

Leading Organizational Change

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Abstract

Almost all organizations require some form of change to keep up with globalization and current technological trends to enhance development. However, the implementation of change in most organizations is greeted with high resistance if it is not correctly introduced and implemented. Robbins and Delenzo (2001) define change as the alteration of an organization's environmental structure, technology or people. Fullan (1992) also asserted that change is the process of learning new ideas and things and he further mention that the process of change is complex, and organizational leadership must exercise great circumspection when implementing change. This analysis includes a discussion of the importance of change in organizations and the role of leadership in the implementation of change.

Keywords: organizational change, leadership, organizations, institutions of higher education

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1. Introduction

Leading change in most institutions in the 21st century is a herculean task and involves changing the mindset and culture of the people. According to O'Neil (2006), culture is dynamic and this is definitely applicable to the culture of any institution. This assertion presupposes that the success of an organization is dependent on the culture of the organization and how it reacts to changes emanating from within and without. Bowman (2013) posited that organizational culture consist of the behavior of people within an organization and it includes the organization's vision, norms, beliefs, and habits. In the 21st century era of technological evolution, all educational institutions are working hard to adopt and embrace this new technology to improve. It is against this background that the U. S Department of Education formulated the "2016 National Education Technology Plan" a flagship educational technology policy document for the United States geared towards providing greater equity of access to the technology, and equipping students with the requisite skills for today's job market.

2. Need For Change

The need for constant change in our institutions in the 21st century is inevitable. The success of any organization is dependent upon how the purpose of the organization fits into a constantly evolving environment. According to Weston, Ferris, and Finkelstein (2017), in order for organizations to remain resilient in our competitive global world, organizational leaders must be mindful of the changes in the environment in which they operate. They further mentioned that, to ensure sustainable development, organizations will have to continually evolve and adapt to societal demands and meet organizational goals. If your organization does not change by market-driven needs and requirements, it is bound for failure.

3. Role of Leaders in Organizational Change Process

The process of change demands an efficient and highly skilled leadership that can envision future trends and proactively address the issues of change appropriately. According to English (2008), leadership is an art and science. As a science, it is studied in schools and encompasses what is taught during lectures, in textbooks, and other research journals. English (2008) further asserts that the art of leadership is about how a person (leadership) can motivate, lead and motivate staff and subordinates to achieve organizational goals. Alvesson (2016) intimated that, there are a lot of research focused on how to change the culture of the organization and not how leaders can change themselves to spearhead the success of the institution. This assertion lays credence to the fact that, leaders cannot effect the necessary change if they do not align their beliefs with that of the organizational objectives. In fact, most leaders continually make efforts to accomplish successful and significant change in their respective organizations. However, some are very successful, while others constantly struggle and fail.

4. Barriers Inhibiting Effective Change

Effective change to any educational institution is not an easily obtainable goal. Indeed, during the process of change, dynamics in operations may resist the proposed change, such as school culture, the lack of holistic approach, the absence of follow-up or support. There are many obstacles to effective change. Englert and Tarrant (1993) pointed out that resistance to change is a natural phenomenon as most staff are used to the old ways of doing things. Newton & Tarrant further outlines a number of factors that can fuel unwillingness to change which includes the lack of adequate information, threat to core skills and competence, the fear of failure, and reluctance

to experiment. These factors have a great effect on the process of change and innovation.

5. Change and Institutions of Higher Learning

According to Fullan (2002) and Conlon (2000), one of the most crucial problems in educational reform, is that educators do not have a clear sense of the reasons for change. This assertion gives credence to the difficulty associated with the implementation of change in educational institutions. They further argued that, higher education institutions today are gradually evolving due to the astronomical rise in student population, demographics and other factors. Students are demanding new programs, just as are policymakers at the federal and state levels. The colleges that are the most flexible can adapt and continue to thrive. This requires a culture that expects, and even celebrates change. It must be noted that, change in any organization has everything to do with reaching set goals. It can certainly propel and organization to greatness or stifle its progress.

6. Conclusion

A Change is a very powerful tool that can be utilized to propel an organization towards achieving its goals. However, if an organization is adamant to change it stifles organizational development. Being adamant to change is one of the fundamental obstacles of many institutions, and as Cook Jenkins (2014) mentions, one way is a surety when it comes to improving and achieving and organization's set goals, to solve its problems by adapting and changing to meet global trends.

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