

BLOCKERS/BARRIERS TO CHANGE

While this seems obvious and we all know that in order to survive we must “move with the times”, change is not something which is embraced easily and many people are threatened by the very hint of change. Some of the more common blockers of change include:

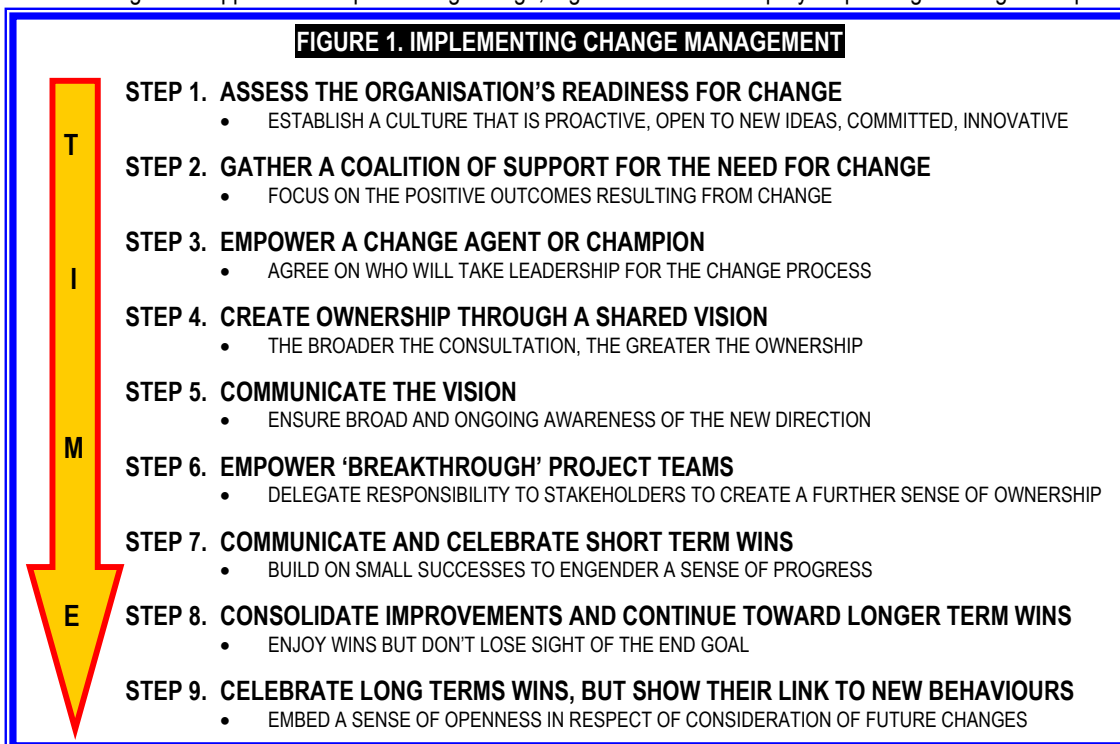
- Organisational culture - the notion that “we have always done it this way.”
- Volunteer management - the challenge of volunteer administrators balancing the provision of social or community services, but within a modern day, professional management environment.
- Personalities - every organisation has those people who seem to disagree with everything, but are seen as invaluable in terms of their level of time and commitment to the “cause.”
- Politics - factions, cliques and power plays are not uncommon and can cause significant disruption to the change process.
- Balancing limited resources against increasing stakeholder demands – this can lead to things that are considered even remotely difficult to implement (such as issues related to change), ending up in the “too hard basket.”

MANAGING CHANGE

With all these issues, is it any wonder change is resisted and/or is often difficult to implement? So how do we manage change? There are a few key principles that, in terms of order of implementation, will tend to vary from issue to issue and from organisation to organisation, but are designed ultimately to gain a sense of commitment to change. These principles include:

- Acceptance – that change is necessary and will take time, compromise and effort.
- Communication – is kept open and ongoing.
- Ownership – seek and value all stakeholders’ feedback and input.
- Trust – needs to be established.
- Shared values – about the future/vision of the organisation.
- Respect – for one another and for the treatment of one another.

In terms of a general approach to implementing change, Figure 1 outlines a step-by-step change management process.



While change can take a considerable amount of time (so be prepared to move slowly), perhaps the key to managing change is maintaining broad and ongoing communication. It is pivotal in gaining an understanding of the issue/s, in gaining support to address these, in agreeing to a common vision, and in selling and sharing the successes.

**IT'S NOT THE STRONGEST SPECIES THAT SURVIVE, NOR THE MOST INTELLIGENT,
BUT THE MOST RESPONSIVE TO CHANGE." (Charles Darwin)**

References:

Paper presented by Mr Martin Stewart-Weeks, *Achieving Organisational Change*, National Conference for Leaders in Sport, Melbourne, June 1999.
Rauter, E. *Corporate Governance for Sport and Recreation*, Australian Sports Commission, Canberra.

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