Down Under

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BPM and Change Management: Two Perspectives

BPM Without Organizational Change Management!

John C. Jeston

Paul Harmon recently wrote an Email Advisor in May on the topic of Change Management and BPM and how they relate to each other.

There is no question that these two aspects of organizational change relate to each other and indeed go hand in hand. With rare exceptions, you cannot impact your business processes without impacting the people involved. As Michael Hammer said in 1993, "Coming up with ideas is the easy part, but getting things done is the tough part. The place where these reforms die is … down in the trenches." And who 'owns' the trenches? You and I and all the other people. "Change imposed on the 'trench people' will not succeed without being part of the evolution or revolutionary process" (Jeston & Nelis, 2008)[i].

Many of you will have seen our 7FE BPM Project Framework before. Figure 1 below takes this framework and links it to organizational (project or program) change management steps.

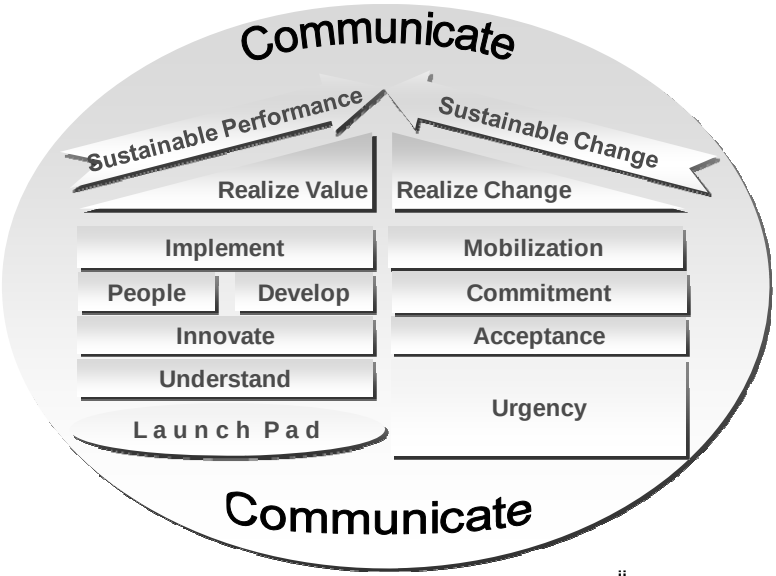

Figure 1 – BPM and Change Management[ii]

In summary, what this is showing is the 7FE BPM Project Framework on the left hand side of the figure and the change management view on the right hand side. A more detailed explanation is

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provided in the table below.

If a project team chooses to continue through a phase without achieving success in the commensurate change management step, then the project will *simply* be at a higher risk of not achieving the success they wish. If you wish to achieve success, then ignore change management at your peril.

7FE Project Framework	Organizational Change Management
Launch Pad and the **Understand** phases (project initiation and current state analysis)	**Urgency** – if you have not created an understanding in the organization of the urgency for change, then you should not proceed beyond this point in your BPM project until it is achieved
Innovate phase (process redesign)	**Acceptance** – once you have redesigned your new business processes, you must have achieved an acceptance within the organization of the new processes ***You have the people's Minds***
People and **Development** (the need to establish roles and responsibilities and performance measures for the people; and the development of your desired change, technology or otherwise)	**Commitment** – at these phases of a BPM project you will need to have all the people impacted 'on-board' and committed to making the change happen ***You have the people's Hearts***
Implement (go-live)	**Mobilzation** – the people impacted are excited and organized to ensure the implementation is a success ***People have Enthusiasm and Energy for the change***
Realize Value (achieving the realization of the business benefits outlined in your business case)	**Realize Change** – the impacted people are willing and committed to realizing the business benefits
Sustainable Performance (the handover to the business to ensure the improvements you have made in the project are able to be sustained)	**Sustainable Change** –the impacted people are willing and committed to ensuring that the processes are continually executed in the manner they were created and continually enhanced and improved

Let us provide you with an example via a case study.

One of the authors (John) was involved in a project with a government department. He was asked to write a business case for the redesign of some business processes to be supported by workflow and imaging technology. During the development of the business case it became obvious that the client did not wish to 'really' implement the change, even though legislation introducing of a change to an existing tax would bring processing to its knees. The reason for the concern was that the organization had developed and implemented a workflow system 5 years previously which subsequently failed badly.

Further investigation revealed that the IT department had developed the system and announced one day that it was being implemented and going live. Staff had not been involved and certainly had not been taken on the journey to ensure they were committed to the new system and processes. Indeed the system had been developed and implemented without looking at the existing business processes!

The system was implemented and never used. Staff simply refused. They continued to use the existing manual processes and systems and totally ignored the new workflow application.

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During the development of the business case, staff were intimately involved is many workshops and the high level design of new processes. The business case was approved. The system developed and implemented, and the feedback was that it was the best project ever within the business - all because of change management and the people aspects of the project.
Projects, whether BPM or otherwise, do not deliver strategic objectives. Projects provide opportunities for the operational, or business as usual, part of the business to deliver strategic objectives. After all, the operational part of the business **is the business.**

The Need for Change Management

Johan Nelis

Paul Harmon wrote in his BP Advisor of May 10, 2011 "*Process Management and Change Management are tightly coupled".* There are two particular areas that we want to explore in further detail here:

1. Change Management is a pre-requisite to ensure that improvement through projects are embedded within the Business as Usual process execution (through the unfreeze – change – freeze)

2. People centric - process Execution requires that the proposed processes are well documented and executed accordingly

These aspects are common knowledge. Unfortunately, they aren't common practice.

The Need to Change

Change management is often the hardest challenge in a process improvement project. Sometimes you wonder ….. *what is required to make people change*? So we try to find a burning issue and sell the change on the assumption that if peoples' careers were dependent on change they would change.. However, a recent study showed that people don't change, even if their life depends on it!!!!

The results of the study demonstrate that even when doctors tell heart patients they will die if they don't change their habits, ***only one in seven will be able to follow through successfully****. Desire and motivation aren't enough: even when it's literally a matter of life or death, the ability to change remains maddeningly elusive. Given that the status quo is so ingrained in our psyches, how can we change ourselves and our organizations?*

Change Management as Pre-requisite – the Management Value Chain

Hence, it's amazing to note that still many companies are focussed on project execution and try to achieve a high level of Project Management Maturity, while completely ignoring their maturity around Change Management and Process Execution.

It is important to note that projects will never ever achieve strategic objectives by themselves, rather they enable an organization to achieve their strategic objectives through the day-to-day execution and management of the improved processes. Change management is required to ensure that the improvements are correctly embedded within the organization

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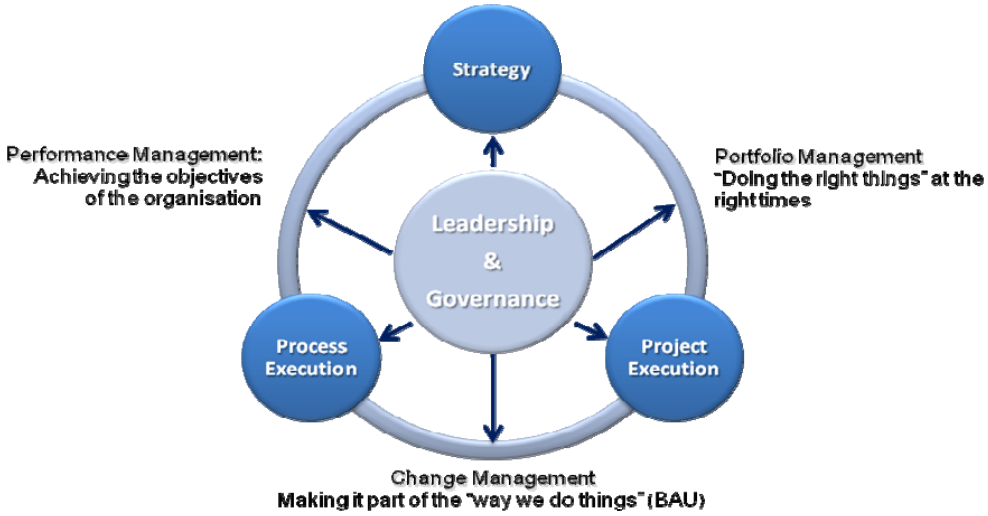

Figure 1. The management value chain

That's why it is surprising that companies spend millions of dollars on hardware, software and consultancy and think that change management can be limited to fancy emails and soap box statements. Good change management ensures that people are **enabled (**e.g. through training) and **willing** (e.g. through two-way communication) to adopt to the new change.

People Centric Aspects in Day-to-Day Process Execution

Change management principles apply also to the daily execution of the processes. It is still surprising to find that organization aim for a high process maturity by purely focussing on the documentation of processes. The process modellers are extremely happy with "*how beautiful the processes are"* rather than ensuring that the process models are fit for purpose and that people actually use them.

People who reside in an "*ivory tower"* often think that polishing their tower (by putting more colour or applying technology) will bridge the gap to the users. However, the only option is to engage with the users.

It is strongly recommended to ensure that the development of process documentation go hand in hand with the actual embedding. In other words….. it is better to ensure that limited documentation is maintained than to hope that some of an over abundance of documentation is adhered to.

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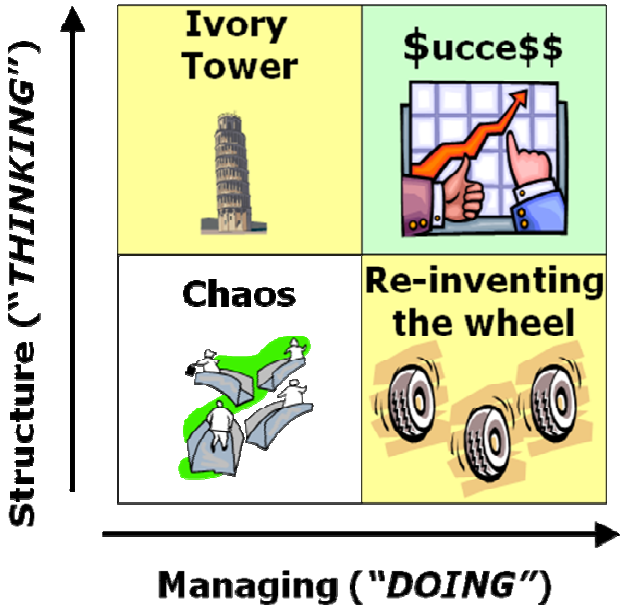

Conclusion

We strongly supports Pauls call to **"have *different body of knowledge, tools and methods need to be integrated*".**

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[i] John Jeston and Johan Nelis, *Business Process Management: Practical Guidelines to Successful Implementations*, 2008, Elsevier

[ii] Jointly developed by John C. Jeston and YNNO in the Netherlands

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