

The Change Management Indicator



Introduction

The statistic that 70% of change programmes fail seems to be widely accepted¹. However, change remains the only constant. The managements of many organisations embark on change programmes with a sense of necessity and a determination to drive change through. The approach taken may be evaluated in a Post Implementation Review, but by then it is too late. What is needed is a means of finding out how your change programme is going while you have time to do something about it.

Over the longer term, the success of planned changes can be assessed against performance indicators such as time-to-market, customer satisfaction and the bottom-line, but in the short term the most powerful means of assessment is employees' collective perceptions of the way the changes are being managed and the effect this is having on their experience of, and attitudes towards, the changes.

It could be argued that resistance and some lack of enthusiasm on the part of employees is inevitable and, therefore, that employees' perceptions are not a good indicator of how well the change is being managed. However, since one of the main imperatives of change is to win over hearts and minds and get people to buy in to change, their feedback can provide a good indication of how well things are going.

The Change Management Indicator (CMI) was developed by John Hayes Associates and Peter Hyde Management Consulting as a structured means of providing this feedback. Its purpose is: *To help organisations manage change more effectively by providing change managers with feedback on how organisational members perceive the change itself, how well it is being managed and its impact on them.*

Uses of The Change Management Indicator

The Change Management Indicator is intended to be used once a major change process is underway, but not yet complete. It can be used in a number of ways:

- As a one-off diagnostic instrument to identify major areas of concern (e.g. aspects of change management which are poorly perceived) for remedial action.
- As a barometer of opinion at a series of points in time, indicating whether the trend is in the desired direction.
- To compare the situation in different departments, functions, locations and organisational levels and thereby identify localised problems.
- As an intervention in its own right, to get people thinking about the issues and to promote dialogue.
- To benchmark against other organisations which are undergoing similar changes.

¹ Beer, M., Eisenstat, R. and Spector, B. (1990) 'Why change programs don't produce change', *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 68, No. 6, pp.158–167; Beer, M. and Nohria, N. (2000) *Breaking the Code of Change*, Harvard Business School press, Boston; Roberto, M.A. and Levesque, L.C. (2005) 'The art of making change initiatives stick', *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Massachusetts, Vol. 46, No. 4, pp.53–60.

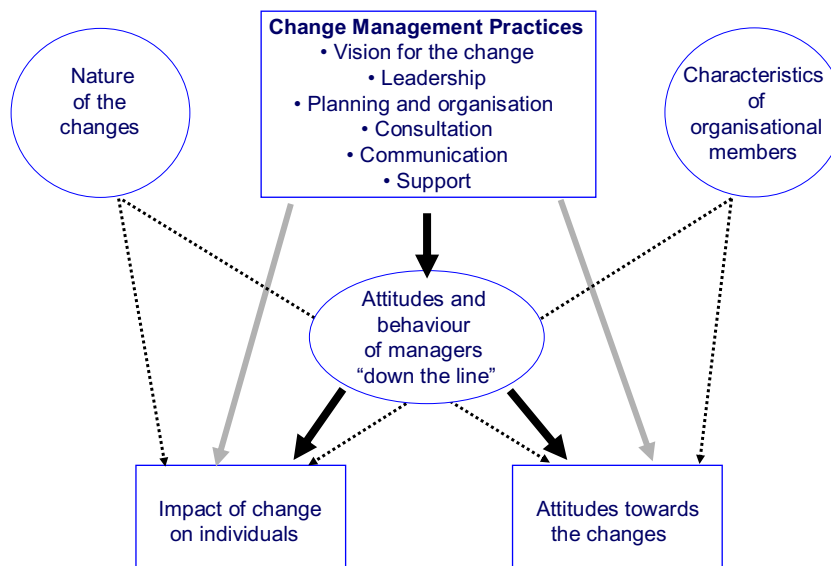
The underlying model

The model underpinning The Change Management Indicator proposes that peoples' experience of organisational change and their attitudes towards the change are influenced by four key elements:

- *The inherent nature of the change.* Management will often see this as a given, but its impact cannot be denied. It will be hard, for example, to get positive feedback about the change if it is inherently painful (such as the closure of a facility).
- *The change management practices adopted by the overall managers of the change.* The model identifies six key components which need to be managed well.
- *How the overall strategy for change is represented by local line management.* Middle managers often struggle to find the right way to position themselves, but it seems clear that if they are not actively supportive of the corporate strategy for change it is highly unlikely that people will buy into it.
- *Individual personality and temperamental characteristics* which make some people more receptive to change and others more resistant.

The underlying model can be summarised as follows:

Change Management Indicator Model



Structure of the questionnaire

The Change Management Indicator comprises clusters of questions that cover:

- The six components of effective change management practice described in the model:
 - The vision for the change
 - Leadership
 - Planning and organisation
 - Communication
 - Consultation
 - Support
- The attitudes and behaviour of immediate line managers.
- Two key outcomes:
 - Peoples' attitude to the change
 - The impact on their work, well-being and commitment.

There is also an optional set of four additional clusters of questions that focus on individual characteristics that affect how people respond to a particular organisational change. These clusters are: recognition that change is normal; attitudes towards change in general; disposition to initiate change; personal ability to cope with change.

Design and use of the questionnaire

Each cluster of questions covers one aspect of change management and its consequences. We do not claim that a cluster is a dimension or that all the questions within it will co-vary – indeed the items have been carefully chosen to address distinct aspects of each cluster. Clusters therefore have varying numbers of questions.

Questions are mostly phrased positively except where this would sound false. Having some negative statements also reduces the risk of response set. Questions are phrased in the present tense because change is assumed to be already happening.

The questions have been written to be answered using the following scale:

Strongly agree

Agree

Mixed feelings (neither agree nor disagree)

Disagree

Strongly disagree

No opinion (have no view at all either because new to the organisation or completely apathetic)

The questionnaire is intended to be delivered online, using a platform such as SurveyMonkey, with each cluster of questions being presented on a separate screen.

Demographic characteristics of respondents (e.g. function, location, grade, length of service) will need to be added and references to "this organisation" and "the changes can be replaced with the organisation's name (or that of a function or part of the organisation) and that of the change programme. Additional, organisation-specific questions, including free-text ones, can of course be added.

The questionnaire

Vision for the changes

I have been given a clear explanation of why we are changing.

I have been given a clear account of what the organisation is expected to look like once the changes have been implemented.

I know what benefits are expected from these changes.

Leadership

Senior management are fully committed to these changes.

Senior management are all united behind the changes.

Senior management behave in a way which is consistent with what they say about these changes.

There is a hidden agenda at senior management level.

Senior managers are effective at leading change.

Planning and organisation

All important roles and responsibilities for managing these changes are clearly defined.

The resources needed to effectively implement these changes are/will be available.

The implications of the changes have been thought through and there are plans to address them.

The timescale for the changes is realistic.

I know what my responsibility is in relationship to these changes.

Consultation

We have been asked for our views about the changes in our part of the organisation.

Our views have been sought early enough to have an impact on the changes.

It is worth contributing our views because they are taken seriously.

We have been treated as a stakeholder in these changes.

Communication

The information I am given about the changes is clear and easy to understand.

I am given information which addresses my questions and concerns about the changes.

I am kept up to date on how the changes are progressing.

There is adequate opportunity to discuss and clarify the changes.

Support

Those who are leading these changes are aware of how they will affect people and have taken this into account.

Adequate training is available to equip people for these changes.

People are given the support they need to help them cope with these changes.

My manager

My manager

Is really committed to these changes.

Is effective at leading the changes.

Has asked for my views about the changes in my part of the organisation.

Keeps me up to date on how the changes are progressing.

Gives me the support I need to help me cope with these changes.

Impact of change on individuals

I am expected to cope with too much change at once.

The level of stress is too high to bear.

I feel stimulated and excited by these changes.

These changes are making me think about leaving the organisation.

The changes are making it difficult for me to perform effectively.

The changes are having a negative effect on my general health and well-being.

Attitudes toward the changes

Some change is certainly needed in this organisation.

We are changing the wrong things.

The changes are just the flavour of the month.

I am confident that the impact of these changes on me will be positive.

I am confident that the impact of these changes on the organisation will be positive.

I am committed to making these changes a success.

Additional section: Individual characteristics

Recognition that change is normal

Change is a fact of life in organisations today.

I understand and accept that change is likely to continue indefinitely.

It is no longer realistic to expect periods of stability.

Attitude towards change in general

On the whole, change tends to be exhilarating and exciting.

Change is a source of opportunity.

Compared to others, I tend to look on the bright side of change.

Disposition to initiate change

I encourage others to adopt a positive attitude to change.

I am prepared to constructively challenge and question the existing way of doing things.

I actively seek better ways of doing things.

Personal ability to cope with change

I am confident in my ability to acquire new knowledge and skills.

I am able to manage myself in uncertain or stressful situations.

I find it relatively easy to 'let go' of old ways of doing things and adjust to new ways.