Week 4 - Discussion 1

Approach to Change Management

Define and compare the change management concept with the contingency approach. Drawing from this week’s lecture and readings (below)

1. Provide a specific example for the contingency approach.
2. How might cultural barriers and communication constraints affect the change process?

Week Four Lecture

Once the change has been decided and all driving factors have been determined, it is then the implementation process that takes the focus. Change management and action steps required are critical to successful outcomes. This week we look at the vision of the organization and the implementation of strategic change initiatives.

Kotter (1996) is a foundational author in the conversation of change management. His eight- step change management model is probably the most noted and quoted dialog for change implementation. Within this model we are reminded that there are specific actions that must be considered for change to be meaningful and ultimately sustainable. Developing the need for urgency and ensuring that the initiative meets the vision of the organization will help facilitate ownership by staff and ultimately embed the change in the culture. Each change initiative warrants its own model for success. What works in one situation may not necessarily work in another. However, without properly designed change models and an indicated process there quite possibly will be gaps in the implementation that could cause the initiative to fail. A collaborative effort throughout the organization promotes the concept of importance and inclusion. Cingoranelli (2003) believes that good communication is the key to a successful change process. It is alleged that the message of change must be communicated by the leader no less than seven times before most people will begin to believe that change is taking place or understand the concept of the change initiative itself. Being mindful of the individual perceptions of the change, the leader must refrain from presenting the lofty pie-in-the sky concept and make the change pertinent to those whose role it will be to make it work.

Change is multidimensional and requires a framework from both the constructive aspect and a personalized psychological dynamic (Rusly, Comer, & Sun, 2012). Change readiness is pivotal to the overall outcomes. Change readiness comes through precise and logical communication with all shareholders and stakeholders of the change effort. Understanding the context of change is important to being able to identify the gaps of continuity and sustainability. Managers who ignore the underlying factors that individuals use to process change will find themselves playing catch-up down the line.

Even with the most successful model used for the implementation, there are times that a change process may appear to be successful but over time it becomes apparent that it was not sustainable. Each organization has a culture and moves in a fluid motion. If the culture and individual behaviors are not taken into account during the change process then the outcome may not follow the model. It is important for the leader to understand the individual personalities and behaviors, the culture of the organization, and necessary components for maintaining change.

















