Title:
The More Things Change...

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762

Summary:
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umpteenth announcement this month."
One of the senior employees smiled. "Don't worry. It's all talk. There's never
any follow-through. Trust me, I've been here long enough. Things will NEVER
change around here."

Keywords:
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Article Body:
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We remembered conversations like this in the company we worked for. The pattern
was familiar: first, a crescendo of excitement, then implementation, and then
half-way through the project, you never heard anything again.

Take the Ball and Run With It

Momentum. That's one of the most beautiful words in the English language. We
like using it when we speak of change. At the organizational level, past
experience tells us that when there are leaders versus followers and initiative
versus resistance, change becomes a very difficult process to manage.

Common sense dictates that to initiate change the buy-in of EVERYONE in the
company is needed. Even if the change affects only a segment of the
corporation, executives and the rank and file must believe that the change will
be good. Common sense also dictates that the person responsible for overseeing

the change must be supported by his superiors and his team members. It isn't fair to tell the person, "take the ball and run with it" without providing him with the resources and diligent guidance.

This is why the intended change does not materialize. Somewhere in the implementation, momentum diminishes and gradually disappears.

Six Sigma and Change Management

Change imposes generous doses of enthusiasm, a disciplined approach, unconditional support from those who have the resources and strict measurement of progress. Change connotes obstacles - a large corporation is a collection of human ambitions going in different directions – unstoppable, driven, and selfish.

Does change have a chance then?

Yes!

Business case studies prove that change does happen in spite of real challenges. Success comes easier when management takes the time to participate and act in a democratic manner. When we say "democratic", we mean key executives take an active part and not just pay lip service to the concepts and processes involved in a given change. Management engages in sincere dialog and is open to the opinions of others.

Six Sigma offers valuable lessons in change management. In a business environment where the desire to implement change is customarily met by resistance, leaders can look to Six Sigma as a concept, an approach, a culture, a set of statistical tools, a philosophy, a sacred ritual that's been tried and tested.

If there's one defining trait for Six Sigma, it's flexibility. Companies are cleverly combining Six Sigma with other change management tools to reach targets. You are aware of how companies have blended Lean with Six Sigma, where they take Toyota's lean manufacturing strategies and combine them with Motorola's measurement tools to track progress in cost reduction efforts without sacrificing customer loyalty.

Using DMAIC and ADKAR in Change Management

In Lean Six Sigma, we learned how DMAIC can be an effective tool to bring about desired changes to the company's profitability. DMAIC (define, measure,

analyze, improve and control) necessitates a certain structure, serving as a roadmap for the attainment of a company's stated objectives. There are times, however, when a company may need to combine DMAIC with other proven change management tools.

One such tool is ADKAR - acronym for awareness, desire, knowledge, ability and reinforcement. Note that it harmonizes with the five steps of DMAIC.

Rick McCormick of the Change Management Learning Center explains ADKAR by aligning it with DMAIC.

Project leaders build awareness (ADKAR) of the change by defining (DMAIC) what that change is and who will implement it. Desire (ADKAR) must be felt and embraced by those who will be affected by the change so that inputs and outputs can be measured (DMAIC). For change to be off to a good start, leaders must possess the knowledge (ADKAR) necessary for successful implementation, but this requires an analysis (DMAIC) of factual data. Going hand in hand with analysis is the ability (ADKAR) to deploy the right measures so that the desired improvement (DMAIC) can be sustained. To complete the process, the change must be reinforced (ADKAR) where standard operating procedures and training manuals will serve to control (DMAIC) aspects and consequences of the change.

McCormick pointed out that important questions such as profile coherence, divergence of opinions, and problem areas must be settled first before getting to what he calls the "toll gate" – the end point of each ADKAR phase.