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A Case Study of Organizational Change at Riverview Early Childhood Center

Jaclyn Yetmar
University of Northern Iowa

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A Case Study of Organizational Change at Riverview Early Childhood Center

Abstract

This study examined the need for change in an organization and the obstacles which must be overcome. The reasons for change were discussed in regard to Riverview Early Childhood Center of Webster City, Iowa. Guidelines were presented for change agents to use in accomplishing change within an organization. Conclusions were drawn from the literature and recommendations were made for organizations in facilitating change from within.

A CASE STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
AT RIVERVIEW EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

A Graduate Research Paper

Submitted to the

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education

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By

Jaclyn Yetmar

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Has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the
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Charles R. May

July 7, 2004
Date Approved

Graduate Faculty Reader

Jill M. Uhlenberg

July 7, 2004
Date Approved

Graduate Faculty Reader

Rick Traw

July 8, 2004
Date Approved

Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Today in business and in life, we need to be receptive to change; as change occurs, growth is natural, also. “Along with change come adaptation or death” (Seita & Waechter, 1991, p. 9). As human beings, our bodies and minds are constantly changing, as does our life and environment. To some people change is fluid and accepted as natural; for others, it is looked upon as a threat or discomfort.

In the book, Change: Meet It and Greet It, Seita and Waechter stated:

Creating change can be exciting, challenging, and rewarding for those who are open and willing. The magic that will be created within the organization will be a new energy, a deeper commitment, and a brighter future for those involved as they work in a more effective and efficient way. No magic wand is required; only a determination to learn, share, and celebrate in the process of change (p. 8).

Change is not new, for humans have always had to deal with it for survival, but in today’s world, speed of change is accentuated, although according to Bissell (2002) “Change works best when done slowly and incrementally. However, there is no longer enough time before another change demands our attention. Leaders not open to the inevitability of this phenomenon will become irrelevant” (p. 27).

In business, leaders, managers and employees often view change differently. Each group knows that vision and leadership drive successful change. Leaders see change as an opportunity to strengthen the organization by aligning operations with strategy, to take on new risks and professional challenges, and to advance their careers; however, for many managers and employees, change is neither sought nor welcome. It is disruptive and intense. It upsets the balance. Change creates stress and upheaval.

This situation was experienced in Webster City, Iowa. Riverview Early Childhood Center, Inc. (Riverview) is a non-profit child care and preschool center that serves approximately 70 families and 110 children from Hamilton, Wright, and Webster County areas in Iowa. Approximately 50% of the children served are from single parent families with household incomes that fall below the low to moderate income level for Hamilton County. Riverview Early Childhood Center is located in a former single story elementary school building that is owned by the Webster City Community School District.

To deal with changes needed in child care, a new way of thinking and behaving was necessary. The following discussion tells how change was accomplished to save Riverview Early Childhood Center. Riverview had a need for increased funds but the school district that sponsored it could not provide the needed support. In order to monitor and protect the needs and interests in the daily operation of the center, a board of directors was created. The board would function as a catalyst for securing funds for staff salaries, program equipment and supplies. The center needed to advertise the services that it provided. However, while under the auspices of the school system, Riverview acquired a negative reputation in the community, for the valuable services the center provided were overshadowed by the perception that the center absorbed funds that could be used in other places within the school system. This negative attention created problems when budget or spending issues arose. Outside funding was difficult to obtain because of the link between the center and the subsidies received by the school system. Additionally, the center was operating with equipment that had been donated community members, or by the school system. The equipment was old, and inappropriate for preschool children and often unsafe. The rooms were designed for elementary school children, and not preschoolers. Changes were needed to provide a safe environment and quality child care. An analysis of these

concerns revealed the following changes for Riverview were needed: 1. positive publicity for increased enrollment, 2. additional funding for improving center programming, 3. new equipment and building maintenance in order to meet state licensing standards, 4. fire, health, and safety issues addressed within the center.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the literature concerning organizational change to help the Riverview Early Childhood Center survive. This study also examined the conditions needed to effectively initiate and produce change. The information that was gathered was used to explore how change could be accomplished effectively at Riverview Early Childhood Center and to determine what guidelines were needed for appropriate change.

To accomplish this purpose, the following questions will be addressed.

1. What are the characteristics of an organization in need of change?
2. Why is change necessary for an organization?
3. What are the obstacles to change for an organization?
4. What guidelines are needed to enhance the change process so that Riverview Early Childhood Center will survive?

Need for the Study

Much information about change focused on business and industry. Concerning childcare, the articles on change dealt with changing curriculum. No articles were located concerning changes that must occur in order for a child care program to survive. Thus there is a need for

this case study to describe how change had to be accepted in order for a child care program to survive. This study provided guidelines for producing successful practices for other childcare organizations to continue to exist.

Limitations

This study is limited to literature that provided general information on organizational change and its effects on the organization and its employees. Another limitation was the inadequate availability of literature that was pertinent to this study in the University of Northern Iowa library.

Definitions

The following definitions were needed in this discussion of change.

Change Agent: The leader who oversees the change process.

Change Process: In the literature reviewed for this study, researchers used some terms regarding the change process synonymously with other terms: organizational change, organizational transformation, realignment process, adaptive work, and transition.

Determination Phase: The fourth phase in the Change Curve process by Jean Daniel Duck. In this phase the plan is carried out and proceeds toward fruition.

Fruition: The goal has been attained.

Intrinsic Motivation: Enthusiasm and desire for learning and achievement are individually driven by the student.

Total Quality Management (TQM): An organizational change model developed by Dr. W. Edwards Deming. The management model stresses the pursuit of quality in production and service.

501(c)3 Tax Exempt Status: A tax status that is granted for non-profit organizations that qualify under government regulations. This tax status is used to identify a charitable organization.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Resources for Change

The change process has been used and discussed in relation to the transformation that has taken place in business and industry in the past. Much has been learned from the change agents who have modified business and industry practices. The leaders that have been most helpful with this change process are, Warren Bennis (1999), Stephen Covey (1990), W. Edwards Deming (1994), Jean Daniel Duck (2001), and Seita and Waechter (1991).

During the early 1900s, the common management style was rigid, and change at first, was not encouraged. In the early 1960s, American industries recognized the need for change. They were beginning to understand that the human factor within an industry must be considered in order to maintain or increase productivity. Although this was recognized as a key factor, the autocratic style of management continued until the late 1970s because of the cost to produce these changes. An authority in the production management field, Deming took previous productivity management methods and expanded them. The system then became known as the Deming Wheel. The Deming Wheel represents the transformation toward quality: Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA). The system is then modified on the results of the productivity study conducted. This is thought to be one continuous cycle.

The introduction of Deming's Total Quality Management (TQM) system focused on satisfying customers and stressed continuous improvement of systems and processes. It was a pivotal piece to the business transformation puzzle. Deming had a profound effect on how we think, behave, and relate to customers and to society.

While Deming's T.Q.M. system served as the building blocks, it was not enough to provide the total changes that were necessary at Riverview. Consequently, additional information from change experts was researched in order to achieve the desired changes.

Bennis (1999) and Covey (1990) are both experts in the field of leadership and achieving change. Their ideas draw from the Deming management method and include the leadership aspect of the change process. Bennis's ideas were used to develop the compelling vision to achieve change, and the shaping of behavior for the project leader. Stephen Covey's *Principle Centered Leadership* (1990) provided information on the qualities a leader must possess to create successful change.

In Duck's *Change Curve* (2001), she discussed the change process and includes the human aspect. She provided information about how to anticipate the needs of the people affected by the change process. The information was used as a guide to know how to handle each phase in the transition.

Seita and Waechter (1991) provided a view into the three phases of change and the stages of reactions to change that everyone goes through. They also provided a valuable tool kit used for starting the change process. This information was useful in developing the guidelines for organizational change.

Characteristics of a Center in Need of Change

Change starts with a positive or negative force. This force could be as small as a customer complaint or as large as the acquisition of one organization by another. The intensity in this discomfort is a key factor in how rapidly the changes are made. Additionally, there must be an authentic reason or need for change.

Riverview Early Childhood Center was in need of funds to improve the operating

conditions in the center and its ability to provide a quality service for the community. These conditions created a stressful environment, and caused financial instability. The areas needing additional funding were staff wages, staff training, aging equipment, low supply levels, and failure to comply with many state licensing and local fire codes.

In the Change Monster by Duck (2001), the author pointed out, “For a change initiative to succeed, the emotional and behavioral aspects must be addressed as thoroughly as the operational issues” (p. xii). She saw change unfolding in a predictable series of five phases known as the Change Curve. In the first stage, the organization is depressed or hyperactive. This stagnation period ends when someone in a position of authority within the organization demands change. The Preparation phase can take months. In this phase a huge amount of work must be completed in order to define what needs to change and how that can be carried out. A great deal of research is examined concerning the organization’s products, resources, and people that have and have not worked successfully in the past. A plan is developed and leaders align themselves with the plan. During the third phase, the plan is implemented. The leaders announce the plan, and provide the people with information on the new processes required. The leaders persuade and motivate the workers and managers to participate in this new plan. This is an emotional stage because it is upsetting and difficult. The most critical phase in the change process is the *Determination Phase*. In this phase the people begin to realize that this is for real and that change is inevitable. The people decide whether they will accept this change or confront it. Management addresses problems honestly and quickly. Duck stated the following: “Organizations do not change until the beliefs and behaviors of the people with change” (2001, p. xvi). If the plan is not successful then leaders go back to the Preparation phase and start again. During the Fruition phase, the spotlight is on the achievement. Everyone shares in the rewards.

Leaders take the time to absorb the benefits and learning that have taken place. The organization has come full circle. The key in this plan is for the leaders to listen to insiders and outsiders regarding their company. They need to hear both good and bad points and make a plan for each point. The downfall with this plan is that the majority of people do not want to change. It is very difficult to get close enough to your employees to know what is needed because they fear retribution for their opinions.

In Riverview's situation, the center was in dire need of additional funds and the Webster City School system did not have the additional funds available. The Riverview Center was in the spotlight for its cash flow problems and drain on the school system. The superintendent would not allow major changes to occur. Consequently, the center was in a downward spiral. The director was requesting changes in an attempt to save the center. She approached both the superintendent and the school board to educate them on the value of quality early childhood education. She quoted statistics that showed ways in which money would be saved later if more attention were placed on early childhood education. The school system held to the premise that they received funds for K-12 aged children and that it would be improper to spend funds on areas that did not directly pertain to that area of education. The center was at an impasse.

Why is Change Necessary for an Organization?

Organizations become focused on the aspects of what or how in the transformation process, and they often forget to consider why. Change is normal. A need to change does not have to be negative. Change can be needed due to a multitude of reasons. It is important to understand why the need exists. The organization must identify the problem or cause and then establish an authentic reason or need for change. The proposed change must provide benefits that outweigh

the efforts put forth to accomplish the transformation. A plan will need to be developed to address this need. It is best if the change results are seen quickly. But unfortunately it may proceed rapidly, and it does not always happen in a neat and clear fashion.

“Change in an organization is inevitable and is an on-going process. It is not a destination. Those groups who go through the process and feel they are finished will soon find themselves in trouble once again” (Seita & Waechter, 1991, p. 20). Change experts such as Deming (1994), Conner (1998), and Peters (1987) agree that organizations need to view change as an ongoing process.

In Riverview’s case, it was determined that the center needed access to additional funding resources that were not available to the center while it was connected to the local school system. The center was having trouble hiring and retaining qualified employees because of the extremely low wages offered. Many qualified staff left the center and the early childhood field to work in local factories for higher wages. Consequently programming suffered because of the lack of trained staff. Another need dealt with equipment. The equipment provided for the young children was given to the center by the school system. This equipment was old and designed for elementary children. The furniture and equipment were unsafe for young children to use. The center was not meeting state licensing codes with issues such as separate hand-washing and bottle preparation facilities for the infants. The paint on the infant cribs was chipping. The toys were donated and many were broken. The carpets in the rooms were not fire rated. The building fire alarm system was installed shortly after the building was built in 1956, and did not meet current fire safety standards, but had been *grandfathered* in. It was difficult to maintain proper heating and cooling conditions in the building. The plumbing was old and not functioning properly. The asbestos floor tile needed to be replaced in several areas. The kitchen was not

equipped to safely prepare food for meals served to the children. The meals and snacks received through the school system were expensive and not always appropriate for young children.

When the current director arrived in 1996, billing and scheduling were completed by hand. Computers were not available because of lack of funds. These were all challenges that required money. The center was in dire need for change.

The director determined that another plan was needed to stabilize Riverview. An important part of this plan was developing a set of goals. Short and long term goals were developed to assist the center. The short term goals were designed to address the immediate needs in relation to the care the children were receiving. The list included updating equipment, addressing health and safety needs, and adding computers to the administrative area of the facility. These items required immediate funds. The director applied for and received several small local contributions and one small grant. Computers, baby cribs, kitchen and office equipment were purchased to address some of the short term goals. A food program was set up to provide low cost, nutritious meals and snacks that met government food program guidelines. Long term goals were developed to do the following: 1. improve building conditions, 2. improve staff salaries and education, 3. develop a new curriculum, 4. establish a fund for purchasing new equipment on a yearly basis, 5. increase cash flow by lowering expenses and increasing income, 6. apply for grants, 7. locate ongoing funding resources, 8. provide each classroom with a set of computers for student use, 9. provide a computer for each teacher to use for curriculum and record keeping, and 10. improve community relations through a positive image campaign.

What are the Obstacles in Change for an Organization

Organizations may encounter a multitude of barriers during the change process.

Careful consideration must be given to the people within the organization. One main obstacle to achieving change is resistance. Resistance could come from the employees or from the clients the organization serves. Communication is often key in preventing resistance. Communicating what will happen before, during, and after the change process is very important in preventing problems. A second obstacle would involve the time factor. A slowing in the change process and stalling out are risks that need to be addressed. Often there may be legal issues, an over abundance of paperwork, or a continuous stream of problems that need to be addressed before moving ahead. This could take an inordinate amount of time and energy. Employee training on new procedures would consume time and money. Organizations must be able to decide whether the changes needed are worth the effort put forth to achieve success. Leaders must be responsible for the project and the time commitment required in achieving success. A lack of funds necessary to complete the change process could be a third obstacle. The road toward successful change is not always low cost. Resolving legal issues and completing paperwork may be expensive. The organization must research the costs involved in completing the change and determine if it is feasible or even possible to fund the change process.

Other obstacles involved the way Riverview was originally set up. In 1988, the Webster City School system was recognized as a pioneer in the State of Iowa for opening an early childhood center as a part of the school system. Unfortunately, not all of the planning steps were followed, the process was pushed through, and as a result the center quickly experienced difficulties. Financial hardship was created by a series of errors. The school system and child care director assumed they would receive state funds for the center start-up. When funds were

not appropriated, a financial burden was assumed by the school system. The school system was encouraged to open the center by leaders of a major industry located in Webster City. The leaders were concerned about the lack of child care available for its employees. Community financial support for the new center dissolved.

Over the next six years, problems arose that caused more financial burdens for the school system. The original superintendent left and the incoming superintendent was under the assumption that the child care center was to be closed, and the building would be sold to a local clinic. This is not what transpired. The following year, the original director retired, and the interim child care center administrator was given an ultimatum: become solvent and self-supporting in one year, or the center would be closed. The center did become solvent and self-supporting through a more organized billing and attendance contract system. In the meantime, the school system faced a decrease in state funding, and an increase in expenses. A new child care center director was hired and was presented with a new obstacle. The child care center was expected to assume an additional number of expenses; thus the budget was insufficient to cover the additional financial burden. Outside resources were limited because of the center's connection to the school system.

Because of this situation, the Friends of Riverview was established in order to provide a non-profit financial arm for the child care center. The Friends of Riverview board was assembled with individuals from the community that had knowledge in the areas of grant-writing, trust funds, endowments, and connection to people that could offer financial assistance. Unfortunately, legal issues regarding the non-profit status continued and did not seem to be resolvable. A meeting was held between the center director and the School Superintendent. The director proposed that the center and the school system mutually separate so that the center could

gain an independent non-profit tax status on its own. The idea behind the separation was that the center could gain access to a larger share of financial resources as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt corporation. The Friends of Riverview Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws were amended so the center could become Riverview Early Childhood Center, Inc. A new board of directors was formed and on July 1, 2001, the Riverview Early Childhood Center and the Webster City Community School District became two separate entities. The center experienced severe financial difficulties during the first year of operation as an independent unit. Riverview did not receive its non-profit tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service for almost a year. Because of this, the center was not able to participate in the government food program for reimbursement of meals served. Also, Riverview incurred many additional expenses for assuming its independence. These additional expenses and loss of revenue were devastating to the budget. In June of 2002, Riverview Early Childhood Center was officially declared a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. In December of 2002, Riverview was facing a tremendous amount of debt and little financial support, and the future was very uncertain. The Riverview Board of Directors rallied for the center and gained financial support from the community with three grants, and eventually reinstatement of government food program. The center was able to recover and gain financial stability. In July of 2003, Riverview Early Childhood Center was accepted as a member of the local United Fund, another funding entity that provides financial support for the center.

Riverview Early Childhood Center is in the completion stage of a \$330,000 renovation project. The renovation of the Riverview building addresses safety issues, handicapped accessibility issues, and building maintenance issues. The Riverview project is a part of the \$1.5

million Webster City Childcare Coalition project. The Webster City Childcare Coalition project was organized to answer the need for additional quality childcare in Webster City. The project includes renovating the Riverview Center and enlarging a second child care center in Webster City. The community was continually informed about the changes in Riverview through the local newspaper articles, radio interviews and town meetings. Coalition members were frequently asked to speak local service groups, city council and county supervisor meetings. As a result of the publicity, the coalition raised \$1.15 million of the \$1.5 million project costs. The project was funded through local industry and business contributions, a Community Development Block Grant through the city, a Racing and Gaming Commission of Iowa (RACI) grant through the Iowa Department of Economic Development and a USDA Rural Development loan. The school system obtained a Harkin Grant to assist in making the needed updates to the Riverview building. The coalition will continue to raise funds to eliminate any debt remaining on the project. The renovation project required shuffling of classrooms and schedule reprogramming in order to work within a center that was operating with half of its normal space. Meals were prepared off-site. Programs and meetings were held in other buildings. Timing of activities to compensate for the noise created by the renovation process were considered. Meetings were held with staff and parents to inform them of the process. Each parent had to sign a statement acknowledging that they were informed of the renovation process and that they understood what would be happening inside the building. The first few days and weeks were difficult. This change created an upheaval in the daily operations at the Riverview building. It was discovered throughout the project that even the main employees and parents that pushed for improvements were often the ones who were the most vocal in regard to the discomfort that the changes created.

Change is not easy, but each problem can be discussed and dealt with in a positive manner.

The director made herself available and visible throughout the project. Each parent and staff member was encouraged to meet with the director when a question or concern arose during the process.

The changes needed for the Riverview center were extensive. The center needed to change policies and procedures since it became independent. A lawyer and an accountant were consulted to assist with legal aspects of the change. One year later with the project in the final phase of completion, the leaders have seen successful change through commitment and dedication to the project.

CHAPTER 3

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Guidelines to Enhance the Change Process

In order to achieve change, there are general guidelines that enhance the change process. In my research, I have combined the general information into nine steps that assist in bringing about organizational change.

1. Determine the Need for Change

In determining the needs for change, the organization must be clear concerning the factors that will influence the need for change. The following questions should be asked, researched and answered to determine the kind of change that is necessary.

- A. Is the current mode of operation following guidelines set by licensing agencies? If not, why?
- B. Is the organization currently fulfilling the needs of the community? If not, why?
- C. Is the organization the best-suited agency to fulfill this need in the community?
- D. Is the organization capable of delivering the most up to date and professional service?
- E. Does this organization provide the best educational opportunities available to children and families in this community?
- F. If the organization were to make the necessary changes, will the community support these changes through use of the facility?
- G. Will the community provide financial support to accomplish the changes, leaving the organization improved and viable?

It is vital that the organization has completed the research in order to have the best vision for change. This vision also needs to be supported by the staff, families, and community. The best way to determine community support is through random public surveys and interviews with community leaders. The results of the surveys should be evaluated to determine the feasibility of the proposed change.

2. Make a Plan

Once it has been determined that the need for change is both feasible and attainable, a plan needs to be developed. In the beginning of the planning stages, information is gathered from the interviews and surveys. This information is used to guide the plan. Alternate courses of action should be investigated in the event that problems occur with the original plan. An expanded committee should be created. This committee should consist of officials that have knowledge of state and local regulations and guidelines. These people can assist in anticipating problems that may occur with the plan being developed. During this stage, the committee should be investigating what services are currently available in the community. Find out what similar organizations are offering. What is the difference between your organization and theirs? What are the recent changes that they have made and how those changes have affected them? How did they accomplish their changes? What, if anything, would they do differently? What is their vision for their organization? Compare your vision with their vision and determine what changes, if any, need to be made. This information should be used to create the plan for change and also to be used as information to develop an alternative plan.

3. Establish a Support Network

It is very important to establish relationships with community officials and leaders. It is best if these people know you and what you are trying to accomplish. People are more likely to

support a plan of change if they know the leader and know that he or she is capable and committed. These people need to be educated in the need for change in your organization and how accomplishing this change will help the community. Schedule a meeting with these people and give them time to offer suggestions and feedback. Use this information to guide the change process.

4. Publicize the Plan

When publicizing the plan for change, your goal will be to gain public input and support. In order to gain support, the public must understand the need for this change in your organization. It is vital to create a compelling vision (Bennis, 1999). The following points support creating that vision:

- A. People need to feel that the need for this change is too great to ignore.
- B. The information given should be clear and concise.
- C. The information should be easy to read.
- D. People need background information on what caused this need for change.
- E. The information needs to be accurate.
- F. Leaders need to have plenty of information to validate the plan.

As a general rule, the public forum should be no longer than one hour. In an article the main points should be covered in the first paragraph. Be ready to accept feedback, both positive and negative. Be prepared to respond to negativity with positive information that educates your audience. All information gained from this step should be used to shape the plan.

5. Set the Plan Into Action

After accomplishing the first four steps it is time to set the plan into action. Prior to beginning the plan of change, give plenty of notice. Publicize the start date for this change. Be

prepared for those involved that are not prepared for the change and plan ahead. Be prepared for the unplanned obstacles by using a simple four step plan modeled after the Deming Total Quality Management System:

- A. Identify the problem.
 - B. Determine the best plan of action.
 - C. Set the new plan into motion.
 - D. Check for results.
6. Monitor the Change Process

This is the time of imbalance. Persons involved will be on edge, and will have a number of questions. It is vital that the leaders in this change process are visible and available for questions or comments. Leaders need to be in motion and on the front line heading off potential roadblocks. It is also important to continue to provide the public with progress reports. Information on the phases and completion will assure them that changes are being accomplished. Remind the public of this need for change and that it is a WIN-WIN situation (Covey, 1999). It is important to keep a daily progress report. Note the changes and methods used in problem solving. A good public relations tool is the use of pictures; they are also nice to have for the recognition ceremony showing the progress timeline.

7. Stabilize Center Change

Once the organizational change is progressing, there is a period of stabilizing on a teetering base. It is a time in which people become acclimated to the change process. It could be equated to the last hill of a roller coaster ride. The end is nearing but there are still those final curves and turns that must be negotiated before the big fall. Toward the end of the change process there is one final concern. This is where the people involved in the change are

anticipating the end. There are many questions still to be answered. A range of emotion arises in anticipation of the conclusion of the change. It is again important that the leader is there to provide feedback as to how the changes will happen at the conclusion of this plan, and also how it will affect the people involved.

8. Celebrate Fruition-Project Completion

Take a moment to savor the accomplishment. Recognize the people involved in this project. Hold a recognition ceremony to recognize and thank the supporters and people involved in the successful completion of the plan. Hold an Open House to show the public the changes made and what work was involved in accomplishing those changes.

9. Assess the Accomplishment through Continuous Improvement

Once the change is accomplished, an assessment should be completed. The committee involved in setting up the plan should evaluate the project. The leader should continuously monitor the changes and determine how the organization is dealing with change. If problems arise, the leader should investigate the best course of action and decide whether the situation can be improved or modified to bring about continuous improvement.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine conditions needed to effectively initiate and produce change, to explore how change can be accomplished effectively at Riverview Early Childhood Center and what guidelines are needed for appropriate change. The paper addressed the following four questions:

1. What are the characteristics of an organization in need of change?

One of the characteristics of an organization in need of change is instability. The organization is experiencing either growth or decline too rapidly and is unable to meet the needs of its customers.

A second characteristic is that the organization does not have the most appropriate services available for its customers. The organization and its employees should be using techniques, methods, and equipment that are widely accepted by professionals in the field. The organization is in need of funding to obtain the needed training, and equipment with the purpose of providing the service.

A third characteristic is that the organization is not flexible or able to meet its customer's needs. An organization must provide a needed service for its customer. An organization that is not able to fill a need will become obsolete.

2. Why is change necessary for an organization?

Organizational change could be necessary for a number of reasons. It is important to understand why the need exists. The organization must identify the problem or cause and then

establish an authentic reason or need for change. The change must provide benefits that outweigh the efforts put forth to accomplish the transformation.

3. What are the obstacles to change for an organization?

One main obstacle to achieving change is resistance. Resistance could be within the company or the clients. Communication is often key in preventing resistance. Communicating what will happen before, during, and after the change process is very important in preventing problems.

A second obstacle to consider is the time factor. A tremendous amount of research is required in order to avoid getting slowed down or stalled out in the process. Organizations must be able to decide whether this change is worth the effort put forth to achieve success.

A lack of funds necessary to complete the change process could be a third obstacle. The organization must research the costs involved in completing the change and determine if it is feasible or even possible to fund the change process.

4. What are the guidelines are needed to enhance the change process so that Riverview Early Childhood Center will survive?

These guidelines are the following:

- A. Clearly communicate the factors influencing the need for change.
- B. A plan needs to be developed.
- C. Establish relationships with community officials and leaders and tell them about the project.
- D. Publicize the plan and create a compelling vision.
- E. Set the plan into action
- F. Monitor the change process.

- G. Stabilize the changes made.
- H. Fruition- enjoy the success.
- I. Reevaluate for continuous improvement.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from this study:

1. Change begins with instability. The need for change must be authentic and compelling.

The reason to change must appear to be self driven.

2. Accomplishing a change initiative is difficult. The leaders must be able to see the project through to the end, whether the end is successful or a failure. Leaders are to be visible, and must be able to meet each obstacle and resolve issues effectively and efficiently. Clear commitment and dedication by the leaders is vital.

3. Time, effort, and money are the three main factors that affect successful change. A thorough plan of action must address each of these issues. The benefits of the change initiative must outweigh the drawbacks from the three main factors involved in creating successful change.

4. A successful change initiative is accomplished through a leader who has built a strong support network.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are considered necessary in order to initiate change in other programs and institutions.

1. It is recommended that additional studies are needed to look at the role of the change agent in other early child care and education programs.
2. It is recommended that the resources need to be examined concerning what is needed in

order for change to take place in other programs.

3. It is recommended that a study be conducted concerning the common obstacles that tend to retard the change process in other programs.

4. It is recommended that a study be conducted on the role of the community in community-based child cares, in order to bring about change.

5. It is recommended that a study be completed to look at the benefits of change in other child care programs.

6. It is recommended that a study be conducted on the changes that have occurred at the Riverview Early Childhood Center, and determine if further changes need to be made.

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