

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT (OCM)

- Preliminary position paper

Purpose

This paper describes the initial steps in the development of Organizational Change Management (OCM), a new Critical Capability (CC) of the IT Capability Maturity Framework (IT-CMF). OCM consists of a maturity assessment and an accompanying Body of Knowledge to support an organization's improvement efforts. An initial overview of the literature related to managing organizational change is described, based on a review of 30+ academic and practitioner publications. Core themes are identified and used to define an initial taxonomy for OCM. This initial structure was further refined and developed in collaboration with industry and academic experts to ensure it both reflects and supports contemporary organizational realities and best practices in organizational change management.

Organizational Change

There is widespread agreement amongst scholars and change experts that successful change is difficult to achieve [1][2][3][4][5][6]. Yet, despite these apparent difficulties, organizations have little choice but respond and adapt to the dynamic business environment. There is an imperative both to adapt to market changes, as well as to integrate, and potentially benefit from, ongoing technological innovation. The speed, magnitude, and lack of predictability of change has ensured that it is becoming an increasingly important capability for contemporary organizations [3]. Since the work of Kurt Lewin [7], a myriad of models and approaches have been proposed to guide and increase the success of an organization's change efforts. Prominent amongst these are Deming's Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle [8] and Kotter's 8-step model, depicted below [9]. These influential models continue to exert influence on the contemporary ways of thinking about change. Indeed, there are few scholars who do not continue to credit Lewin's 3-stage model *unfreeze-change-refreeze* as the basis for their thinking [10].

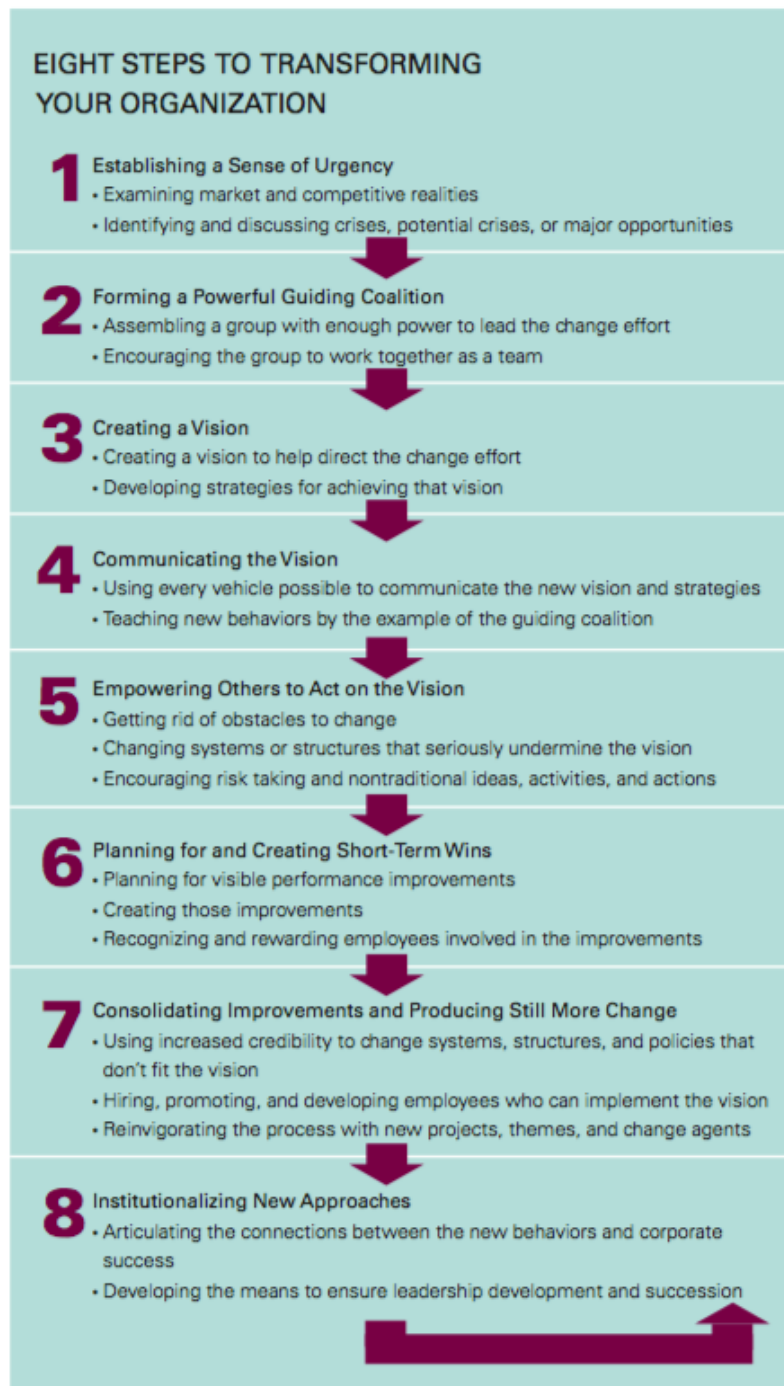


Figure 1: Kotter's 8-step model (1995)

Early models of change tended to emphasize a planned and managed approach, with an emphasis on change leadership [11]. While these factors remain important aspects of organizational change, more recent emphasis has incorporated processual or emergent views of change [12][3], continuous change [10], and a greater focus on the employee or 'recipient' roles [11][13]. Nonetheless, the importance of competent leadership remains a central topic and enabler of success [1][4][14][15][16]. Successful change programmes require visible commitment and involvement from senior management, including a strong sponsor to guide the programme [17][18][19], and a professional steering or

guiding coalition to ensure appropriate oversight and adequate resourcing [4]. This includes ensuring that change leaders and agents have the right competences, such as the ability to communicate the need for change, mobilize support for change, and evaluate the implementation and impact of the change [14]. A number of scholars have focused explicitly on the relationship between employees and leaders, showing that the quality of the relationship affects a positive influence both on employee performance [15] and commitment [16] to the organizational change programme. Quality of relationships is measured by the presence of shared obligations, respect, and trust, and increases both interpersonal communication and the exchange of resources. This type of leadership is described as 'Transformational Leadership', where leaders can communicate a shared vision, and work closely with, and inspire confidence in, their teams [15][16].

More recently, the focus has shifted from a view of those affected by change as passive 'recipients' to a more active role [20]. It is now recognized that change management involves the buy-in and active participation of all those affected by it [11][13]. Similarly, the emphasis has shifted from a focus on change resistance, to a focus on the importance of change readiness [21][5][20][11][22][23]. The concept of change readiness can be traced back to the first stage, 'unfreezing', in Lewin's 3-stage process [5][20]. Change readiness, in this context, is the 'cognitive precursor of the behaviors of resistance to or support for organizational change' [21], that is, it is an aspect of people's attitudes and beliefs towards the organization, the impending change, and their own part in it. This, in turn, plays a determining factor in people's level of support for the change. Armenakis and Harris's institutionalizing change model, depicted below, shows how messaging should be crafted around recipients' 5 key beliefs: discrepancy (need for change), appropriateness (appropriateness of the change), efficacy (organizational capability to implement the change), principal support (leader commitment), and personal valence (benefit to the recipient), which will positively influence buy-in to change [21].

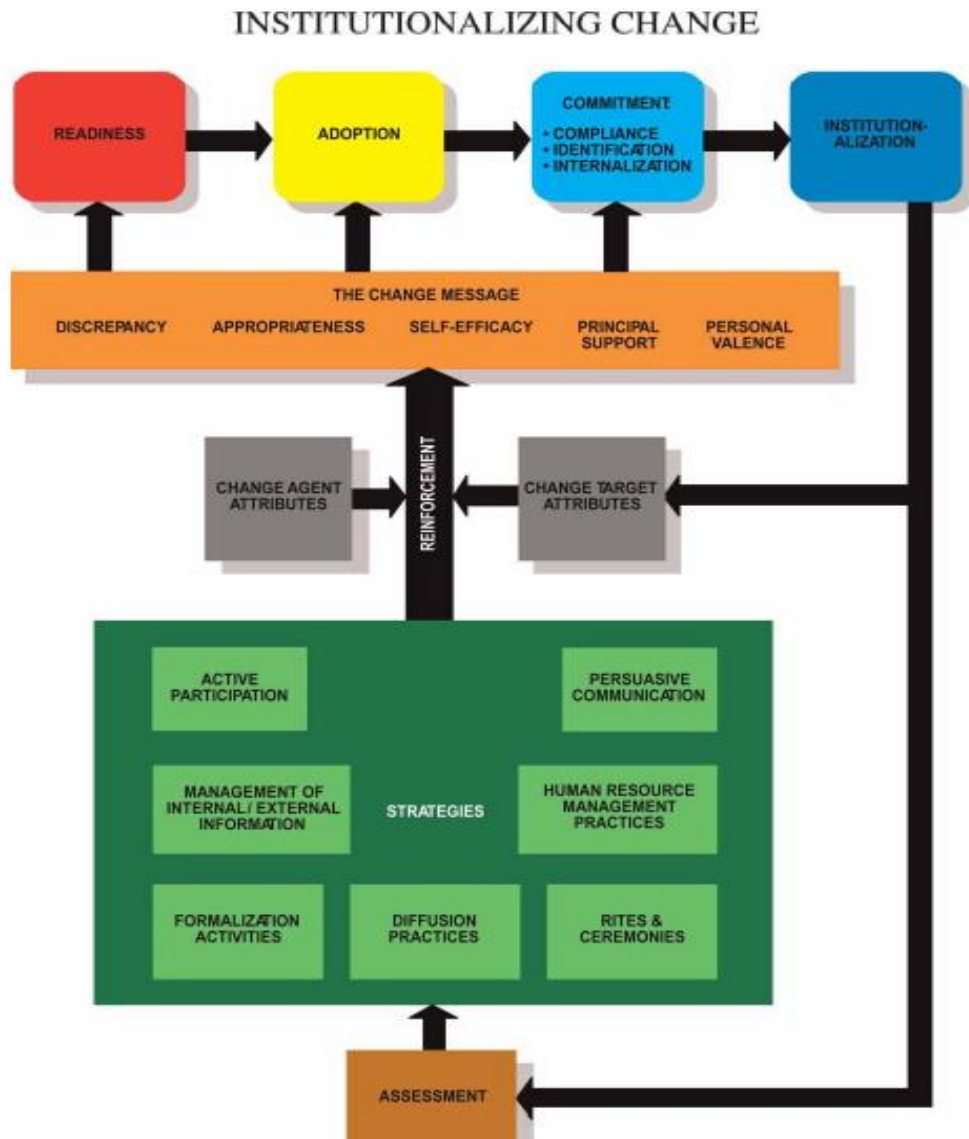


Figure 2: Armenakis and Harris 'institutionalizing change' model (2009)

Factors that have been identified as crucial to enabling successful change, such as in Kotter’s 8-step model, are also considered instrumental in change readiness. These include communicating a clear and compelling vision and sense of urgency, empowering change participants, and mobilizing support and commitment [11]. Key to generating early commitment is to accurately diagnose and communicate the ‘need for change’ [24][25]. Initial diagnosis is seen as critical, as “change efforts designed based on faulty diagnoses are unlikely to be successful” [5]. Equally critical, however, is ensuring that the need for change is communicated and understood by change participants [24][26]. Additional change enablers include senior management commitment, appropriate allocation of resources, effective working relationships, as well as rewards, training, and employee participation [27].

Organizational culture is another key factor affecting change outcomes [28]. Sometimes considered the softer side of change management [26], culture is nonetheless an instrumental factor in both determining and constraining what people do [10]. Culture has been shown to have an influence on

readiness [22] and on the level of overall support and cooperation from change recipients [23]. Equally, it has been shown that organizations wishing to adopt new technologies and approaches, such as Agile methodologies, or DevOps, first and foremost require a cultural realignment [29]. An organization's culture also plays a determining factor on individual's ethical behaviour and adherence [30]. Underlying all successful change efforts is effective and persuasive communication: 'without credible communication, and a lot of it, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured' [31]. However, communication as an effective change enabler is not simply concerned with imparting information, it also covers meaningful engagement, fostering active participation, and developing interpersonal relationships built on trust [24][5][23][15][16]. The need to effectively communicate the vision for change is a core theme across the literature [24][15][32].

Although the work of readying the organization for change dominates the academic literature, the actual implementation of change is, of course, key to change efforts. This starts with developing a cohesive change strategy, and translating the strategy into operational goals and deliverables [24][17][32][25]. This corresponds to stage six in Kotter's model, where managers 'actively look for ways to obtain clear performance improvements, establish goals in the yearly planning system, achieve the objectives, and reward the people involved with recognition, promotions, and even money' [31]. Kotter is insistent on the importance of creating short-term wins. Planning for, attaining, and achieving short-term goals will, he maintains, create the momentum necessary to sustain focus and a sense of urgency throughout the change programme [24]. Successful implementation also involves measuring success and analyzing outcomes using appropriate metrics [17].

Finally, in order to ensure change success, changes must be sustained [5][32][25] or institutionalized [24]. Planning for sustainability post-change is something that should be part of the earliest stages of the change programme. Recipient participation is considered a key determinant of sustainable change [5][25]. Another is drawing a clear connection for people between the new 'approaches, behaviours, and attitudes' and the subsequent improved performance [9]. Feedback and learning, both at the organizational and individual change agent level, are also central to the organization's ability to implement and sustain successful and continuous change [8][25][33][20].

OCM Capability Improvement

OCM is a new critical capability in IT-CMF. It is based on academic research, and developed in collaboration with industry and academic experts to ensure it both reflects and supports contemporary organizational realities and best practices in managing organization change. OCM consists of a maturity assessment and a suite of artefacts to support capability improvement, including a set of Practices, Outcomes, and Metrics (POMs) and an informational Masterdeck. The core categories and Capability Building Blocks (CBBs) of OCM are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: OCM Categories and Capability Building Blocks (CBBs)

Category	Capability Building Blocks
Change Leadership	Governance and Steering
	Team Building and Participation
	Communication and Engagement
	Organizational Change Culture
Change Readiness	Need for Change
	Change Models and Methodologies
Change Transition	Strategy
	Planning
	Implementation
	Impact
Change Sustainability	Embedding Change
	Evaluation and Learning

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