

Implementing Change: The Human Side of Progress

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What We'll Discuss

- Why do so many organizations find it difficult to implement change?
- What can we do about it?
 - Before it happens
 - While it's happening

Products, People, Process, & Tools

...but it all comes down to people

Why Don't Most People Like Change?

- Change is difficult
- Change introduces uncertainty
- Change relies on trust and a touch of faith

Organizations resist change...

People resist change...



CHANGE

WHEN THE WINDS OF CHANGE BLOW HARD ENOUGH,
THE MOST TRIVIAL OF THINGS CAN TURN INTO DEADLY PROJECTILES.

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Why People Resist Change

- Losing something they want to keep
- Keeping something they want to lose
- Fearing what they can't control
- Fearing the unknown

Why Organizations Can Be Resistant

- Culture
 - Incentives
 - Baked-in habits
- Process
 - Embedded rules & values
- Leadership
 - Skimming
 - Competing demands
 - Leaving a void



COMPROMISE

LET'S AGREE TO RESPECT EACH OTHER'S VIEWS,
NO MATTER HOW WRONG YOURS MAY BE.

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What About Us?

- Let's Be Careful We Aren't the Resistors!
 - Listen to the issues
 - Keep people engaged
 - Take objections seriously
 - What could we have missed?
 - What could we be doing better?

Proactively Managing Change

- What can we do?
- Set the stage
- Communicate
- Build trust

The Purist = Adherence

Risks losing credibility and support

The Pragmatist = Adaptation

- No idea can be applied to everyone, every company, or every situation
- Ideas are rarely applied in their “purest” form
- From the beginning people need to hear that change is an iterative process
 - We don’t get there all at once...
 - We never get there! (the destination is moving)
 - We learn to adapt (and perhaps anticipate)

Set the Stage

- What does your organization want to accomplish?
- Build a strong but realistic business case
 - Strategic alignment with business & product objectives
 - Realistic revenue opportunities
 - Metrics (quantitative and qualitative)
 - Define a process/method for evaluating ideas

Set the Stage

- Build decision-maker awareness
 - Identify the champions and decision makers
 - Be sure they know what you need from them and when it's needed
 - Get their commitment
- Build participant support
 - Determine the expected impact on people, processes, and tools
 - Involve all key stakeholder groups early and often
 - Build an aggressive but achievable schedule

Anticipate Issues

- Identify risks & mitigation strategies early
 - Who gains & who loses (or feels like they lose)?
 - How can their concerns be addressed?
- Watch for “resistant” behavior
 - Snipers
 - Skeptics
 - Decision Avoidance
 - Passive-Aggressive Behavior

Communicate

- Early, often, & through multiple channels
- In terms of expectations, outcomes, & next steps
- Don't stop no matter what!
 - Don't assume everyone knows how the project is progressing
 - Don't assume everything is fine if you're not hearing objections
 - Communicate face-to-face with extended team members, stakeholders, opinion leaders, and key executives

Build Trust

- When something doesn't progress as expected
 - Don't stop and react; investigate and plan
 - Get the right people in the room, including sponsors & stakeholders, and determine the options
 - Don't be afraid to change direction if it's warranted
 - Communicate to all concerned parties
 - What is the issue? How was it discovered?
 - What is the resolution?
 - What did we learn?
 - Communicate with a single voice (everyone on the same page) and always be honest

Expose Our Own Biases

- Identify people and/or product ideas you consider annoying, irrelevant, or misguided
- To start, pick one and learn all you can about it
Ask & listen with an open mind.
Why do you think they/it annoys you?
- Look for ways these ideas could be adapted to the benefit of your products and customers.

Reality

- Executive attention will come and go
- Organizational priorities will shift
- Resources may never be fully dedicated
- Customers & coworkers will get nervous as products and processes change

Summary

- The rules are in flux
- The only option: Experiment (Learn) = Change!
- People are at the core of every change we need to make