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IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The Need for Top to Bottom Buy-In

thrive support transform believe positive progress sustainable
 positive acknowledge believe honour awareness thrive
educate inspire empower coach
 acknowledge honour believe sustainable positive

James Reyes-Picknell

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Abstract

- Improvement initiatives and change management – the need for top to bottom buy-in
- The maintenance and asset management disciplines are dominated by highly trained and often very experienced engineering and technical people. By nature, those people focus on the physical assets, what they do, what needs to be done to keep them doing it or improving on it. They focus on the technical and although they know that changes must be implemented by people, they often ignore that others may resist what to them is a perfectly logical change.
 - There is a saying that to engineers, change is an event but for everyone else, it is a process. That is a broad and sometimes unfair judgement but it has been earned. Technical people are seldom good "people, people". They are highly logical and once they see a solution to a problem, they are sold. At that point, to them, implementation is a straightforward technical process.
- **But not all people are sold on the basis of technical or financial merit alone. Many changes to physical assets will impact how people work.**
 - Once the engineering project is over, operations and maintenance must live with it. Management must manage processes in a new way and different results can be measured, monitored and expected.
 - At the very least, people will need to learn to use the new system, no matter how simple or complex it is.
 - Some may feel their jobs are at risk, especially if the change entails some labor saving technology (as it often does).
 - Some may think it will make their job more difficult.
 - Some may be apprehensive of anything that comes out of engineering or "management" because of past bad experiences.
 - Even managers may be apprehensive.
- **Some reasons are good technical ones and others are merely unfounded fears.**
 - It doesn't matter which, all of these lead to resistance in one form or another that must be overcome. After all, without people operating the systems (new and old) nothing happens. A plant without people is just a pile of hardware subject to the natural processes of decay and deterioration.
- **Changes must be managed from top to bottom in any organization.**
 - Without good change management and good management of change (we'll explore the differences) any new initiative, hardware, software, process, procedure, etc., will be at risk. We will explore considerations for any program of change in the technical and non-technical realms and arm participants with ideas on what to watch for and to ensure success with any new change.

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Do we need to worry about change?

- Technical disciplines and departments are full of technical people
- Our changes, although often technical in nature, have impacts beyond the technical people
- There are many more to consider

Engineer: change is an event

Everyone else: change is a process

What sort of things can change?

- Processes
- Need for spares
- Training
- Procedures
- Budgets
- Documentation
- Risks
- Staffing
- ...

Why is change a challenge?

- We love change, but we hate being changed!
- Every change creates stress for us
- Unless we wanted the change in the first place, we will (generally) resist it
- Why wouldn't we want it if it comes from someone else?
- Irrational emotional reactions are also a factor
- Past change history can create fears

How to guarantee failure

- A good idea that has no general support will fail
- Tell people they'll lose their jobs or income will fall
- Tell people they "might" lose their jobs (but not everyone)
- Don't tell people what's going on or why
- Don't help people assimilate the change
- Create distrust
- Too many changes at once

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Is your initiative going to be at risk?

- Many change initiatives will fail
 - 70% will fail (Harvard Business Review)
- Becoming part of the 30% that succeed
 - Identify and understand where you are at risk
 - Learning from your company's past experience
 - Seek out and listen to concerns that are voiced
 - Deal decisively with risk factors

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Your change history

	Question No.	Topic	Score
Vision	1	Compelling need clear	
	2	Operational vision clear	
Leadership	3	Leaders model new ways	
	4	Leaders maintain focus	
	5	Leaders demonstrate commitment	
Commitment	6	People expect change to succeed	
	7	People learn new ways	
	8	People can be constructively critical	
	9	Managers have change skills	
	10	Rewards / punishments applied	
	11	People well informed	
	12	Commitment built not forced	
	13	Middle managers not pressured	
Sustain	14	Processes don't block change	
	15	Processes changed regularly	
	16	Cross functional operation high	
Configure	17	Approaches varied appropriately	
Manage	18	Authority responsibility clear	
	19	Managers disciplined	
	20	Change kept on track	
	21	Decision-making not slow change	
	22	Problem solved quickly	
	23	Sufficient time allowed	

Evaluate past change programs.
Score: 1 to 10; low scores mean high risk

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Change leadership

	Question No.	Topic	Score
Vision and Price	1	Current situation is unacceptable	
	2	Exciting and compelling vision	
	7	Prepared to pay personal price	
	10	Prepared to pay organisational price	
	15	Desire to learn to lead change better	
Change Programme	3	Calibre of the change programme	
	4	Clear priorities and resources	
	5	Appropriate timescales and resources	
	6	Style of leadership to change team	
	11	Availability of appropriate skills	
Commitment and Comms	8	Public promotion of commitment	
	9	Gains commitment of team	
	12	Ensures public team commitment	
	13	Rewards and disciplines appropriately	
	14	Sustains compelling need	
	16	Overall performance (intuitively)	

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Typical change activities

- Communication plan
 - Send and receive!
- Governance
- Participation
- Make sure all the bases are covered

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Change management is built in

- Change management is not a separate work stream
 - You don't "do change management" to an organization
- Deal with people as people (not problems)
 - If someone is expressing concern, it is because they care
- Review your project plans with an eye to change issues
 - Look for risks and potential challenges then address them in the plan

How long will it take?

- Well executed change management should be all but invisible to the end users / subjects
- It should not add appreciably to the duration of a project because much of its unique activities run in parallel
- Be prepared to pause to get things right if you run into snags

Does it cost a lot?

- There is additional work for project management, governance (steer-com), communications, issue reporting and correction
- If you haven't considered the change related components in your project design it could add cost
- Each project is different so there's no rule of thumb, but a small incremental investment is cheap insurance to get 70% of your project return.
 - Looking at it this way, the change management effort probably has a bigger payback than the project itself

Setting the stage for success

- Once the change is chosen
 - Carry out the change history and change leadership assessments
 - Build the results into your plans
 - Don't miss the obvious "user" oriented aspects of making a change happen successfully
- Insist on governance and a charter
- Include mechanism for dealing with problems
- Work with HR "experts" but don't execute change management as a separate discipline
 - This is NOT HR's part of a technical project

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Questions

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It's time to optimize