

6 Steps To Effective Management During Change

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Take the pain out of gain and decrease the upheaval surrounding change by following six commonsense steps to effective management.

Step 1: Establish Objectives - The process must begin with a clear and detailed statement of objectives and move from there to goal design. Goals must be directly accountable to the vision while remaining in alignment with the stated purpose of the organization. This requires constant interaction with team members to determine that they are on track, and with all internal clients to insure that the goals and objectives are pertinent to their needs, as well as to the organization's greater purpose.

Step 2: Organize & Plan - Efficiency in this area requires the ability and resources to develop and effectively communicate design/redesign plans and realistic schedules, while maintaining a balance between the broad view and day to day operation.

The existing departmental structure in the case of a redesign is all-important to the success of the plan, as is the ability for leadership to delegate responsibility, while continuing to monitor and control outcomes. Structure, though transitional, must take precedence, often a challenge in an atmosphere of change.

Step 3: Communicate - Great communication, the delivery of clearly stated information on the true state things, is timely, pertinent, and requires confirmation that the message has been understood. The more ways in which information is given, the more believable it becomes and the more likely to initiate action. By means of clear communication, a course of action is determined, pertinent information is provided and goals are met.

Step 4: Motivate - Motivation is the purpose provider, the impetus for action. It is complex at best and takes more than one form, depending on the level of the individual or team, the level of the manager, and the product or service provided. Experts acknowledge that the feelings of the individual or team toward the motivator are key to the degree of motivation achieved. It becomes ideal then to have the full cooperation of those directly affected by the process and for leaders to have a good understanding of and rapport with teams and team members, knowing what makes each tick.

Change is disturbance of the status quo, and will always involve a degree of resistance. Involving key staff in the design and implementation process, particularly when it involves drastic structure changes can be extremely productive.

Step 5: Develop Staff - Developing people ought to be a primary goal of any organization, and developing existing staff during a period of transition is practical and profitable. Leaders have the power to provide an environment rich in opportunity and resource, in which employees are encouraged in the area of self-development.

Placing staff appropriately is critical to insuring they become long-term contributors who can be counted on in periods of growth and transition. An effective leader understands that discerning the right fit of individual to position is critical to all present and future endeavors. Ignorance in this area can be a costly flaw surfacing during periods of change.

Step 6: Measure & Analyze - Finally, management is responsible for measurement and analysis of both processes and individuals. Employees must be made aware of their progress, in new and developing settings, as well as in familiar ones, in order to effectively draft and adjust personal goals and improve performance. Measurement and evaluation should be designed to reflect the vision while motivating and initiating self-government of the individual.

It is necessary to communicate a clear concept of the point at which development issues end and performance issues begin. Growth is a process best achieved and assessed under relatively stable circumstances, though periods of transition are often an excellent proving ground in which star players often begin to shine.

Effective Skills

It goes without saying that the challenges inherent in the management process must be met with maturity and sophistication by each leader. The areas of interpersonal and leadership skills, as well as continued willingness to invest in self-awareness and personal growth are paramount in the profile of the great leaders who will guide organizations to effective change.

Interpersonal skills are of chief importance. Leaders must treat all staff equitably, developing solid working relationships across all levels. This may appear blatantly obvious, but sadly is all too often overlooked in the name of accelerated progress.

A great leader has a sincere desire for universal success, treating staff members as individuals, giving credit, taking pleasure in achievements. A great leader keeps the objective clear and uncomplicated, always acts as a role model, and stands back, letting others get on with their assignments.

A true leader will make the difference between an effective period of change and the failure of an otherwise brilliant plan. Do not overlook the advantage of adjusting the needs of the plan to allow for the needs of the people. It is not necessary to prioritize purpose over people, or vice versa. If leadership has done its homework, everyone in the organization will arrive at the objective simultaneously.

In Closing...

Essential to the process is an understanding of the distinction between management and leadership.

Management ensures that things get done right, creating process and systems and insuring efficiency. A manager manages the process and records the efficiency.

Leadership revolves around people, concepts and ideas, establishing direction for those who will follow. It is discerning and articulating what is right, all the while educating the team to do the right things and to do them right.

Manage the process, lead the people, and educate them along the way - commonsense.