Toolkit for Change in Resistant Organizations

Cheryl-Haley Nix, Christopher Rowe, Jonathan Carpenter, Michael MacKay, & Patrick Guichon
School of Education and Technology, Royal Roads University

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Dr. Michelle Harrison
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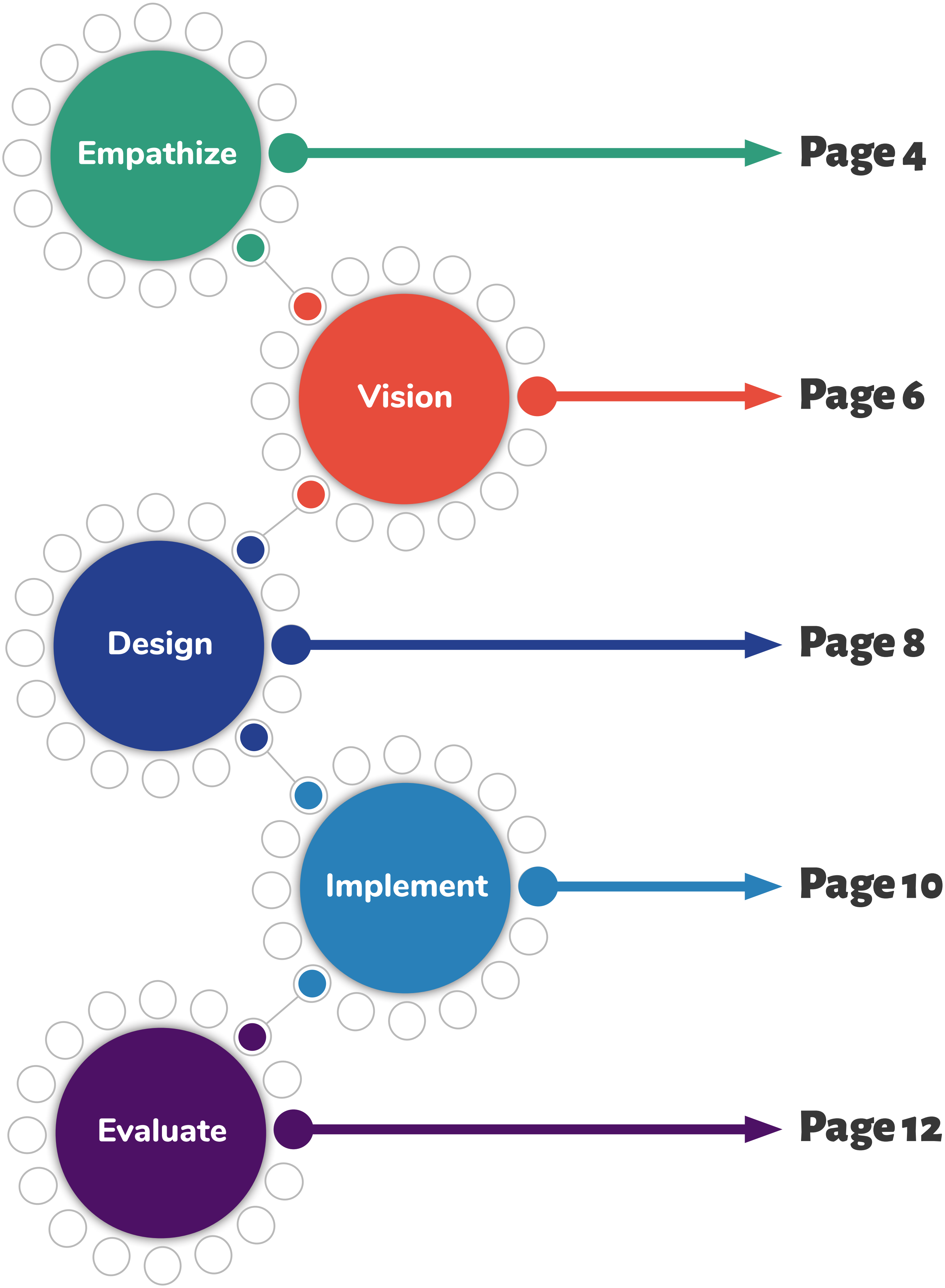
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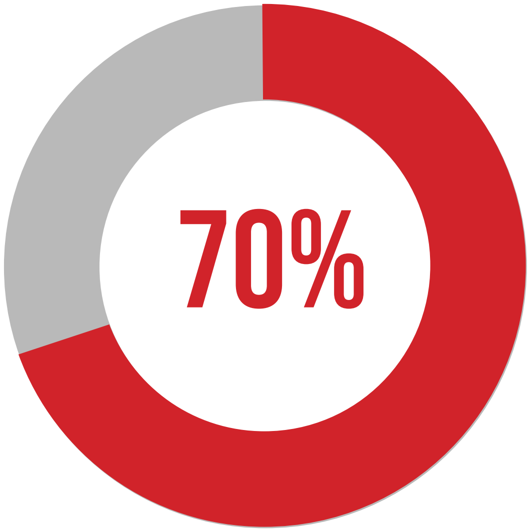
Introduction



It is estimated that around 70% of change projects fail because they lack a clear framework to guide the planning and implementation process (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015). This document amalgamates several theories, models, and approaches to change and project management. It provides a simple toolkit to facilitate change, unify stakeholders and advance the probability of implementing educational technology projects.

See your change project to completion!

Empathize with your Stakeholders

1 Discover

Stakeholders are people who have a valid interest in the change project and deserve to be included in the process (Freeman et al., 2018). Start with a few key stakeholders and brainstorm to discover more stakeholders who are relevant to the project. Expand discussion groups to explore as many stakeholders as possible (see Figure 1).

2 Understand

For each of the identified stakeholders, consult with them to determine their power (level of influence/ control), their interest (active involvement), and their attitude (in favour or against) (Bryson, 2004; Mendelow, 1981; Murray-Webster & Simon, 2006). Not all stakeholders are alike. Classify the stakeholders as one of the following eight categories (see Figure 2). Use these classifications to inform operations. For example, *Acquaintances*, stakeholders with lower power and interest but a positive attitude, should be kept informed during the project. Nevertheless, they are not likely to be a barrier to the change as they have little influence and little power and are generally in favour of the change.

(Huizinga, 2018)

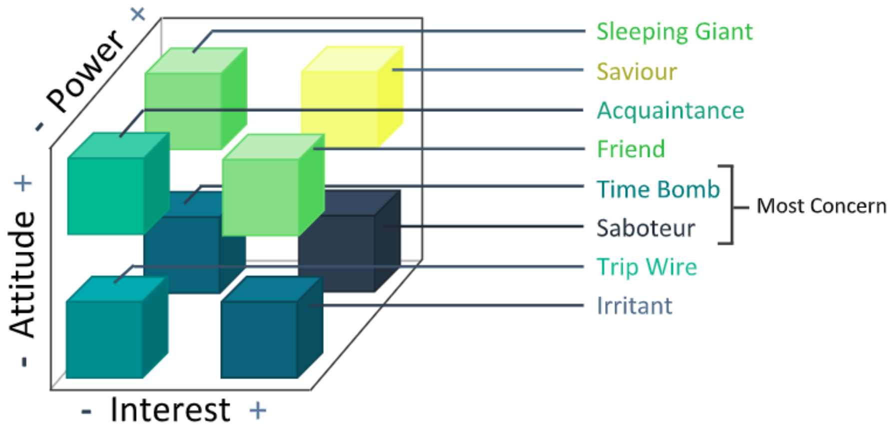
FIGURE 1
LIST OF POTENTIAL EDUCATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

Your stakeholders for an educational technology change project may include (but not necessarily limited to):

- Students
- Teachers within the program
- Teachers outside the program
- Employers (for jobs that students might get once they graduate)
- Companies (that provide Co-op positions and work-study projects to students)
- Other institutions (where students transfer in from or to)
- Other programs within the school (some programs may run in parallel or in competition to the program in question)
- Financial support institutions (banks, government grants/bursaries, employers - funding for the program, funding for the students)
- Students' families
- IT support staff (people responsible for implementing or maintaining the tech)
- Training staff (people who need to teach staff about the new tech)
- Accreditation boards (may influence or be influenced by the changes)

Note. This figure is an example of possible stakeholders.

FIGURE 2
CATEGORIZATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

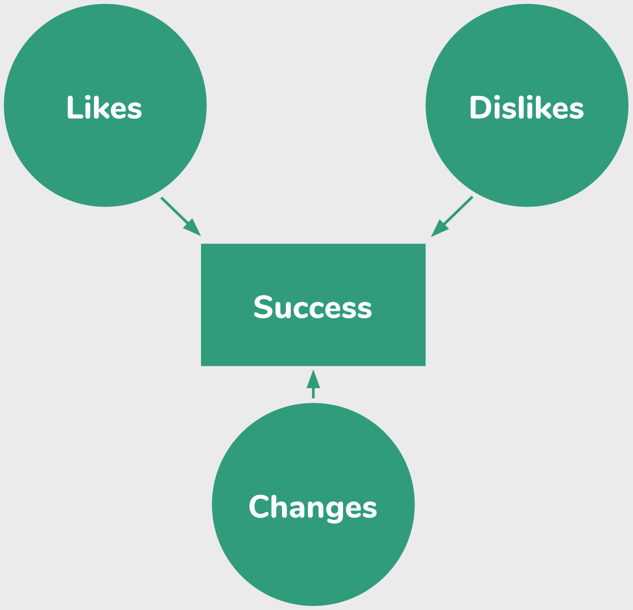


Note. Stakeholders can have different amounts of power, interest and attitudes regarding a particular change project. Some will support the change (positive attitude), some will have more influence (positive power), and some will be more involved (positive interest). Some stakeholders will (at least initially) be more resistant to change such as the "Saboteur" and "Time Bomb". Both of these categories are of most concern as they are likely to be the biggest barriers because they have high power and are not in favour of change.
Model is adapted from Murray-Webster & Simon (2006).

3 Empathize

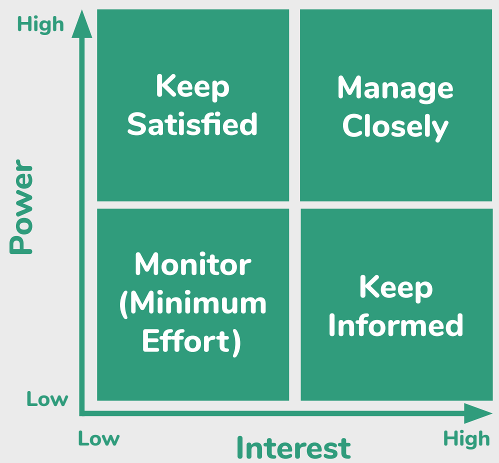
Interview stakeholders individually or in groups, synchronously or asynchronously, to get their perspective on the current system, their likes, dislikes, and how they might envision a change. If and when a change is identified, understand the stakeholder expectations and get a sense of how they define success (see Figure 3). Throughout the change project, keep stakeholders involved and informed to the appropriate level given their category (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 3
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW DISCUSSION POINTS



Note. Discuss with stakeholders their likes and dislikes of the current system. Discover what they would like changed and how they would define the change project a success if implemented.

FIGURE 4
POWER/INTEREST GRID FOR STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIZATION



Note. Not all stakeholders need to be managed the same way. Those with higher interest and power will be involved in decision making and discussions. Conversely, those with lower interest and power, still need to be informed, but do not need to be in every meeting, discussion, and be involved with the minor details of the change project.
Adapted from Mendelow, A.L. (1981). '[Environmental Scanning - The Impact of the Stakeholder Concept](),' ICIS 1981 Proceedings, 20.


(Annadale, 2016)

Creating a Vision

To implement a new learning technology, a leader must have the capacity to develop an image of what a successful implementation looks like (Hamid et al., 2014).

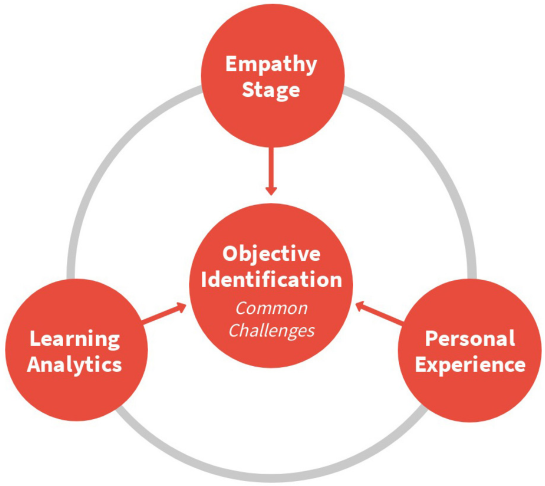
Identify Objective

First, act as an aggregator (see Figure 5) to bring together all of the information at your disposal. Include qualitative data from the empathy step, academic and learning analytics, and personal introspection of your previous experiences (Kouzes & Posner, 2019; Schneider, 2015; University of Calgary, Learning Technologies Task Force, 2014). The goal here is to identify a solution that can apply to your constituents' challenges and outline your objectives.

Assess Risk

Next, determine potential obstructions which can derail the success of your project. By identifying these risks early, plans can be developed to manage challenges or avoid hazards (Watt, 2014). Leaders should be aware of potential roadblocks and those who might prevent a project from moving forward, such as previously identified Saboteurs and Time Bombs.

FIGURE 5
OBJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION



Note. This figure shows the aggregation of data from all available sources to identify common challenges and reveal opportunities for solutions.

Visualize

You will not be able to force constituents to work towards your personal goals but instead look to identify a shared vision from which all can benefit (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). It is for these shared benefits that constituents will expend energy to achieve. As the leader, you need to be able to articulate intangible ideas in such a way as to create an image in your constituents' minds (Hamid et al., 2014).

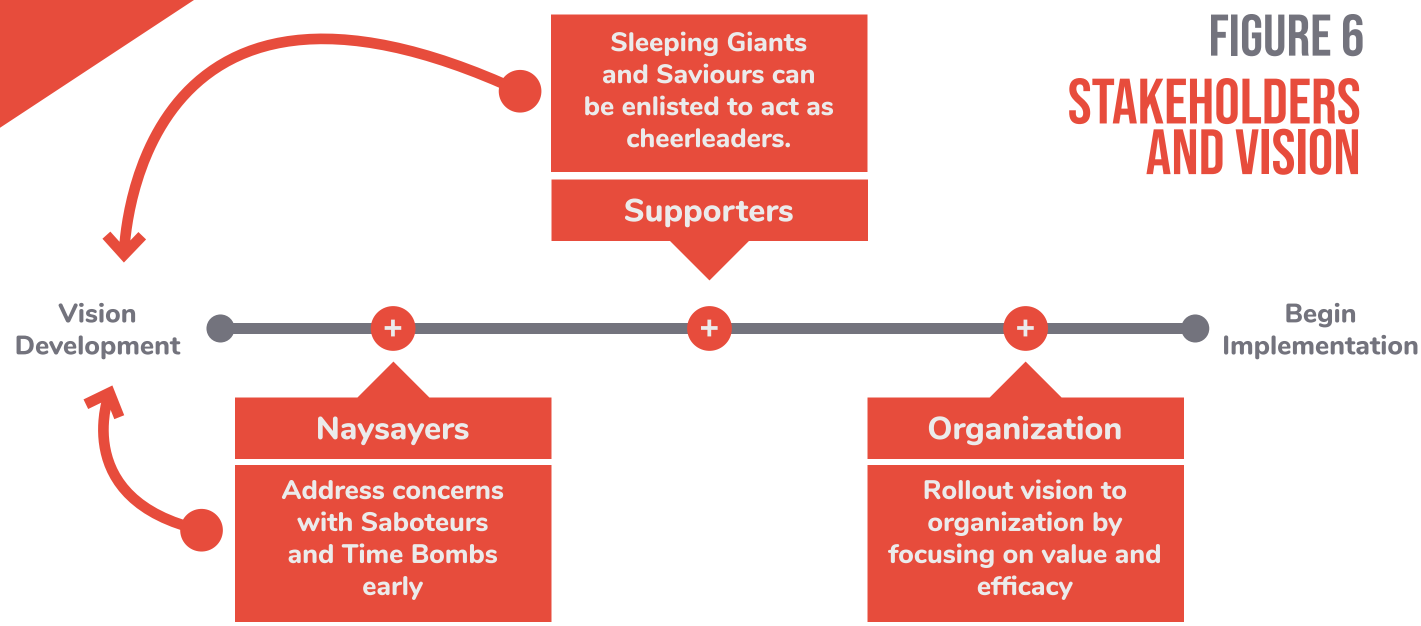
Unfreeze

Hack the System

Consult with those in a position to bring the implementation to a halt, such as Saboteurs and Time Bombs, by addressing concerns and pointing out the project's shared benefits (Conway et al., 2017). Be prepared for possible adjustments to the vision based on their feedback (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6

STAKEHOLDERS AND VISION



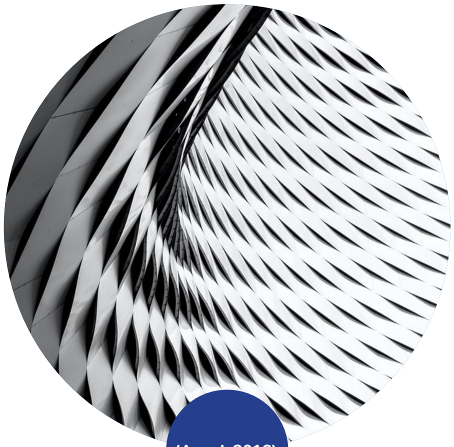
Note. Represented here is a timeline for communicating the developed vision. Interactions during the first two stages could require adjustments to be made to vision to increase the likelihood of adoption during organizational rollout.

Reveal Value

Address all stakeholders by articulating the vision with particular attention to identifying the problem, outlining the solution, and listing benefits to developing value for the impending change (Weiner, 2009).

Demonstrate Efficacy

Demonstrate stakeholders' ability to implement the change by acknowledging that they know what is required of them, have access to necessary resources, and work in the appropriate cultural environment for successful implementation (Weiner, 2009).



(Angel, 2016)

Designing Systematic Approach

Leaders need to address the process's human side (Conner, 1998). However, stakeholders may naturally resist such changes to maintain the status quo as they may perceive the initiative as a threat to their professional practice (Austin & Ciaassen, 2008). Managing change requires leaders to create stability, giving a sense of familiarity and comfort for stakeholders as they navigate the apparent chaos accompanied by change (Austin & Ciaassen, 2008; Pearlmutter, 1998).

MACRO-LEVEL DESIGN

The Macro-Level Design (MLD) process was developed to ease change by inciting stability through a systematic approach. It acknowledges the perspective of stakeholders and a shared vision as indispensable affordances to frame the design. The process is incremental, with each step building upon the last to create a stable foundation to instill confidence in stakeholders.

COMMUNITY

1

The previous stages focused on creating a community around a shared vision. The MLD process's first step is to leverage the community with the proper attitudes, interests, and vision to guide the organizational change (Kotter, 2007; Murray-Webster & Simon, 2006).

DEFINE & IDENTIFY

2

The second step of the process requires the newly developed community to consider multiple perspectives to define and identify the problem (Conway et al., 2017). Backwards imaging (see Figure 7) should focus the team on what people will be doing once the desired change has been implemented. Furthermore, backwards imaging helps identify specifics and uncover possible supports and resistances to the change by describing what success looks like in specific terms (Recardo, 2008).

FIGURE 7
BACKWARDS IMAGING

Imagine a time in the future when the current change has been completed. Assume the change was implemented perfectly; what would the related new agency say about the change? Discuss this imagery as a team.

Using this imagery, describe what each team member sees, hears, and feels as they observe their change efforts.

Discuss and debate the different viewpoints of this future change. Use what has been learned from the stakeholder assessment to identify specific supports and hindrances.

Note. This figure demonstrates a sample methodology that could be used for backwards imaging.

FIGURE 8
RETURN ON CHANGE

$$\text{Return on Change} = \frac{\text{Effort Yield}}{\text{Execution Cost}}$$

Note. This figure shows the calculation needed to determine the return on change for a given change initiative.

3

BUDGET

The third step is to create a budget around the return on change (see Figure 8). This weighs the effort's yield, the perceived benefits from accomplishing the change against the execution costs (Conner, 1998); such an approach establishes an inventory of possible applications to monitor their cost-effectiveness (University of Calgary, Learning Technologies Task Force, 2014).

4

EMPOWER

The fourth step focuses on creating short-term wins to empower stakeholders (Kotter, 2007). Change in digital environments takes time, and to ensure motivation, stakeholders need guidance and commitment from their leadership in the form of training (Aladwani, 2001), rewards and recognition (Kotter, 2007), and professional freedom (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). It falls to the leadership to create a plan of empowerment for their stakeholders that focuses on short and long-term goals that are frequently discussed, ambitious, specific, and transparent (Sull & Sull, 2018).

Implement

Systematic Approach

The implementation phase puts the project plan into motion using systematic steps to encourage organizational change and technology adoption amongst stakeholders. Use the following checklist as a guide for implementing new technology within a digital learning organization.

(Schnobrich, 2018)

Step 1

Support

Encourage stakeholders to use the latest technology through leadership and value-driven motivational strategies that align with the project vision (Lisewski, 2016; Weiner, 2009).

Step 2

Communicate

Set up multiple communication channels between senior management and stakeholders to support the adoption of new technologies; to help ease this process, coordinate with Sleeping Giants, Saviors, and Time Bombs while being aware of the Saboteur's intentions (Norman, 2017; Hanson, 2003, Lisewski, 2016).

Step 3

Create Policy

Set clear expectations, incentives, and guidelines through policy to encourage technology adoption (University of Calgary, Learning Technologies Task Force, 2014).

Step 4
Educate

Deliver training opportunities for stakeholders to learn new technologies to collectively contribute towards the primary change objective (Conway, 2017; Watt, 2014).

Step 5
Afford

Provide stakeholders adequate time, space, access, and resources to adopt new education technologies (Norman, 2017; Lisewski, 2016).

Step 6
Action

Execute, control, and conclude the strategic plan to generate organization-wide technology adoption through research-based project management principles and change methods (Watt, 2014).

Step 7
Reward

Implement initiatives that reward academic stakeholders for using the new technology to encourage sustained and organization-wide technology adoption (Lisewski, 2016; University of Calgary, Learning Technologies Task Force, 2014).

Step 8
Adapt Plan

Identify and respond to project roadblocks by innovating real-time solutions appropriate to the implementation plan to meet broad-scale project conditions (Conway, 2017).

Step 9
Report

Communicate project challenges such as implementation barriers, budget and timeline constraints, and other metrics that impact Sleeping Giants and Saviours' implementation efforts to coordinate at all organization levels (Watt, 2014).

Evaluate Change

(Smith, 2018)

Within learning organizations, leaders must create an environment in which stakeholders exchange ideas, work across departments, and build cohesion towards achieving a shared purpose (Gratton & Erickson, 2007).

Leaders and managers must be perceptive to their stakeholders' needs and cognizant of the concerns or anxieties stemming from perceptions of an increased workload due to innovations and change (Stonehouse, 2012). Today, organizations are operating in such a highly dynamic and competitive environment that they need to undergo continuous change (Metwally et al., 2019). However, most change projects fail to achieve the expected results (Beer and Nohria, 2000; Sirkin et al., 2005), and people's attitudes are a likely reason for this outcome (Eby et al., 2000; Holbeche, 2006).

For change to be successful, leaders and management are vital in evaluating and analyzing stakeholders' engagement. Key stakeholders are essential to the success of change and are crucial in the advancement of change. Change is inevitable within organizations. However, policies and procedures must be used to evaluate outcomes and processes to ensure positive change. Mento et al. (2002) discussed the importance of continuous analysis with stakeholders to continue advancing and reducing the resistance to change within organizations.

Six Ways to Analyze Change Management Processes

1

Clarify and Reevaluate Your Objective

- Training objectives align with post-change.
- Update objective statements.
- Assess if the outcomes are measurable.
- Can success be tracked (Pappas, 2020)?

2

Collect e-Learning Feedback from Stakeholders

- Allow stakeholders a voice
- Identify areas of improvement
- Offer support
- Peer-based support opportunities (Pappas, 2020)

3

Evaluate LMS Metrics

- Evaluate online training tools.
- Evaluate stakeholders engagement.
- Adjust online training tools to meet stakeholders' needs.
- Assess data to expose underperforming assets (Pappas, 2020).

4

Get Input from Team Leadership

- Conduct surveys.
- Tap into existing management feedback.
- Hold live events on social media
- Invite new leadership to share ideas (Pappas, 2020).

5

Pre-Assess to Pinpoint Gaps

- Target pre-existing gaps.
- Identify personal areas for improvement.
- Remove irrelevant outdated processes (Pappas, 2020).

6

Hire an Outsourcing Partner for Training Needs Analysis

- Use analytical tools to help to disclose hidden gaps within organizations.
- Evaluate metrics collected.
- Expose stakeholders concerns.
- Remove irrelevant outdated processes.
- Assess stakeholder compliance (Pappas, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Research has shown that 70% of change projects fail because they lack a clear framework to guide the planning and implementation process (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015). However, establishing a framework that concentrates on learning, collaborating, implementing, and evaluating change-resistant organizations can enable key stakeholders and leaders to take their organizations to the next level.

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