

10 tips on embedding change

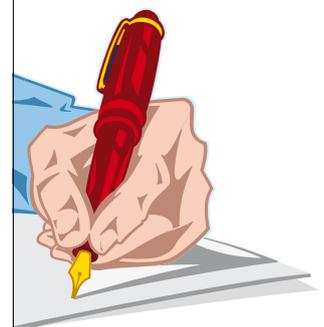
Organisations that have the capability to change effectively are stronger and future-proof. This is perceived wisdom that few would argue with, but to achieve this capability is easier said than done.

Effectively embedding change can be achieved by following these ten fundamental principles:

- 1 **Change must have a clear strategic mandate and be linked to a compelling rationale** Organisations are made up of individuals and we all respond to change differently. Some people like to move towards pleasure and others to move away from pain.
- 2 **Organisations must bring to life the compelling rationale for the change they wish to drive through** A compelling vision must either represent the dire consequences of failing to act or a sufficiently exciting and motivating future state.
- 3 **A vision alone is not sufficient to capture the hearts and minds of everyone but it is a good start** People must be able to make the link with what is important to them personally.
- 4 **The change must be driven top-down and bottom-up** The old adage of leading from the front is true but, for change to really stick, it must be driven throughout the organisation.
- 5 **In every company there are influential and dynamic individuals throughout the hierarchy; it is imperative that these individuals are 'on side' and championing the change from the bottom up and inside out** However, these individuals must still be supported by great leadership; it does not matter how galvanised the troops are, the change will fail if there is insufficient direction, support and drive from the top.
- 6 **The approach to embedding change must be holistic and systemic** All organisations are complex and dynamic systems, not simple and linear. As a result, a simple cause-and-effect approach to embedding change will not work – "I say change... you change" just does not wash in such a complex world.
- 7 **There are a number of organisational 'levers' that need attention** For example, objectives, leadership, recruitment, promotion and training. Not all need to be 'yanked' but all need to be at least tweaked and nudged so they support each other and are all lined up.
- 8 **Focus should be on changing actual behaviours, not just rhetoric and enthusiasm** It is much more effective to change what we can see, and we can see how people behave.
- 9 **The hardest organisational change to effect is that which requires people to think and feel differently, often referred to as 'culture change'** Too often these change programmes fail because they are not grounded in what people are being asked to do that is different. Focus on what you want people to be 'doing', how you wish to see them behaving, and you have a greater chance of success.
- 10 **Be prepared to 'course correct'** Very few change programmes end up exactly where they predicted at the outset, for many reasons. Ensure you have checkpoints that enable you to see where progress is being made and where progress is not; redefining the course you are following as a consequence is vital to success.

HINTS & TIPS

Richard Ferguson has some advice on ensuring the success of change programmes



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