



Pathways
Leading Discovery – Connecting Outcomes
Organizational Agility – Operational Excellence
Driving Value Across Sustainable Incremental Change

Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Informatics

Is transformation in your future?

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The Condition

What comes to mind when you consider heading into the office at the start of your work week? Can “Friday” come soon enough? Do you wrestle with depression? Are you frequently irritated? Are you apprehensive, anxious, or annoyed? Is it a matter of routine or purely academic? Knowing that something must change but do not know what to do about it... Well... you are not alone. It is time for a transformation.

In the journey from common to exceptional, does the path forward for your organization appear insurmountable, filled with reservations, demanding audiences and pervasive resistance to change? Chances are high that your organization needs transformation. The issues leading to the need for transformation likely did not happen overnight, nor, will there be a silver bullet to quickly resolve the issues in a single pass.

Many an organizational development (OD) and/or change management (CM) expert has a well-placed opinion supported by detailed methodologies. Their expertise is not to be discounted nor held in contempt. This article is therefore not an expert opinion in OD/CM academics. Rather, this article is for the novice who is interested in making a difference in the complex journey from common to exceptional, both individually and within the organization.

Avoiding all the psychological babble, basic needs, and frustrations in falling short are common to individuals and organizations alike. We do not always have a choice as to what happens around and to us. However, we very definitely have a choice as to how we choose to respond to our surroundings and what is happening to us. Therefore, let us take a decided look at how to respond to disconnects that lead us to our need for transformation.

So, where do we begin to look for what got us to this point and what will effectively lead us through transformation? We first need to honestly look within ourselves without filters. Change, good or bad, is contagious. The question is what are you spreading? Ultimately everyone has an impact in the rise or fall of an organization’s culture. There are three considerations which help to understand both what got us to this point and with due focus can help in completing the needed transformation.

Apart from any form of transformation process, let us examine change from the perspective of “The Ask”, “Ability”, and “Attitude”. These perspectives, in their various forms, set the stage for understanding how we arrived at the need for transformation and a potential way forward to higher rates of change adoption and utilization reflected in a positive return on investment. It is this examination that initiates the pursuit of wisdom.

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The Ask

When you know that a task must be completed and you are hounded to completion, the natural tendency is to consider “The Ask” to be at best irritating, if not insulting. Giving credit where due, some may need the gentle reminder or push to make it a priority. The point is that the perspective of “The Ask” can either make or break one’s commitment to completing the task.

Likewise, “The Ask” may be an unknown, or even a sizable stretch to current understanding or “Ability”, at best being met with skepticism, if not contempt. Giving credit where due, growth often requires stretching or moves in new directions. The point here is similar, the perspective of “The Ask” can either make or break one’s commitment to meeting expectations.

Within “The Ask”, there are serious considerations for focused and purposeful communications. Often, it is what you say. Other times it is how you say it, or even with whom you communicate. Yet still, it may be a combination of these and other communications factors. “The Ask” is needed for change awareness and to cultivate desire for the change.

Ability

Untapped individual ability is an organization’s gold mine. Ineffective assessment and application of individual “Ability”, much like “The Ask”, can at best be a distraction, if not prohibitive. Giving credit where due, some may need the gentle reminder or the push to make one’s ability a priority. The point is that the perspective of “Ability” can either make or break one’s commitment to completing the task.

“Ability” may be an unknown, or even a sizable stretch to current talents, at best being met with skepticism, if not contempt. Giving credit where due, growth often requires stretching or new directions for which “Ability” is a key consideration. The point here is similar, the perspective of “Ability” can either make or break one’s commitment to growth.

Within “Ability”, there are serious considerations for talent enhancement and acquisition through development and knowledge transfer. Sometimes it is what you know and/or appreciation for what you don’t know. Other times it is who you know. Yet still, it may be a combination of these and other factors. “Ability” is needed to meet and exceed the demands of the change.

Attitude

A popular belief is that altitude (the height of your potential) is limited only by your “Ability” and “Attitude”. Ability and a bad attitude has a predictable outcome. Ability without attitude will get you only so far... a developing ability with an attitude of openness and trust breeds confidence and growth. Attitude and how it is managed, with no ability can either make or break one’s potential.

“Attitude” is a choice molded by events and conditioned by history. The natural tendency of behavior is to echo attitude. Giving credit where due, some may need the gentle reminder or push to continuously check one’s attitude. The collective behaviors of individuals within an organization sets the basis for the organization’s culture which can either make or break the organization.

Within “Attitude”, there are considerations for mentoring and reinforcement. When coupled with “The Ask” and “Ability”, the potential is endless when properly reflected upon and managed. “Attitude” manifest in behavior is a combination a of many factors, not the least of these being choice. “Attitude” is needed to bring life to “The Ask” and “Ability”.

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Conclusion

Transformation must begin with the end in mind. Achieving desired, repeatable results through Organizational Change Management (OCM) affecting “The Ask,” “Ability” and “Attitude” does not come from wishful thinking or hoping luck holds out. You might be able to complete OCM without a methodology or plan in place, but getting consistent, reliable results in any OCM effort requires a proven OCM approach that is scalable and can be applied along any phase of a complimentary lifecycle.

Organizational Change (OC) is about reviewing and modifying management structures and business processes. Organizations must adapt, adopt and utilize change to assure measurable return on investment. OC should not lead to complacency. To stay a step ahead of the game, organizations need to look for ways to do things more efficiently and cost effectively. There is no need to fear change. Instead, organizations should embrace change as the foundations for sustainable return on investments.

Just like with individuals, organizations experience change as they move through life. They can happen for a variety of reasons, but in the end, organizations change how they do things and often how they are structured to better meet their goals. Organizations, like individuals, have unique practices and cultures. Therefore, organizational change is the people side of change, how they adopt and utilize change measured by the rate of adoption and utilization, including return on investment.

Organizational Change Management (OCM) is the application of a structured process and set of tools for leading the people side of change to achieve a desired outcome such as increased rates of adoption and utilization, including return on investment. OCM begins with building awareness and desire based upon established trust, transformation through developing ability, knowledge, and reinforcement. Being attentive to “The Ask”, “Ability” and Attitude” is the novice’s key to being a positive catalyst for change.

Change, of any kind, is all about one life at a time. It must be from the inside out! Looking from the outside in or the inside out, that which has brought us to this point, also carries us through transformation. When it comes to the individual, change is personal impacting one’s perceived loss of control and/or a threat to one’s sense of security. When it comes to the organization, change is cultural, living the life or living a lie. Personal or business, the focus remains on helping people overcome their resistance to change and realize their full potential while achieving higher rates of change adoption and utilization reflected in a positive return on investment.

In conclusion, it was President John F. Kennedy who said in his 1961 inaugural address: “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” In the same spirit, ask not what your company can do for you, ask what you can do for your company. In such an “Attitude” you will find the “The Ask” to be acceptable and the “Ability” to be obtainable.

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Regardless of whether you are just starting out on your organizational transformation journey or are already deep into an existing OCM initiative, the way forward often gets lost in the uncertainty or ambiguity that surfaces between patience and perseverance in the pursuit of progress from mediocre to exceptional. Pathways leads discovery and connects outcomes that illuminates, and addresses change adversities and resistance in your journey. Contact me today to see how Pathways can be tailored and applied in your pursuit of progress from mediocre to exceptional.



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