

Change and Resistance

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ABSTRACT

From the olden days, the early man was in a continuous effort to improve his abilities to make his life easy and comfortable. Since those days, the early man made the best use of his intelligence to transform his hard work, which required more physical labor into smart work that demanded more mental labor. The only root cause for this transformation of the ancient man is the intense urge for skill development with appropriate use of knowledge and the right attitude. In today's vocabulary, we coined this as "Competency" which is a combination of knowledge, skill and attitude to perform one's job in the most perfect manner. Organizations speak volumes and emphasize on the competency mapping i.e. right resource with right skills for the right job at the right time and this right quality could be in borne for some or could be achieved in some people by way of learning and development i.e. reinforcing a task with subject knowledge and continuously doing this again and again till a standard is achieved. This process of adoption of new learning to work faster and better and unlearning the old methods is termed as change management. This is possible only if the individual's goals are aligned with those of the organization's goals i.e. organizational engagement and strive to achieve greater heights and sustain its place owing to the demands of competition. The best managed organization is the one with enriched HR capital which can create a niche to derive the right organizational value proposition from and for its employees with enhanced skill sets and satisfied hearts who get emotionally glued to the entity.

Keywords: change management, competency mapping, learning and development, organizational engagement, value proposition

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INTRODUCTION

Life treats us with many experiences and surprises that compel us to learn and unlearn and change for better. The researcher had such experience recently, which gave her a real time experiential learning on the process of change, resistance to change and management of change and positivity of change. You can witness the same at the end of this article.

Getting back to the researcher's experience driven learning, she was driving a Maruti Wagon R since the day she started driving. It was a fantastic vehicle as far as she was concerned. Most importantly, given the

shortcoming of her height, she felt comfortable in seeing the bonnet of this car because of its high ground clearance feature. Most of the times, this allowed her to judge the bumper-to-bumper distance in a pretty much right way. On the sentimental side of it, it kept the researcher safe from the time it was with her (it has been more than a decade that their family used this car) all the years without any accidents they drove for really long distances. The researcher is emotionally connected as her newborn child was brought from the hospital in this vehicle and she travelled safe to the play school and school in the very same car till date.

You must be getting by now- that the scholar had all the good reasons to feel cozy and secure driving this car. It was kind of an extra ordinarily comfortable feeling. Maybe they were obsessed with this so much that they started personifying it as a part and parcel of their family.

The other side of the coin- being the machine it was and serving them for this long time, it had age related health problems with the battery, silencer, clutch, breaks, engine, etc. They took it for car health checkups religiously and regularly in its lifetime with them.

Slowly, a discussion was initiated in the house, to exchange this car for avoiding any future unwarranted breakdowns. This car became the prime source of transport for their daily needs and without a car, it would have been very difficult with a baby in the house and the weather unpredictability of untimely sun and rain in the city where the researcher lived.

The researcher was reluctant to participate in the discussion for the fear of losing it and trained her mind gradually to comfort herself that it was just a discussion. Then they started pursuing a research about the best cars of recent times, price gain, latest built in features, automation etc. Mind you, that this Wagon R did not have the power windows and the scholar has been happy rising up the glasses on need basis to turn on the AC.

After all the discussions, they zeroed in on an SUV/Wagon R again for the ground clearance, comfort of height and parking ease it facilitated them with. The other purpose of this vehicle was also to take their elders out, may it be to a hospital, drives, family get-togethers etc. The height gave them an advantage to get in and out with ease. Finally, they decided to go ahead with Wagon R again as they were totally convinced about its compact,

flexible, friendly motor vehicle features for all purposes.

They ordered for a new wagon R with some variant features and the showroom promised us to deliver the same within a month. Still craving to drive her car and the fear of losing it soon, the researcher was not very happy to hear on the departure date to hand over her car. The D-day approached but no news from the showroom people.

The researcher felt relieved, that there was still some more time to use her beloved old car... Literally, shed tears of happiness at that moment. She had jolly free time riding this good old car for some more days... news came in from the showroom that it will take some more time. But these change agents in life. The researcher's husband was chasing the showroom guys to deliver the new car ASAP. In addition to these, like a spell, to break the fantasy thought of retaining her old car, the showroom people insisted to exchange the old car giving a special discount within some time, failing which the buyer will have to forego the exchange discount.

Coercively, the researcher had to give the car with a very heavy heart to the showroom guys on one of the evenings. If one could read her mind, it was as though she was devastated and was short of tears though she showered a smile.

That day, her husband had to go out for an office dinner from there and hence, asked her to go home in his car which is a Hyundai I 20. She has never touched this car before, for reasons what so ever and felt really nervous handling this car. She felt the ground being pulled out under her feet and accompanying the researcher, was her little daughter who does not know the word "silence."

At that minute, it was like the change management principles were visually

streaming around her and the resistance she showed was clearly prominent. Cursing her husband for the moment, she thought to give it a go and started the car... It was around 8pm in the night and had a challenge of driving two souls (researcher and her daughter) back to home that is 30 km away from this car showroom.

The researcher was tensed to the core and her daughter had been asking all the doubts in the world that could ever come into her mind.

This is where she felt the need of training to drive this car that could have overcome her resistance to change a car more easily. This skill gap gave her the impetus for the need to have a basic understanding about any motor vehicle, which would have facilitated a cakewalk drive, to her home.

The researcher had experimented on the lights, the horn and the gears that allowed her to handle the car with some jerks at places. The gods were crazy, and the traffic was killing that day to her fortune and she was getting baked in the tense of heat though the AC was turned on in the car. It was a trial and error situation with no option left out for error, as her daughter was right beside the researcher who meant a world to all of them.

With great difficulty, the researcher finally reached home and got relieved. In the heart of hearts, she thanked the gods who showered blessings upon her for that adventure.

That night, she felt like a brave warrior who had won a battle after all the odds that were only against her. The next day, she had to take the same car again for her work, which was 50 km away from home, and her feet trembled again.

“Oh my god not again” was her first thought.

Her husband had a different car and she got this lucky car once again to her share. As she drove this car, challenges were falling in during the course of her drive... She did not know how to use the AC effectively. She could not switch on the music It was raining that day and she had difficulty in using the wipers. Above all this, this car’s reverse gear was little different from the old car. Out of habit, she was applying like the old car and it had failed many a times.

Like the bolt from the blue, the car was bigger and wider than her old car and the ground height was very low.

She was cursing the moment when she exchanged her old car. With all these problems that she had, the road to her office was so busy with heavy trucks and bumper-to-bumper traffic with many signals in between and the distance was never ending. Finally, she reached her office safe. And then, no one could stop her again. The researcher finished the icebreaker stage.

Only with a feeling of never give up attitude, trial and errors, the scholar overcame the difficulty of driving this car and slowly felt cozy with this as well. There were few days of difficulty, but then, it all ended happy and she became flexible to handle/drive any car.

Objectives

- [1] To study and understand the nuances of skill gaps, owing to the rapid demands of organization’s survival mechanisms resulting in the fear of losing the organization’s identity.
- [2] To pursue the need and ability to overcome resistance to change through learning and development to be in the game of competition.

- [3] To provide avenues for better organizational engagement resulting in an enhanced organizational value proposition.

Research Problem

The basic research problem of this conceptual paper is how to efficiently manage change through competency mapping and learning and development and thereby, enhance the organizational engagement to maximize the organizational value proposition. The author has demonstrated a personal life situation and thus borrowed snippets to draw inference from a real life situational learning to establish a relationship between competency mapping, learning and development, change management, organizational engagement and organizational value proposition.

Methodology/Approach

Organizations in the contemporary economic environment need to understand how to manage change and overcome resistance by reinforcing the factors promoting the mindset change through learning and development and competency mapping. This paper approach is to illustrate how organizations can manage change effectively and increase the organizational engagement levels by overcoming resistance to change.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Competencies

Competencies are individual characteristics, including knowledge, skills, abilities, self-image, traits, mindsets, feelings, and ways of thinking, which, when used with the appropriate roles, achieve a desired result [1].

Competencies contribute to individual exemplary performance that create reasonable impact on business outcomes. Competency information in the Organization helps in:

- Gap analysis

- Role clarity
- Selection, potential identification, growth plans
- Succession planning
- Restructuring
- Inventory of competencies for future planning

Identification of Roles

As the organization comprises of different groups and each work group performing a specific function, the employees are classified accordingly. For each of this work group classification, roles are identified.

Job Descriptions

Once the roles are identified for each work group, a job description is written for each and every role stating the responsibilities to be taken, the skills essentially required to fulfill the role effectively and the skills good to have for the role and the scope of the role.

Identification of Competencies

Based on the roles and skills required for that role, competencies are identified along with an ideal rating required for that role. In this process, several rounds of consultations will be held with the workgroup heads/head HR and other key stakeholders who can contribute to identify the performance rating criteria.

Competency Master

The skill ratings and proficiency levels are developed for individuals to compile a competency master. The variance in skill ratings is decided on the base of the complexity, scope and responsibility across jobs and could be as under:

- Level 1 – Novice
- Level 2 – Intermediate
- Level 3 – Competent
- Level 4 – Proficient
- Level 5 – Expert

Competency Mapping

Based on the required competency/skill master, required ratings and proficiency levels are mapped to all the roles in each workgroup and likewise, for all workgroups. The data on competencies is periodically audited for compliance with the organizational policies and the competencies are updated as and when required.

Learning and Development

Once the skill gaps are identified, it is imperative that the organization renders support for initiating competency enhancement initiatives.

Competency Development Plan

Individuals are assessed on their competencies and provided with a development plan to further enhance their competencies according to their job, requirements and feedback is taken to enhance the competencies as per the role.

A competency is an underlying characteristic of a person which enables him /her to deliver superior performance in a given job, role or a situation.

“Effectiveness of an organization is the summation of the required competencies in the organization.”

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Learning

Typically, learning is a process of overriding the deep-rooted opinions, values, beliefs and routines in one's own mental model, on the acquisition of knowledge through reading, interaction with people or researching. It enhances the performing abilities of a person to bring in the element of finesse [2].

Development

This is a process which transits an individual from a current state of learning to a future state which facilitates the

application of the learning process in the organizational affairs.

Learning and development helps to reason, retrospect and inquire about the values, traditions, beliefs, assumptions and routines that an individual is attached to and constant reinforcement of the reasoning and retrospection will break the shell of rigid mental model and give scope for an urge to change for the better.

Change Management

“Change management” is the discipline that guides how we prepare, equip and support individuals to successfully adopt change in order to drive organizational success and outcomes [3].

Most of the people deal with change management in every phase of their lives. Despite of the fact, that change is the only constant inevitable thing, we tend to resist as it is a natural physiological reaction. We are compelled by force or persuaded by choice to move to a new future state from the current state.

Current State

However, if we tend to move to the new state by choice, we can do our homework by getting to the know the reasons of change like why, how, what, when and where, so on and so forth and understand what could come in our way and how can gain support in this transition journey and what makes it easy for us at accept state of things in the new state.

Transition State

“A friend in need is a friend indeed” goes a saying. For any organization to be successful, mutual give in by the employees and the organization is the key to move ahead positively and strategically. In any change journey, it is the engagement, participation and adoption of change that enables a smooth transition.

Future State

Once a new change is implemented, the success of it can be measured only and only when it is used proficiently by the impacted people and they feel that “this was worth all the hard times during the transition state.”

Resistance Management

It is quite natural to oppose any new change keeping in view of the physiological of the human body. However, the fact is change cannot stopped. Hence, the best way to face the problem is to solve the problem rather than avoiding it.

The factors that can make this possible are as follows.

Resistance Approach

Nelson Mandela once quoted “If you speak to a man in a language that understands, that goes to his head, if you speak to a man in his language that goes to his heart”.

This is exactly what we need to do to win the hearts of employees. We need to speak to them in their language.

Phase 1

In the initial phase, while the organization is preparing for change, the key aspects to be focused upon are:

(a) Define the change management strategy: The three elements of change management strategy are:

- Situational awareness: This is about the need, scope, magnitude and timelines of change.
- Organizational attributes: This is about the perceived need of change by the employees, the past experience of the organization in managing changes, participation and involvement by the employees, etc.

- Impacted groups: This is about the people likely to get impacted due to the implementation of the change, the manner in which they are impacted, etc.

(a) Team structure: Change is a synergic effort which requires a like-minded team and a lead who can advocate change to take informed decisions.

(b) Change management strategy analysis: This comprises the project risk assessment, resistance expected and the special measures to tackle change.

Change management plan: Change management strategy helps drives the change management plan which comprises of:

- Communication plan
- Sponsorship plan
- Coaching plan
- Training plan
- Resistance management plan
- Reinforcement plan

Phase 2

Managing change: After identifying anticipated points of resistance and implementing special tactics based on readiness assessments, change management plans will be put to necessary action.

Phase 3

Reinforcing change: This is a very important aspect to know the pulse the people and should not ignored. This involves

- Collecting and analyzing feedback
- Diagnosing gaps looking for resistance pockets and managing resistance
- Implementing corrective actions and celebrating successes

Organizational Engagement

Well managed change journeys result in supreme organizational engagement. This is just not about a financial motivation to

the employees or making them happy by giving them the soft benefits. The output of best engaged organizations is a positive behavior and commitment by the employees using their discretionary will to work that extra mile / extra hours when work demands without any expectation.

This stands good to the maxim “Excellence is never an accident, it is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities.”

The employee engagement is mainly dependent on three aspects:

- (1) Emotional connect of the employee with the organization
- (2) Relationship of the employee with the employer
- (3) Skills and ability of the employee to render superior performance

Hence

- Efforts should be put into to win the hearts of the employees by giving them confidence that organization stands by them always.
- Relationship between the employees and the employer should not be limited to a mere financial deal but employees should be involved in the organizational affairs which enables ownership, accountability and commitment by the employees.
- Facilitate effective training programmes which are not a mere tick in the box activity but sincerely help enrich the work abilities of the employees to deliver the best work and give time and scope for the employees to display their learning abilities in the real work.

Value Proposition

Value proposition is a return of renderings to the employee for his experience, knowledge and skills that benefit the

organization. It can also be called the unique selling proposition for an employer which enables to attract, acquire and retain the best talented resources [4].

Employee value proposition remains as a memory to the exited employees who could speak volumes of good words if their association has been positive leading to references through “word of mouth” advertisements who will be looking forward to joining the organization, if given an opportunity. In addition to this, the existing employees take pride in bragging about their organization and raising their collars high with pride of having the unique value proposition which means competitive advantage in the market.

CONCLUSION

A quick retrospection of this situation threw light on these aspects:

The researcher had to upgrade her car driving skills and balance her fitment into driving any car (competency mapping) and the exploratory phase of understanding all the features in the car give a mention of the (learning and development abilities) and confidence to handle and drive bigger cars.

The researcher’s journey to the office enabled her to successfully handle the turbulence of change that came into her life with a mere car exchange and could manage the new change successfully without resisting much (change management).

“You get what you give” goes a saying. When the researcher felt that the car was a problem, she could only experience negativity but the moment, she took it as a challenge, the cards turned to her favor... Here, if she could consider her car as an Organization, a convincing positive

outlook does wonders and renders a positive flavor and all the odds against her turned to her favor (organizational engagement).

The value proposition derived out of this experience was an accident free; scratch free drive with better-equipped skills and sky-high confidence to mold the most difficult situation into a most pleasant memory (value proposition).

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