UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

CHALMERS

DIT035 - Assignment 3, Reflect on guest lecture and connect to one or several theories

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<u>**Team**</u>

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1. Reflect on guest lecture and connect to one or several theories

Noventum demonstrated their vision and steps regarding service transformation which led us directly to think about Kotter (2007) and his eight common errors and how to approach them correctly and in the right order. Noventum talked about 7 steps from which we will map three of them with the concepts of the theory.

Firstly we will consider assessing performance, identifying business priorities and challenges to implement (Noventum, personal communication, October 4, 2022) related to compelling a reason to embrace change. We certainly know that without motivation individuals or groups will not help spreading the change since it is hard to drive them out of their comfort zones. Proof of this are the various cases encountered by Noventum during the guidance of typical transformational challenges, when the urgency or need of change was not pumped up enough to let the transformation process succeed.

Second, what Noventum sees as developing a vision of the future business, Kotter (2007) sees it as lacking one. In order to have a successful change it is required to create a vision for the future that appeals to all parties involved in the transition and is reasonably simple to explain.

Lastly, correlation was found regarding the delivery of results and not systematically planning for, and creating, short term wins. Real transformation is understood to take time, therefore over the long term, people should be able to see some convincing proof that the trip is yielding the desired benefits.

What are the common characteristics of the practical approach to change/transformation and the theoretical point of view?

The commonalities between the practical approach and theoretical point of view can be seen in the examples of the challenges that Noventum faced. The theoretical point of view describes that the effectiveness of a change process is based on an intricate relationship between the organizational context, the change model, and the technology itself (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997), which mirrors respectively the three dimensions given by the guest speakers. For example, when convincing the top management to do a change, the organizational context is raised by discussing the business case, then the change model will be based on what are the demands of the customers in contrast to the current implementation, and finally the technology that will be implemented such as the example of boarding pass scanners.

Theoretically, change is part of an iterative cycle were the approach is characterized by setting up a climate for accepting change at the members level of an organization, followed by creating a vision and supporting the climate by removing obstacles, then the transformation cycle goes to the phase of getting feedback in short iteration to anchor the results as described by Kotter (1995). The approach is similar to the practical point of view, as Noventum service transformation journey

included the same parts of setting up the environment and then getting the feedback for improving the process. Namely the changes begin by first "Setting the climate for service transformation" to gauge and direct the organization's reaction to change, then supporting the climate by creating a new set of rules and supporting the skills in the third step of "Design transformation & engagement strategy", whereas the feedback can be found in the last two steps of "implementation" and "Scale up services".

What are the differences between the practical approach to change/transformation and the theoretical point of view

When approaching change, any theory should be initiated by evaluating the existing situation and finding the problems of the current model. This evaluation should have continuity during all the process of change in order to verify its suitability, completeness and modify it if necessary.

When doing this evaluation of the problems of the current model in order to achieve effectiveness of any change, ideally, the first step is to align the three dimensions described by the theoretical point of view (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997) and dedicate resources to provide support for the ongoing change process. In practice, Noventum dedicates those resources to the business based changes the directors and stakeholders considered to increase revenues.

Based on your reflections, does theory always work in practice or not? How can theory be utilized in practice?

Oftentimes, when making any sort of plan, there are elements that will need to be adjusted. Given the case study of the Swiss machine manufacturer, Noventum's own theory of service transformation was not possible to be carried out due to interference by the CIO. Unforeseen consequences will come into play that theories cannot specifically account for, and often theory can only be used as a general guiding principle. In reality, people end up functioning through Trukese navigation, doing what is necessary in the situation to facilitate a change (Orlikowski & Hofman 1997). Without any theory, people are lost, lack direction, making it harder to create a successful change effort. This is why Noventum comes with a set of best practices for implementing change when transforming companies. While theory may not always work out perfectly as shown through Noventum's case studies, it creates an industry tested baseline that can allow new ideas to emerge, provided the environment is conducive to this.

We can utilize theory in practice by first embracing that theory won't provide all the answers, that people will have to figure out for themselves what is necessary for the success of a change. When applying theory or any change, people will resist and will need to be convinced of the benefits as well as needing encouragement. Providing an environment that boosts communication, enforces their strategies while remaining open to ideas and empowers employees to lead changes allows for emergent ideas to arise. Indeed, continuous change can help theory thrive by adapting the practices that are most relevant and discarding the parts that are not key to success (Weick & Quinn 1999). Showing the results of these efforts is important for making theory stick. Theory should be a normal part of everyday life to be utilized through training and management of people, to not be forgotten shortly after its implementation.

2. Peer Review

Group 4 - Alexander Andreasson, Johan Axell, Christofer Jidarv

We understood the mapping part of the assignment to be to show how the terminology used within the required readings are used in Noventum. To us the terminology is not directly taken from Kotter's steps but we can see how it's derived from a similar concept.

In the second Paragraph ''when looking at the common characteristics'' it might be good to acknowledge the source of information first to justify it. In this sentence it comes off as you claiming that change is always an iterative cycle when this is not always the case. Try to mention that according to Kotter change is an iterative cycle so that you clearly justify it through the source and not as a definitive statement.

We believe that reference is meant to be something that we (the reader) can look up and use. So to reference the guest lecture like (Noventum, personal communication, October 4, 2022) feels like something that might not be ideal. Furthermore, to reference something in the text without including it in the reference list could also be confusing for the reader.

Another thing regarding references, we see that you have referenced Kotter (2007) by writing "Kotter (1995)". The same reference is stated by writing "... by Kotter (1995)". As far as we understand, "Kotter (1995)" is a publication and not a person, therefore we think it should be "... in Kotter (1995)" instead of "by".

Aside from the previous mentions, we feel that the assignment is well written and exhibits a good understanding of the guest lecture while also showing clear connections between the aspects described and required readings.

3. References

Kotter, J., (2007). Leading Change Why Transformation Efforts Fail. *Harvard Business Review*. 96-103

Orlikowski, W. & Hofman, D., (1997). An Improvisational Model for Change Management: The Case of Groupware Technologies*. Sloan Management Review*, 11-21

Weick, K. E. and Quinn, R. E. (1999). Organizational change and development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 50, 361-386.