

Realising Cultural Change

The need for cultural change is never ending because the environment in which we live and in which business operates is ever changing – evolution. It is not peoples fear of change and resistance to change that is the cause of shortcomings in many cultural change activities, rather it is an unrealistic expectation of what can be achieved in a given period and because the cultural change process is not managed properly. People want to better themselves. They are not stupid. People just need help to make it happen. If the following are properly implemented, change will occur.

Key Points for realising cultural change include:

- Slow and painful process - one quick project not deliver lastings results.
- Championed at the top – articulate a vision and champion. Without this, change will not occur.
- Have to sell the benefit to the coalface – real and not abstract, they want to do it.
- Big Bang gives you a whimper - lots of people making small changes is how cultural change occurs.
- Appealing to fear and greed - If you do not hit these and you do not excite people, cultural change will not occur. The fear has to be a positive fear – the fear of missing out.
- One size does not fit all.

Drivers are critical for realising cultural change and include:

- Change role and position descriptions - staff and management, financial incentives.
- Gang of three – deploy groups around the organisation to lead by example: strategist, sales person and politician and the detailed operations person.
- Cost recovery – profit and loss accountability.

Focusing on what matters is important greatly facilitates cultural change:

- When you can't get the help desk to provide timely responses to problems how can you expect people to change what they do?
- When people are fighting worn out photocopiers every day cries of “cost savings and efficiency” ring hollow.

Understanding of the change and an understanding of what is needed:

- Understanding – people need to understand and feel involved
- Pragmatic – focus on the good and what has been done, suggestions for betterment.
- Keep it simple!
- Clarity and Stability – Want recipes to follow. No half backed solutions and never ending change of change.

Environmental factors facilitate cultural change:

- Environment – supportive, nurturing and appreciative, make people feel valued and empowered.
- KPI – can be understood and have real impact
- Ownership – take ownership and reward ownership not problem passing

Communication of change is vital and is an ongoing exercise. Explain to people what is happening and why. They are not stupid.

- Appreciation – say thank you and well done.
- Executie and senior manager – go out there, find the issues, show you care
- Get passed buzz words and slides
- Smile

Education empowers people. Educate people and they'll change themselves:

- Authoritative.
- Relevant.
- Ongoing.
- Exciting.
- Fun.