Assignment #3: Theoretical Foundations of Organizational Change

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There are many things a leader within an organization has to be aware of in order to be successful in leading the organization. One of the most important things a leader has to have a clear understand of is the change process within the organization and how it is going to impact the organization as a whole. A leader must understand the factors that contribute to the change, understand the strategies needed for the change, the skills needed, how to implement the change, and how to analyze the data to the most efficacious timing of change. If a leader does not understand these things about change within an organization, then it is highly possible the leader will not be successful in bringing about any sort of change within the organization.

**Factors that contribute to the organic evolution of change:**

A leader must understand there are factors which contribute to the organic evolution of change within an organization. Change within an organization will not take place quickly and will take time to plan out in order to be successful in the long run (Shore & Kupferberg, 2014). One of the internal factors to be considered that will contribute to the organic evolution of change is having leadership who has open and clear communication with the associates about the need for change and how it will take place (Holten & Brenner, 2015). Leaders who communicate the need for change and then prepare their associates for change by training and preparing their associates are more likely to be successful in bringing about change for the organization (Holten & Brenner, 2015). The reason why communication has to be clear in order for the change to evolve into what it needs to be is because the leadership is pretty much changing the culture of the organization and having the associates work in a new manner they have not worked in before.

It is also important that the leadership of an organization understand the role external factors play in the evolution of change within an organization. One of the external factors that helps contribute to change within an organization is what other organizations are doing and if the stakeholders are demanding things be done differently in order for the needs to be met (Harraf, Wanasika, Tate, Talbott, 2015). If this takes place, then the leadership would have to respond and make changes in order to meet the needs of the stakeholders and the community. Another external factor that helps contribute to the change process is technology that is available to the organization and if it can allow the organization to operate in a better manner to meet the needs of everyone involved (Harraf, Wanasika, Tate, Talbott, 2015). When this takes place the leadership will have to look at and make decisions on how to properly change the organization in order for it to stay relevant in the community in which it operates. Both internal factors and external factors help contribute to the evolution of change within organizations. Leaders who are aware of both internal and external factors are more likely to be prepared for how to best prepare the organization to operate well into the future.

**Strategic development and models for change leadership:**

A leader has to understand how to formulate strategic development approaches in order to help bring about change within an organization. A leader can formulate strategic development within an organization by having good and open communication about the vision of the organization with the associates and all of the stakeholders involved (Namada, 2018). Having a good vision plan can allow associates and other stakeholders to better understand and carry out their positions within the organization (Namada, 2018). Successful leaders tend to also have clear goals made known that are aligned with the vision of the organization (Namada, 2018). By having a good vision in place that supports change, it will allow the organization a clear blueprint to operate when any changes are being made within the organization.

One way a leader can formulate change is to understand the different models that can be employed to help bring about change. Two models that can be used to help bring about change within an organization is Kotters change model and ADKAR model (Das, 2019). For example, a leader can use Kotter’s change model to help bring about change by creating an urgency for the change, and then form a coalition, create a vision, communicate the vision, remove any sort of issues in place, make the change, and then build upon the change (Das, 2019). The ADKAR model entails bringing awareness for the need of the change to the associates, and then getting the associates motivated towards the change and having a desire for the change (Das, 2019). Once this is complete training needs to be conducted to prepare associates for change, then give associates the ability to carry out the change (Das, 2019). Once the change has occurred the leader then needs to make sure the new change is being followed and implemented and make any minor changes as necessary (Das, 2019). In other words, a leader has to determine which change model would be best for their organization based upon the associates and then put the model in place to bring about the change. If a leader does not understand the many different change models, then it is possible the leader will chose a model that will not work well within the organization.

**Leadership and management skills needed for continuous change:**

When a leader is trying to bring about change it is important for the person to understand what skills are necessary to implement the change and change models within the organization. When looking at change within an organization it is important for a leader to understand the most common reason for a change to fail is the lack of communication within the organization (Garicano & Rayo, 2016). In other words, one of the necessary skills needed for change within an organization is having clear and open communication with the associates (Tanner & Otto, 2016). Another skill necessary in order to facilitate organization change is to ensure that leaders have proper training in place for associates (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald & Nguyen-Quang, 2015). If leaders do not have good communication in place then it could lead to the associates not willing to adapt to the new change being implemented. Also, if leaders have good communication but no training in place, then associates are more likely to push back on the changes taking place (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald & Nguyen-Quang, 2015). The reason is because when associates don’t understand something or don’t feel comfortable carrying out a certain behavior they are more likely to revert to behavior they are comfortable with, and in this case would be the old way of carrying out business. In other words, it is important that leaders have the skill of being able to properly train associates on any sort of change that needs to take place within the organization. Another important skill that is important for leaders to have when dealing with change is the skill of being able to listen to associates. Allowing associates to give feedback on what is being proposed and also feedback on changes which have already taken place is important for the success of any change within an organization (Bakari, Hunjra, & Niazi, 2017). Giving associates the ability to speak up and give feedback is important because they can make known any issues the leader might not be aware of within an organization or with the change being proposed.

**Evaluating the skills and the amount of commitment from associates:**

The way to evaluate the skills necessary of the leadership is to look at the commitment level of the associates in regards to the change in question. A leader can ensure the associates are committed to the changes by monitoring the changes being put into place. The leader had to start out by being open with communication with the associates and why the changes needed to take place. A way to see if associates were committed during this process was to see how many questions came up. Allowing associates feedback on changes can help allow buy in to the changes that are going to be taking place (Bakari, Hunjra, & Niazi, 2017). Another way to look at the commitment of associates is to look at the training being provided. Are associates complaining about the training or are they participating and going through the entire amount of training? If they are going through the training without any sort of issues then it could mean the associates are buying into the change being put into place (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald & Nguyen-Quang, 2015). Another way to look at the commitment of the associates is to look at the overall amount of feedback associates are giving on the change that has taken place. By looking at the feedback it can allow the leader to see if associates are really working towards the change and if issues have come up that need to be addressed to make the change successful. The last and most important way to evaluate the commitment of the associates on the change is for the leader to monitor the change and make sure the associates are carrying out the new way of doing the job at hand. In other words, are the associates willing carrying out the task at hand in the new way that has been identified or are they reverting back to the old way of doing their job.

**How to gather and analyze data to determine the change:**

A leader has to understand when it is the best time to carry out a change within an organization. One of the best ways to determine anything within an organization is to collect data from the associates, stakeholders, and anything else that might impact the business. One way a leader can assess the need for change is to research and stay up to date on the needs of the stakeholders in the organization are (Taneja, Pryor, Hayek, 2016). If the data is collected and it is noticed that the needs are not being met of the stakeholders involved then it is safe to assume it is time for a change to take place within the organization. Another way to gather data is to meet with associates and get feedback from them on what is working within the organization and also what is not working within the organization (Grama & Todericiu, 2016). When collecting the data and analyzing the data from the associates if the leader notices that there is a common problem identified by associates, then it could mean it is a good time to bring about change within the organization. By making a change to one of the problems the associates are facing could help the organization as a whole operate better. A leader can gather data and analyze it in a couple of different ways from associates. A leader could meet with associates individually, host town halls, carry out focus groups, or even do open ended questionnaires with associates. All of these methods would be appropriate to gather data and analyze it to determine if change is needed and if it would be effective.

**Conclusion**

A leader has to be aware of many things in order to be successful in their position within an organization. A leader must understand the change process and how it will impact the organization and what needs to be done in order for the change to be successful within the organization. If a leader does not understand how to properly carry out change or know when to put a change into place, then it could mean the organization will not be successful in the long run. A leader must also ensure they know how to collect and analyze data to determine if a change can even be supported within an organization. If they do not know how to properly analyze the data then it could mean that the organization is not ready for a change to be carried out.

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