Module 8.2 Assignment: The Dangers of Change Approval Process

CSD380-O307 DevOps (2261-DD)

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September 23, 2025

The Dangers of the Change Approval Process

Although change approval processes are supposed to reduce risks, they may pose their own risks. Extremely bureaucratic structures tend to cause delays, suppressing an organization's innovation and responsiveness. The intricacy and inflexibility of these processes may frustrate employees, and workarounds may be used to circumvent those necessary safeguards. Finally, the pretense of control offered by time-consuming approval systems can conceal the system vulnerabilities, resulting in a false sense of safety and the unwillingness of the organization to adapt and be competitive.

The Change Approval Processes

A change in the approval process is a methodical approach to dealing with changes in a system or project; changes are introduced most effectively and with little disturbance. It starts with triggering a change request, explaining the proposed change, why it is needed, and how it may affect. This is then followed by an analysis to determine the technical feasibility of the change, risks that may arise, and the effect the change will have on the existing systems. A stepwise plan is developed if the change is viable, including the implementation steps, resources needed, and a schedule. The change request is approved and reviewed by the appropriate stakeholders, including the project managers, technical leads, and business owners. After approval, the change is executed as per the plan and is well tested and validated. The change is monitored after the implementation to determine whether it is working properly and identify any possible problems. Lastly, the change is officially closed, and the documentation has been changed accordingly to specify the change (BMC, n.d.).

Increased Lead Times and Batch Sizes

Unnecessarily complicated approval procedures can only result in higher lead times and larger batch sizes, which causes a serious efficiency bottleneck. When decisions must be made with many layers of approval, the tasks will pile up and must wait in line until they are checked out. This waiting period increases the overall time required to make even minor updates, slowing down the improvement speed. In addition, the necessity of justifying the time spent navigating these processes often results in changing and bundling them into bigger batches. Although this might be effective at face value, it puts more chances of errors and makes it harder to isolate and correct when an issue occurs. What ensues is a slow system that finds it hard to cope with the dynamics of a changing environment (Dora, n.d.).

Creation of Bottlenecks

            The change management process has certain approval phases that may easily degenerate into significant bottlenecks, slowing down the working process and not allowing the required changes to be implemented in time. Delays are bound to occur when approvers receive too many requests or do not have the proper context to decide. These bottlenecks not only slow down the change process but also cause frustration for the team members who are ready to make changes. The inability to implement changes quickly may result in loss of opportunities, escalated expenditures, and overall stagnation in the organization. To deal with these bottlenecks, there is a need to look at the approval process in that approvers must have the resources and powers to make decisions promptly (TeamHub, 2025).

Reduced Agility and Innovation

Protracted and lengthy approval processes can smother agility and innovation in an organization. Bureaucracy processes continually slow down teams, which makes them less adaptable to new information or quicker to respond to new problems. The fear of going through complicated approval processes may deter experimentation and risk-taking, creating a culture of risk aversion. This, in turn, may suppress creativity and make the organization unable to exploit new opportunities. The approach to occupation should be simplified, and teams should be able to make decisions faster and keep testing their ideas without delays that do not benefit them (Noreja, 2024).

Worsening Existing Problems

The tendency to address the stability problem by overlaying further approval may make the problems it is meant to address even stronger. Rather than simplifying the procedure and dealing with the factors that cause the instability, introducing more checkpoints brings even more friction and delays. This may create the scenario that even minor changes will get stuck in the red tape of the bureaucracy, and this may take a longer time to resolve outages and act in response to emerging problems. More complexity also implies difficulties in determining the root of issues, since the additional levels of approval obscure the root of the problems. Eventually, the effort to solve the problems by giving it more approval may backfire, and a less responsive and cumbersome system may be created (Dora, n.d.).

A Vicious Cycle

The basic threat is that the add more process solution is self-perpetuated. The knee-jerk response to instability or inefficiency is frequently to impose new rules, approvals, and procedures. Nevertheless, it is a strategy that will lead an organization to a vicious cycle where the increased complexity creates further inefficiency. The more cumbersome processes get, the longer the lead times and the lower the agility. This, in turn, results in more issues, and this cycle, in turn, causes another addition of processes. The outcome is the vicious cycle of rising complexity and diminishing returns, where the organization gets deeper into its own bureaucracy. To interrupt this cycle, drastic new thinking is necessary, and it should be centered on simplification, empowerment, and continuous improvement instead of adding more levels of control (Chaudhary, 2025).

Impact on Resources and Deadlines

Any further steps implemented into an approval process can considerably affect the budget, the distribution of resources, and the schedule of a certain project, and this aspect should be carefully assessed and managed. The new stage also brings about the possibility of delay, wasting resources over a longer period, and increasing the project's cost. Long approval times may delay a deadline, resulting in lost market opportunities or contract sanctions. In addition, the complexity added may overstretch the resources available, since the teams waste time going through the approval process rather than working on the main project activities. Hence, it is important to evaluate the possible effect of each approval step on the project resources and timeline to implement strategies that will eliminate delays and maximize resource utilization. This can be in the form of simplifying the approval process, delegating authority correctly, or investing in tools and training to boost efficiency (Malik, 2025).

Strategies To Mitigate

What is required is a strategic approach towards simplification and security, and not just more layers of approval to make the change approval process more efficient and secure. This consists of a process of workflow simplification, removing non-essential processes, and prioritization based on the urgency and risk level of each change, so that the most important changes are properly scrutinized without stalling on the advancement of normal updates. Decision-making at the lowest tiers, with the teams being the closest to the work, minimizes bottlenecks and makes the teams feel ownership, enabling them to respond to small changes faster and build responsibility.

One of the major features of this method is risk assessment, which involves comprehensive reviews of technical requirements, acceptance, and possible customer impact. This is to ensure that all changes are well comprehended and analyzed to reduce the chances of unknown problems and improve the quality of implementations. Organizations can build a faster and nimbler change approval process through team empowerment and risk evaluation.

Continuous improvement is the key to having an effective change of the approval process. The ongoing process mapping and optimization to detect and remove inefficiency will enhance the flow and productivity. This cyclic methodology will keep the change approval process in line with the organization's changing needs and will serve to aid its strategic goals. Through these values, the organizations can make the change approval process into a lean, safe, and empowering system that will create innovations and reduce negligence (TeamHub, 2023).

Modern Alternatives

Various strategies can make change management modern, more efficient, and reliable. Peer review substitutes external sign-offs with reviews by knowledgeable team members, recording reviews, comments, and approvals to trace them. Making things uniform in deploying change and automating test and delivery pipelines reduces human error and increases confidence. Continuous integration/continuous delivery (CI/CD) tools allow prompting the feedback loop, which identifies the problem promptly and makes the delivery process more predictable. When managing change is treated as a product, it entails creating an automated development platform upon which the developers can test the effects of their change with much safety. In routine change, where delegation of authority via self-service or conditional approval systems is applied, the change approvals that fit within pre-established criteria are automated, simplifying the process, and resources can be redirected to more complex problems (Community, 2023).

Conclusively, though change approval processes are meant to provide security against risk, they are complex and may pose bureaucratic burdens that may pose immense risks. Companies must create an equilibrium between these processes with a sophisticated flow of actions that would promote agility and innovation without endangering the control requirements. Businesses can reduce the risks of change approvals and build a more durable and responsive setting by prioritizing efficiency and empowering informed decision-making at the right levels

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