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8.1 Assignment

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Dangers of the Change Approval Process

In the software industry, change is inevitable and will likely occur on a daily basis for most developers. That said, it is essential to have a change management process in place to ensure each change runs smoothly. Effective change approval is the first step to streamlining change management. When done correctly, it can enhance communication, mitigate risks early, and boost productivity by removing clutter and simplifying processes. However, there are some dangers to these processes that software companies need to look out for when implementing change approval processes. These dangers can be sorted into two primary categories: the dangers of disorganization and the dangers of over-organization.

Of course, as with most processes, if change approval processes are disorganized, they are more likely to fail. Disorganization in change approval and change management can appear in the form of inefficient communication or inconsistency. Inadequate communication between the parties responsible for approving changes and the rest of the development team can lead to misunderstandings and resistance. Similarly, too much inconsistency or lack of reinforcement in the change approval process can lead to confusion and loss of employee confidence in the process's effectiveness (Smith, 2024).

On the other hand, it is also completely possible for a change approval and management process to fail because it is *too organized.* Over-organization can be found in overly specific change request forms or the requirement that changes be approved at several different levels of management (Kim et al., 2021). While these methods may provide more information necessary

to approve or deny larger and more complex changes, they drag lead times and create friction in the value stream. If every single change calls for a lengthy request form and a redundant trip through the company's chain of command, lead times will skyrocket and resistance to change may increase (Joe the IT Guy, 2019).

In conclusion, while change approval is a critical step in any change management process, companies must be aware of the dangers that come with the process so that they may prevent them. Disorganization stemming from miscommunication and inconsistency can decrease employee trust and morale, creating friction in the value stream. Conversely, when a change approval process is too specific and strict, lead times will increase as developers are left waiting for proposed changes to be reviewed and approved. That said, efficient change approval relies on an organized middle ground that leaves room for flexibility and communication (Emerson, 2022).

Reference:

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