

Understanding organizational change

Michael Fullan, M. (2004)

“Change cannot be managed, but it can be understood, and led, but not fully controlled”

Michael Fullan (2004). *Leading in a culture of change: Personal action guide and workbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.)

Understanding organizational change

Fullan, M. (2004)

- Most change is a response to disturbances in the system’s external or internal environment
- Change is rapid and nonlinear
- Messiness (arational factors) inherent in organizations

Understanding organizational change (cont.)

Fullan, M. (2004)

- Key stakeholders & the organizational culture are primary considerations in organizational change
- Complex & often unclear or contradictory advice on how to effect organizational change
- Leadership makes a difference

Unclear or contradictory advice re. organizational change

(Fullan, 2004)

Top-down (Kotter, 1996):

1. Establishing sense of urgency
2. Creating guiding coalition
3. Developing vision & strategy
4. Communicating the change vision
5. Empowering broad-based action
6. Generating short-term wins
7. Consolidating gains & producing more change
8. Anchoring new approaches in culture

Bottom up (Beer et al.1990):

1. Mobilize commitment to change through joint diagnosis...
2. Develop shared vision re. competitiveness
3. Foster concerns for new vision, competence... & cohesion...
4. Spread revitalization to all departments without pushing from top
5. Institutionalize revitalization through formal policies, systems & structures
6. Monitor & adjust strategies in response to problems in revitalization

“Leading in a Culture of Change”

Michael Fullan

(Fullan, M. (2004). *Leading in a culture of change: Personal action guide and workbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.)
(slide courtesy of Isaac Tse Pak Hoi)



Five components of leadership

(Michael Fullan, 2004)

1. Moral purpose: acting with the intention of making a positive difference in the lives of employees, customers/clients, and society
2. Understanding change: i.e., the complexities of the change process. Never a check list!
3. Building relationships: successful change involves improved relationships
4. Creating & sharing knowledge—intimately related to previous three
5. Making coherence: tolerating ambiguity (near chaos), but seeking coherence. Includes aligning policies & coordinating strategies for changing directions, etc.—in the minds and hearts of members of the organization

Leadership matters!

Leadership style & organizational change (Fullan, 2004)

1. Authoritative: mobilizes people toward a vision ("come with me")
2. Affiliative: creates harmony & builds emotional bonds ("people come first")
3. Democratic: forges consensus through participation ("what do you think?")
4. Coaching: develops people for the future ("Try this")
5. Pacesetter [not good]: sets high standards for performance ("do as I do, now")
6. Coercive [not good]: demands compliance ("do what I tell you")