

Lesson Note: Change Management

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Factors that Bring Change to an Organization

There are two types of factors that bring change to an organization: internal and external.

External factors are the factors that you learned about in the PEST analysis: political, economical, social, and technological. For example, with Covid-19, organizations are forced to change and adapt to social distancing.

Internal factors relate to the company's strategic goals. Perhaps the company wants to expand internationally. Perhaps the company wants to reduce costs. To reach a goal, a company will need to implement changes.

Challenges Facing Today's Organizations

Today's business environment face changes from many sources, including technology, the law, and society.

Technology is always advancing, and many organizations still have very old or outdated technology. Older employees are not good with computers because they didn't grow up with them, and they never had to use them in the past. Suddenly, an organization might decide to implement a new software system, and many of the employees will resist, thinking, "We didn't have to use software before and we were fine, why do we have to use it now?"

The legal landscaping is also always changing. The government continues to put out new or updated employment laws relating to workplace safety, pay equity, and non-discrimination. The government will also send inspectors to companies to check that they are following the new laws.

Society also influences the business environment. For example, with the recent "Black Lives Matters" movement, all big organizations are trying to show that they value black employees and treat them fairly. Every new generation of graduates also affects businesses. Thirty years ago, graduates wanted a long, stable career with one company. Nowadays, graduates want to hop around companies and build up a variety of experiences. That forces companies to change the way they invest in their people.

Attitudes Towards Change

In the book, *Who Moved My Cheese*, author Spencer Johnson highlights four attitudes towards change.

Attitude 1: Anticipates Change

The first attitude is represented by a character named Sniff. Sniff means "to smell". The idea here is that these people *anticipate and look for change ahead of time*. They see change as normal, and they are always trying to be ready.

Attitude 2: Adapts Quickly

The second attitude is represented by a character named Scurry. Scurry means "to rush into action." The idea here is that these people will *quickly adapt when their situation changes*. They also view change as normal, and they are willing to change themselves quickly.

The third and fourth attitudes are represented by two characters named Hem and Haw. “To hem and haw” means to hesitate.

Attitude 3: Denies Change

Hem has a very negative attitude towards change. He feels that things should always stay the same, he is *afraid of things changing*, and he gets angry at the world for changing.

Attitude 4: Adapts Slowly

Haw is afraid of change in the beginning, but after facing his fears and taking action, he *learns to adapt to change*. He also sees that change can lead to better things.

Personality and Change

In Myers-Briggs, people who are of the Judging Type prefer plans and stability. They don’t like it when things don’t go according to plan. They are less open to change. People of the Prospecting type don’t like planning. They prefer to go with the flow. They are more open to change.

Watch the video about *Who Moved My Cheese* here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOUeHPS8A8g&ab_channel=KeyvanB

Or watch it on the lesson page if you can’t open YouTube.

Answer these questions about the video:

1. What does the cheese represent?
2. What did cheese mean for Hem and Haw?
3. What does cheese station C represent?
4. What did the four characters do when the cheese in Cheese Station C disappeared?
5. What did Haw learn during his journey?
6. Do you think Hem was finally able to move to the new Cheese?
7. Which character do you resemble the most? How so?
8. What is your “cheese” and “maze”?

Three Levels of Change

Read this article: <https://www.weeklywisdomblog.com/post/three-levels-of-change>

Helping Others Change

Read this article: <https://www.weeklywisdomblog.com/post/how-to-change-others>

Being Proactive

It often takes a major problem to force people to change for the people. That's unfortunate and unnecessary. A much better approach is to be proactive about changing yourself, your team, or your organization.

For example, rather than waiting until a health crisis to start caring about health, practice healthy living while you're healthy. For a business example, instead of waiting for a new start-up to disrupt the industry, try to disrupt the industry yourself.

Check Your Understanding Questions

1. What are some factors that can bring change to an organization?
2. What are some challenges facing today's organizations?
3. What are some common attitudes towards change? Which one is most common?
4. What are the three levels of change? Which one is most effective?
5. How can we help others to change?
6. Why is it important to be proactive?