

Change Management in Public Health

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Change Management in Public Health

What is Change Management and why is it important?

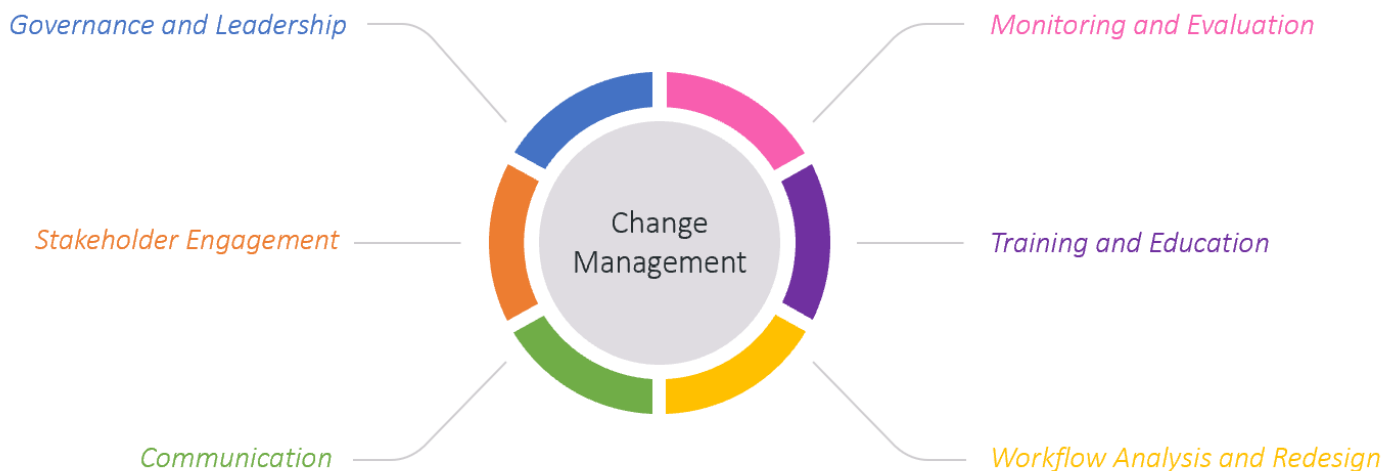
- Change management is the practice and process of supporting people through change, with the goal of ensuring that the change is successful in the long term. Change management helps people to change their behaviors, attitudes, and/or work processes to achieve a desired business objective or outcome.
- Change management as a discipline includes the processes, tools, and techniques used to manage the human elements of change which are applied at the individual, project, and organizational level before, during, and after the change occurs.
- The implementation of health technologies is both expensive and time-consuming, often requiring significant changes to user workflows. Change management ensures that these projects are successful, by helping to organize and disseminate information and change management practices throughout the organization.

How is change management different from project management?

Change management and project management are complementary disciplines, both with the aim of ensuring organizational success through improvements. Change management; however, focuses on helping employees to manage the disruption they experience during a change, while project management focuses on ensuring that a project is completed on time, and on budget.

What are the core elements of Change Management?

- There are 6 core elements of change management:



- Each of these 6 core elements must be accounted for through a change management plan. Each plan helps to ensure that a key component of the change process is considered carefully and thoroughly and that the change is successfully implemented and adopted with minimal organizational or individual resistance.
 - These 6 elements are described below, along with an introduction to the fundamental concepts underpinning their importance during change management initiatives, and the components most commonly included in each element's plan.

1. Governance and Leadership

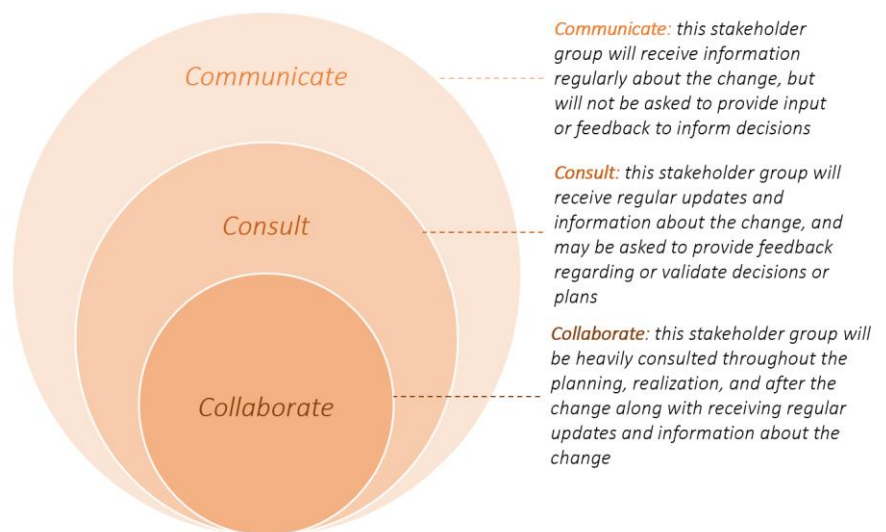
- Governance refers to the mechanisms that guide the course of an organization or project. Effective governance gives the individuals in an organization an understanding of the strategic view and the reasoning behind what is being done and why. This gives individuals an understanding of the project aim, direction, and tasks involved in the execution, reducing confusion that might otherwise lead to resistance.
- Without an engaged leadership structure supporting the change activities, there is a risk of decreased productivity and reduced buy-in from stakeholders involved in the change process.
- For a governance model to be complete, it should identify three key elements:
 - **Principles:** the guiding principles which the governance model should adhere to
 - **Structures:** the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the project, including individuals, committees, and organizational units
 - **Processes:** the operating model and policies for operating the model and making decisions

Governance and Leadership

- ✓ All guiding principles are established and documented
- ✓ All roles involved in the change management are clearly identified, including individuals, committees, and organizations
- ✓ All responsibilities during the change management process are clearly defined, and are attributed to specific roles
- ✓ Policies for operationalizing the governance model have been documented, agreed upon, and distributed to all roles

2. Stakeholder Engagement

- Engaging all stakeholders in a planned and organized way ensures that all individuals that will be affected by the change are well-prepared for and understand the need for change. It also helps guide and plan for the incorporation of stakeholder perspectives in planning for change, which is a vital component of change management success.
- A stakeholder engagement plan should be made, detailing which stakeholders will be engaged, at what points in the change process, and for what purposes.
- After stratifying stakeholders into the above levels, it is useful to consider what form of engagement might be used for each. For example, collaboration might be achieved through co-design groups, or through interactive focus group



sessions. The type of engagement session will influence the type and volume of feedback gained; therefore, it is important to consider the objective of the engagement session, and what method might facilitate its accomplishment.

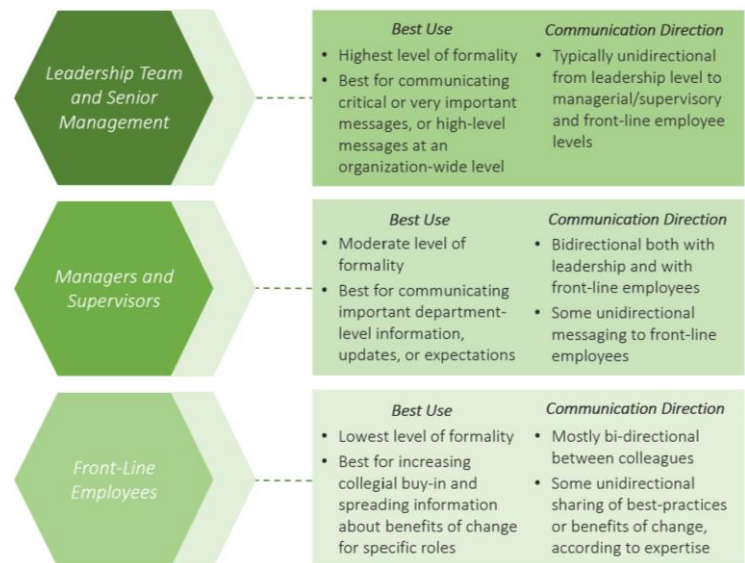
- Engaging all roles in change planning and management helps to reduce resistance to change, or confusion related to the change, and helps to ensure that no stakeholder perspective is missed.

Stakeholder Engagement

- ✓ All stakeholders have been clearly identified and characterized
- ✓ Communicate, Consult, and Collaborate stakeholder group memberships have been created and agreed upon by the change management governance committee
- ✓ The mechanisms of interaction (e.g. emails, workshops, surveys, etc.) with each stakeholder group have been selected

3. Communications

- In order for change to be affected within an organization, communication and messaging must be proactive, consistent, and repeated. Communication in this context refers not only to the information that is disseminated about technical specifications, dates, and requirements but also to building the organizational understanding of the value of the change and generating commitment to change at all levels within the organization.
- A communication plan should be developed in the early stages of change planning. This communications plan should consider the various roles, sponsors, and stakeholders involved in or affected by the change, and what the best method of communication with them is at each stage of the change (particularly whether the communication should be uni or bidirectional).
- The communication plan should also consider what key messages should be directed at what section of the audience, and what each role's information requirements might be.

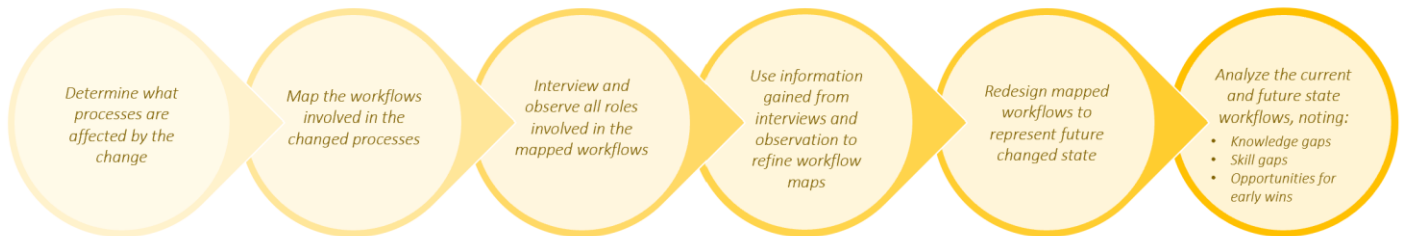


Communications

- ✓ Key messages have been clearly identified, and are understood by all
- ✓ A communication plan has been created, considering what roles will be responsible for communicating what messages, and whether the communication will be bidirectional
- ✓ All individuals responsible for communicating during the change are aware of their roles, and have agreed to follow their scheduled communications

4. Workflow Analysis and Redesign

- Workflow analysis increases organizational and individual understanding of how work is currently performed. This may provide clarity on how processes can be improved or enhanced during the implementation of new technologies or systems.



- Often, the implementation of new systems is focused on training end users rather than examining how new systems impact a user's current workflow. However, mapping current state workflows not only allows for a better understanding of knowledge gaps thereby improving the efficiency and precision of training but also allows the organization to revisit current practices and introduce new efficiencies.

Workflow Analysis and Redesign

- ✓ All workflows and processes affected by the change have been identified, mapped, and redesigned
- ✓ Redesigned workflows have been analyzed, and all knowledge and skill gaps have been identified, along with any possible early wins

5. Training and Education

- Training and education are essential for staff to be able to effectively realize a change. Education is necessary for staff to understand both why and how they must change, and training is required for employees to be able to carry out the functional activities and build the new skills required for the change.
- Education requirements for different employees in an organization undergoing change are usually the same or similar and do not need to be tailored to a specific role. Education should be provided early in the project and may be provided through meetings, townhalls, newsletters, or emails. Training should be role-specific and should be provided near a change's beginning to affect that role. For example, if a new EHR is being implemented in a hospital in a phased roll-out, physicians should receive training to use the computerized physician order entry system shortly before that feature becomes available to them. Providing training in this way allows staff to manage a larger change in smaller, simpler units, and helps to ensure that they do not become overwhelmed or forget the training before they can use it.

What is the difference between education and training?

Education builds understanding of the value and benefits of change, and the process that change may follow, whereas training builds the skills and abilities of employees.

Training and Education

- ✓ Education sessions have been planned to build knowledge and understanding of the change
- ✓ Training sessions for each role have been designed, with the training material tailored to that specific role
- ✓ Training sessions have been planned to occur just prior to the first instance of that skill being used

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Evaluation and monitoring are not only important for determining whether a project has been successful, but also are important throughout change management initiatives to ensure that the desired changes are being affected. For some projects, monitoring and evaluation may only need to be discussed briefly at project meetings, while for others it may include all factors listed to the right. Regardless, the ongoing performance and success of a change or series of changes should be consistently monitored and evaluated during and after the change.

- Change should be monitored and evaluated on two levels; the individual level, and the organization level. Organization change management evaluation

methods and metrics have significant crossover with traditional project evaluation and monitoring metrics, for example, the use of key performance indicators to gauge project status. Along with traditional project evaluation metrics, certain change management-specific metrics should also be continuously monitored and evaluated, such as the evaluation of change management activity effectiveness through a combination of indicators, as seen above.

- By monitoring and evaluating change management, it is possible to course-correct should evaluations reveal that the change management initiatives are not delivering the desired results, helping ensure the success of projects.

Individual Change Management Performance

Understanding and acceptance of the rationale for change:

- Employee feedback
- Compliance and adherence metrics
- Employee readiness assessment results

Skills and abilities to enact the change:

- Adoption metrics
- Usage and utilization metrics
- Proficiency measures
- Error logs and help desk calls
- Observed behaviour change

Change management performance

- Tracking change management activities conducted relative to planned
- Performance improvements
- Progress and adherence to plan and timeline
- Project KPI measurements

Change management activity effectiveness

- Training effectiveness measures
- Training participation and attendance
- Communication deliveries
- Employee feedback

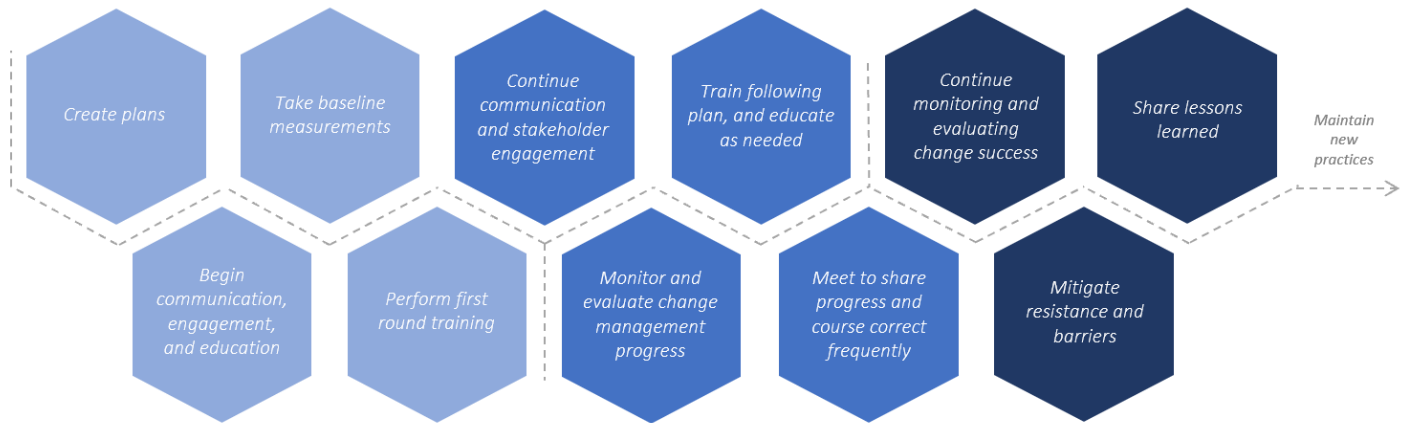
Organizational Change Management Performance

Monitoring and Evaluation

- ✓ Appropriate evaluation criteria have been chosen, defined, documented, and distributed as needed
- ✓ Procedures have been established to define how each evaluation criterion will be measured, and by whom
- ✓ The project management or change management team has set a regular schedule to convene and discuss the change initiative's progress, and review recent evaluations

How does effective change occur?

- Constructing plans and strategies, although important for change management initiative planning, will not alone lead to a successful change project. The strategies and plans must be applied to a change project in a tactful and well-thought-out manner, which may be difficult as an implementation date approaches.
- A change management initiative may be broken into three temporal phases, as seen below:



Phase 1: Before the Change

The governance, communication, stakeholder engagement, training and education, and monitoring and evaluation plans should be developed and shared

Baseline measurements should be taken

Communication, engagement, and education should begin prior to the change occurring

The first round of training should occur just prior to the first subset of changes

Phase 2: During the Change

Throughout the change period, it is important to communicate frequently, and follow engagement plans

Change progress should be evaluated frequently, and used to inform course-correction as needed

Employees should be trained as set out in the training plan

The change management and project management teams should meet often to review progress, and revise plans as needed

Phase 3: After the Change

After the full change or series of changes have occurred, it is important for a thorough evaluation of the success of the change to be done and reviewed by the change management team

Any areas where the change has not been sufficiently successful according to the evaluation criteria should be addressed iteratively until the change is determined to be successful

- Effective change management for large-scale initiatives such as Digital Health initiatives is both resource and time-consuming. The development of the various core plans and strategies requires the dedication of staff for a significant period of time, and following these plans and strategies throughout the duration of the change period may be difficult and expensive. However, organizations build their change management competency with each change initiative completed, and with this increasing competency, the time and resources required may become less. Certain change management plans or strategies may become embedded in the organization and may be reused for multiple future initiatives, for example, the future state workflow maps created may become the current state maps for another change management initiative, thereby reducing the time and resources required.

References. Canada Health Infoway (May 2011). “A Framework and Toolkit for Managing eHealth Change: People and Processes”. Pan-Canadian Change Management Network.

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