

Is your organization capable of change?

Undertaking this campaign means it must be sold over and over

Scholars specializing in change management widely report that 70 percent of projects fail due to a lack of change management skills. Generally, change management might happen at the individual or team level. Rarely does it happen at the organizational level where multiple teams and departments change in concert to achieve a large-scale transformation.



STEPHAN LIOZU

Founder

Value Innorruption Advisors

Stephan specializes in disruptive approaches in innovation, pricing and value management. He earned his doctorate in management from Case Western Reserve University.

sliozu@case.edu
www.stephanliozu.com

So what does organizational change mean? Bill Judge, a change management scholar, defined an organization's change capacity as organizational and managerial capabilities allowing an enterprise to adapt more quickly and effectively than its competition to changing situations. For an organization to change as a whole, learning has to be a vital component in its values, visions and goals, as well as its everyday operations and assessments.

Identifying elements for success

In 2012, I conducted a survey with more than 900 business, marketing, pricing and sales professionals on the topic of organizational change. The goal was to identify the critical dimensions of organizational change capacity.

Based on my findings, in essence, for an organization to change as one entity, it needs capable and skilled change agents, a system approach to change at the organization level and a strong culture of holding people accountable to get the change executed.

Here are five other considerations essential for organizational change:

- **Change needs to be intentional and focused.** It cannot be reactive. Change requires a sense of urgency that starts with an organizational realization that issues need to be fixed. It is easier to do when the organization is facing adversity and less easy when an organization is successful.

- **The vision is critical for success.** The vision rallies people around a goal and an outcome. This is perhaps one of the most neglected components of change initiatives.
- **Change management is not project management.** These are two different disciplines. Project management deals with the technical side of moving from a current state to a future state. Change management focuses on the people side of that transition. They need equal attention and work hand-in-hand in project teams.
- **Pay attention to all relevant stakeholders.** A big misconception is that changes only concern specific teams or departments. Organizational change requires different organizational road mapping exercises, such as stakeholder analysis, what's in it for me analysis and holistic training plans.
- **Change requires leadership support.** My survey indicated change without capable champions and top leadership support is difficult. The role of top leaders is to identify and make resources available to change agents, removing roadblocks and tackling bottlenecks.

Getting expert help

Change is hard. Organizational change is even harder. If your organization is stuck or unable to embrace large organizational projects, you have to start thinking differently and bring in experts.

Change management is a science, and there are amazing training programs out there. In 2013, I became a Prosci® Certified Change Manager, and it opened my eyes to how rich the change management and change leadership fields are. ●



LINK UP with Stephan Liozu on LinkedIn <http://linkd.in/17LL2Sz>