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Developing Policies, Protocols and Procedures using Kotter's 8 step Change Management Model

So, enough with the talk. Let's do something.

Marion Foster

Scottish Practice Management

Development Network

[Pick the date]

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE POWERFULLY AND SUCCESSFULLY

"Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step" Lao tzu

What was true more than two thousand years ago is just as true today.

We live in a world where "business as usual" *is* change. New initiatives, project-based working, technology improvements, staying ahead of the competition – these things come together to drive ongoing changes to the way we work.

Whether you are considering a small change to one or two processes, or a system wide change to an organisation, it is common to feel uneasy and intimidated by the scale of the challenge.

You know that the change needs to happen, but you don't really know how to go about doing.

Change management is a stepwise approach for ensuring that programmatic changes are implemented smoothly and systematically and that the lasting benefits of change are achieved.

The Kotter (1996) model outlined below serves as a successful roadmap and can be used to operationalise any of your organisation's initiatives.

Figure 1Kotters 8 Step Model

POLICY AND PROCEDURE PLANNING TEMPLATE

TITLE: ....

Development Task	Plan
STEP 1 Establish a sense of urgency **The reason. Is it important to do it?** • SEA, Complaint, Risk assessment • What is the urgency? • Guide book: When to write or review the policies and procedures?	
STEP 2 Create the Guiding Team **Who needs to be involved and why?** • Identify the key stakeholders and create the team • Guide book: The Policy - Persons affected	
STEP 3 Develop a vision and strategy **What is the vision and strategy?** • Where are we now? Where do we want to go? How will we get there? • What do we need? Knowledge, Skills, Physical resources, time? • Guide book: The Policy – Policy Purpose, Policy Text	
STEP 4 Communicate the Change Vision **How can you communicate the vision and strategy?** Recording, Writing, Reporting, Motivate, Tools, Meetings, Training, Feedback.	
STEP 5 Empower a broad base of people to take action **What can you address early on to ensure the team is prepared, strong, empowered and motivated?** • Who can be empowered and take responsibility? Coaching opportunity? • What are the perceived challenges? • How can the team prevent them or overcome them?	
STEP 6 Generate short wins **What short term wins can you plan?** Identify steps in the process where benefits can be acknowledged, reflected upon, know things are going well to keep the team motivated and feel they are achieving?	
STEP 7 Consolidate gains and producing even more change • How will you avoid the risk of premature victory and its implications? • How will you acknowledge the short term wins and build on them?	
STEP 8 Institutionalise new approaches in the organisational culture • How can you make them easily accessible, referred to and reviewed on time? • How can you make them valued by the users and working documents?	

STEP 1

Action Establish a sense of urgency

Common Errors Allowing too much complacency

It is not that people are incapable of seeing the solution. Often people are incapable of seeing the problem. Once convinced that the problem does exist, most people are willing to adopt reasonable solutions.

For change to happen, it helps if the whole organisation really wants it. Develop a sense of urgency around the need for change. This may help you spark the initial motivation to get things moving.

This is not simply a matter of showing people poor performance or Significant Events (past events) but open an honest and convincing dialogue about what is happening in the wider community and national strategy (future opportunities and demands).

If many people start talking about the change you propose, the urgency can build and feed on itself.

What you can do to establish the sense of urgency:

- Identify potential threats, and develop scenarios showing what could happen in the future.

- Examine opportunities that should be, or could be, exploited.

- Start honest discussions, and give dynamic and convincing reasons to get people talking and thinking.

- Request support from members of the team, patients and outside stakeholders to strengthen your argument.

Kotter (1996) suggests that for change to be successful, 75% of the practice team needs to "buy into" the change. In other words, you have to really work hard on Step One, and spend significant time and energy building urgency, before moving onto the next steps. Don't panic and jump in too fast because you don't want to risk further short-term losses – if you act without proper preparation, you could be in for a very bumpy ride.

Pointers:

- Allowing too much complacency is by far the biggest error, therefore:

    o Create a sense of urgency,

    o Create a sense that the current way of doing things is unsatisfactory or cannot stay the same.

- Convince people that change is necessary with your evidence.

- Help others see the need for developing or changing the protocol or procedure and the importance of acting with urgency.

- Leaders of change must communicate the challenges, crises, or opportunities facing the organisation, and their urgency. Without this people will stay in their comfort zones.

- When appropriate, carry out a Significant Event Analysis or risk assessment

- Identify potential risks, and develop scenarios showing what could happen in the future.

- Examine opportunities that should be, or could be, exploited.

- Start honest discussions, and give dynamic and convincing reasons to get people talking and thinking.

- A compelling need has to be developed and shared.

Action Create the Guiding Team

Common Errors Failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding team.

Convince people that change is necessary. This often takes strong leadership and visible support from key people within your organisation. Managing change isn't enough – you have to lead it.

You can find effective change leaders throughout your organisation – they don't necessarily follow the traditional practice hierarchy (if you have one). To lead change, you bring together a coalition, or team, of influential people whose power comes from a variety of sources, including job title, status, expertise, and political importance.

Once formed, your "change coalition" works as a team, continuing to build urgency and momentum around the need for change.

Pointers:

• Identify the true leaders or champions within your organisation i.e. those whose power and influence may come from a variety of sources, including job title, status, expertise, political importance, community connections, and special skills.

• Make sure there is a powerful team guiding the change— the effective team consists of leadership skills, bias for action, credibility, communications ability, authority, analytical skills.

• Identify the stakeholders e.g. Patients, The Health Board, The Practice next door.

• Ask for an emotional commitment from these key people.

• Work on team building within your change coalition.

• Check your team for weak areas, and ensure that you have a good mix of people from different disciplines within your practice.

• Individuals on their own, however talented, will seldom muster the power, information and expertise needed to overcome tradition and inertia. A group of key people who function like a close-knit team (even though they are from different disciplines or organisations) is needed to guide change.

• Once formed, your "change coalition" needs to work as a team, continuing to build urgency and momentum around the development of the documents.

STEP 3

Action Develop a vision and strategy

Common Errors Underestimating the power of vision

When you first start thinking about change, there will probably be many great ideas and solutions floating around. Link these concepts to an overall vision that people can grasp easily and remember.

A clear vision can help everyone understand why you're asking them to do something. When people see for themselves what you're trying to achieve, then the directives they're given tend to make more sense.

A vision can be a desired realistic and credible future that an organisation hopes to achieve.

Pointers:

Vision

- Determine the values that are central to the change.

- Develop a short summary (one or two sentences) that captures what you "see" as the future due to the development.

- Clarify how the future will be different from the past, and how you can make that future a reality.

- A clear vision can help everyone understand why you're asking them to do something. When people see for themselves what you're trying to achieve, then the directives they're given tend to make more sense.

Strategy

- Create a strategy to execute that vision.

- Consultation with stakeholders will identify concrete tasks to be done to get closer to the vision.

- Check for existing policies and procedures and responsible individuals.

- What resources are needed:
  - Environment
  - Equipment
  - Information and Knowledge
  - Financial e.g. cost/benefit analysis
  - Personnel
  - Time

STEP 4

Action Communicate the change/developing vision,

Common Errors Under-communicating the vision

What you do with your vision after you create it will determine your success communicate, and embed it within everything that is relevant to it.

Use the vision to make relevant decisions and solve problems. When you keep it fresh on everyone's minds, they will remember it and respond to it.

It is also important to "walk the talk." What you do is far more important – and believable – than what you say.

Pointers:

- Openly and honestly address peoples' concerns and anxieties.

- Apply your vision to all aspects of operations – from training to performance reviews. Tie everything back to the vision.

- Lead by example.

- Communicate through actions as well as the verbal and written word.

- The best person to write the procedure is the one who does it, utilising the information and resources. This is a coaching opportunity and an opportunity to check the knowledge.

- Test the procedure after it has been written to ensure it is comprehensible.

- What you can do:

  - Keep others aware of the change/developing vision.
  - Ensure all stakeholders are kept informed and involved when appropriate.
  - Discuss the developing document and encourage constructive feedback
  - Openly and honestly address peoples' concerns and anxieties.
  - Keep motivation of all concerned going by:
    - Acknowledging and valuing their work,
    - Ensure it is valued by others
    - Making the process easier, safer, rewarding and fun.

Action Empower a broad base of people to take action

Common Errors Permitting obstacles to block the vision

If you follow these steps and reach this point in the change process, you've been talking about your vision and building buy-in from all levels of the organisation. Hopefully, your staff want to get busy and achieve the benefits that you have been promoting.

But is anyone resisting the change? And are there processes or structures that are getting in its way?

Put in place the structure for change, and continually check for barriers to it. Removing obstacles can empower the people you need to execute your vision, and it can help the change move forward.

Pointers:

- Identify change leaders whose main roles are to deliver the change.

- Look at your organisational structure, job descriptions, and performance to ensure they are in line with your vision.

- Recognise and reward people for making change happen.

- Identify people who are resisting the change, and help them see what is needed.

- Take action to quickly remove barriers (human or otherwise).

- Empowered staff are motivated, feel valued, carry more self responsibility, have ownership, increased knowledge and confidence, participate in team leadership.

- Staff may understand the new vision and want to help but be blocked. Obstacles could be structures, systems, what people are rewarded for, and colleagues who block or delay things, or spread cynicism,

- Remove as many barriers as possible so that those who want to make the vision a reality can do so. Empower them to remove the barriers.

Action Generate short term wins

Common Errors Not systematically planning for and creating short term wins.

Nothing motivates more than success. Give your team a taste of victory early in the change process. Within a short time frame (this could be a month or a year, depending on the type of change), you'll want to have results that your staff can see. Without this, critics and negative thinkers might hurt your progress.

Create short-term targets – not just one long-term goal. You want each smaller target to be achievable, with little room for failure. Your change team may have to work very hard to come up with these targets, but each "win" that you produce can further motivate the entire staff.

Pointers:

- Thoroughly analyse the potential pros and cons of your process.

- Acknowledge the people who help you meet the targets.

- Real transformation takes time, and there is a strong risk of losing momentum if there are no early successes.
- Create some visible, unambiguous successes as soon as possible.
- Nothing motivates more than success.

STEP 7

Action Consolidate gains and producing even more change

Common Errors Declaring victory too soon

Kotter argues that many change projects fail because victory is declared too early. Real change runs deep. Quick wins are only the beginning of what needs to be done to achieve long-term change.

Each success provides an opportunity to build on what went right and identify what you can improve.

Pointers:

- After every win, analyse what went right and what needs improving.

- Set goals to continue building on the momentum you've achieved.

- Learn about <u>Kaizen</u>, the idea of continuous improvement.

- Press harder and faster after the first successes. Be relentless with instituting change after change until the vision becomes a reality.
- Don't let up
- Each success provides an opportunity to build on what went right and identify what you can improve.

STEP 8

Action Institutionalise new approaches in the organisational culture

Common Errors Neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the organisational culture.

Finally, to make any change stick, it should become part of the core of your organisation. Your organisational culture often determines what gets done, so the values behind your vision must show in day-to-day work.

It is also important that your team leaders continue to support the change. This includes existing staff and new leaders who are brought in. If you lose the support of these people, you might end up back where you started.

Pointers:

- Talk about progress every chance you get. Tell success stories about the change process, and repeat other stories that you hear.

- Include the change ideals and values when hiring and training new staff.

- Ensure the Policies, Protocols and Procedures are well written and presented.

- Published in a manner that is easily accessible, easily updatable, easily searchable.

- Change only sticks when it becomes 'the way we do things round here' i.e. embedded in the practice's policies procedures and protocols.

- Hold on to the new ways of behaving, and make sure they succeed, until they become a part of the very culture of the group.

- Maintain clear focus.

- Cultural change comes last, not first.

- Embrace resistance.

- Respect those who resist.

- Ensure you have a robust and sustainable information and knowledge management system

Reference: Kotter J., 1996., *Leading Change.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press