Integrating Organizational Change Management Into Your Project

WA State Government Lean Transformation Conference

Organizational Change Management – Best Practices

Why is it important for change managers to be brought in at the start of projects?

- Effective and thoughtful preparation for change requires time and leg work.
- Change management is about trust and relationship building which requires time.

Strategies to address being brought in late as the change manager for a project

- Review the existing organizational change management plan and adjust, as needed.
- Develop a comprehensive organizational change management plan if none exists.
- Have a conversation with project leaders about project risks to ensure managers can make an informed decision about how to proceed.

Best practices for integrating organizational change management into projects at initiation

- Build relationships with project teams.
- Market the value you bring to projects as a consultant, partner, and advocate for change.
- Explain the importance of bringing change managers in early on projects.
- Understand whether the change being implemented is pre-determined (i.e., legislative mandate) or not to determine the right approach.

Tips and advice

- Develop clear project roles and responsibilities and regularly communicate them.
Ensure the organizational change management plan aligns with key principles of change management (i.e., using preferred senders to deliver key messages and planning for resistance as it is a normal response to change etc.)

Build the organizational change management plan collaboratively with input from stakeholders and projects teams, as much as possible.

Collaborate with stakeholders, don’t tell, as appropriate.

Help the leader sponsoring the change complete a mission analysis (consider stakeholder input) when a mandate or required change is going to take place.

Be honest and transparent about the benefits and challenges of the change.

Engage in humble inquiry and ask questions.

Things to avoid (i.e., aggressive approach)

- Using technical change management language.
- Coming in thinking you know all the answers.
- Sugar coating information about the change.
- Ignoring and/or not trying to understand resistance to the change.

Organizational change management plan development

- If possible and when appropriate, have more than one person create the organizational change management plan.
- Try to put yourself in the shoes of someone who won’t understand and doesn’t agree with the change as well as someone who will understand and agree with the change.
- Organizational change management plans are fluid. You will need to go back and regularly update your plan.