aware that there are intellectual, psychological and neurological responses that people have regarding change that can be addressed with the following recommended techniques:

- **Get People's Attention** – Change distracts and disturbs human beings, so directing their attention in a positive

way will help them focus on the proposed change. Introducing the initiative in a setting away from people's daily routines, off-site if possible, will create a shared sense of urgency and ownership in the change.

- **Align Their Disturbances** – A disturbance is a neurological term for the conflict or gap between a person's current mental map of thinking and the mental map required to operate in a changed state. To align disturbances means to create agreement among the individuals in an organization so they have a common gap between their current way of thinking and the mental state needed to adopt the change. This will enable them to agree on the direction and organizational response needed for change.

An important technique leader should use to align disturbances is to create a compelling vision of the future state and continually communicate it. The vision should take into consideration the change need at every organizational level, so that the day-to-day work experience of the staff is described along with high-level change goals. Additional people-related issues leaders should be aware of and address when identifying change opportunities include:

- Potential frustration in performing new tasks

- Clearly defined job responsibilities

- Job descriptions and metrics appropriate to the new process

- Understanding of the end-to-end process

- Organizational culture dynamics that may prevent people from adapting to the changed state

Phase 2: Engage the People

The next step in the change management life cycle is to engage people in the planning of the organization's response to the change. This concept is the antithesis of a top-down rollout strategy in which a change initiative is delivered to the people expected to implement and adopt the change. Giving them the opportunity for intellectual, emotional and psychological reaction to the proposed change enables them to become accustomed to the idea of change and begin thinking in ways that can identify potential trouble spots and contribute to process improvement. It is critical to their personal stake in the proposed change.

A technique project leader can use to facilitate people's adoption of a change is to conduct organization-wide workshops on appropriate change response. These sessions enable people to participate in the dialogue about how a deliverable should be used in the organization, and contribute to the emergence of an aligned approach for managing and adapting to the change. Aligning reactions and encouraging involvement in the change response typically moves people's

behaviour to addressing the problem and creating a direction to facilitate change.

The implementation strategy for change response can then be developed at a high level. The people executing the strategy, as well as those who will be impacted by it, should be included in the strategy development. The strategy needs to be acknowledged by all involved as a flexible plan so that changes can be made once implementation is begun.

Phase 3: Implement the Change

During the final Implementation phase, change strategies developed in the Identify and Engage phases are translated into actions for achieving the proposed future organizational state.If the first two stages were effectively addressed, people will be well prepared to participate in the development and implementation of new processes and technology, and the implementation should essentially be a monitoring activity for leaders. However, most organizations spend the majority of their time in the implementation phase and don't adequately address their people's role in change. In such instances, successful change adoption rarely occurs.

Prototyping is a critical technique to get the change underway incrementally without waiting for a highly detailed, master plan which can potentially stall the change initiative, while allowing flexibility to respond to changing conditions. Prototyping considers people's thinking and activities as new processes and technology are deployed. Since their thoughts and actions are used in developing the change response, it further increases people's ownership in the change initiative.

Techniques leaders should use during implementation include reiterating the change mission through ongoing communications. E-mails, project milestone commemorations, conversations and other channels should be used to remind people why they are expending their hard work on implementing a change.

Organizational leaders should address people-related issues that arise by asking themselves the following questions:

- Does the individual have the ability or desire to work in the new environment?
- Are additional skill sets needed to transition to the new job?
- Are changes to job descriptions needed?
- Are job grades or pay impacted by this change?
- Does the change impact short-term productivity and is additional support needed to ensure business success?

Lastly, leaders should focus on people's performance and satisfaction by questioning the following areas:

- Are change-oriented tasks being accomplished as planned?

- Are energy and enthusiasm present?
- Does alignment still exist among the people?

People First

The urgency of circumstances that precipitate change results frequently in the introduction of new processes and technology which are doomed to failure without the input and buy in of an organization's people. Leadership that recognizes the importance of making change a personal commitment for all of its people, not just executives and stakeholders, will be more successful at implementing change. Using the Change Management Life Cycle methodology's three phases of Identify, Engage and Implement and related techniques provides organizations with a framework for creating a receptive environment for positive, lasting change.

LEADING THE CHANGE: ENABLE THE CHANGE

According to Harvard Business Review bloggers Chris Musselwhite and Tammie Plouffe, "the companies most likely to be successful in making change work to their advantage are the ones that no longer view change as a discrete event to be managed, but as a constant opportunity to evolve the business. In these organizations, change readiness is the new change management."

These organizations have cultures that foster innovation and collaboration and accept risk and failure. The leaders must help employees understand why change is necessary, create an environment of open communication and build teams with complementary competencies and strengths.

To become a change-ready organization, Musselwhite and Plouffe said leaders should assess their organization's:

1. **Change Awareness:** "A company's ability to redefine itself as necessary. Good change awareness practices include scanning the environment for opportunities, focusing on emerging trends and planning for the future."

2. **Change Agility:** "A company's ability to engage people in pending changes. An organization with good change agility has the capacity to stretch when necessary and quickly shift resources to the place they make the most difference."

3. **Change Reaction:** A company's "ability to appropriately analyse problems, assess risks and manage the reactions of employees. This internal focus ensures your company can sustain the day-to-day business while reacting in a timely and appropriate manner to self-initiated and market-dictated change."

4. **Change Mechanisms:** A company's "ability to integrate a change into existing systems, accountability for results and reward systems that reinforce desired change behaviours. This contextual focus is critical to the ability to implement desired change with no interruption to daily operation."

SUMMARY

Leadership has a central role in evolution and cultivating an organization. The process of change in the organization demands a very effective and highly competent leadership that is well capable to perceive the most desirable shape of an organization and address the issue of organizational change in most appropriate way. Leadership with the competencies of "Vision" and "Innovative Approach" along with other characteristics can prove more effective to accomplish the complex phenomena of organizational change with success. Further the successful change in the organization can leads to innovation for organization, which is the key of long-term success and sustainability.

REFERENCE

[1] Bass, B. M., 1985"Leadership and performance beyond expectations" Free Press, New York.

[2] Buono, A., J. Bowditch and J. Lewis ,1985, "When cultures collide: the anatomy of a merger," Human Relations, 1,477–500.

[3] Camelia BĂEŞU and Ruxandra BEJINARU (2013), Leadership Approaches Regarding the Organizational Change, The USV Annals of Economics and Public Administration, Volume 13, Issue 2(18).

[4] Gardner, J.W. (1993) On Leadership. New York: Free Press

[5] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263243008_Enabling_ organizational_change_-_leadership_commitment_to_change_and_the_mediating_role_of_change_readiness

[6] Jonathan Gilbert,https://www.reliableplant.com/Read/18706/leadership-techniques-to-empower-people-during-change-initiatives

[7] Kathie Thomas, https://www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2010/11/09/leading-change-enabling-change/

[8] Kouzes, J. M. and B. Z. Pozner, 1987, The leadership challenge, Jossey Bass, San Francisco, CA.

[9] Sinnappan Santhidran, V. G. R. Chandran &Junbo Borromeo (2013), Enabling organizational change –leadership, commitment to change and the mediating role of change readiness, Journal of Business Economics and Management, 14:2, 348-363

[10] Terry, D. J., C. J. Carey and V. J. Callan, 2001, Employee Adjustment to an Organizational Merger: An Intergroup Perspective, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27,267–280.