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Change Management

Through

Coaching

&

Feedback

iCOACH1st

Change is hard.

No matter what type of change you want to make in your organization—whether it is exciting, or constructive, or just necessary—it is probably going to cause resistance among at least some of your employees. Maybe all of them.

Perhaps you are in a period of rapid growth that requires next-level processes and procedures. Perhaps you are preparing to take your company public, or you are embarking on an acquisition or merger. Maybe you have had to enact a RIF. All of these need employee buy-in to succeed.

Whatever the transformations you are implementing with your workforce, your statistical odds of success aren't great. In fact, research from McKinsey and Company shows that 70% of all organizational transformations fail.

Why?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, failing to get employees on board is the primary factor that will make or break change.

For you this is actually good news, because there are key ways you can stack the deck in your favor. If you've got a great performance/talent management platform—with integrated coaching, feedback, recognition and training—you have everything you need.

This guide will outline some of the risks and benefits associated with change management, and then it will show you how you can use your performance management program to make all of your new initiatives smoother and more successful!

Risks and Challenges

Does it really matter if your employees support change?
After all, change is inevitable, right?

The answer here is a resounding **"yes, it matters."** Unmanaged or poorly managed organizational change will affect your company not only by the short-term failure of the change project, but also by possibly undermining and impacting your culture negatively for years to come.

In the short term, your project may suffer:

1 Delays and missed milestones

2 Budget impacts and decreased profits

3 Distraction and loss of work

4 Possible abandonment of the initiative

In the longer sense, your organization may experience:

- Increased turnover and loss of flight risk employees
- Disengagement of those who stay
- Loss of productivity and reduced quality of work

- Stress, confusion, fatigue and other health impacts
- Decline in customer service and profitability

How can you mitigate these risks and help to ensure success?

It helps to begin with a careful look at the potential roadblocks to a successful transformation. According to the 2018 edition of Best Practices in Change Management the five biggest obstacles to successful change management are:

1 Lack of executive support and active sponsorship

2 Inadequate change management buy-in and resourcing

3 Resistance and lack of support for the specific solution

4 Change-resistant culture and organizational structure

5 Change saturation and lack of prioritization

When we understand these blockers, how can we avoid them?

Paving the Way for Success

According to experts like McKinsey and Deloitte, the most important elements in driving successful change is driving communication, ownership and commitment. In other words, **how much does each employee feel informed, involved, and responsible for the changes being implemented?** By addressing this, we can much better control outcomes.

According to experts, driving ownership and commitment can be done in five key ways:

1. Clear bi-lateral communication

2. Honesty around challenges and risks the organization faces

3. Prioritization and building clear action plans for success

4. Driving positive "buzz" within your workforce

5. Modeling and positive reinforcement of behavior

And it turns out, all of these factors can be achieved through great coaching and feedback platforms! Make that your first stop on the road to change management.

You can use coaching, feedback, training and recognition to ease change and pave the way in two major ways:

1   By **PROACTIVELY** creating a more resilient and trusting organizational culture that will roll with changes more easily.

2   By **REACTIVELY** using specific coaching and feedback techniques and insights to successfully drive very specific change management initiatives in your company, as they arise.

Let's move on to some specific tips on how you can use your coaching and feedback solution to lay the foundation for easier organizational change.

Proactively Build a Resilient Culture

One of the best ways to protect your organization against the trauma of negative changes or prepare culture for significant transformation is by proactively creating a more resilient culture that will allow employees to "roll with the punches".

Resilience is one of the four key factors what organizational psychologists call Psychological Capital (or PsyCap). Along with hope, optimism and well-being, resilience has been proven by researchers to directly impact important bellwether metrics—including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being, and also to reduce cynicism, turnover intentions, job stress, and anxiety.

Coaching and mentoring systems building resilience in the following ways:

They encourage investment in a shared social system

Feedback systems link employees together through peer-to-peer feedback and recognition moments. Psychologists tell us when employees feel invested in a social system, they take on shared responsibility for maintaining that system—and are more likely to help stabilize, not disrupt, during times of change or crisis.

They establish a built-in support framework

Coaching and feedback systems—particularly those that encourage peer-to-peer and manager-to-employee mentoring relationships—will give employees a place to turn for answers during times of turmoil or change.

They create an expectation of honest, open communication

If you have a performance management system where employees are accustomed to hearing honest feedback, they are more likely to trust that system, and more conditioned to accept communication and recommendations during times of change.

Focus on using coaching and feedback to establish a climate of open and honest communication, and to enrich social connections via peer feedback and mentoring, and you will be rewarded when the time comes for transformation.

Rolling out Acute Changes

If you need to socialize or acclimatize employees to very specific new changes (such as process changes, expansions, acquisitions, layoffs, mergers, etc), coaching and feedback software can help in several key ways.

Positively reinforce behavior

Show employees how you want them to change or deal with change by rewarding and offering positive feedback when they are modeling great resilience or positivity. Social recognition, in particular, is a great way to show employees the behavior you want to see them emulate. This could be a manager-to -employee or peer-to-peer.
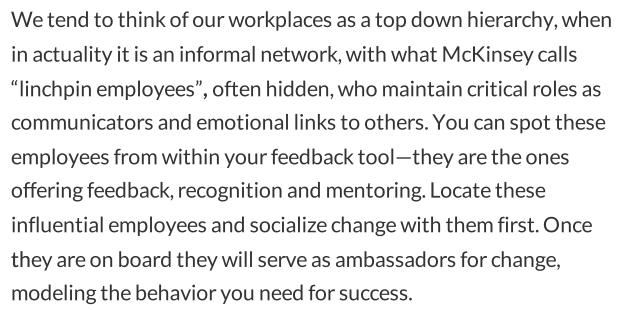
Encourage employee voice

One key hallmark of successful change is one that facilitates bi-lateral communication. Having a two-way feedback system provides a critical safety valve for employees, allowing them to voice questions and concerns directly to leaders, instead of gossiping at the water cooler.

Find and leverage linchpin employees

Do you know who your linchpin employees are?

We tend to think of our workplaces as a top down hierarchy, when in actuality it is an informal network, with what McKinsey calls "linchpin employees", often hidden, who maintain critical roles as communicators and emotional links to others. You can spot these employees from within your feedback tool—they are the ones offering feedback, recognition and mentoring. Locate these influential employees and socialize change with them first. Once they are on board they will serve as ambassadors for change, modeling the behavior you need for success.

Create a spiral of positivity

One well-known product of workplace social systems is the contagiousness of emotions. Change can easily create spirals of negativity, that snowball into loss of productivity and rise in disengagement. But you can also use feedback and coaching to create the positivity spirals, sparking the kind of buzz that will help ensure success.

Use coaching and feedback as your lifeline to both communicate to and gather information from your organizational networks. This will become a key tool for you as you drive forward change initiatives.

5 Ways To Coach Employees Through Change

01 Share the reasons behind changes and how they will affect employees

02 Ask employees for their commitment and buy-in

03 Set expectations for employee behavior and results

04 Delegate specific actions to create co-ownership of change

05 Train employees to better adapt to changes

5 Ways to use Feedback for Change

01 Give employees the opportunity to share their feelings

02 Correct behaviors negatively impacting change

03 Offer positive reinforcement for desired behaviors

04 Use social recognition to model and reward behavior so others can emulate

05 Watch and listen to peer-to-peer feedback for clues as to how employees are feeling
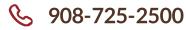
The tools of change

A great performance management platform—one that incorporates coaching, feedback, recognition and integrated training, can be your secret weapon in times of change.

If you invest in a solution like iCoach you can use it proactively to build a culture that will be more naturally resilient, and you can use it reactively to deal with specific changes as they arise.

Would you like to see how iCoach can help you to better manage your organizational transformation? We'd be happy to give you a demo!

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