The Ten Common Mistakes in Leading Change, and How to Prevent Them

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March 1, 2011

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Good work,
But I think we
need just a little more
detail right here!

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

1. **Relevance and Meaning:**

   Not overtly linking the change effort to the market and business strategy to create clarity in the minds of stakeholders

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

2. **Change Governance:**

   Unclear Change Leadership: roles, structure, decision-making, and interface with operations

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10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

3. **Strategic Discipline for Change:**

   Leaders not providing a strategic discipline for how change is led across the organization—no enterprise change agenda, no common change methodology, and inadequate infrastructure to execute change successfully

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10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

4. **Misdiagnosing Scope:**

   Misdiagnosing the scope of the change either in magnitude or by initiating only technological or organizational initiatives, and neglecting the cultural, mindset, and behavioral requirements

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

5. **Initiative Alignment and Integration:**

   Running the change through multiple, separate, or competing initiatives rather than aligning all initiatives as one unified effort and ensuring the integration of plans, resources, and pace

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10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

6. **Capacity:**

   Not creating adequate capacity for the change—setting unrealistic, crisis-producing timelines and then laying the change on top of people's already excessive workloads

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10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

7. **Culture:**

   Not adequately addressing the organization's culture as a major force directly influencing the success of change

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

8. **Leadership Modeling:**

   Leaders not being willing to develop themselves or change their mindsets, behavior, or style to overtly model the changes they are asking of the organization

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

9. **Human Dynamics:**

   Not adequately or proactively attending to the emotional side of change; not designing actions to minimize negative emotional reactions; not attending to them in constructive ways once they occur

10 Most Common Mistakes in Leading Transformation

10. **Engagement and Communications:**

   Not adequately engaging and communicating with stakeholders, especially early in the change process; relying too heavily on one-way top-down communication; engaging stakeholders only after design is complete

Your Risk Assessment

Rate Hi - Med - Lo

__1. Relevance and Meaning

__2. Change Governance

__3. Strategic Discipline for Change

__4. Misdiagnosing Scope

__5. Initiative Alignment and Integration

Rate Hi - Med - Lo

__6. Capacity

__7. Culture

__8. Leadership Modeling

__9. Human Dynamics

__10. Engagement and Communications

PREVENTING THE 10 MISTAKES

What Works

1. **Relevance and Meaning:**
   - **At launch, communicate how change is a direct result of (and requirement for) fulfilling business strategy. *Make the link clear!***
   - **Engage stakeholders in exploring importance of change *in their own terms*, the part they play, and what you need from them to succeed. Personalize it.**
   - **Circle back periodically to ensure relevance remains clear; refocus as needed**

What Works

2. **Change Governance:**
   - **Establish importance of Change Leadership**
   - **Clarify and staff roles**
     - Sponsor, Executive Team, Change Leadership Team, Change Process Leader, Initiative Leads, Change Teams, Change Consultants
   - **Design change structures—distinct from operations**
   - **Clarify decision-making for change—in advance, aligned with desired culture!**
   - **Establish up front how change structure will interface with operations**

3. Strategic Discipline for Change

Competing Initiatives

Shared Direction; No Strategic Oversight

Leadership and Integration Driven by Enterprise Change Agenda and Infrastructures

What Works

3. **Strategic Discipline for Change:**
   - **Establish necessity of conscious change leadership at enterprise level**
   - **Create an enterprise change agenda**
   - **Select/use one common change methodology and develop in-house expertise and infrastructures**
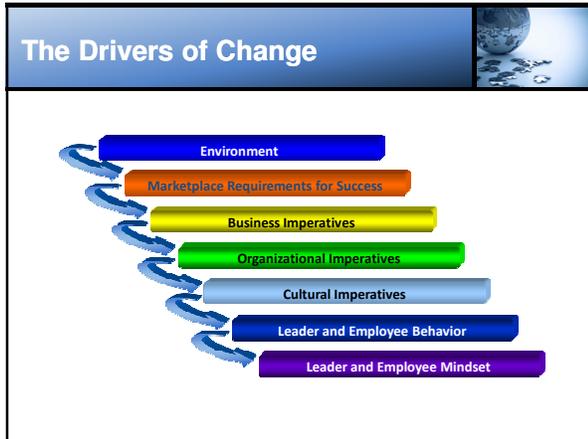
The Change Leader's Roadmap

Hear the Wake-up Call

I. Prepare to Lead the Change

II. Create Organizational Vision, Commitment, and Capability

III. Assess the Situation to Determine Design Requirements

IV. Design the Desired State

V. Analyze the Impacts

VI. Plan and Organize for Implementation

VII. Implement the Change

VIII. Celebrate and Integrate the New State

IX. Learn and Course Correct

What Works

3. Strategic Discipline for Change (cont'd):

- **Establish clear infrastructures and best practices to lead change successfully**
  - Templates for case for change and change strategy
  - Roles and team charters
  - Integration strategy
  - Course correction system
  - Intranet and internal communication/engagement vehicles
  - How and when to use internal change resources

What Works

4. Misdiagnosing Scope:

- **Use scoping tools that call forth cultural, mindset, and behavioral requirements as well as technological and organizational impacts**

The Drivers of Change

- Environment
- Marketplace Requirements for Success
- Business Imperatives
- Organizational Imperatives
- Cultural Imperatives
- Leader and Employee Behavior
- Leader and Employee Mindset

What Works

4. **Misdiagnosing scope (cont'd):**
   - **Perform initial impact analysis as input to scope**
   - **Map entire stakeholder/project community affected by change**
   - **Ensure sponsor/executive agreement to full scope and commitment to resource it adequately**

What Works

5. **Initiative Alignment and Integration:**
   - **Identify initiatives "down and in"**
   - **Identify initiatives "up and across"**

Integrating Initiatives: 2 Views

Down and In

Your Initiative

Sub-Initiatives

Up and Across

Larger Initiative
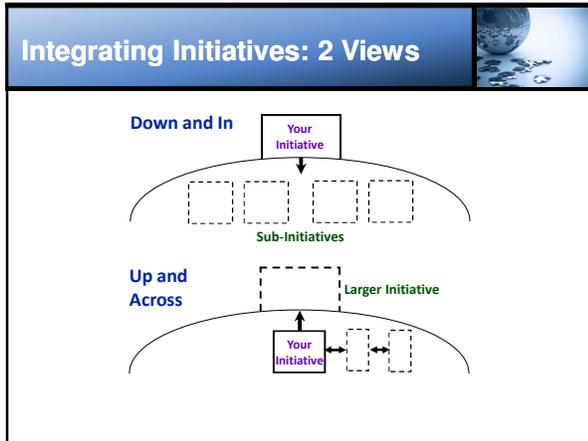
Your Initiative

What Works

5. **Initiative Alignment and Integration (cont'd):**

    ▪ **Determine how initiatives fit together into an aligned change theme—the umbrella outcome**

    ▪ **Multiple Project Integration Strategy; "Air Traffic Control"**

6. Ensuring Capacity

Time, Attention, and Resources for **OPERATIONS** ➕ Time, Attention, and Resources for **CHANGE** ＝ **100% CAPACITY**

- **Any capacity required for change is not available for operations**

- **You will need to free up capacity required to make the change!!!**

What Works

6. Capacity:

- Perform Change Capacity Review
- Use Enterprise Change Agenda to keep the discussion **realistic**
- Adjust timelines *after* Impact Analysis and Planning for Implementation to make an **intelligent determination** of the real capacity required
- Free up additional capacity

This is your "Get Real" conversation!!!

What Works

Vehicles to Free Up Capacity:

- Take work off/stop work
- Slow work down; readjust timelines
- Pause work; put it on back burner
- Reallocate existing people with best skills to priority efforts
- Hire the right skills and knowledge
- Outsource work
- Use external experts to do appropriate work

Culture

Culture is the mindset of an organization, the pattern of widely shared (often unconscious) assumptions, beliefs, and values that form the basis of people's ways of being, relating, and working.

Mindset is to the Individual

as Culture is to the Organization

What Works

7. Culture

- **Assess your current culture for:**
  - What already **supports** your future state
  - What directly **blocks** it/needs to be dismantled
  - What needs to be **created** for you to succeed
- **Address culture in *every* initiative**
- **Develop culture change plans for what needs to change, and reinforce prevailing cultural norms that support your desired future!**
- **Continue to drive culture change over time!**

What Works

8. Leadership Modeling:

- **Ensure leaders understand direct link between behavior, credibility, and the success of change Are their current mindsets aligned with the future?**
- **Translate values and norms for the change into specific behavior and language**
- **Get clear agreements for conscious modeling, monitoring and reinforcement strategies (coaching)**
- **Overtly legitimize the mindset work!**

People in Change

Human Dynamics

Change happens from the inside out. If we don't account for people's reactions and needs, and we don't engage them in creating their future, we cannot expect them to change—no matter how much pressure we apply!

What Works

9. **Human Dynamics:**

   - **Build change strategy to consciously minimize emotional turmoil and threat**
   - **Be aware of stakeholders' core needs and emotional reactions, and take them into account in planning, communications and engagement**
   - **Invest in strategies that acknowledge and heal past or recent negative emotional reactions— "leadership listening circles"**

What Works

10. **Engagement and Communications:**

    - **Activate stakeholder engagement early**
    - **Build change communication plans that go beyond top-down email announcements and "talking head" road shows**
    - **Do not rely solely on one-way corporate communication vehicles and standards; LISTEN!**
    - **Marry communications and engagement plans**
    - **Change communications is a process as well as a plan! Most of it will be emergent.**

Use the 10 Common Mistakes Consciously!

- Engage senior leaders (and stakeholders) in a 10 Common Mistakes Risk Assessment

- Explore underlying causes of each high risk factor. *You/leaders have enabled the organization to create this risk!* What needs to change to prevent or minimize them?

- Determine the cost of continuing "As Is" versus the investment to change these factors in how your leaders lead change. *Make a conscious choice—and plan of action!*

Thank You!

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