Change Approval Process

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Change approval processes are critical in many different organizations as they ensure that any changes or modifications made to systems and applications are made safely so they can reduce the risk of downtime and failure. These processes help mitigate risks, but they also create issues like limiting timeliness of changes, can delay process innovation due to following guidelines for changes, and can impact the business overall.

One of the biggest dangers with the change approval processes is that they can slow down delivery cycles of a product. Today’s environment is fast-paced and competitive and companies are always looking to be quick and adaptive to the changing technology and market. One aspect of this comes from a book written by Nicole Forsgren, Gene Kim, and Jez Humble where they researched and found data to show that having a Change Approval Board (CAB) doesn’t work to increase the stability of production systems and slows things down. (Deploy, 2020, para. 3) While this can seem a bit extreme on one end, it may still be important to have a process in place to manage changes, but ensuring it is streamlined and efficient.

Change approval processes can create silos between different teams if not managed properly. If silos are created, this can reduce collaboration between different teams and individual teams may feel like they are restricted when trying to make changes, which would ultimately lead to a lack of morale or drive. This is all based around how the strategy is rolled out; focusing on how you want to roll out changes and what information is important to give to the team(s) so they can feel comfortable and confident when the change process is implemented. (Emerson, 2022)

People are always resistant to change. This stems from our human instincts of being comfortable with what you know, and staying away from things you don’t. This is often true when it comes to the change approval processes. The team having to submit a change for approval versus just committing to the new change is a hard thing to do. You’ve interrupted their normal process of how to fix or correct issues by now adding in extra steps to their process which they may not agree with. This is also true on the flip side, where you would have to build or create a change approval team who then needs to approve or deny change submissions. Some people on this team may be hesitant to give feedback and deny changes, so instead they could approve it which could create further issues. Also, if they aren’t following a consistent routine, it can create confusion about what gets approved and what doesn’t. All of these factors can lead to stress on the team, which is not good long term. (Academy, 2024)

Overall, change approval processes can be supportive and an effective way for managing risks, but if not implemented properly, it can create a different set of challenges and issues within the team or business. When introducing a change approval process, there must be some outlined rules including a commitment to not sacrificing speed for changes, allowing for open innovation, and ensuring their is quality collaboration in a multi team organization. There will have to be a balance between control of changes and flexibility within the team to ensure the work environment is positive and innovative.

References

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