

Chapter 2

The Continuum of Change

INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to incorporate the observations of about two decades of doing business under complex conditions. The author's association with civil construction and international business observed a series of discontinuities leading to the both success and failure stories. Lessons learned from the success and failure stories became instrumental to recognize the need of future research for future opportunities and to shed light on the adaptive challenge of an enterprise in the continuum of change. The triggers for change and unchange, isomorphic nature of enterprise, lively behavior of business actors as well as organizational and environmental dynamics at one part and the enterprise concerns and commitments—organic, agency, partnership and patronage—are considered major influencers in the continuum on the other. Similarly, the enterprise schemata consisting the issues of organizational mortality, enduring nature of change as well as enterprise assumptions and forecasts need to move along the series of change. In consideration of the triggers, schemata, concerns and commitments, this chapter anticipates likely response to the change interventions and also determines the urgency of enterprise resiliency in the continuum of change.

One of the central questions in enterprise lifespan is 'how long' the identity of an enterprise continues within the system in which it operates. Enterprise identity directly relates to the survival of the enterprise and the survival depends on the relationship between and among its actors in a continuum

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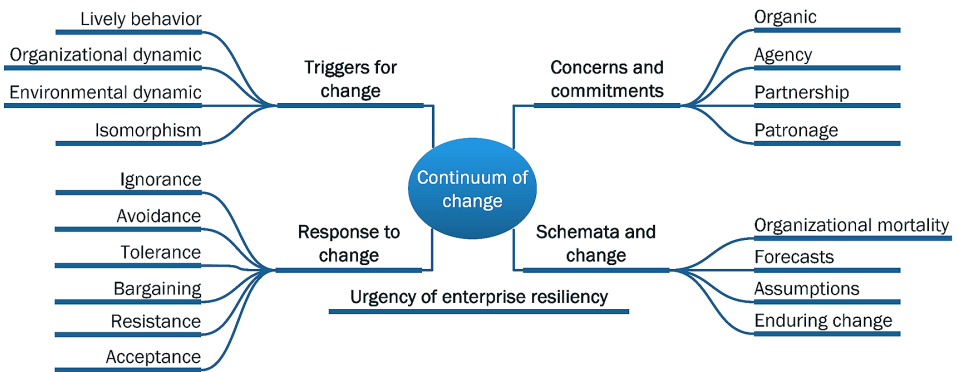
of change. The actors’ relationship is proportional to the patterns of their reciprocal exchanges, which tends to be immune as long as the exchanges continue. The nature of immunity is more stable but the nature of time is more often changing.

Continuum of change (*see Figure 1*) is a series of changes in business ecosystem of an enterprise. It incorporates the physical changes that are taking place in its general environment, industrial environment and organizational environment as well as the virtual changes that are taking place in its human/ natural intelligence and artificial intelligence. The changes are along with a set of things on a scale of time, which have particular characteristics of different degrees impacting the business of an enterprise. Fundamental property of the changes is intervention intensity in the status quo of the enterprise.

ENTERPRISE CONCERNS AND COMMITMENTS

The system perspective does not permit an enterprise to be operational in isolation. Interconnectedness and isomorphic nature of an enterprise bears fundamental properties of an organism as mentioned hereunder. Not only do the enterprise of our concern bears such properties but other enterprises are also bearing the same properties. However, the inherent properties of every enterprise does not change uniformly. If the change were uniformed then there would be no question of enterprise resiliency. In fact, there are heterogeneous changes in the properties of enterprise under the given system of business; therefore, resiliency is essential for every firms so that they would be able to survive and to enjoy their success in the continuum of change.

Figure 1. Continuum of Change



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