

Unit 302 Information Pack

Planning Change in the Workplace



INTRODUCTION

Successfully leading and managing change is not one single skill; it is a range of skills – all of which can be learned. Understanding the business environment, how change will impact on all aspects of it and what will be required to reach the new state is one side. Understanding people, how they react to change and how to coach them successfully through the transition process is the other. It is in applying this mix of skills that leaders bring about lasting, transformational change.

To understand change and therefore to be able to successfully plan and implement change in the workplace, managers need to be aware of the different types of change, the origins of change and the way in which people react to and cope with change.

Change is often necessary and important so that a company remains relevant and continues to deliver viable solutions to a growing customer base. But, while a company and its executives may recognize the need for change management, employees may be resistant since change can be hard and uncomfortable.

New ideas and innovations have always been important drivers for organisational growth. In an increasingly fast-paced global economy, an organisation's ability to innovate for competitive advantage can mean the difference between survival and extinction. Interestingly, breakthrough innovations are more likely to occur when market conditions are tough, and resources are limited.

A strong awareness of the external environment and understanding the driving forces that affect your organisation is essential for effective short- and long-term planning.

This information pack introduces you to the concept of innovation and change and explores how to implement change within the workplace efficiently and effectively.

GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. You will see the learning outcomes above treated in their own sections. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

Purpose

Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.

Theory

Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.

Example

The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.

Question

Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.

Challenge

You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.

Video

Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

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Other ways of Defining Change

Other terms used to describe change, include:

Developmental Change

Like incremental change, developmental change involves small changes to processes and procedures that give gradual improvements to ways of working and to give increased levels of performance. Developmental change is a necessity in business and helps maintain the organisation's competitiveness and ultimately its profitability, through gradual and measured improvement.

Transitional Change

Transitional change describes the period between movements from a relatively stable state to a new order. The new order will provide a radically different way of doing business. Examples might include restructuring, downsizing, mergers, implementation of new production methodologies or introduction of completely new products and services. High levels of turbulence during the change can induce anxiety and stress in employees and is likely to be uncomfortable for both managers and staff. Transformational Change Akin to metamorphosis, transformational change involves radical change to the organisational culture, is wide reaching and leaves the organisation with totally new ways of operating. Often transformational change and transitional change will be simultaneous. The radical nature of transformational change is usually driven by, for example, the emergence of innovative new technologies, changes in supply of resources, or where new entrants enter markets with additional competitive edge to existing organisations. Examples might include the changes to the wristwatch industry following introduction of digital watches in the 1970/80's or more recently the emergence of China as an industrial powerhouse, with low-cost labour providing the world market with inexpensive products.

Business Turnaround

Business turnaround is a term used to describe a rapid and radical change to save a business that is on a trajectory to failure. Often the alternative would be for the business to be put into liquidation. Business turnarounds usually involve drastic measures to return the business to a viable platform. Cutting costs, redundancies for the workforce, disposal of unnecessary assets, along with refinancing tend to be prominent features of turnaround. Refinancing would usually require a business to be able to demonstrate that it is able to recalibrate the business to deliver significant improvement in performance and results in the future.

Business Restructuring

Business restructuring is a term used to describe a situation where a business seeks to become more profitable by changing the structures of the business. Structure in this context might include the business finances, ownership and legal status of the business or organisation of the operational structure including possible divestment of assets. It is a repositioning of the business to ensure its ongoing viability.

Business Redesign or Business Process Re-engineering

Business redesign or Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) are terms used to describe radical departure from current ways of operating. Major or step change is implemented following a total redesign of business processes and systems. BPR starts from a 'blank sheet of paper' to produce efficiency and effectiveness, especially in terms of quality, cost, and response time, assuming that the required improvement could not be achieved through development of existing systems.

Reasons for Change

Challenge

Consider the reasons why organisations will need to change. Now complete the table below with examples of three different types of change that have taken place, or are taking place, in your organisation:

	1	2	3
Description of change and type			
Identify the reasons for the change			
Positive outcomes of the change			
Negative outcomes of the change			