6-23-2023

# Changing How We Change: Change Management Processes and How Best to Achieve Change Results in the Public Sector

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June 23, 2023

**Background and Inspiration**

This paper is inspired by a recent personal experience that occurred in 2021. Having been associated with a Not-For-Profit (NFP) for over twenty years (Organization Beta-Toronto), it seemed apparent that senior leadership lacked transparency when initiating a change that would modify all future operations significantly. This resulted in loss of trust of its members and caused significant turnover of long-standing members. Organization Beta-T, located in Toronto, Canada, is a regional, satellite location of the headquarters (Alpha) located in India.

Structurally, Beta-country should function in accordance with the guidelines placed by Alpha and all the regional locations like Beta-T should function in accordance with the guidelines passed down from their parent organization (Beta-country). Therefore, the parent organizations within each country are responsible for mediating between Alpha, the headquarters, and the regional locations within their country. So, the chain of command is as follows for each country: Alpha → Beta-country (ie. Beta-Canada) → Beta-regional location (ie. Beta-T).

However, Beta-Canada, started to function independently from Alpha by seeking to change what spiritual teachings were taught and how these spiritual teachings were disseminated. Since the organization is a faith and values based NFP, the understanding is that the members are inspired to follow the teachings because of the sacredness in the message. As nearly 60 years progressed, however, Alpha realized that it did not have strong measures in place to determine whether all their Beta locations were following the guidelines they were expected to follow. Through the gap in this feedback loop, the Beta's of various countries including Canada, began recreating doctrine which eventually came to the notice of Alpha through various complaints from members across the world.

In an attempt to set things right, Alpha decided to enforce measures to ensure the guidelines were being followed. Alpha did this through an announcement that required all the Beta countries and their regional locations to recognize itself under the banner of Alpha directly as opposed to having the Beta-country as the mediator between Alpha and their regional location. This led to chaos and fear from the Beta-countries and Beta-regions as they grappled with what this change could mean. Beta-countries and Beta-regions became fearful of rumours being spread about Alpha's motives and refused to join under the Alpha banner. This led to a monumental split within the organization in mid-2021 forming two factions: those who adopted the banner of Alpha, and those who did not. The factions, however, became choices that individuals made for themselves or their regions resulting in the loss of lifelong friendships, regional communities being torn apart whose repercussions are felt by members to this day.

Note: there are many Beta-countries and Beta-regions across the world and members within these locations sent complaints to Alpha on their own over time regarding changes they were witnessing in the organization. This was not a mobilized complaint but something that slowly came to Alpha's attention over a decade.

**Introduction**

Change is an inevitable and permanent aspect of life (Raina, 2019). In every change, leaders are needed to ensure that the desired change is being implemented effectively. This research paper discusses how NFPs can effectively use Change Management (CM) principles, tools, and techniques to achieve better organizational performance when undergoing a change in the organization. In this research, a literature review was conducted to explore existing CM knowledge to better understand the role of CM practices and the impact they can have in an NFP.

For the decision-making leaders of an organization, it is invaluable for their role to be done well. First, they need to understand the need for change and have the knowledge and ability to implement change effectively (Marinos, 2022). CM enables the decision-making leaders of an organization to effectively influence people and utilize models, theories, techniques, and tools by appointing and utilizing various change roles. CM theory tells us that having different roles such as change leaders, change managers, and change agents, is essential as they oversee the change process to ensure that the desired change is approached systematically and holistically to achieve results (Raina, 2019, ch. 8). In this paper, we use "a process by which organizations move from their present state to some desired future state in order to increase their effectiveness" as the definition for CM (Hodges, ch.11). In addition, a common thread among all the models looked at for this paper emphasizes that during a change initiative, "human beings stand at its core as both the subjects and the objects of change" (Frank et al., 2015). Therefore, when looking at CM in any organization, leaders and members who are going through the change play an integral role in achieving the desired change results. In a change, a leader is expected to perform management tasks, take stock of the current operations, keep an eye on the external environment, and be able to assess future business possibilities (Raina, 2019, p.160). Therefore, the leader becomes an indispensable

component of an organization's change and leadership becomes inexplicably intertwined with

change management.

This involves (a) identifying vision [statement] for the organization considering the changing present business environment and its impact on the business; (b) selling his vision to the management and all stakeholders; (c) communicating vision to people to muster the support of people affected by the change; d) developing internal change leaders/ change agents to mobilize support at subunit level and assist in managing the change process; (e) leading the change to achieve the desired state and (f) consolidating gains (Raina, 2019, p. 161).

NFPs are "aimed at accomplishing functions intended to strengthen the social and

ecological dimensions of sustainable development" (Ortega-Rodriguez et. al, 2020). This

begins to depict the differences and potential challenges that an NFP goes through in its

lifecycle that businesses in the private sector may not face and vice versa. In an NFP, there

are many external forces such as the operations within a larger institutional and social context

being shaped by law, regulations, political, economic trends, and the cultures in which they

operate (Renz, D. O., 2016). CM theory states that when it comes to dealing with more

complex changes such as transformational change, which is when the organization goes

through a radical shift in their operations and has a long-term impact and a new future state, it

is comparatively more difficult "and needs a much higher degree of leadership skill to swim

through the troubled water" (Raina, 2019). Renz shares how context can shape an NFPs

organizational structure and how the NFP leader needs to understand the environment in

which they exist.

…affects why and how nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations emerge, operate, thrive, and die, the important question for the nonprofit leader is how such contextual conditions have been and will continue to shape the unique character of their sector and their work as leaders and managers for their own specific circumstances (Renz, D.O., 2016).

Therefore, CM becomes more complicated when applied to the NFP context because of the

vast and diverse contextual conditions that shape the unique character of each NFP and the

intangible impacts of emotional, religious, and cultural beliefs that can be foundational to

some NFPs like organization Beta-T. For example, the range of NFPs vary innumerably and

the regulations for each type of NFP also changes organization to organization. Some NFPs, like organization Beta-T, are all-volunteer organizations (AVOs) which adds another layer of complexity to managing change. Current research informs us that through a more planned, consistent, and effective strategy, a change situation can increase transparency, trust, and decrease turnover amongst members (Hodges, 2021). Iverson also delves into the mechanics of resistance and summarizes that people fear change because of a lack in knowledge or skill, resource restrictions, projections either into the future or to a negative past, as well as discomfort about change or fear of the unknown (Iverson, 2010). This is important because understanding why people resist change provides a strong foundation in how to enable better change initiatives in NFPs where funding for change initiatives can be limited. Iverson also heavily emphasizes forming a mindset that is ready to break through resistance to change by identifying the barriers when faced with a change (Iverson, 2010). Had organization Beta-T adopted principles discussed by Iverson, they could have potentially seen a better change result or at the very least, mitigated the negative effects of a change that is a product of high resistance (Iverson, 2010). Evidence indicates that when an organization does not use CM practices, there is opportunity for poor performance, resistance to change, low morale, distrust, and the worst of all, members leaving the organization (Hodges, 2021). The conclusions of this paper show that if NFPs can use and implement effective CM practices, the outcomes could potentially be more positive in terms of the organization achieving its desired change result or state.

**Critical Review and Evaluation of Literature**

**The role of organizational leadership**

An organization is "never static" and cannot function in isolation because of all the factors influencing it (Raina, 2019). As stated above, context is especially important in NFPs

because of the breadth of factors that influence them. Therefore, decision-making leaders in NFPs need to understand the reality of their organizational context to formulate an appropriate strategy to deal with the dynamic forces of their environment (Raina, 2019). This enables leaders to approach the change in a specific manner and respond to them with a set of actions depending on the approach of the change. The role of a decision-making leader in organizational change becomes the understanding of the need for change, communicating effectively, and implementing the desired change through various techniques and tools. The decision-making leader needs to use their "soft logic" (which is generative dialogue, open-mindedness, and reflective thinking) to reduce "the high failure rates" associated with change programs (McCalman & Potter, 2015). Leadership is the conduit through which CM can be implemented in an organization and leaders are the catalysts that make this happen.

Organizational change management (OCM) has two main approaches: top-down and bottom-up. The former uses the organizational structure to drive change downwards while the latter tries to get "a degree of buy-in" from the members during the process (Davis, 2017). There are also four types of changes that can occur in an organization: planned, developmental, transitional, and transformational (Raina, 2019). Planned change is when an organization wants to get from the current state to a desired state and will generally pass through four phases. Developmental changes are incremental, small changes to improve performance without disturbing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Transitional change is when existing processes and procedures are replaced with new systems. Transformational change is when the organization goes through a radical shift in their operations and has a long-term impact and a new future state. These types of changes differ based on the purpose of the change, to whom it is applicable for, and the technique in which the change is applied. The type of change most suitable "will depend on the type of change the organization is planning" (Raina, 2019). In the case of Beta-T, it went through a

combination of the changes mentioned above making the management of this change even more complex. Beta-T had developmental, incremental changes over a decade that led to the complaints being sent to Alpha which then set an ultimatum for all Beta locations to fall under Alpha's banner within a deadline. This meant that Beta-T went from having unnoticeable incremental changes spread across many years to having a single transformational change within a few months. The decision-making leaders did not have the tools to understand the change or the capacity to communicate it effectively to the membership. This resulted in silence from the decision-making leaders of Beta-T and confusion and chaos for its membership. Current OCM research states that the best approach between top-down and bottom-up is using a combination of both depending on the situation and need. Both the approaches, however, emphasize the importance of managing the relationship between leadership and membership while fostering goodwill. In the case of Beta-T, applying both the approaches would have helped in fostering the goodwill between the decision-making leaders of the organization and its membership, and "through awareness, leaders seek to: strengthen followers" especially long-standing members who have formed an emotional connection with the place and people (Osula, B., & Ng, E., 2014). It is important to note that developmental and transitional changes can be dealt with effectively using CM theory. However, when it comes to transformational change, it "needs a much higher degree of leadership skill" (Raina, 2019). This suggests that in NFPs going through transformational change, strong leadership is required to have a successful change. This was missing in the change Beta-T underwent resulting in the breaking apart of Beta locations globally from Alpha.

     In an NFP, you can have a variety of memberships such as full-time paid employees, some part-time paid employees and some unpaid volunteers, or all-volunteer organizations (AVOs). In the case of volunteers, this means an expense of energy, time, and money to

participate in the activities of the NFP. This puts greater onus on the leaders; "press for greater accountability is a crucial element that is shaping most aspects of modern NFP management" around the world and should not go unnoticed (Renz, D.O., 2016). Leaders must understand who is impacted by the changes to determine who needs to be engaged during the change initiative by outlining the degrees of impact (Davis, 2017). When the leader can assess who is impacted by a change, they can approach the change plan in a more deliberate manner. In Beta-T, the onus was on the leaders of the organization to be accountable to their membership. Especially considering that Beta-T is an AVO, leaders should have understood who is impacted by the change and determined who needs to be engaged during the change initiative to reduce turnover, increase trust, transparency, and accountability (Davis, 2017). Palmer (2022) suggests that this would have been crucial in shaping the change successfully if the leaders assessed the impact and approached the change plan more deliberately and "select[ed] an appropriate strategy on the causes of resistance" (p.272). The leaders responsible for decision making in the NFP can either pass the planning and implementing of the change to a change manager (which will be discussed in the next section) or lead the change themselves by assigning the change manager/change agent roles to their existing knowledge workers and leaders. However, it is important for the decision-making leaders to understand their capacity limits before undertaking the task of leading an organizational change. CM theory suggests that for a successful change initiative, having a designated third-party change manager who can be objective, unbiased, and competent in implementing the desired change is the most suitable (Marinos, 2022). In an ideal situation, the leaders of the organization can work alongside the change manager to conduct a "stakeholder needs assessment" to uncover information about the key stakeholders during the change that will make the process of implementation easier. The "stakeholder needs assessment" identifies each key stakeholder

and breaks down their needs and potentially conflicting needs to establish a strategy and address as many of the needs as possible across all the key stakeholders (Davis, 2017). Through the decision-making leaders answering the questions of the "needs assessment", they will gain a better understanding of the impending change and the various facets of the implementation of their idea. The "needs assessment" is a great tool for decision-making leaders in an organization because step 3 and 4 of the assessment is about building a trust bond and trust bridges respectively between groups. In Beta-T, this would have been invaluable because leadership had no idea the impact the change would have on their membership's psyche. Doing a "stakeholder needs assessment" would have helped Beta-T identify each key stakeholder and break down their needs and helped establish a strategy to address the needs of the membership (Davis, 2017). This would have been a key process for Beta-T because not only does this raise morale and repair the relationship between membership and leadership (which would have been critical to Beta-T's success), but this also provides a very clear plan and gives leadership confidence in the uncertain space of impending change which Beta-T's leadership lacked.

This is explicitly highlighted in the example of Save the Children (SC), an international NFP that went through a transformational change within their organization in 2011. By utilizing their existing knowledge workers such as Rudy van Bernuth, former Vice President for Emergencies and Crisis at SC, as a newly appointed Director of International Programs in the change initiative, SC helped increase buy-in, trust and helped in forming a sustainable change. In a case study by Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, on the global transformation of Save the Children, the "resistance to certain proposals for change was strong" and the members appointed in leadership roles through the change state that what kept them on track: "every time we got derailed, we could harp back to the mission and ask, 'how is the current or future strategy

helping us to achieve our mission" (Lux, S.J. & Vijfeiken, T.B.V., 2012). This is crucial to understanding changes in an NFP context because the case of SC shows us that they utilized existing knowledge workers and leaders who understood the culture, emotion, and mission of the organization. This is important because the change that SC underwent faced challenges of resistance and the thread that kept them afloat was the mission of the institution. This thread which kept them together is only possible by utilizing the talents of the existing members further highlighting the need for openly communicating the need for change, the need for using existing members abilities and having a unified mindset in overcoming the changes from the present state to the new desired change state (Brimhall, 2019).

In a research article published in the Nonprofit Management and Leadership Journal, "increasing employee commitment to the organization may be one of the most effective tools for increasing retention" especially because "many nonprofit organizations relying on volunteerism [have limited resources]" for their membership (Brimhall, 2019). This specifically highlights the upper hand that Beta-T had in this change initiative if the decision-making leaders created "a climate for inclusion" through the transformational change they were undergoing with a focus to "increase employee commitment and performance". Beta-T had committed volunteers who believed in the organization's message who would have readily sought to understand the cause for the change and the organization's perspective had the decision-making leaders made any time and effort to explain the situation. The above suggests that commitment to the organization fosters retention, therefore, for Beta-T, the commitment from the volunteers was already there. All Beta-T had to do was to reinforce the retention and commitment by practicing leadership principles like communication, conflict resolution, etc. This correlates with CM theory which suggests that the decision-making leaders of the organization must understand their

organizational landscape to form the appropriate change strategy necessary to achieve the desired results. In addition, CM theory highlights extensively the importance of appointing specific people throughout a change initiative such as change leaders, change managers, and change agents (described in the section below) (Raina, 2019).

**Role of a change manager in an NFP**

As Benjamin Franklin once said, "if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail" and CM theory reinforces this adage by emphasizing the importance of managing transitions with competence (Green, 2019; Bordia & DiFonzo, 2013; Raina, 2019). CM theory describes three change roles that a change initiative can utilize for better change results: the change leader, the change manager, and the change agent. The change leader identifies the change that is required and understands the importance of the internal and external factors that are likely to affect the change process at the highest level (Raina, 2019). A change manager may overlap with the change leader in the competencies required in implementing change, and will be involved in developing a vision, involving all the stakeholders, helping everyone align to a vision state, create an interest in the process of change, develop a plan by collective wisdom, and implement the plan (Raina, 2019). The change agent is often an "identified leader" within the organization who guides and assists the change manager by acting as a catalyst and assuming responsibility for managing change activities in an organization. In an organization, decision-making leaders must understand their capacity and be able to seek the right resources who can help in achieving their change vision by hiring a change leader or manager. CM theory tells us that "an organization which is unable to initiate and manage the change process in time suffers from entropy and soon becomes defunct" (Raina, 2019). This further emphasizes the need for timely change management as well as competent management where "a business leader also needs to understand the importance of both internal and external factors that are likely

to affect the change process and maintain ideal equilibrium between them for the growth of the organization" (Raina, 2019). In this section, the change manager is introduced as a separate entity from the decision-making leader of the organization or NFP. This is to showcase the importance and benefits of an objective party whose only role is to ensure that the change process is smooth and successful. The objective party can be from within the organization or a third party or external professional who can contribute as a change manager.

Note: the introduction of a change manager in an organization requires the decision-making leader in the organization to first recognize the need for one as "a business leader needs to have a clear understanding of the present business environment and should also be able to visualize the likely" future environment and the impact it has on the organization (Raina, 2019).

CM uses many different models to achieve different CM results in a change process, for example, the Kubler-Ross 5-Stage model is a model that targets organizations already in transition while the IIEMO CM model focuses more on the conflict resolution and achieves a gradual build-up to an acceptance of change (Marinos, 2022). One such model is John Kotter's Eight-Step model which addresses the process of change from end-to-end. John Kotter's first step of the Eight-Step model is for leaders to recognize a need for change. This is imperative because we can see the consequences in the example of organization Beta-T of leadership either operating out of fear or the unknown, keeping silent, or disabling organizational performance through poor leadership. In a research paper discussing the changes in the public sector, they noticed that "the ongoing demands associated with changing technology require nonprofit leaders with a developed awareness of the impact of technology on business processes, all of which demands a commitment to effective strategic planning" (Bramwell & Eddie, 2014). This means that considering the various financial and personnel challenges NFPs undergo, what organizations need are decision-making leaders with awareness of the impact of certain factors on their

organization to plan strategically and achieve results. Therefore, decision-making leaders must seek the right resources to implement the change. This is where the change manager comes in. The change manager should be fully supported by the leaders of the organization. An important distinction to make is that decision-making leaders who have sought the help of a change manager must be steadily committed to the change vision, supporting the change manager as well as the members through the change. They must commit to a supervisory role overseeing every step of the change implementation process to successfully achieve their change results. In a change management case study done as an in-class exercise based on a pharmaceutical company that remained undisclosed in HRMT44000D: a fourth-year degree course Sheridan College, the leaders of an organization recognize the need for change and seek to hire an external resource to implement the change. However, the leaders were entirely disinterested in the detail and work required by them in the change initiative. As Hodges (2021) has described, this leads to members spreading rumours, not having enough time to get used to the changes which were thrust upon them in a short timeline and the change result suffers (Hodges, 2021). Leaders must understand their weaknesses in a change initiative, commit to supporting the change vision wholeheartedly, recognize where their perspective might be jaded and step away if needed and understand the change process completely to best support the external change manager and the change vision. This is significant because it provides an in-depth perspective about the type of leadership needed in a change initiative. In Beta-T, depending on the scope and targets within the change process, change managers or change leaders could have been chosen within the organization by leadership if they were unable to get an external source to implement change. Choosing whether a change initiative needs a change manager or change leader is one of the decisions the decision-making leader of the organization should make. By assigning change managers and change leaders from

within the organization, Beta-T would have seen many benefits. Firstly, change managers from within will have a stronger understanding of the impact the change has on the membership since they are part of the membership. This will enable honest conversations between change managers/agents and the decision-making leadership of the challenges they are facing through the change process. This would also enable honest and open conversations between the change managers/agents and the rest of the membership, creating a safe space and reinforcing trust in the organization. Secondly, by including members within the organization through the change process would have disabled the spreading of rumours because members would feel a sense of ownership toward the change process and would be able to address issues of time constraints and implement a more realistic timeline for the change within the organization having a more holistic view of the challenges faced by the membership (Raina, 2019). Lastly, having change managers/agents from within the organization would have greatly benefitted Beta-T's leadership because when they recognize the membership's commitment to supporting the change vision, they also get strengthened in the vision and commit wholeheartedly to supporting the membership through the change.

Notably, the role of a change manager is significant in a change initiative because the change manager becomes a constant and consistent presence throughout the change process and plays "a vital role in managing change" (Raina, 2019). Raina discusses six competencies that a change manager needs to possess. First, to manage change effectively, a change manager needs to develop a vision and identify a desired state that the leaders of the organization communicate to the change manager. Change managers working alongside the decision-making leader, must gain full support from all stakeholders by communicating their vision and obtain ideas from each other, mobilize support from employees, keep the vision as an ongoing process and provide resources to support the vision. Next, the change

managers, working alongside the organizational leader, must ensure the involvement of all stakeholders where the goal is to minimize resistance as much as possible. Ways to do so have been discussed in the methods of communication section. Next, the change manager needs to align all members and stakeholders to the vision. They can do so by enabling better understanding of the change which will in turn increase the likelihood of stakeholders supporting it. Next, they need to create an interest in the process of change by "involving, motivating and removing fear of failure from executives" and establishing authentic engagement to the change (Raina, 2019). Next, the change manager must develop a change plan based on the thoughts, ideas and feedback received from all the stakeholders in the process. Finally, the change manager needs to ensure the implementation of the



Figure 1
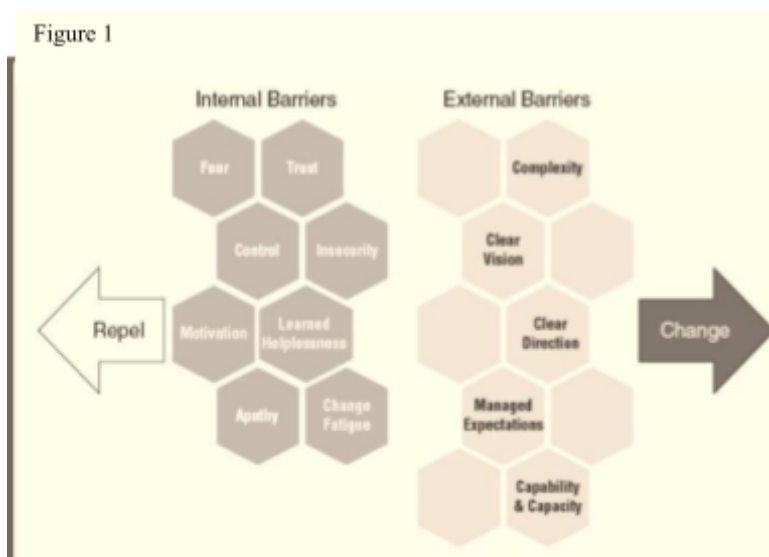
change plan. Here Raina suggests that resistance cannot be avoided and needs to be prepared to face this. At the implementation stage, the change manager will need to remain composed as this will be where the change manager faces stress. This is also the step where relationship building and the establishment of trust becomes critical. Raina then discusses that the change manager and organization leader will often be implementing the same competencies within their responsibilities and an effective organizational leader will be of benefit to the change manager and the organization going through the change (Raina, 2019).

This is crucial to understand because each responsibility and competency of the change manager outlined above is impacted by internal and external barriers throughout the

process of change. This is relevant for Beta-T because the value of CM as part of any

change process is that it is critical in ensuring that any change has the focus that it deserves

in order to be successful (Hodges, 2021; Raina, 2019). This is reinforced in the Journal of

Managerial Challenges of the Contemporary Society where solution-focused management

was discussed as one of the best ways to manage results for leaders and for being effective

in achieving results (Galli, 2012). In Beta-T, unfortunately, there was no change

manager/agent assigned by Alpha, which led to Beta-T's challenges in identifying change

impacts and implications within their organization. This was a significant contributor to

the unsuccessful change initiative between Alpha and Beta-T. This in turn was reflected in

the challenges faced by Beta-T internally as well.



Figure 2
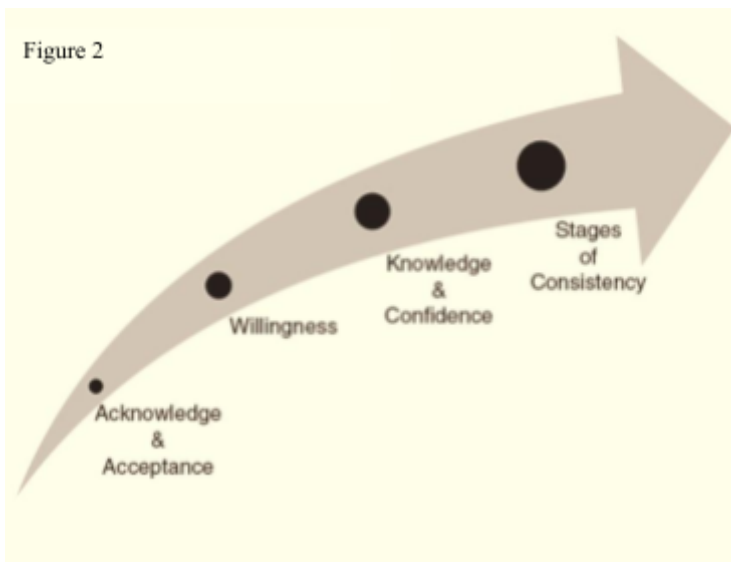
This idea of how an organization like Beta-T can have its change initiative impacted by different barriers is clearly showcased in Barbara Davis's (2017) theories of the barriers of change impacting the process

of change. Current research tells us that there are factors affecting our strategy to

implement change such as the internal and external barriers of change (Davis, 2017).

Figure 2 shows us the personal nature of change and the reactions a change can evoke in

people going through a change and Figure 1 highlights the responses people can have of

fear, insecurity, apathy, etc. However, how open one feels toward a change, can depend on

external factors like clarity in the vision and direction of a change, complexity of the

change, and management of expectations. As suggested above, if Beta-T had chosen a

change manager from within, these internal and external barriers to change needed to have been addressed. Therefore, the lack of decision-making leadership identifying a need for change, coupled with a lack of change managers leading the change initiative may have led to the unsuccessful change within Beta-T. A combination of the internal and external barriers can create a double wall that becomes a solid barrier to implementing change. In Beta-T, the lack of Alpha's clear vision and communication may have led to Beta-T's increase in fear of the change. What this image shows is that when the internal factors go unaddressed (by leadership or management), this can repel a change altogether as we see in Beta-T. However, when the external barriers are addressed/reduced or removed, the pathway to a change is potentially cleared. Davis (2017) states that a resistance to change increases when both the internal and external factors go unaddressed and suggests that any change initiative should address these barriers to successfully implement a change. This means that to reduce resistance, having a clear vision and direction can reduce insecurity and fear of the change and transform into motivation to change and trust in the org initiating the change. By limiting or reducing the external barriers to change, the decision-making leaders can weaken the double wall of resistance and enable more positive internal responses to a change initiative thereby, clearing a path to the change. If these factors had been addressed in Beta-T, then the resistance to change that was felt could have been managed better by the assigned change managers. Figure 2 showcases the journey and process of an individual going through change experiences. Once the internal and external barriers are reduced or limited, the individual can go through this process to attain the desired state. The journey to a consistent adoption of change behaviour begins first with the acknowledgment that a change is required. Once the acknowledgement has been made, the individual can accept that they need to make attempts to change behaviour. Davis explains this relationship between Figure 1 and 2 by describing how the individual

entity's transformation is enabled or disabled by the internal and external barriers of change. As we can see in Beta-T's case, however, Alpha did not provide clarity in their vision or direction for the change. This led to Beta-T being afraid of the unknown change, mistrusting of Alpha, increased insecurity about control which resulted in a lack of motivation and a greater sense of apathy by the stakeholders of Beta-T therefore rendering the imperative component of a change manager's involvement and role ineffective. It is possible that the external barriers Alpha did not address, exacerbated the internal barriers experienced by Beta-T as depicted in Figure 1, creating the double-wall of resistance by becoming the external barriers that Beta-T faced and did not address with their membership leading to the internal barriers experienced by the individual members within Beta-T. Due to the creation of the double wall by the decision makers of the organization, members did not seem to have the opportunity to go through the process of change (Figure 2). The process in place did not allow people to acknowledge the change, let alone accept it. Therefore, because of a poor change process, the process of change was broken before it even began. Members could not get to a place of acknowledging the change and were not driven to a willingness to adopt the change because of having not addressed the double wall barrier of resistance that was created. Alpha had not sought out individuals within each Beta-T location globally who spearhead and communicate the vision and direction of the change. There was also no one put in place by Alpha or Beta-T to manage the expectations of the members. If Alpha had established an understanding of what was being asked of Beta-Canada and Beta-T they could have reduced or contained the external barriers which would have reduced the internal barriers felt by Beta-T. This also highlights the overlap and intersection between the role of a change manager and the experience of an organization when the barriers are not addressed systematically as CM theory suggests.

**Change Models**

With the understanding of the role of a change manager, we can now look at the models available to the change manager which can impact performance during a change initiative. In CM theory, the models become guiding principles which can be applied to NFPs, and this section will discuss models that can help in less structured environments.

As mentioned above, decision-making leaders in an organization must be conscious of their capacity, capability, and responsibility (Raina, 2019). Of the many CM models, three pertinent ones will be looked at for the purpose of this paper. The choice of models was based on how flexible a system was to ensure that NFPs can apply it to their organizations provided the right leadership. The first model is Kurt Lewin's Three Step Model and Force Field Analysis theory. This model is useful because it has three simple steps that can be applied to any change: unfreeze, change, refreeze (Raina, 2019). This model supports the idea that it is better to reduce the opposing forces of a change instead of adding more supporting forces (Marinos, 2022). This is important in an NFP because NFPs can struggle with time, resources, and manpower (Renz, D.O., 2016) and will need to maximize what they have within the smallest time frame. This framework will help in reducing implementation time by providing a firm foundation on which to build the change initiative upon. Therefore, it is important to lead with the opposing forces in mind to reduce resistance. In the unfreeze stage, the problem is identified and communicated to the members. In the change stage, members are initiated into the new state while leaders of the organization help navigate any problem areas. In the final, refreeze stage, the change becomes permanent through stabilizing the change by balancing and managing restraining forces (Raina, 2019). In a study initiated at Frontier College, it discusses the struggles faced through a change initiative and suggests that to achieve a successful change, an organization requires a complex strategy that is executed over three distinct phases,

namely, the pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation (Frontier College, 2022). This study talks about the importance of middle management to the successful adoption of a vision or change. It uses middle management as the means of communication between decision making leaders and end users. When applied to organization Beta-T, this strategy provides a comprehensive plan that could have been used to achieve a positive change result. However, this did not happen in Beta-T nor was it suggested and initiated by Alpha. This would have been beneficial to both the organizations going through overlapping changes and Beta-T, as discussed above which was disabled by Alpha's lack of clarity, would have understood what the change meant. Alpha should have communicated to the decision-making leaders of their vision to achieve a positive change result. As discussed above, this study also shows the power of a change plan. In addition, this source emphasizes the importance of clear communication to inspire adoption and engagement. This suggestion of inspiring adoption suggests a plan to intrinsically motivate members toward a change. This further highlights the depth and care of a leader's role through a change initiative. In addition, Frontier College also suggests the usage of tools like KPI's in every stage of the implementation process to measure targets and maximize impact.

This model of implementation becomes a powerful tool for NFPs because it is broad enough to be applied to any NFP going through a change which is significant because NFPs are diverse and vast. Having a model such as the one described above, provides an easy-to-apply framework for NFPs going through a change. As discussed above, the lack of structural regulations placed on NFPs add a layer of complexity to change initiatives. In addition to the basic three-step framework, Kurt Lewin provides a Seven Step guideline to embed into the Three-Step Model which leaders can use to break down the complexities of each of the three steps.

The next model from CM theory that can be useful for NFPs is John Kotter's Eight-Step Model (Palmer et al, 2022). To summarize, the steps of the Kotter model begin with creating a sense of urgency for the need for change and increasing buy-in from stakeholders and moves through the various requirements such as creating a unified vision and communicating that all the way through to the implementation of the change. This model can help NFPs navigate a change because it enables decision making leaders of an NFP to move from the first step of recognizing a need for change, to the implementation stage. As seen with organization Beta-T, the leaders of the organization did not recognize a need for change and therefore faced the impacts of not communicating it to the members whose lives still changed. Had organization Beta-T used this model, their strategy in dealing with the change could have been different.

Lastly, the ADKAR Model of Change which is based on research conducted in over 300 companies (Davis, 2017). ADKAR stands for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement. To summarize, as the names suggest, this model takes an organization from the recognition stage to the implementation stage of a change. NFPs can greatly benefit from this because the model is flexible to apply to any situation and as long as the principles are followed, the chances of a change initiative yielding positive results is higher. These three models can be an invaluable resource for NFPs going through a change because it provides structure to change, enables leaders to observe the changes being made and provides insight into the results they can expect from every step. This insight enables leaders to notice when their plan goes off track and rectify the situation either with the help of a change manager as listed above or by themselves if there is capacity and knowledge. In Beta, this would have been invaluable because what their change initiative lacked was a structure which the above models would have provided them. In addition, Beta-T's leadership faced the reality and impact of the change as membership dropped significantly.

Implementing these models could have given Beta-T's leadership a chance to observe the changes being made and provided them with insights which would have enabled a better change result, unlike the surprise they were faced with.

In the three models discussed above, there is a common thread that binds them together. In fact, this is the thread which binds all the CM theory models. Communication is the principle that runs through all CM change models. Leaders must communicate at every step of every change model and failure to do so can compromise the entire change plan (Marinos, 2022). The communication of the changes most importantly allows membership and leadership to see the change unfold in front of them. This is powerful because as stated above, this can increase s buy-in from the people going through a change which enables the positive feedback loop of people embracing the change more wholeheartedly which further enables the change initiative's success (Raina, 2019).

**Methods of communication that reduce resistance**

In any organization, for employees or members to be in the know of the goings on of the organization, they need to be informed (Hodges, 2021; Raina, 2019). In a business, there might be strategies in the form of memo boards, bulletins, email newsletters, etc. to achieve the goal of keeping their employees informed of the activities in the company. This allows constituents to feel like they are part of that community. However, in an NFP, where protocols and procedures can be less organized, having a consistent mode of communication might become challenging. Thereafter, if there is an internal change initiative that will impact all the members, not having a platform on which to communicate this becomes challenging. Naturally, the leaders in an organization who are the decision-making authorities become responsible for the dissemination of information to the constituents. When do the leaders communicate to the constituents during a change? At every point of the change process (Marinos, 2022).

When looking at what drives implementation in an organization, the natural first step becomes communication. When an organization wants to undergo change, communicating the vision becomes imperative (Hodges, 2021; Davis, 2017; Raina, 2019). Raina (2019) reinforces that "communication is the cornerstone for any successful organizational change which facilitates in developing positive relationships among people (p.223). As stated above, in an NFP, relationship building is important to the sustenance of the organization and effectively communicating a change initiative helps "build mutual trust between the management and all affected parties" (Raina, 2019, p.223). Guiding principles of communication that can be utilized by NFPs are to have a shared meaning in what is being communicated, build a sense of trust by deliberating upon the medium of communication, communicating with a sense of purpose, updating members about the progress on an initiative, target-group specific communication that changes strategy based on the audience and "believability of the information" (p.225) that is being shared (Raina, 2019). These guiding principles can be adopted by any organization and its leaders to gauge whether the organization has covered all components of the organization to ensure that the first of the implementation of change has been successful. These guiding principles enable the leaders of the organization to guide key ideas such as what needs to be accomplished by the change, address any gaps between the current state and the desired change state, understand the number of people that will be affected by the change and even understand the levels of resistance and feedback members are sharing after hearing about the change. These guiding principles can enable leaders to see the change initiative with a greater degree of clarity and will be able to help the change initiative succeed by preparing for everything learnt in this stage of the implementation. Hodges (2021) also states that "a lack of communication can encourage rumours and demoralize people and results in distrust" (p.161). This is important because it suggests and reinforces that communication which builds trust through

sustainable change helps reduce resistance. This is especially important when discussing change initiatives in NFPs because sustainability of manpower becomes a focus that is important in NFPs which are AVOs with no monetary remuneration which can lead to manpower imbalances when the emotional or cultural incentives seem to decline through a change transition that is poorly managed. Had Beta-T engaged in open dialogue with members and the leaders were open to potential uncomfortable debate, it could have reduced the feelings of anger and resentment. Hodges (2021) particularly emphasizes dialogue with care which can be an important consideration in the NFP context where the number of volunteers are significantly higher than the private sector and where regulations around procedures, structures and protocols are scarce as mentioned above. Hodges (2021) states that the ownership of initiating open dialogue is in the hands of leaders who are the key decision makers (p. 161). This is an important takeaway for changing situations with the structural hierarchies or lack thereof in NFPs because this shows that even if members are dispersed, the decision- making leaders need to reach out first to help reduce resistance. We can surmise that if leaders in Beta-T had initiated open dialogue with the members, the change results may have been different.

Creating and sustaining a structure in NFPs are challenging due to the various external forces that influence it, however, communication models help organizations create a structure while dealing with resistance in a change process. Creating a communication strategy during the change plan has to "support the change process and at key areas during the Change Plan" (Raina, 2019). Iverson (2010) states that the seven phases of managing change are denial, negotiating, sadness, frustration and/or anger, acceptance & healing, communication, planning and moving through these phases with mental flexibility and manoeuvrability builds resilience and reduces resistance.

**Intangible impact**

An essential component of CM and leadership in an organization is its impact on an organization's culture and transparency to build trust. In NFPs, transparency becomes so important that "credibility with society can mean the survival of the entity" (Ortega-Rodriguez et. al, 2020). If we look at some of the components that build character in a leader such as "courage, determination, decisiveness, integrity, will power and honest leadings" and relate it to the cultural and emotion impact of an organization's members, we can understand the intangible impact leader with strength in character can bring to an organization (Raina, 2019). When a leader is courageous and honest when accepting feedback regarding the change, it makes the constituents trust that they have a safe space in which to communicate their true feelings. This can shape the culture of an organization in a profound way "where emotional expressiveness is encouraged, and value is placed on the emotional elements" (p. 65) and can have positive impacts on the members (Hodges, 2021). This allowance given to the members to express their emotions or not is controlled by the leaders who accept or reject the expression of emotions. This is because when the leaders are not courageous and honest in dealing with the reality of the members going through a change, the displays of behaviour and emotions that stem from the emotional labour is being concluded as resistance. Therefore, leaders need to build strength and "need to be mindful of why and how people react as they do towards change and not ignore emotional reactions that can be contagious" (Hodges, 2021). When a leader is courageous and honest, they can reinforce that strength in others to be free from fear to display their emotions and be authentic to how they truly feel in a situation. Hodges describes that in a study conducted in an NFP, "employees were expected to hide their emotions" resulting in "the emergence of new and healthier norms" being stymied by an "unresponsive organizational culture" (Hodges, 2021). When members of an organization

find that the organizational culture is unresponsive, invariably, the dissonance that occurs forces members to hide or manage their emotions to what is accepted and cannot be expressed. This emotional labour where members hide their true emotions "is constructed as an unwelcome form of resistance" (Hodges, 2021). This is an important aspect especially in NFPs because of the contagion factor, when one member feels one way and starts talking to other members without understanding the nature of the change, other members can also go into the change feeling similarly. As outlined above, this is why CM theory emphasizes that communication must happen at every step of every stage of change to ensure that through honesty and open dialogue, members' emotions and mental well-being is taken care of by leaders. Beta-T could have held town hall meetings, small discussion groups since the organization is an AVO and people were impacted emotionally by the change. Beta-T could have also established focus groups amongst leaders in the organization to get a better understanding of what people were truly feeling and sent out mass email communications which outlined the position of the organization. Even if Beta-T did not have all the answers, by being transparent and honest through the many modes of communication they could have implemented, they would have reduced the emotional labour felt by membership. In addition to managers and leaders enabling a safe space for members to display their emotions, they also need to be aware of "their own emotions, as displayed emotions can spread easily, and can have an impact" on the emotions and behaviours of other organizational members (Hodges, 2021). Decision-making leaders in NFPs can equip themselves with an awareness of the Four Elements to Emotional Intelligence (EI) which are Emotional Awareness, Emotional Facilitation, Emotional Knowledge and Emotional Regulation so they can be aware of others and their own emotions and better impact a positive change result (Davis, 2017; Hodges, 2021; Raina, 2019; Brimhall, 2018). During a change, emotions run high because

people respond to the changes in different ways and their reactions to the changes can create a variety of displays of comfort or discomfort. Therefore, a leader must have the knowledge to tackle these situations and can look to the Four Elements of EI to help others work through what they are feeling. In Beta-T, leaders were not aware of the elements of EI or had the capacity to tackle the emotions their membership was going through. Due to their lack of Emotional Awareness, they were unable to reach the point of Emotional Facilitation. As we can see, everyone going through a change will benefit from having the Four Elements of EI, however, decision-making leaders having this becomes essential to the health of the organization especially through a change initiative. Leaders who have the Four Elements of EI become an asset to their organizations and can impact the experience of members when going through a change.

**Implications and conclusions**

In a study titled 'Inclusion and commitment as key pathways between leadership and non-profit performance', the discussion suggests that "effective leadership is a required element for developing trust among people within organizations" which becomes imperative for sound knowledge management processes which enhance overall performance (Brimhall, 2018). This further validates that when an organization is undergoing change, not only is leadership capability important but reinforces the role of trust for the sustenance of positive organizational performance. Whether it is paid employees or volunteers, not trusting the leaders or other members can lead to poor organizational performance (Brimhall, 2018). This can lead to significant impacts when beneficiaries of the NFPs work is considered. For example, if a food bank, due to untrustworthy leadership toward its workers, has to shut down, then all the beneficiaries of the food bank face the impact of the loss. Not only do they face the loss but the workers who provided a service and care for less privileged members of their community are not

given a platform to serve. This has significant impacts on the individuals and the community which further highlights the key importance and impact of good leadership.

Another important impact is for leadership to take accountability by "disclosing information in response to stakeholder concerns and enabling their participation in the organization which increases transparency in favour of the organizational community and the building of trust" (Ortega-Rodriguez et al., 2020). This highlights the need for developing internal control mechanics in accordance with their social mission, as mentioned in the introduction of this paper. This becomes important for an organization to achieve social credibility which, as CM theory reinforces, is directly related to the continuity of an organization. In the NFP context, as established, credibility and trust become difficult to build up once broken and these principles become essential to the sustenance, existence, and growth of the organization (Renz, D.O., 2016). A study which looks at a sample size of over 14,000 diverse NFPs, which indicates consistent evidence that NFPs with stronger governance, better performance and more professional staff are associated with transparency (Harris & Neely, 2021). While the study primarily discusses financial transparency, the findings can be extrapolated to see the impact that transparency of leadership can have on stakeholders. This is an important consideration when looking at NFPs going through change and gives NFPs guiding principles they can hold onto as they navigate a change initiative. NFPs can look at the CM theories and assess what characteristics they already have and what they can acquire, to better understand the consequences they can expect based on whether they have the practices in place. Organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society and Seaside Sustainability discuss strategies from applications based on successful CM principles where communication and proper leadership led to successful change initiatives (Frontier College, 2022).

As described and discussed in this paper, Beta-T from the outset seemed to lack the

awareness of the need for change within their organization. This was significant in two ways. Firstly, Alpha did not clearly communicate their vision for change to Beta-T which in turn disabled Beta-T from recognizing the need for change. This was a big loss for Beta-T because this lack of understanding exacerbated Beta-T's ability to handle the questions, rumours, disagreements, and reactions from their membership. Had Alpha clearly communicated their change vision to Beta-T, they may have had the chance to figure out their position and understand Alpha's vision for change. Once Beta-T understood the idea of the change from Alpha, they could have explained it to their membership more clearly. Beta-T did not acknowledge or accept the change or even start the change process. However, the news continued to spread, and membership began figuring out bits and pieces of information. This is precisely the behaviour as outlined in this paper, that occurs when communication is unclear to an organization's constituents. Alpha's seeming lack of clarity seemed to further exacerbate the internal barriers of change within Beta. Although, despite this oversight by Alpha, Beta-T could have still communicated openly and transparently to their membership about what they were experiencing; however, the fear of the change and its impact could have been a key factor in Beta-T remaining silent. Beta-T's leadership refused to communicate any information with the membership. Finally, Beta-T ended up losing a large portion of their membership, which as we have seen above, is a potential result of a poor change initiative. Therefore, despite Beta-T having no clear direction or guidance from Alpha, they could have still benefited from adopting the models, theories and processes discussed in this paper. They could have implemented communication processes like surveys to get a better understanding of what their membership wanted from them. Instead, Beta-T ended up treating their membership in a manner similar to how Alpha treated them. Beta-T still had the potential to have a different outcome had they implemented the techniques and processes discussed in this paper.

Overall, Beta-T could have benefitted from communicating with their membership, providing an open and safe space to their membership to share their thoughts and feelings, and moving toward a more positive change result through this initiative. Beta-T at the very least could have increased the trust their membership felt towards the leadership and could have, through effective change planning, reduced or limited the number of people that left the organization.

Overall, effective CM intertwined with strong leadership who prioritize consistent communication becomes the key to a successful change initiative and process (Marinos, 2022). When NFPs go through a change, by recognizing their strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats, organizations can place themselves in better positions while going through transitions. Effective leadership and management through communication can reduce resistance, increase trust, accountability, and enable growth to NFPs and their constituents (Davis, 2017; Hodges, 2021; Raina, 2019; Marinos, 2022).

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