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Organization Change Management – Contemporary Methods and Practice Inferencesin Anthropology

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Abstract

Organizations are now looking for new Business Services model with a common governance structure between the vendor and the Organization. Outsourcing is maturing as an inevitable option for many organizations and is accepted as Business corporeality at present. Outsourcing involves substantial Change Management.

There are many aspects that are associated with Change Management. The Cultural and the Behavioral facets are often intervened with the human associations that are essential ingredients of Change Management. Change should be addressed with these qualities because these factors address the human dimension of work. Initiatives analogous to Outsourcing need to consider Human behaviors, Culture and Environmental factors of Change to be managed.

Anthropology is a social science that studies human's behaviors and cultures. There is a very strong bridge between principles of management and anthropology.

This paper is a Research outcome about the Contemporary Practices and Connotations from Anthropological Studies from the perspective of Change Management.

Article

Organization Change Management – Why is it a vital?

Organization Change happens because of various factors. Mergers, Acquisition, Divestiture, and Transition/Outsourcing are much prevalent events that warrant Organization Change Management at present.

In large Information Technology outsourcing engagements, while infrastructure, technology, and process are transitioned, Organization Change Management is one facet that is offered as a binding solution for Success. Organizational change befalls a transition – An Enterprise, or an Organization or Services is transitioned from its current state to some desired future state. Embracing change, creating sustainable change is critical for any Transition. Very nature of social or organizational change is restructuring cultural paradigms and norms.

In my career I have been involved in large transitions in the following domains- Banking and Healthcare and Life sciences – Pharma. Orchestrating Change and Transition was always an interesting challenge. I have taken one of the transitions I spearheaded for research purpose.

Typically, the Transition Management team will have Organization Change Management Consultants who will steer the Change throughout the transition and the steady state. Many human behaviors either aid or resist change. The rudimentary Ethnic behavior "Adaptability" is more prevalent in the Indians. The following Fig.1 is a show the present Transition Management process intervened with the Organization Change management.



Fig .1

Any engagement is a collaborative effort of People, Process and Technology. Organization Change Management will be usually executed as a joint venture between the incumbent and the customer.

The following are the high level steps followed for the above mention case study to strategize Organization Change Management.

A team of Organization Change Management Consultants commenced the Process of Change Management with Change Assessment and Impact analysis.

- The Change Impact Assessment and analysis- collection, analysis and prioritization of change impacts that will define the future state.
- The assessment identified who is impacted, how they are impacted and what supporting change interventions are needed to mitigate the resistance to the change.
- Identified Specific remedial proceedings for the stakeholder and communication plans and key activities to engage business users directly or through the Change Champion Network were formulated.
- Trainings – Cross-Cultural, Change awareness.

The Following Fig2. Represents high level timelines and inclusion of Organization Change Management in the Transition Plan.



Fig.2

Research Method: In this research paper, I will start with the observation and experiences about handling Change, considering humane facets in a Hostile milieu. These were derived out of the assessment done as part of the transition initiation in the vendor team.

The participants have ranked the key success factors of this transition in relation to the present setting. These factors were ranked by 35 individuals who were part of the transition in various capacities / job functions. Each of the facets was weighed based on perception from Low to Crucial. A questionnaire was administered followed by an interview with the leads and change champions.

Observe that these Major Facets have definitive involvement human behaviors. While some facets of change can be managed through cognitive learning, most of them are self-managed and fostered by training.

Please Rank the listed facets of Change according to the importance					
Major Facets	Low	Needed	Important	Crucial	Total Responses
Adaptability to new environment	0	1	9	23	33
Know Barriers of Change	5	14	4	6	29
Approach with Humane aspects of Change	1	5	9	18	33
Transparent, Clear, Regular, Timely communication	1	7	11	9	28
Encourage ownership by key players	2	4	9	18	33
Embrace the common Governance Factors	5	10	7	7	29
Support people affected by the change as possible	2	6	7	15	30
Be prepare for the unexpected	0	1	7	20	28
Cross-Culture Training	2	5	14	10	31
Total Number of Participants in the Survey	35				
<i>Note : Large Transition of a UK-based Bank - Responses collected in 2013</i>					

Fig.3

Observe the table in Fig.3. Managing organizational change is the process of planning and implementing change in organizations in such a way as to minimize hostility and create a congenial atmosphere.

Also, there was one predominant observation made on the role of Organization culture and Change Management. The role that Organization culture plays is very vital. Organizational excellence should be a culture where change is embraced to benefit the organization.

Hostility to change is an attribute of human nature. Also adaptability to change is the main ingredient of successful change. Both these attributes were prevalent in this case also.

In the above situation of hostile transition, Cognitive learning /Knowledge has aided in a successful Transition and Change. The Transition was successful with minimal knowledge transfer loss.

The team of Organization Change Management consultant was a well-appointed army led by an able Programme Director.

Change Management– An Anthropological outlook.

Here is an annotation from Thirukkural (Tamil Sangam Literature., written in Tamil, Period-B.C) on well-planned Management strategies.

*“Even without a winning offense and defense, a well-appointed army may win renowned acclaim” Verse 768. (*Ref)*

Outsourcing of services involves creating a new system and then institutionalizing the new approaches in the transitioned knowledge/job. It is done for various aspects of business which includes – Reduced costs. There are many Challenges acquiring knowledge in these transitions. A hostile transition requires Cognitive learning and adaptability.

Social cognitive learning is one aspect which is Ethnography oriented. Anthropology and ancient history says about the Indian method of learning and Knowledge transfer as a method which is Attention while teaching, Observation and Retention and Reproduction of the learnings in practice (Sravana (listening), Manana (review) and Nididhyasana (Intense contemplation)).

In the modern theory, the Concept for social cognitive theory was formed by Edwin B. Holt and Harold Chapman Brown in 1931. The theory speaks about Attention, Retention and production. The incumbents in this study were predominantly from the India.

Today's Knowledge Transfer methods also have these components – Attention / Listening/Observation, Retention/Documentation and Production .Play back and Future Support.

Metacognition is the ultimate ethnicity based behavioral aspect that helps in Hostile Transition and Successful Change. It involves Strategy and Knowledge Components of learning and helps self-management.

Connotation of Anthropological Studies to Contemporary Change Management

When the discussion narrows to the connotation and complementing the Change Management practices from the Anthropological and Contemporary theories, Application of behavioral science techniques would help understand the need for Environmental changes, People Management, and Project Management where are aspects signified in all theories.

I am going to reference two Gurus' here –Kautilya also called as Chanakya-The virtuoso and Kurt Lewin, pioneer of Modern Change Management theories.

Kautilya/Chanakya is a visionary and a guru for Change, who brought in Political and Economic changes in ancient India. His book, Arthashastra written in the 4th century BC, speaks about Socio-cultural aspects, Managing a Kingdom that can be related to an Enterprise/Organization level.

Kurt Lewin is one of the forerunner of Contemporary organizational, Social and applied psychology, who lived in early 1900's. His Change Management Principles are well established as Contemporary change management practices.

Kautilya calls his Leader as Swamy and he defines that the Swamy should possess a sound knowledge of human nature, for efficient and honest running of the Kingdom.

Lewin's equation, $B = f (P, E)$

Behavior is a function of People and Environment. He also coined the word “Group Dynamics”. Lewin's equation establishes the interdependencies well.

Kautilya's Arthashastra has guidelines for the society, People, employment, Behavioral aspects and control of immoralities, which is nothing, but People and Environment. In short, his design is based on Group Dynamics and Cross-functional management.

Lewis used applied psychology, and factors influencing social situations and behaviors.

Kurt Lewin's, 3 Stage Change Management process is as follows. The Fig 4. Denotes the steps.



Fig.4

Many aspects of Changes are discussed in the Arthashastra and there is guidance written on how the change is managed. It is amazing to observe that several concepts of present day theories have been in Arthashastra. Adaptability to Change is one important aspect dealt in the Arthashastra. Here Kautila is a Guru as he brought in a major political change successfully.

Conclusion

Change Management involves meticulous planning and implementation, with involvement of the people affected by the changes. Change Assessment, Planning, Stakeholder Management, Communication, Risk Management and Trainings were part of the Organization Change Management Program. The key components of successful change management that could be derived from my study are as follows:

- Appoint a Change Champion, Create Change Network, Plan Partnership Building events, Involve people.
- Establish the connections to influence the stakeholder. Encourage Ownership by Key Players.
- Nurture adaptability as a culture.
- Look for common ground for functioning, but accept cultural diversity wherever needed.
- Allow more time for communication and for developing common “ground rules”
- Be Prepared for the Unexpected.
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