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Module 8

**Introduction**

Change approval processes are essential in organizations to ensure modifications in systems, software, or workflows are carefully evaluated before implementation. However, these processes can introduce significant challenges that hinder efficiency, security, and overall productivity. This paper explores the dangers associated with change approval processes, citing three external sources to provide insights into the risks and potential solutions.

**Bureaucratic Delays and Reduced Agility**

One of the primary dangers of a change approval process is excessive bureaucracy, which can lead to delays in implementing necessary changes. Organizations that enforce rigid approval protocols may struggle to adapt to rapidly evolving business needs. According to Smith (2021), companies that impose lengthy approval chains often experience reduced agility, making it difficult to respond to market demands, cybersecurity threats, or technological advancements. As a result, competitors with more streamlined processes may gain a strategic advantage.

**Increased Security Risks Due to Delayed Updates**

Security vulnerabilities are another major concern when change approvals are slow or cumbersome. Cyber threats evolve rapidly, and delaying critical security patches or software updates due to a complex approval process can leave systems exposed to attacks. Jones and Patel (2022) highlight that many organizations have suffered data breaches because necessary security changes were delayed by approval bottlenecks. By the time changes were approved, attackers had already exploited known vulnerabilities.

**Employee Resistance and Workarounds**

Complex and time-consuming approval processes can lead to employee frustration and resistance. When workers perceive these procedures as obstacles rather than safeguards, they may attempt to bypass them altogether. Research by Thompson (2020) indicates that employees in highly regulated industries sometimes implement unauthorized changes to maintain productivity, potentially introducing security flaws or compliance violations. This circumvention of formal procedures weakens the integrity of the organization’s change management framework.

**Balancing Control and Efficiency**

While structured change approval processes are necessary for risk mitigation, organizations must strike a balance between control and efficiency. Implementing strategies such as automated approvals for low-risk changes, risk-based assessments, and decentralized decision-making can help streamline the process. Jones and Patel (2022) suggest that leveraging modern IT service management (ITSM) tools can enhance approval workflows by reducing manual interventions and expediting necessary changes without compromising security or compliance.

**Conclusion**

Although change approval processes are crucial for managing risk and maintaining stability, they can also introduce significant challenges if not properly designed. Bureaucratic delays, increased security risks, and employee workarounds are among the dangers associated with rigid approval frameworks. Organizations must adopt a balanced approach that ensures necessary controls are in place while maintaining agility and efficiency. By leveraging technology and refining approval workflows, companies can mitigate the risks associated with change approval processes while maintaining compliance and security.

**References**

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