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How Successful Organizations Implement Change
Authors: Emad E. Aziz and Wanda Curlee
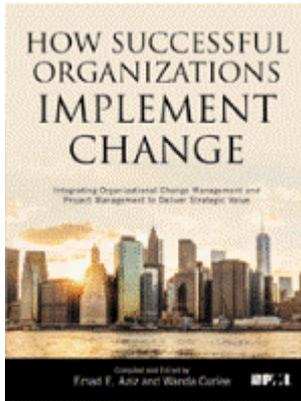Book Review   Reviewer: Rex B. Reagan

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: *How Successful Organizations Implement Change*

Authors: **Emad E. Aziz and Wanda Curlee**

Publisher: Project Management Institute (PMI®)

List Price: $ 44.95   **Format:** 354 pages, soft cover

Publication Date: 2017   **ISBN:** 978-1-62825-386-3

Reviewer: **Rex B. Reagan**

Review Date: April 2018

Introduction

How Successful Organizations Implement Change is a well thought-out, extremely well organized, and profound look at Organizational Change. The authors, and noted contributors, take Organizational Change a step further and much deeper by clearly stating the benefits and potential minefields to businesses in a complex and sometimes volatile environment, where strategies may often become, or redirected, realigned to fit within the organizational climate. This book is a collaborative effort of a team of well-known, respected, and accomplished parishioners and not just scholars. These are operators who have truly "been there and done that" and have accomplished their change and project management objectives successfully.

The proposed change cannot be accomplished without a strong and compelling vision. It is said that vision is a picture of the future and why people should strive to create that future. While the book is not based on "vision", it is paramount that this element of change be a foundational principle of change and without a clear vision, then the risk of solving current challenges and not attain the desired and needed change as originally planned.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is presented in three (3) parts;

Part 1 provides a history of project management and how it has evolved to include and facilitate organizational change. The book especially devotes attention to the complexities that surround organizational change and the inherent negative and positive benefits from this change. The companies and organizations that are able and capable of adapting to change will often stand a greater probability of succeeding where those who cannot, will not, or do not, will likely not succeed to the degree sought.

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Part 2 addresses the more personal part of Change with affects to leadership and employees. The influence of innovation (demonstrated by Agile approaches) will also show how these methodologies may benefit organizational change. The role of Stakeholders is addressed and the necessity for gauging their impact upon this change. Change cannot be measured without metrics and key measurements are discussed in Part 2.

Part 3 is critical in that the actual and pragmatic approach to a change team is addressed.   This includes constructing a change team, its leadership, and sponsorship.   Communication is discussed as a critical ingredient and the importance of how the role of technology may often drive change.

Highlights

The book is a comprehensive and informative treatise on Organizational Change. Any professional in this discipline would be well served and who desires to remain at the top of their game would be well-served by reading each page of this book.

Addressing both traditional theories (previously mentioned) as well as innovative and contemporary approaches (Chapter 6 on "Applying Agile Techniques to Change Management Projects") demonstrated the range of which innovative approaches are applied as well as traditional methods remain usable.   The description of the Agile technique was especially appreciated as it was practical and descriptive.

The book stressed the personal influences that are key to Organizational Change. These influences are presented by Leadership and the substantial information by Stakeholders. The authors provide a very clear informative view that organizational change does not occur without a firm understanding, and a strong purpose, understanding, and well-developed strategy.

Highlights: What I liked!

The level of expertise that developed this book:

The authors and contributors to this book are respected, well-accomplished, and known in the world of Project Management. Dr. Ginger Levin is a well-known contributor and practitioner. Her literary accomplishments are well known, and have been a part, of the Project Management Institute.   Mr. Emad Aziz is equally accomplished with contributions in the corporate world spanning years and countries.

The thoroughness in which this book addresses and the complete sphere of organizational change that it contains are comforting and reassuring in knowing that this could be the definitive source on organizational change. The three parts that range from a history of change to actually formulating a change team provide the foundation upon which to begin and implement change within an organization.

While the resources producing this book have been well-accomplished professionals, they are not reluctant to emphasize the importance of history and how past theories and practices play a vital part in today's climate. An example of this in is Chapter 11 that references the FIRO (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation) theory, developed by Will Schutz in 1958 that states the three basic needs that all human beings share: The need to feel significant, competent, and likable. Another is the Bruce Tuckman's Stages of Small-Group Development Theory in 1965. This contains the "forming, storming, norming and performing stages. Since the initial introduction of this theory, a fifth stage has been added, that of adjourning, in which the team has completed all tasks and its human elements become absorbed by the organization.

Who might benefit from the Book?

The book should be a fundamental reference and source book for those personnel about to become involved and especially to be the driving factor behind change within an organization. The book should be required reading for those personnel engaged in change teams, leading the change team, or the sponsors of change. Any professional in the consulting, government contracting, or corporate environment would benefit from reading How Successful Organizations Implement Change.

Conclusion

How Successful Organizations Implement Change is a book that should one that remains within easy reach of any professional that is involved in organizational change. While there was no index, the questions and answers included were a great addition to this book. It is extremely well researched; whose authors and contributors are at the top of their game. I will be using this book for practical application.

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About the Reviewer

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Rex B. Reagan, PMP is a project manager with the Loch Harbour Group, He is a Project Management Professional, ITIL, Agile International Consortium, and is Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certified. He is also a retired U.S. Navy commander (Supply Corps) and former Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security Federal senior manager. He has his masters degree in financial management from American University in Washington, DC, and is a graduate of the Naval War College.