

New Synergist Insights

Why Change Efforts Fail

July 2015

In the last three New Synergist *Insights* I discussed Organizational Culture. Understanding culture is an integral part of the change effort. This month's *Insights*, *Why Change Efforts Fail*, will provide a brief examination of the organizational change process and some of the reasons that these efforts fail.

Studies have shown that up to 70% of change efforts are unsuccessful! With a failure rate this high you might wonder if change efforts are even worthwhile. Not only are change efforts worthwhile, they are critical to your organizations continued success. So, what steps are necessary in order to increase the odds of success?

The first step in this process is to craft a formal business case for the change effort and communicate it to the workforce. Why do we need to change and what will our organization look like when the proposed change is in place? Creating a business case should also involve employees at all levels of the organization. Involving employees in the planning process and communicating the business case (not just announcing the plan) are critical to reducing resistance and creating buy-in.

The second step is to create a formal structure for the change effort. Who will be on the team and who will lead the effort? Almost 30% of change efforts are started without a formal structure in place. How will the team(s) interact with the organization structure already in place? How will you continue to conduct business while implementing the proposed change effort?

Finally, an implementation plan needs to be created to direct the activities of the team(s). In addition to the steps one and two listed above, the implementation plan should include timelines and performance metrics. In too many cases organizational change efforts are open ended without specific milestones or performance measures.

Measures of success should be documented prior to the commencement of the change effort. Measures can include increased market share, higher levels of quality, faster delivery of products and services, reduced costs, etc. All change objectives should be measureable and all successes (even small ones) should be shared and celebrated.

We are living in an era where the world is moving (changing) faster than ever before. Instant global communications, rapidly changing technology, changing demographics, and increased competition require faster and more effective organizational change efforts. In the August edition of *Insights* I will continue to discuss change management focusing on the value of Organizational Change models.

Questions?

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August New Synergist Insights:
Organizational Change Models