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Implementing Change Management for a change
by Audrey Mphela
Advisory

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Project leaders are often responsible for the implementation of large-scale projects that are robust and required for the organization to pivot. It could be implementing new technology advances, new business systems or even new infrastructure. ''The project scope is signed off, and once the execution is complete and successful, the end user will have no choice but to comply. It's that simple.'' Said the project team during their kickoff meeting. The execution goes underway, and the project team is focused on ensuring that the implementation of the new systems remains on track and without any scope creep nor black swan experiences. The change management aspect of implementing new systems for example, often overlooks the change management aspect of how new changes will have an impact on the end user. The project plan outlines the steps to be taken but does not indicate the way the project team will manage the change process that is part and parcel of the project.

How does one achieve a successful merger of the change process with the project? Let us look two – facilitating Change through Projects and what Project leaders need to know about change management.

Facilitating change through projects.

Looking at a Case Study example of an Organizational Change management pilot - HCC (Hampshire Country Council) E-Procurement Project, Version 2, which took place over 10 years ago. The case study is an overview of the change Management issues faced during its e-procurement system implementation.

The key statistics of the project were:

	Total
Population	1.7m
Number of System Users	3.700
Number of Purchase orders per annum	500 000
Total External Purchasing Spend Per Year	£380m
Supplier Records	70,000
Electronic Catalogue lines	Approx 52,000 to date
Number of suppliers on the Electronic Catalog, or which	

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• **Fully Catalogued Suppliers**	300 to date	
• **Free text only suppliers**	800 to date	

This is what is discussed in the case study.

The objectives of the e-procurement Project were to Reduce off-contract purchasing (purchasing from non-approved vendors), Provide better procurement management information and to streamline the purchasing process.

This formed, part of the overall IT systems Replacement Project, to replace the old systems within the organizations respective departments such as Finance, and Human Recourses.

The old systems needed replacing as were designed around the way things have been working before. Old systems were becoming obsolete and expensive to maintain. End-user expectations for new systems that were futuristic were also very high.

A change management plan as part and parcel of the project scope was drawn up prior to implementation to:

- Establish Change Partners per department supported by two change Managers within the enterprise project.

- Developed an in-house business process change course for senior managers.

- Documenting of new business processes and

- Face-to-face visits to explain the corporate procurement strategy.

Though the change management plan was a useful plan, the plan did not get carried out, focus was on system delivery and not on change management.

In the end, the HCC e-procurement project turned out to be somewhat successful irrespective, with exception to the move to centralization which was abandoned due to resistance, funding challenges and the perception of ends users' loss of control.

The main players attributed to the project success are:

- Documenting and discussing new business process maps with departments.
- Appointment of change management partners in each department
- Visits and discussions with local managers and staff promotion of the corporate procurement strategy via the corporate procurement network

Source: Delivering e-procurement | local e-gov | National Projects |

You might be questioning the purpose of use. The main project was successful without fully carrying out the change management plan. Why would one want to change what is working,

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take on a risk of trying something new like implementing a change management plan full on? Can the change management plan not be documented to form part and parcel of the risk register instead?

Resistance to change is not something that can only be experienced from end users. Project leaders become resistant to change too – for various reasons, one may not know the knowhow or lacking the tools or resources to implement the change management plan within the project.

This takes one back to the latter part of the initial question posed earlier on - How does one achieve a successful merger of the change process with the project is discussed below.

What project leaders need to know about change.

In his book, titled "what got you hear, won't get you there, subtitled - How successful people become even more successful!' Marshall Goldsmith discusses the trouble with success and why we

resist change and how our previous success often prevents us from achieving more success. He

discusses the 4 beliefs that hinder success.

- Belief 1: I have succeeded before, meaning, I will succeed again.
- Belief 2: I can succeed, meaning I'm capable of succeeding.
- Belief 3: I will succeed, meaning I possess the power to succeed.
- Belief 4: I choose success, meaning I'm successful by my own decision to succeed.

If one has not implemented a change management strategy within the project plan of past, present, or future projects, which one of the beliefs could be holding project leaders back?

Some of the reasons project leaders shared for not implementing a change management plan are:

- There is not time to implement change management within the projects.
- Implementation is time consuming, not cost effective, not feasible, not crucial.
- Change will happen automatically anyway.
- It makes no difference to project success or failure.
- Excluding change management will not impact the project negatively.
- Project success has been achieved before and can still be achieved without it.

Perhaps we can discuss some of the benefits of implementing a change management strategy as part and parcel of the project plan and what difference it can make.

Benefits to Human Resources

What affects human resources the most during change is how the feelings are about the change. End Users can experience different emotions such as fear, worry, sadness, joy, anger,

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shock and or depression. The project leader and project team are not exempt from experiencing the same emotions. These Differing emotions can fluctuate like a roller coaster. The Kübler Ross' Change Curve model outlines the different stages that one can go through during the process of change.
Being cognisant of this will assist project leaders anticipate the inevitable and respond in a way that does not jeopardise the project in any way.

When users are feeling positive about the project that in turn has a positive impact on the project.

There are several other change management models that suite different types of projects. One can adopt the model that would best suit their project and merge that into the project plan. One may prefer to select the Kotter's 8 Step Change Management Model, or the ADKAR change management model depending on the objectives and project.

A change management model will assist project leaders to guide the organisation through the change, by managing the human variables, and ensuring that all bases are covered.

Benefits from Lessons learned.

Project management lessons learned is a crucial part of any project plan. Thorough this, one can avoid past project mistakes and use past project successes to attain greater success for future projects.

There are many lessons that could be learned from – the HCC (Hampshire Country Council) E-Procurement Project we discussed earlier on:

A few may include:

- Consistent and continual communication assists in keeping all stakeholders on the same page to avoid any unplanned delays in the project plan.
- Conducting thorough research and planning can mitigate the risk of scope creep and black swan projects.
- Continually controlling and monitoring the project can assist in keeping the project consistently on track.
- A proper change management plan, when implemented, can increase the success rate of the project.

How does one implement change management as part and parcel of a project?

To recapitulate, I have listed some key Project Management Professional terminology often used, that one can think of and be reminded of what to consider in a change management strategy within the project pan. I have selected to use the word C.H.A.N.G.E

C – Cost Control: Conducting a thorough Rough Order of Magnitude (Rom) Estimate that

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includes the cost of factoring in the change Management process within the project, will reduce the risk of cost overruns, caused by poor planning.

H – Human resources: Plan Human resources management resulting in users eliciting positive emotions throughout the lifecycle on the project. A project leader and team that will not change with the demand of the project, must be changed.

A – Agile Manifesto Values: Change affect human resources the most. Responding to change positively and how change affect human resources is paramount.

G – Gant Chart: Consistently controlling and monitoring the progress of change will ensure the project schedule, task dependencies and critical path are well underway as expected.

E – ECM: Using Event Chain Methodology (ECM), prepare for the unexpected and the unknown throughout the lifecycle of the project. Optimise positive risk and mitigate negative risks through a thorough risk register to avoid scope creep and black swan projects.

We have now come to the end of this project and will close it off by saying….

Implementing a change management plan within a project, cost a lot. So, keep the C.H.A.N.G.E!

About the Author

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Audrey Mphela is a Retail Systems Training Specialist at SPAR SRDC in South Africa. She provides expert advice and guidance to store Owners/Managers with regard to IT Systems being used to develop skills and competencies. She assesses if a store is operating within accepted parameters for the various departments and provides retailers with sufficient system knowledge to assist them in the management of their business, to use a system correctly, to analyze and act effectively on the information contained in the system • Analyze financial indicators such as gross profit, high/low profit areas, sales growth/loss, high/low sales areas, sales versus purchases, stock holding, cash flow, ratios. She can identify areas outside normally accepted operating range for a given set of criteria and to rectify the situation. She advises

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store owners, store managers, supervisors, and operators on best operating policies and procedures to run and manage their stores to gain greater business benefit from using group business systems, also to grow profit, reduce shrinkage and grow the business.

Audrey holds an Advanced IT Project Management NQF Level 7 Certificate with UJ. She has Occupationally Directed Education and Training and development. (Current) and an E-Technology Professional Diploma. She has been awarded Best Project Manager at SPAR for a 12 Month Project and Division of the year Award (Division Director for Clubs in Johannesburg and neighboring countries Malawi- Toastmasters). She is a Producer & Radio Presenter of an online Radio Show – Bloma Nathi (evening show). Audrey can be contacted at amphela@gmail.com