Organization Work- and Change-Management: A Multi-Task Model

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It's not that the business environment is changing. Change is the business environment. It's not that every company is undergoing change. Change has overtaken every company. Creating change, managing it, mastering it, and surviving it is the agenda for everyone in business who aims to make a difference. Even change has changed….Instead of an external program, change today is intrinsic to business, an integral expression of how successful business operates.

<div align="right">--Charles Fishman, 1997, p. 64</div>

Change initiatives are difficult, complex, and subject to failure. When they are seen by members of the organization as competing with and isolated from the core work and tasks of the organization, they are even less likely to be successful. Today organization change is an integral part of the work of the organization. The organization's management processes include the management both of change initiatives and of the organization's core work and tasks. They are interrelated.

Organization development and change practitioners offer and use many different change and change management models. Most change models are theories of the change process. Most change models can be traced back to Kurt Lewin's "unfreezing-movement-freezing" model. In Lewin's model, change in human systems (individuals, groups, organizations) involves a process of preparation for change, movement to a new state, and incorporation of the change as a part of the system.

Change management models are theories are theories about organizations that describe or emphasize particular aspects of an organization that are areas for interventions that can result in desired organizational changes. Earlier change practitioners theorized about organizations in terms of "planned change." (Bennis, Benne, and Chin, 1985). Because change is now so much part of organizational experience and diagnostic and all other organization interventions can result in organizational learning and change, thinking about organizational change is evolving from a "planned-change" perspective to perspectives about "managed change" and "learning management." (Schein, 1999, pp. 59; Beckhard and Pritchard, 1992, pp. 9-24.)

Many change and change management models are used to guide organizational change work. They include:
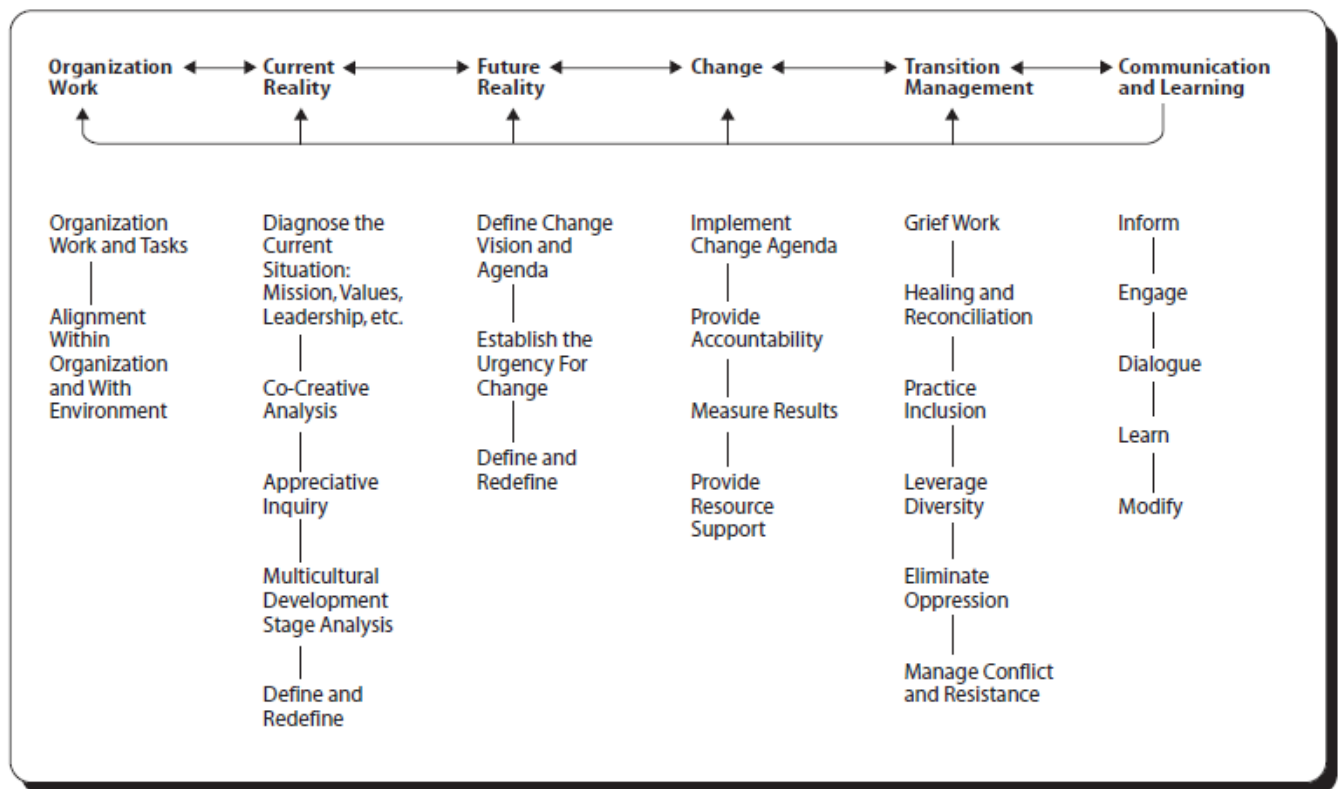
- "Unfreezing-movement-freezing" organization development models of planned organizational change (Lewin, 1958, pp. 197-211; Lippit, Watson and Westley, 1958; Kolb and Frohman, 1970, pp. 51-65; Kotter, 1995, pp. 59-67.);
- Organization diagnosis (Weisbord, 1978) and paradoxical theory of change (Beisser, 1970, pp. 77-80 and Nevis, 1987, p. 61) models that focus on the organization's current reality;
- Strategic planning (Bryson, 1988), creative tension (Fritz, 1984 and 1996), co-creative analysis (Craft, n.d.), appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivista, 1987, pp.129-169; Hammond and Royal 1998), and readiness for change (Beckhard and Pritchard,1992, pp. 74-77; Beckhard and Harris, 1977, pp. 24-27) models that focus on both the organization's current reality and future reality;
- Mission/purpose-based (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1984, pp. 79-88; Gelinas and James, 1999, pp. 10-22), vision-based (Collins and Porras, 1996, pp. 65-77; Block, 1987, pp. 99-129), values-based (Collins, 1996, pp. 19-24; Anderson, 1997, pp. 25-46), and results-based (Schaffer and Thompson 1992, pp. 80-89; Case, 1997, pp. 118-127; Kaplan and Norton, 1996) organization change models;
- Holding on, letting go, moving on (Tannenbaum and Hanna, 1985, pp. 95-121) and transition (Bridges, 1988 and 1980) models;
- The monocultural-multicultural organization model (Jackson and Hardiman,1981 and 1994, Miller and Katz, 1995, Brazzel, 2007) that explicitly addresses the impact of oppression and social justice on organizational change;.

- Change and resistance (Maurer, 1996; Wheeler, 1998), force-field (Kurt Lewin,1948), and conflict (Brown, 1993; Brazzel, 2003, pp. 363-406) models of organizational change;
- Grief work and healing and reconciliation models (Kubler-Ross, 1996; Keleman, 1974; Levine and Levine, 1982; Bassman, 1992; Davenport, Schwartz and Elliott, 1999; Reina and Reina, 1999; Merry and Brown, 1987; Noer, 1993; Goff and Goff, 1991; Schaef and Fassel, 1988), and
- Dialogue (Ellinor and Gerard, 1998; Isaacs, 1999) and learning (Senge, 1990; DiBella and Nevis, 1998) models.

The number and variety of models can lead to confusion, competing claims about which is "best," and jokes about the latest "fad-of-the-month." In fact many of the models are complementary and overlapping and address key, but limited, aspects of the change management process.

These change and change management models are integrated and connected with the core work of the organization and shown as the "Multi-Task Organization Work and Change Management Model" in the following Table 1 as complementary parts of the change management process. The multi-task process model includes work and change management processes as the core work of the organization. The six tasks of management responsibility and processes are addressed simultaneously. Change management activities are described in five of the tasks: current reality, future reality, change, transition management, and communication and learning.

Table 1: Organization Work and Change Management Model

Organization Work	Current Reality	Future Reality	Change	Transition Management	Communication and Learning
Organization Work and Tasks	Diagnose the Current Situation: Mission, Values, Leadership, etc.	Define Change Vision and Agenda	Implement Change Agenda	Grief Work	Inform
Alignment Within Organization and With Environment		Establish the Urgency For Change	Provide Accountability	Healing and Reconciliation	Engage
	Co-Creative Analysis		Measure Results	Practice Inclusion	Dialogue
	Appreciative Inquiry	Define and Redefine	Provide Resource Support	Leverage Diversity	Learn
	Multicultural Development Stage Analysis			Eliminate Oppression	Modify
	Define and Redefine			Manage Conflict and Resistance	

The work and change management tasks are interdependent. The activities in each task incorporate a learning-by-doing perspective and represent interventions that can change the organization. Knowledge and information gained in one task inform and impact the management processes of other tasks. Activities (that is, change initiatives) in the five change management tasks inform the management of

core organizational work and tasks. When change initiatives are segregated from the management of organizational work, organizations can miss important forces for improvement.

The multi-task model is a framework for defining the processes and activities involved in assisting organizational change as described below.

1. Manage ongoing organizational work and tasks. Attend to the core work and tasks of the organization, as well as change initiatives. Insure that organizational processes are aligned within the organization and with environmental demands and opportunities.

2. Define current reality. Organizational diagnosis relating to mission, values performance, relationships, leadership, policies and programs, structure, environment, alignment, and other key aspects of the organization. What is going well? Poorly? Opportunities, issues, problems? Areas of resistance, blocked energy? C-creative analysis – What attitudes, beliefs, actions, behaviors by the co-creators and partners are keeping things as they are now? What are the patterns and levels of exclusions, collusion, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression in the organization? Where is the organization along the path from monocultural to multicultural organization? Why? Engage with stakeholders in defining and redefining current reality and its co-creation.

3. Define, redefine, and share change vision and agenda widely. B concrete and specific about the changes and attitudes, beliefs, actions, behaviors, and results that are wanted from the organization, its employees, and other key stakeholders. Establish the urgency for change and share that as the business case for change or the organizational imperative. Engage with stakeholders in defining and redefining vision and its co-creation.

4. Act on the change vision and agenda. Do something. Doing nothing creates greater resistance to change.

5. Establish change as the core work of the organization through accountability and support. Create a coalition of support for the change effort. Designate a person and/or group to be full-time spokesperson(s), resources, and steward(s) of the change initiative for the 2-5 years (or more) it will take to get the change process started and institutionalized. Treat the change effort as core work of the organization, establish accountability and performance measurement, including the accountability of senior leaders, managers, and employees, and measure results.

6. Manage the transition processes that cab block change and are a normal part of the change process. Heighten awareness of loss, resistance, and conflict. Don't escalate or force them underground. Provide opportunity and space – that is safe – for expression and awareness of loss, resistance, and conflict. Support healing and reconciliation. Provide for inclusion, leveraging diversity, and elimination of oppression.

7. Manage communication and learning processes. Create an information-rich organization. Let everyone know what is going on, even when nothing is happening. Engage as colleagues and peers in dialogue about change and the change process. Ask questions. Consult. Listen. Acknowledge. Suspend debate. Let any ideas be ok. Seek understanding of your own assumptions and the assumptions of others….and how they differ from yours. Explore the implications and outcomes. Check where things are currently. Use learning to modify organization core work and tasks, definition of current reality, change vision, agenda and actions, and transition management, communications and the learning process.

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