

"...often the best ideas come from cutting across disciplinary boundaries and looking into other fields for new ideas. And...nothing will make a field stagnate more quickly than keeping out foreign ideas." Roger von Oech

# Linkages

by Sager Educational Enterprises

## CRITICAL II

## Change Leadership Thought Topics

### Initiating & Implementing Change from the Middle of the Organization: Part II

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In today's workplace, change is everyone's responsibility. When one part of a system changes, other changes are cascaded throughout the organization. How well and how quickly necessary change is initiated and implemented determines survival. As detailed in Part I, anyone can initiate change. The key tasks in initiating change are the same regardless of one's position inside or outside of an organization. Success is determined by how well Change Agents (CAs):

- Develop a need for change.
- Develop intent to change.
- Analyze problems.
- Influence People Needing to Change (PNCs) to take action.
- Establish effective two-way communication.

At some point, there is agreement to move to the Implementation Phase. This does not mean that tasks for initiating change are completed. In fact, given the dynamics of change, all of these tasks will be revisited during the Implementation process. Implementing change is a complex and real-time process. There are no lock-step procedures in place. The following is a broad overview of the areas that CAs will be part of during Implementation:

- **Building A Flagship Team To Guide The Change Efforts** – This should be done as soon as possible. In almost all change initiatives only a small percentage of PNCs (the Takers) will be enthusiastic and ready to commit to the proposed change from the beginning. Go with the Takers. Engage their efforts in leading the change. Make sure everyone on the team understands the vision, the mission, the goals and essential roles. Concentrate on making this team successful. Don't worry about the W&Ss (wait and see group). The nature of change is such that there will always be a much larger group of people who will want to wait and see some success before they commit fully. The best way to get this group on board is to help the Takers become as successful as possible.
- **Building An Implementation Action Plan**- Make sure the Plan is reasonable, understandable, measurable, believable, and achievable. Some questions to ask are: Are all critical tasks listed? Are responsibilities and due-dates established? Have resources to do the tasks been identified? Are these resources available and committed? Is the Implementation Schedule realistic in terms of resources and other commitments? Are expected results listed for each Action Item? Are milestones listed? Is there clarity about measures and data gathering? Does the Implementation Plan include some action items that are quick wins?

Part of Implementation Action Planning is to look at how the organization has handled change initiatives in the past. Analyze successes and failures. What were the patterns of resistance? What were the positive forces that moved change forward? What were the forces that obstructed change? Are these forces noted in the Plan? Are contingencies stated for current

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and potential issues that could derail the plan? The Implementation Action Plan should also include factors necessary for enabling success. Does the Flagship Team need training? What about retreats? Is there a need for a pilot program?

- Taking Action – Pick an Action item that is a short-term win and just do it! There can be no change without action. Start small and keep it simple. While we all want to prevent failure, failure is better than inaction. Most W&Ss will see a reasonable plan and the willingness to take action as a move toward success. Some will even jump on board at this point because they can see how to turn things around and move forward.
- Communicating Fully And Frequently - Implementers of change must keep all stakeholders fully informed. To do this effectively, Implementers need to listen carefully to the needs of their bosses, to the people who fund the change, and to those who must adopt and adapt to the change. Questions to ask are: Is information on all aspects of the Implementation Plan readily available? Are the expressed needs of different groups addressed? Are successes publicized and celebrated? Are failures disclosed with corrective action that will be taken? Does everyone at all levels of the organization understand the need for change? Do they understand what's in it for them as well as for customers and the company?

Involve people in meaningful dialogue. People who feel they are listened to are more supportive of change and are more likely to accept change requirements.

Use a variety of means - charts, graphs, newsletters, E-mail, etc. - to keep people informed. Communicate often. People who feel that they are informed are less likely to resist change.

- Providing Rewards and Recognition. - Work to provide rewards and recognition to the people who are making change happen.
- Measuring Progress – (See chart below)
- Making Change Stick –Build ownership for change and continually identify and train new change agents. Making the Flagship Team successful will generate new teams, who will generate new teams, etc. (See chart below)

Don't let up - No matter how much thought has gone into the change effort, there will be unforeseen and uncontrollable forces that will profoundly impact the success of the change effort. Be prepared to change the Implementation Action Plan, but as Sir Winston Churchill stated, Never give in. Never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense.

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

QUESTIONS TO ASK	EVIDENCE
Is there good attendance at meetings?	
Are all team members (TM ) actively participating in meetings and interacting with representatives from other disciplines?	
Are T M providing constructive feedback on data and	

reports?	
Are T M recognizing the need for performance improvement teams (PIT)?	
Are T M volunteering to serve on PITs?	
Are T M able to evaluate the progress of the team?	
Are T M able to evaluate their contribution to team success?	
Are T M taking responsibility for achieving results?	
Do T M feel a sense of belonging to the group?	
Do T M feel that the group is accomplishing something important?	

☺ If more is needed here, share your findings with the team and ask for their suggestions.

#### BUILDING OWNERSHIP FOR PNCs AS FUTURE CHANGE AGENTS

QUESTIONS TO ASK	EVIDENCE
Can you listen to & act on the voice of the customer?	
Is your model flexible enough to incorporate feedback from the team & provide quick turnaround for requests?	
Do you have access to the data that will keep teams focused & productive?	
Have you established effective relationships with Information Services?	
Have you fostered collegial, collaborative relationships among team members?	
Have you helped the team achieve results?	

☺ If you don't have evidence of all of the above, continue to provide support. Enlist feedback from the team.

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