6 Critical Factors & Best Practices for Successful Organizational Change

Introduction

The keys to planning and managing success in organizational change involve leaders building specific, detailed answers to these questions:

- What should the change involve?
- How, exactly, will planned changes impact stakeholders?
- How will stakeholders be impacted by the change (process, technology, etc.)?
- What's a reasonable pace at which change can occur?
- How will the successful change be measured and reported?

While each of these questions represent critically important factors in the process, none has more impact on success than the cultural and organizational elements – those changes that impact employees on a personal level.

"Critical to the success of any transformational project is devoting an appropriate level of effort to encouraging change in people's mindset and focus."

In our experience, with our clients, we've seen organizational change projects be hindered because project leaders and managers are so busy with tactical tasks that they forget to address crucial change management related activities to ensure the transformation effort is fully adopted and that desired outcomes can be achieved.

ResultWorks, along with our client project manager teams and leadership can plan for and ensure the necessary steps are taken to drive successful change.

The ResultWorks' Change Management Framework

ResultWorks has developed a unique approach to OCM. We leverage our Change Management Framework (CM Framework) to help ensure success of our client's project. This Framework entails:

- Change Strategy Planning
- Stakeholder Management & Communications
- Organizational & Process Design
- Skills & Knowledge Management
- Schedule / KPI Tracking & Management

Additionally, we at ResultWorks have identified six critical success factors (CSFs) that are predictors of how effective a change initiative will be.

Critical Success Factors for Change

1. Strong Executive Leadership & Commitment
Executives serving as initiative champions, who drive change, are most successful when they communicate the reasons behind the plan to both internal teams and external organizations engaged in planning and support. It is important to foster understanding of the company's strategic direction, the competitive environment, and the business needs driving the change among all employees who are being impacted.

We also know that four best practices for initiative sponsors and leadership teams are to:

1. Develop clearly defined program objectives
2. Understand your key stakeholders and be visible from the beginning, conveying a sense of urgency along with the business rationale for why change is needed,
3. Develop consistent messaging that is tailored to specific stakeholders (or stakeholder groups) so they understand why this change is not only important to the business but also important to them, and
4. Provide regular reinforcement around the tenets and reasons for change throughout its implementation

2. Aligned & Measurable Goals
The goals and objectives for a change initiative must be aligned with the overall organizational strategy as well as both clearly articulated and communicated throughout the organization.

Two best practices for success here are that:

1. The goals must be measurable, and
2. Both the executive leadership and project team must define the criteria for measuring progress toward program objectives

3. The Right Change Team Must be in Place
We have seen, irrespective of organization size, that a successful change initiative is directly related to the level of employee involvement in the transformation. This is true from inception throughout implementation tomaintain new organizational policies and practices.

Two best practices to ensure success with both instituting and maintaining change are to:

- Create an approach to both the project organization and communication plans that allows for high employee involvement either directly or through existing communication channels.
- Identify the right team for the project, who have:

- **Authority** to make decisions around the planned changes,
- **Insight** into the overall workflow that will be affected as well as the larger impacts organizationally.
- **Credibility and respect** of the organization, from the bench to the leadership team.

Typically, ResultWorks looks for *change agents, early adopters and organizational influencers* to actively participate in the project. This is particularly important during the Definition & Engagement phase of the project as this team will set the direction and lay the foundation for the overall project.

4. Clear Roles & Responsibilities
Key stakeholders, both internal and external to the organization, must be identified early in the program. In the absence of new direction, people will continue to perform as they have—perpetuating processes, systems, and ownership of issues.

Three best practices for establishing new roles and responsibilities include:

1. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities related to the change.
2. Ensuring organization-wide understanding which will be supported by the alignment and metrics described earlier.
3. Ensuring everyone understands their accountability for their new responsibilities within the changing organization.

5. Effective Communications & Visibility
Communication is one of the most critical elements to build buy-in to the change initiative. Successful change projects evaluate the current communication channels, make use of communication channels that have demonstrated reliability, create new channels—and use new platforms--as appropriate (including all-hands video conferencing).

It is imperative to ensure consistency in communications by having at least one team member reviewing them as they are created, to prevent conflicting messages from being conveyed, either directly or indirectly, to targeted audiences.

Best practices in this area consist of:

- Building formal and informal feedback channels into the project to allow for to share their views and perceptions of the planned changes at strategic times.
- Assessing feedback, and responding promptly, so that employees see that their input is considered and valued.
- Tailoring the communications plan to different sites, groups, and functions as needed to ensure sensitivity to corporate culture and the diversity within the organization.

6. Train Employees on Changes
Another extremely important step is associated with training (process, technology, roles, etc.). It is imperative to the define a comprehensive training approach and processes. Creating a training curriculum as well as training materials that support the organization change mission.

Moreover, the training needs to be aligned based on the user groups in the organization. It also needs to be contextualized by user and project.

Summary

Culture and organizational issues are among the greatest challenges in managing change. To deal with them effectively, ResultWorks has developed a time-tested methodology comprised of tactics to address these critical success factors, plus a sixth that we believe is essential to ensuring that efforts don't fall short of achieving objectives:

Change Management Critical Success Factors

- Strong Executive Leadership
- Aligned & Measurable Goals
- Right Change Team
- Clear Roles & Responsibilities
- Effective Communications & Visibility
- Train Employees on Changes

Addressing these factors are not necessarily guarantees of success but neglecting any one of these will surely contribute to falling short of objectives—especially our address of the sixth factor, to ensure that employees can internalize the changes in ways that make a substantial difference in achieving lasting change.

As companies work to reinvent themselves today, they are spending significant resources to be more effective in bringing new drugs and
devices to market. Managing the change process across the organization is fundamental to ensuring that investments in change yield sustainable results.

About Astrix and ResultWorks

For over 25 years, Astrix has been a marketleader in delivering innovative solutions through world class people, process, and technology that fundamentally improves scientific outcomes and quality of life everywhere. Founded by scientists to solve the unique challenges life sciences and other science-based business face, Astrix offers a growing array of strategic, technical, and staffing services designed to deliver value to clients across their organizations.

ResultWorks, an Astrix business, achieves success for our clients through skilled facilitation and exceptional management and leadership across Life Science domains from Research, Non-Clinical, Clinical Development, Regulatory Affairs, Safety, Manufacturing, and Pharmacovigilance. To learn more about how ResultWorks enables biopharmaceutical leaders' success, visit www.resultworksllc.com.

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