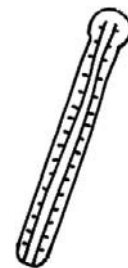


- The Measured Connector: focuses on sense of purpose and connectivity across the organization to help change to emerge;
- The Tenacious Implementer: focuses on projects plans, deadlines and progress to achieve results;
- The Thoughtful Architect: focuses on frameworks, designs and complex fit between strategies and concepts to ensure that ideas provide a sound basis for change.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHETHER CHANGE IS WORKING?

How do you know whether the change process you are involved in is working or not, or whether you would be more successful if you were leading it in different ways, with a different style or with different activities? We have begun to notice that depending on what your prevailing paradigm is, or the way your organization's culture works, the monitoring and evaluation of change will give different answers about what is working, what the issues are, and what needs to be done next.



We can look at evaluation in a number of ways. In a rigorously planned approach the outcomes will have been articulated at the outset, and it will then be relatively easy to see the measures of success or otherwise – cost reduction, increase in stakeholder value, reduced absenteeism, increased customer satisfaction, increased employee satisfaction, reduced head-count, increase in quality standards, etc.

However, the world and the organization may have moved on while the changes were being made, and it is possible that the objectives that seemed important at the start may be viewed differently by the end. Indeed, senior management teams, like politicians, can be very skilled at changing the objectives for change for their own purposes.

Do these hard, preset measures of success really give us the information about progress that we need? Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1999) question the wisdom of solely relying on hard measurement. They highlight six observations:

1. people and systems notice only what they consider to be important;
2. having a set methodology can get in the way of the context – ‘critical information is being generated right now. Failing to notice the “now”, or staying stuck in past assumptions, is very dangerous’;
3. what people notice will change over time – ‘looking for information only within rigid categories leads to blindness, which is also dangerous’;
4. organizational boundaries are permeable – ‘new and surprising information can get in’, if allowed;
5. feedback is not an arid affair but can offer up important information on what needs to be addressed;
6. feedback is an information flow which allows those within (and without) the system to better understand what needs to happen to sustain the system.

They see that there are some clear critical distinctions between feedback and measurement (see Table 10.5).

Table 10.5 Some important distinctions between feedback and measurement

Feedback	Measurement
Context dependent	One size fits all
Self-determined	Imposed
The system chooses what to notice	Criteria are established externally
Information accepted from anywhere	Information in fixed categories only
System creates own meaning	Meaning is predetermined
Newness, surprise are essential	Prediction, routine are valued
Focus on adaptability and growth	Focus on stability and control
Meaning evolves	Meaning remains static
System co-adapts	System adapts to the measures

Source: Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1999)

So the approach employed can affect how we see the outcomes and how quickly and in what manner the change is seen to bear fruit. Our approach to change also affects how we analyse what’s going well and what’s going wrong, and what we do about it. Using the four change metaphors introduced in Chapter 3, we examine here the difference in

approach to evaluating change, and what can be done if things seem to be moving slowly or simply 'not working'.

Machine metaphor

Using a machine metaphor when measuring change will produce a clear set of measurable outcomes which can be monitored and evaluated throughout the process. Many of the evaluations of change projects that appear earlier in this chapter have been based on projects which derive from this metaphor. The evaluations are probably done only on projects where there is a clear set of measurable objectives, tight timescales and a detailed project specification of scope and functionality. As we have seen, many of these projects do not actually deliver on 100 per cent of their objectives. However, if we look again at the figures we might begin to enquire: is change necessarily a failure if it does not meet 100 per cent of its original aims and objectives? And should allowance be made when planning that the original brief will probably need modifying to accommodate external shifts and changes along the way?

Managing change through this metaphor necessitates a focus on 'hard' rather than 'soft' aspects of the change, and the expected outcomes may be a little rigid. The presence of change management expertise and excellent planning are likely to be the most obvious ways of getting this type of change initiative to work well, together with some flexibility of goals and a very experienced and confident project manager. Luck plays a big part too; if the project is completed before the world changes, than that's lucky!

Political metaphor

Managing change through the political metaphor is all about satisfying key stakeholder groupings. Anyone who has seen how governments work in the legislative process, especially when there is just a slim majority, will recognize that the final agreed piece of legislation is not necessarily the ideal scenario but actually a compromise, a negotiated agreement, which satisfies the majority of those who have some power. Change is a success if key stakeholders are satisfied and opinions and policies have been changed. The process of change is one of successfully negotiating one's way through the myriad stakeholder interests.

Success in this arena will be enhanced through the effective and efficient use of stakeholder identification, mapping and management, with

influencing skills at a premium. The change agent needs to demonstrate their powers of power-broking and negotiating. Failure will appear as either stalemate or a disgruntled but powerful stakeholder who may resort to sabotage or sulking. A real, shared sense of common purpose would very likely shift the whole political picture, if it could be achieved.

Organism metaphor

Managing change through the organism metaphor is about ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of information flows across the organization and its environment. A key aspect of successful change management within this paradigm is the focus on organizational learning and responsiveness. This means ensuring that people are factored into the changes, in order to enhance the capacity and capability of the organization to meet the external drivers for change.

Hard and fast change objectives are much more difficult within this metaphor and so it is harder to be concrete when it comes to ongoing monitoring of change success. Clear goals are not necessarily known at the beginning, although a vision, direction and a set of core principles might well be. Sometimes these types of initiative get lost in their own process – like the introduction of performance appraisal, or tackling customer survey data. The point is often forgotten.

Success will be enhanced by focusing on information flows, ensuring that there is good knowledge of the external world and developing internal capability, capacity and competence through participation. The change agent needs to demonstrate the art of facilitating information exchange and organizational learning. Some 'hard' targets are often extremely useful to sharpen this type of initiative's performance.

Flux and transformation metaphor

Managing change through the flux and transformation metaphor is about creating a well-contained space for change to occur. Collective vision and direction, together with a strong sense of organizational values, provide the 'stakes in the ground' demarcating parameters for change. Feedback mechanisms are important and not treated in an evaluative way, but more as data to be made sense of.

Success will be helped by focusing on tensions, conflicts and energy flows. The change agent's task is to help to contain change issues and

create the right conditions for change. They do this by spotting things and pointing things out – blowing on the embers and fanning the flames. The big challenge with this way of approaching change is that there is a chaotic feel to part of the process, which can lead to panic and knee-jerk reactions. Leaders need to have the confidence that results will come, stick to their sense of purpose and focus on ensuring that the vision is a collective one.

STOP AND THINK!

Q 10.1 Do you consider different types of change can be managed more effectively by adopting different approaches to change?

Q 10.2 Reflecting on your personality, in what ways might you be drawn to the different approaches?

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Managing change is a problematic business with most research suggesting 70 per cent of change efforts fail to fully meet their original brief.

Successful change appears to require excellent planning, good systems and processes and a clear vision. Energy, passion and continuous communication are all seen as essentials.

Entering the change consciously, whether it be planned or emergent, will allow you to understand the nature and context of the change, identify its key dimensions and develop relevant strategies and styles.

In leading change you need to be a flexible leader (or at least, part of a flexible leadership team), and be conscious of the appropriate combinations of leadership roles for the particular context:

- the Edgy Catalyser;
- the Visionary Motivator;
- the Measured Connector;
- the Tenacious Implementer;
- the Thoughtful Architect.

Evaluating change progress by focusing on measures will give different answers to those found when focusing on feedback.

Operating from within one of the four metaphors will determine one's approach and leadership style and how one evaluates the change. It will also inform what learning comes out of the evaluation and what a leader should do if things look like they're not going well.