

THE LEADER, THE GENERATOR OF CHANGE IN THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Oana Ramona, Bauer (Hamburda)¹
Elena Cristina, Stroe (Ion)²
Georgiana Tatiana, Bondac³

Abstract

The need for organizational change may appear as stimulus within the organization, although it may be produced by the idea of adapting to the requirements of the external environment. For any organization that does not intend to go bankrupt, it is very important to align with the changes around. The purpose of this paper is to present the process of change and to determine ways to reduce resistance to change.

Key words: leader, stress, school organization, change, resistance to change.

JEL classification: O15.

1. Introduction

The process of change requires momentum, stimulation, coordination, monitoring, prognosis and organization. Within the organizations in our country, the changes inevitably lead to natural changes and require adaptation to the requirements of the external environment (customers, suppliers, competitors, service providers, intermediaries).

Changing within an organization is a complex and dynamic process that involves a very good knowledge of external and internal influence factors.

Change is a means of adapting to the external environment in interdependence with the internal environment. It represents the path from the existing state of existence to the desired state.

"In Cummings's planned change model (1993), any organization maintains a balance between the forces that impose a change and those that oppose it - the change representing the change of forces that maintain the stability of the global behaviors of a system, so that change can occur, interfere either by increasing the intensity of the forces favoring change, or by decreasing the intensity of the forces opposing change, or by using combinations of increasing and decreasing between the intensities of the two types of forces." (R. Iucu, 2006) .

The leader can initiate the change process in order to improve the performance of the organization. They can become an agent of change provided they know how to lead the process of change. The leader must have skills to diagnose the need for change by collecting data, analyzing, correlating information. They need to identify the need for change by analyzing the forces of interaction that interact (positive forces and forces opposing change). The next step involves developing a clear, coherent and concise action plan for the process of change. But the leader can not act alone, they have to form a team to act effectively in this process.

"To achieve performance, the team that supports the leader has a very important role. A team, however, forms over time, following the stages identified by Tuckmann (training, storm, normalization, performance). Sometimes the team's work may be blocked, but the leader must be patient and recognize the steps a team can take to act effectively (that is, to carry out high-quality activities during the time spent on saving resources). The leader has a decisive role in choosing team members and in their formation" (Johnson D. W. , PAG Johnson F., 1994) .

¹ Doctoral student, Valahia University of Târgoviște, e-mail: oana_bauer@yahoo.com

² Doctoral student, Valahia University of Târgoviște, e-mail: cris_stroe33@yahoo.com

³ Doctoral student, Valahia University of Târgoviște, e-mail: georgianabondac@yahoo.com

The team must set common goals, identify the necessary processes in the course of activities, focus on the objectives set. The team must have motivation, mutual respect and professional ethics. It can not function effectively without a balanced set of abilities of its members and without a clear organization.

"The leader must be able to recognize the role of each member of the team, to assess frequently the perception of change in the organization. The leader must build trust in the organization's own strengths, encourage dialogue by imposing a transparent communication and decision-making" (Trevor Bentley, 1996) .

Change then becomes a process based on participation, cooperation, communication and ongoing information that is based primarily on trust and superior motivation. This working atmosphere can prevent destructive conflicts.

The leader can exercise their power in the process of change as an expert, the power of the personal example. The leader is thus recognized in the organization as an agent of change, as the holder of the vision they share with other members of the organization. They describe the future state of the organization. The values underpinning their vision are accepted by those in the organization because they are clear, communicated and appropriate to the organization.

"The leader needs to know how to harmonize and include in the general vision an organizational vision specific to the change process, which is actually derived from the organization's vision and mission. The leader must best understand the organizational culture to determine only those changes that determines the evolution of the organization (the set of values, traditions, myths, etc. that help to understand the state of the organization and what is important for it)" (IRMED, 2003).

Here is how the leader is the key factor in choosing the best ways to go through the process of change, to choose the team to rely on in this delicate process by showing the skills appropriate to that goal.

2. Ways to reduce change resistance

Knowing and understanding the causes of resistance to change are essential to finding the most appropriate means of reducing or even defeating this resistance.

"One of the most important ways to reduce people's resistance to change is to involve them in planning change by focusing on their own feelings, their own uncertainties, their own resilience. When people are confronted with each other, when they have information instead of insecurity, they can participate in change rather than resist change. People should be given the opportunity to discuss and understand the nature of change and their own fears triggered by it."(Paul Marinescu, 2003).

Another way to reduce people's resistance to change addresses anxiety created by change. The focus must be on finding sources of discomfort for people who are afraid of change and not on using sanctions or threats as a means to persuade people to get involved in change.

In a process of change, as habits, routines are sources of resistance to change, behavioral patterns of work that have already been established or "institutionalized" should not be ignored.

Communication is one way to reduce resistance to change. "Resistance can be reduced by communicating with employees, helping them understand the need for change. This method is effective when the main cause of resistance is the lack of information of individuals about the change process. The time and effort involved in this tactic are its main disadvantages, especially when change affects a large number of people" (Paul Marinescu, 2003).

Handling is another way to reduce resistance to change. Deforming the facts and making them look more attractive by hiding some unpleasant information or spreading false

rumors to determine employees to accept change are examples of manipulation. This is a little expensive, but risky, if people find out they have been tricked, the credibility of the change agent decreasing to zero in this case.

The first step in initiating a process of change is diagnosis, ie finding answers to "What changes are needed in the organization to ensure more effective functioning?" We often see changes that no one needs. Is it often that we understand, just after a change has been made, that it did not respond to real problems?

"The organization is involved in a process of uninterrupted interactions with its environment. In this environment, besides the organization, there are other systems - suppliers, customers or end-users - which influence the organization and, in turn, are influenced by it." (Băcanu Bogdan, 2003)

Inside, the organization can be perceived as having four components in interaction: organizational tasks, structures and systems, culture and people - members of the organization:

- Tasks form the primary component of the organizational system. They include the activities to be performed, the characteristics of these activities, the quantity and quality of the services or products offered by the organization
- Organizational structures and systems include: responsibilities and subordination lines, information systems, monitoring and control mechanisms, job descriptions, formal pay and reward systems, meeting structures, operating procedures, etc. Even though these features of the organization are relatively easy to describe, they often come to be overcome, unable with the changing world.
- Organizational culture refers to the values, rituals, power sources, norms and loyalty of the organization, as well as to the informal reward or penalty system that determines the way in which the organization operates.
- People come with their different skills, knowledge, experiences, personalities, values, attitudes and behaviors.

The organization needs to make changes to survive in an increasingly unpredictable environment. The organization must consider change as a good opportunity because it helps it grow and thrive.

"Changes are part of managerial and organizational life. They can be important, they are becoming more and more frequent and can be decisive for the survival of the organization. Changes can offer the people involved different opportunities: increasing professional satisfaction, improving working conditions, improving adopted practices, increasing efficiency, etc." (Paul Marinescu, 2003) .

Foreign pressures favorable to change may be due to sociological, technological, economic and political factors (STEP) exerted by the external environment of the organization. Other external pressures stem from market requirements and offers, conditions of competition, and changing conditions. Foreign pressures favorable to change are beyond the control of the organization.

"Internal pressures favorable to change are often linked to external ones. These include: the need to increase productivity, improve quality levels, increase sales volume, improve services, increase staff motivation, and keep it in the organization. Internal pressures favorable to change are under the control of the organization. "

There are three common approaches to generating internal pressure for change:

- top-down approach;
- the bottom-up approach;
- an expert-based approach;

Each of them having different advantages and disadvantages.

In order to understand the present state of the organization and to describe the one that is prefigured for the future, we can use the diagnostic model of Nadler and Tushman.

"The essential components of this model are the tasks performed by the organization, its organizational structures and systems, its culture and the people working within it. In addition, the model highlights the need to identify the collective vision shared within the organization and the people (or groups) that can facilitate change

A change may occur at one or more of the levels listed below:

1. individual;
2. team;
3. group / division;
4. organizations.

"The length and difficulty of implementing a change depends directly on the level at which it occurs. The force field diagram (Lewin) is an analytical tool that can be used to identify opposing forces requiring change, their relative magnitude, and possible elements for change that might be attracted to forces that require change." (Păun Emil)

Among the common causes of opposition to change there are:

- narrow personal interest
- misunderstanding and lack of trust;
- differences in assessing the situation;
- low tolerance towards change;
- pressures exerted by peer groups;
- fear of stress associated with change;
- negative experiences related to past changes

Among the approaches that can be adopted to reduce the opposition there are:

- training and communication;
- participation and involvement;
- facilitation and support;
- Negotiation and agreement;
- handling and co-opting;
- Explicit and implicit coercion.

Peters and Waterman, in their book "In Search of Excellence" (1982), drew attention to the eight features that any organization that is open to change, innovative:

- action-oriented;
- customer proximity;
- autonomy;
- productivity through good human resource management;
- simple structures;
- centralize essential issues;
- decentralization of actions / implementation and daily control;
- concentration on strong points." (Peters T. J., Waterman R. H., 1982)

In essence, emphasis should be placed on giving middle management the greatest possible freedom.

Conclusions

Specifying the level of change, we can estimate the duration of the change and the complexity and difficulty of the process. It is also necessary to analyze our own responses to change and to determine the influence of our attitude towards change on our ability to direct it. So we have a way to analyze the forces that are manifesting and that can favor or hinder a proposed change. Thus, we find out which forces that impose change must be strengthened and what rejection forces must be weakened. Opposition to change is one of the usual rejection forces. To reduce or eliminate it, there are several possible approaches.

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