Chapter 10
Radical Change

ABSTRACT

As we examine teleworking rules and best practices, we see people deal every day with the requirement to account for their time, performance, and efficiency. This can be emotionally charged due to a lack of clarity in the ways telework is managed, and that is why the authors examine radical change. Radical change involves behavioral indicators that can prove invaluable to starting or improving teleworking. The effect of emotion on radical change dynamics can be best understood by looking at the change process as separate components. There are three critical steps required to achieve radical change: receptivity, mobilization, and learning. At any fixed point in time, a person can accept the need for the proposed change if there is an interpretive, attitudinal state on the cognitive and emotional level. These steps are used to adjust to the cognitive and emotional levels of people involved in change operations.

BACKGROUND

COVID-19 forced changes in the way businesses operate. These changes range from where people work, to how tasks are accomplished, how we communicate internally, and how organizations deal with the public. This breadth of change is startling, especially when one realizes that it might take years for an organization to deal with these issues. The pandemic forced adjustments in all these areas in a compressed time frame. For more than a year, the world was sent home to heal or stay safe as the disease ravaged us.

Just as the world started to seemingly recover from the pandemic and vaccines became available, the world was faced with the Delta variant and the Mu variant. This change is even more dynamic. At the time of this writing, the U.S. is stuck between mask or no masks, vaccines or no vaccines, mandates, or no mandates. This is change at an astronomical level.

Employer-employee resistance is sometimes an issue in change situations, but the pandemic was so pervasive that challenges may have been avoided by the sudden necessity to find work alternatives. In terms of the current or future pandemic or crisis, the management of change requires organizations to rethink future work in light of what we have experienced (Van Looy, 2021, pp. 7-8). Organizations must understand the tensions that may occur based on "…being open to or fighting against telework, or between having primarily social contacts in real-life versus being digitally connected (Van Looy, 2021, p. 8)."

As we deal with the myriad of changes driven by the pandemic, it is important to find ways to adjust to change with strategic decisions on collaborations, appropriate policies and programs, information sharing, and committed organization members (Agba, Agba, & Chukwurah, 2021). These issues are important to getting or managing the behavior modification that may occur in change situations.

we must understand how change affects people and organizations to be successful in telework operations. What seems to be clear is that whether they want to or not, organizations must deal with some level of telework. Even organizations that choose not to deal with telework would do well to have some sort of plan for future crisis situations. Having a plan can help people deal with change in the event of a future crisis.

This chapter presents radical change and dynamic change and strategies for dealing with each. In radical change, examining several separate components helps in understanding the effect of emotion on radical change dynamics. Receptivity, mobilization, and learning are critical steps needed to achieve radical change (Huy, 1999). Receptivity is a person's willingness to consider change. It is a state and a process that consider that at any fixed point in time, a person can accept the need for the proposed change on the cognitive and emotional level.

The concrete action a person takes in the direction of change is mobilization. This is the process of rallying and propelling different segments of the organization to undertake joint action and to realize common change goals (Huy, 1999).

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