

College of Engineering



INFO 6215

BUSINESS ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION ENGINEERING

CHANGE MODEL PROJECT

Group 2

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Introduction

Implementing change in any organization may be a difficult experience for executives. People are typically cautious of change, which manifests itself in heightened tension, resistance, anger, and emotional stress due to the unknowns that change brings. Change, on the other hand, is an unavoidable element of existence and will be an essential component of organizational life.

Change is the process of modifying or replacing current information, skills, attitudes, systems, policies, or processes (American Nurses Association). Though change is a dynamic process that needs behavioral adjustments, it often results in some conflict and resistance, but it may also drive beneficial behaviors and attitudes, increasing organizational outcomes and employee performance.

Change can arise from detecting weaknesses in existing knowledge, skills, and processes, or the requirement of changing established business practices owing to changes in knowledge, technology, management, or leadership. Change may be essential owing to changes in organizational structure or goals; accreditation standards; or economic drivers. Change at any level necessitates changing behavior from those concerned. Leadership, managerial, political savvy, analytical, interpersonal, system, business, and communication abilities are required for change (Nickols, 2007). According to Malloch and Porter-O'Grady (2006), a "drastic shift in locus of control, accountability, expectations, performance, and measurement" is required for system change. Change outcomes must align with the organization's goal, vision, and values.

Change management is the purposeful, planned, and systematic implementation of changes (Beth Hawkes and Hendricks-Jackson, 2015). Humans will react differently to change, regardless of how significant or advantageous it is said to be. Basic needs, such as the desire to be a part of the change process, the ability to express oneself openly and honestly, and the belief that one has some control over the impact of change, will influence one's reaction to change. Change frequently causes a sense of loss because it disrupts established habits. People may respond with astonishment, rage, and resistance, but they should finally accept and absorb change. Change must be managed realistically, without false aspirations and expectations, but with optimism for the future. People affected by the change should be given honest information and given the opportunity to ask questions and express their concerns.

Change management models are approaches created by business leaders and sociologists to steer teams through organizational upheavals and transformations. The research and practice of change management models provides a foundation for understanding change processes and mechanisms at both the organizational and human level. They function similarly to roadmaps, featuring signposts and milestones that leaders may use to plan and track progress (Lieberson, 2018). While change theories can help give best practices for change leadership and implementation, they do not guarantee success (Barrow, Toney-Butler, & Annamaraju, 2022).

In this paper, we will focus on Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory, a comprehensive framework for managing organizational change. We will explore its key components, target audience, strengths, weaknesses, and practical implications for change management, recognizing the significance of adapting strategies to fit the unique context of each organization's change journey.

Summary of Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory

Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958) extend Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory. Lippitt and collaborators devised a seven-phase strategy that highlights the transformative agent's role. The theory focuses more on the role and responsibility of the change agent than on the evolution of the change itself. Lippitt's change theory emphasizes the role and responsibilities of the change agent over the development of the actual change (Mitchell, 2013). There is also an emphasis on a single change agent rather than a participatory or community-based process. In various types of actioner search, the change agent takes on a more directed role than the facilitator. Throughout the process, information is constantly being shared. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley argue that changes that spread to nearby systems or subsets of the immediately impacted system are more stable. Changes have become more established. The more commonly mimicked a behavior becomes, the more it is seen as normal (Lippitt, Watson, and Westley, 1958). The Seven Steps are:

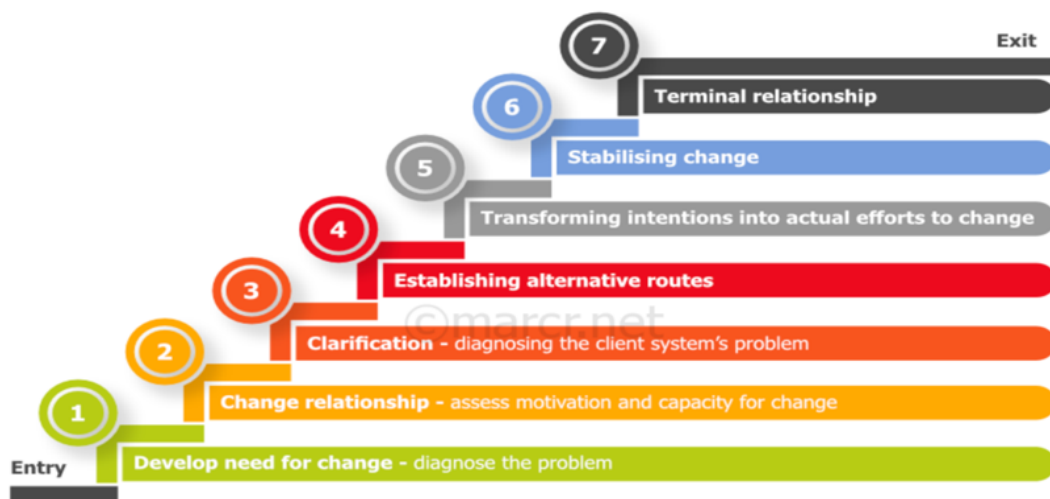


Fig 1. The dynamics of planned change (Lippitt, Watson, & Westley, 1958) Source: (MARCR, 2019).

1. **Developing a Need for Change:** The process of developing a need for change begins with a thorough examination of the current situation within the organization or system. This involves identifying specific issues, challenges, or opportunities that necessitate a shift in approach or strategy. Stakeholders from various levels of the organization are engaged in discussions and assessments to gain a comprehensive understanding of the underlying factors driving the need for change. By involving key individuals and groups early on, a sense of urgency and shared purpose is cultivated, laying the foundation for successful change implementation.
2. **Change Relationship:** Establishing a change relationship involves assessing the readiness and receptivity of individuals and groups within the organization to embrace the proposed changes. This entails conducting stakeholder analysis to identify potential supporters and resisters. Understanding the motivations, concerns, and expectations of stakeholders is crucial in building trust and buy-in for the change process. Additionally, an assessment of available resources, both financial and human, is conducted to ensure the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed changes within the organization's context.
3. **Clarification, Diagnosing the Client System's Problem:** The clarification phase focuses on diagnosing the underlying problems or challenges within the client system that necessitate intervention. This involves

conducting a comprehensive assessment of organizational dynamics, structures, processes, and culture. The change agent plays a critical role in facilitating this diagnostic process, leveraging their expertise and insights to identify root causes and areas for improvement. By engaging with key stakeholders and soliciting their input, a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the organization is developed, laying the groundwork for effective change planning and implementation.

4. **Establishing Alternative Routes:** In the phase of establishing alternative routes, the focus is on developing a comprehensive action plan that outlines specific strategies and initiatives for achieving the desired change outcomes. This involves exploring different approaches and methodologies for addressing identified issues and challenges, considering factors such as organizational culture, resources, and constraints. The action plan should include clear objectives, timelines, milestones, and accountability mechanisms to guide implementation efforts effectively. Additionally, contingency plans may be developed to address potential barriers or unforeseen challenges that may arise during the change process.
5. **Transforming Intentions into Actual Efforts to Change:** Transforming intentions into actual efforts to change requires a concerted effort to translate the vision and goals outlined in the action plan into tangible actions and outcomes. This involves mobilizing support from key stakeholders, providing necessary resources and support, and fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. The change agent plays a pivotal role in facilitating communication, collaboration, and coordination among diverse stakeholders to ensure alignment and coherence in change implementation efforts. By empowering individuals and teams to take ownership of the change process, momentum is generated, and progress towards desired outcomes is achieved.
6. **Stabilizing Change:** Stabilizing change involves consolidating and institutionalizing the changes implemented within the organization to ensure their long-term sustainability and effectiveness. This requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation of change outcomes and proactive measures to address emerging issues or challenges. Effective communication, feedback mechanisms, and support systems are essential in maintaining momentum and engagement among stakeholders. By fostering a culture of learning and adaptation, the organization can continuously refine and improve its practices to remain responsive to evolving needs and dynamics.
7. **Terminal Relationship:** The terminal relationship phase marks the culmination of the change process, where the focus shifts towards transitioning ownership and responsibility for change initiatives to internal stakeholders within the organization. This involves gradually withdrawing the direct involvement of external change agents and empowering internal champions to sustain and further advance the changes implemented (Lippitt, Watson and Westley 58-59).

Target audience of the Model

Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory caters to a wide array of professionals involved in organizational change, including leaders, consultants, project managers, and human resource professionals. This structured approach offers a strategic framework tailored to diverse organizational contexts, empowering stakeholders to navigate change effectively. Organizational leaders, in particular, benefit from Lippitt's theory as it provides a precise roadmap for diagnosing, planning, and executing change initiatives in alignment with strategic objectives. By embracing Lippitt's model, leaders foster a culture of innovation and adaptability, driving sustainable change within their organizations.

Central to Lippitt's theory is the recognition of the change agent's vital role in driving change initiatives. Leaders, as change agents, are equipped with practical strategies for communication, stakeholder engagement, and overcoming resistance. This systematic approach enables leaders to address challenges proactively,

mitigate risks, and foster continuous improvement, ultimately paving the way for organizational excellence in today's dynamic business environment.

Strengths of the model

Comprehensive Approach: Lippitt's model offers a comprehensive approach to change management by providing a detailed step-by-step process. This thoroughness ensures that organizations can plan and implement change initiatives with clarity and precision, minimizing the likelihood of overlooking important aspects of the change process.

Focus on Planning: One of the strengths of Lippitt's model is its emphasis on the planning phase. By prioritizing the diagnosis of problems and assessment of readiness, organizations can establish a solid foundation for effective change implementation. This focus on planning increases the likelihood of successful outcomes by ensuring that change efforts are well-informed and strategic.

Role of Change Agent: Lippitt's model highlights the pivotal role of the change agent in driving successful change. By offering insights into the responsibilities and strategies of the change agent, the model equips organizations with valuable guidance on how to leverage the expertise and leadership of change agents to navigate the complexities of the change process.

Sustainability of Change: An important aspect of Lippitt's model is its recognition of the need for sustained change. By incorporating a phase dedicated to maintaining change, the model addresses the challenge of ensuring that change initiatives are not only implemented but also embedded into the organizational culture. This focus on sustainability increases the likelihood of long-term success and prevents regression to previous states.

Flexibility: Lippitt's model allows for flexibility in the role of the change agent, recognizing that different organizations may require different approaches to change management. This flexibility enables organizations to adapt the change agent's role according to the unique needs, challenges, and culture of the organization, maximizing the effectiveness of change efforts.

Weakness of the Model

The Lippitt's model, while comprehensive, can present several weaknesses that may hinder its effectiveness in certain contexts:

Complexity: The seven-phase process outlined by Lippitt's may be perceived as overly complex, particularly for smaller organizations or those seeking a more streamlined approach to change. This complexity can make it difficult for team members to understand and implement, leading to resistance or inefficiencies in the change process.

Time-Consuming: Each phase of the Lippitt's model requires significant time investment, from planning and diagnosing the problem to implementing and evaluating the change. In situations where rapid change is necessary to address urgent issues or capitalize on opportunities, the lengthy process may not be feasible.

Resource Intensive: The model demands a substantial allocation of resources, including human effort, expertise, and potentially financial investment. This can be challenging for organizations with limited resources or competing priorities, making it difficult to justify the investment required for implementing the Lippitt's model.

Risk of Resistance: Due to its structured nature, the Lippitt's model may encounter resistance from stakeholders who perceive the process as overwhelming or rigid. This resistance can undermine the success of the change initiative, as individuals may be less inclined to actively participate or support the proposed changes.

Dependence on the Change Agent: The success of the Lippitt's model heavily relies on the capabilities and commitment of the change agent. If the designated change agent lacks the necessary skills, experience, or motivation to effectively lead the change process, it can impede progress and diminish the likelihood of successful outcomes. Additionally, the emphasis on a single change agent may overlook the value of a participatory or community-based approach, limiting the potential for diverse perspectives and collaborative problem-solving.

Conclusion

Lippitt's Phases of Change Theory is an elaborate model that serves as an extension to Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory, placing significant emphasis on the role of the change agent in facilitating organizational transformation. The seven-phase approach detailed by Lippitt, Watson, and Westley is designed to provide a structured and comprehensive pathway for planning and implementing change. While the theory prioritizes the responsibility and influence of the change agent, it also recognizes the importance of communication, cooperation, and the sustainable integration of change into organizational culture.

The model's detailed process—from the initial diagnosis of the problem to the final integration of change—highlights the intricate nature of managing transformation within an organization. It is particularly aimed at leaders and professionals who are directly responsible for overseeing change management initiatives.

The model's strength lies in its comprehensive nature, offering a step-by-step guide that anticipates and addresses the complexities of change, from inception to integration into organizational culture. It underscores the importance of careful planning, assessment of readiness, the central role of the change agent, and the sustainability of change efforts.

Despite its comprehensive structure, the model is not without its criticisms. The complexity and resource intensity of the model may pose challenges for smaller organizations. Additionally, the potential for resistance and the heavy reliance on a single change agent's competencies are notable limitations. Lippitt's model may be less suitable for organizations that require agile and rapid change due to its structured and sequential nature. Moreover, the effectiveness of the model is highly dependent on the capabilities and commitment of the change agent, which can be a limiting factor if the agent is not adequately skilled or motivated.

Ultimately, Lippitt's model offers a valuable blueprint for change, especially when a thorough and carefully managed approach is desired or necessary. It encourages a transformative process that is not only strategic but also reflective, considering the broader impact on the organization and the individuals involved.

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