# Paper #3: Organizational Change & Development

Objective:

The purpose of this paper is to:

1. Understand and discuss the process of implementing change in organizational settings.
2. Determine the important tactical choices (decisions) to be made to implement changes.
3. Identify factors that might resist changes in organizational goals and strategy.

## The Case:

Research suggests that social media technologies such as blogs, wikis, and Twitter can enhance the learning experience of students. For example, blogs are great for writing reflections of class exercises, and wikis are very useful to collaborate on projects. Such technologies enhance learning by allowing students to consolidate their personal learning, support group learning, as well as easily integrate classroom resources with external resources available online. On the other hand, social media, if mismanaged, can be counterproductive to the goals set by the instructor. Without appropriate policies regarding use of such technologies, it might impede student’s learning and can be a source of distraction in the classroom atmosphere.

For this assignment, you are required to play the part of an educational consultant. The instructor for IST335 wants to implement social media (blogs and wikis) as a tool for teaching/learning. He has hired you (a consultant) to come up with a strategy to implement the technology for next semester. You can use your experience as a student (this semester) to create a successful strategy.

Use **Lewin’s Process of Planned Change** to implement the various steps necessary to formulate your strategy. While this model has been typically used in an organizational setting, you can apply the same principles to how one can implement change in a classroom. For example, in an organizational setting, introduction of new technology must be coupled with appropriate training of associates to change their behavior (to use this technology). In this case, the new technology is going to be implemented to a new set of students. How does this affect change? What are the factors that the instructor (leader of change) should consider to implement change?

## Further Instructions:

Use the objectives (above) as guidelines to structure your paper. You will be graded on how well you integrate the concepts and ideas from Chapter 14 (Org. Change & Development) to formulate your strategy. While using Lewin’s model, discuss in detail about the 3 different phases of planned change.

You can also use concepts from other chapters (e.g.: Chapter 4, Learning and Perception) from your textbook wherever applicable.

The length of your paper is (min.) one page to (max.) two pages. **The due date is Apr 25th in class**. No late submissions will be accepted.

Blaine Killen

**Essay 3**

I think that using online, digital means of completing assignments and collaborating will have a positive overall effect on education efficiency, save paper for the administration, and help transition students into using technology as primary method for production. This, however, does not mean that the students will be quick to embrace this change, as the majority of students in college are not computer savvy. Students have there own methods for collaborating now through Facebook groups and face on meetings, and therefore may be less willing to change their habits.

Lewin’s process of planned change would have to be applied here in a very structured process to successfully break students of their old habits. The first step of “unfreezing” would be to apply the transitional leader tactic of providing information of new technology to students to inform and persuade students that this format is the way of the future. As students see students around them change to this process, they will feel guilt and anxiety in not changing, and will increase the conversion rate. You also can start slowly penetrating this technology into practice as a requirement for some teams to use as their submission of proof of work, and have them post their assignments to a blog. Professors should give the option of still handing in a physical copy though, because some students may not want to adapt this right away. Graders could give extra credit to those that use the blogs as a service, but this will give the technologically savvy students an unfair advantage. Also, plagiarism will become a bigger issue, as it is easy to copy and paste others work into a blog post.

The next step, the “moving” phase, will involve fully implementing the technology into every aspect of your class. By gradually increasing the frequency of assignments that use wikis and blogs as the primary method for submission will help transition into the next phase. This will also require rewarding students that use blogs and wikis with extra points, while still having the option for physical submission. Transformational leaders have to provide information that supports the proposed change. Without supports, managers (teacher) and associates (students) may not have faith that changing their old habits aren’t better than the newly implemented ones. You could show how much paper you have saved to the students, and how many trees this translates too. This will reinforce the green movement that is popular in the country, and therefore hit harder to the students emotions with the effects of global warming in the back of everyone’s mind. By eventually removing the option of physical submission for most assignments, this will remove the barrier and force students to transition to primarily using wikis and blogs.

The last step, refreezing, will ensure that this change stays in place. This will involve the heavy influence of faculty to stick to the new methods so students don’t revert back to their old habits. This also assumes that students will adapt this new method fully. This is the point where transitional leaders (professors) would assess the success of the change by measuring the quality and quantity of submitted work on the blogs and wikis. Averaging out the grades, and comparing it to previous classes where the use of physical submissions was optional can quantify if this method is successful. Also, by taking the statistics for how many trees were saved would encourage the administration to continue enforcing and encouraging these efforts in the classroom. This stage will also be critical in returning students to a safe and stable environment. The professors can do this by constantly comforting students that it isn’t hard to pick up technologies such as this, and providing clear and structured guidelines for students to follow for both the assignment and how to create an account and edit and post information.

Overall, I think that this strategy will succeed if the professors and administration understand the boundaries and struggles in implementing this strategy. The transformation requires careful planning and outstanding implementation of each stage of Lewin’s process of planned change through the unfreezing, moving, and freezing stages.