

# Revolutionising the Management of Change

*By Johan Opperman and Cobus Terblanche*

Change is a hot topic. The world is in a state of flux. Demands for less avaricious business practices, greener industries, friendlier, people-centric services, sustainable business models ensuring longevity, smarter technologies using less resources and doing more, are common themes which are impassively promoted by politicians, lobbyists, interest groups and even child activists. The world is calling out for change.

Our own president has called for change in all levels of society to among other things, exploit the benefits promised by the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution. The hope is that resultant improvements lead to enhanced business and service delivery that succinctly addresses the diverse, fickle and ever-changing needs of citizens demanding a better quality of life.

Politicians and business leaders are united in supporting the notion of managing change and regularly issue calls for improving the proficiency of different businesses and often use buzz words and vague terms to impress the urgency of the call to their various forums. In the meanwhile, political dissenters and aggrieved customers protest, burn and destroy infrastructure to make their discontent felt and to spur decision-makers and leaders into action, of sorts.

The question on the lips of many organisations then surely is, how to best master and manage change without laying the organisation bare to self-destruction?

Will VUCA, playing off the complexities of decision-making against the volatility and uncertainties of ambiguous change requirements do it? Will BPM, automated management of business processes, be the silver bullet? Will systems thinking, based on customer centric and business canvas modelling, hold potential as a management talisman? Batho Pele, Six Sigma, Process Motivation and 101 other change methodologies, tools and techniques have been tried and used with some enthusiasm and success, but none offer a complete, guaranteed recipe for managing change successfully and consistently, especially when change is unexpected and unplanned.

If, as Forest Gump might say, "Change happens!", what is an organisation to do? The choices seem obvious; anticipate and prepare for change, ignore change until the "bleeding edge" is blunted and handling patterns and safeguards emerge to guide the organisation through the troubled waters of inevitable change; or wait and react only when all other options are exhausted and the organisation finds itself out on a limb. Each approach has pro's and con's, but one thing is certain, in each approach, the results of the change decisions is evident only over time and the outcome is either positive with a new way of doing business, if the organisation is lucky; or it becomes the extended death knell heralding a sinking ship.

Managing change in an organisation is both an art and a science in itself. The art is knowing what to do, when to do it, and where to do it, to achieve a desired outcome. The science is knowing how to do it and having the means available to do it. Making a mistake in any of these aspects can lead to failure and irrecoverable disaster that may speed up the end of the organisation. It also eats up available assets and resources, depletes budgets, energy and motivation and more often than not results in a change of guard with senior executives unceremoniously booted out of office.

Managing change in an organisation is as important as managing the business itself and if it is so important, why blindly outsource it to a third party?

Managing change is pre-requisite on:

- Assessing the readiness of the organisation to embrace and make changes.
- Identifying areas where meaningful results can be achieved quickly, so that patterns for achieving ‘small victories’ can be established, because these serve as milestones to mark progress and encourage employees, especially when the going gets tough.
- Identifying “soft issues” that impact the organisational “mind-set”.
- Identifying “hard issues” that require firm decision-making and allocate roles, responsibilities and accountability to full time employees.
- Identifying human resource requirements which may be external to the establishment.
- Structuring programmes and projects to manage different aspects of change, since change requirements may oscillate between complex, large scale and small, high impact requirements to test or pilot change concepts and find new ways of doing business. One thing is certain though, it is not business as usual.
- Establishing reporting lines and accountability points to catch and resolve issues before they become log jam problems to hinder organisational change.

Symmetrix is a local (South African) methodology that may be used by any organisation to manage change. First of all, it is not a prescriptive methodology, nor is it a technique or a “change management” tool. It may be used across the whole organisation or it may be confined to a smaller sub-set of the organisation, such as a particular business unit. It requires no specialist knowledge and the results are easy to interpret in graphs and presentations, making it user-friendly for busy managers charged with managing change.

Assessing business performance as a precursor to embarking on a change programme offers the following benefits:

- It puts the organisation in charge of managing its change.
- It highlights the organisation’s appetite for risk taking and change.
- It delegates precise roles and responsibilities for external parties against quantifiable baseline measures.
- It helps to identify the real “pain points” which beset the organisation.
- It establishes where the worst of the problem is located in the organisation.
- It determines which department or sub-section of the establishment is affected the most.
- It establishes what needs to be fixed before purchase decisions on methodologies, tools or techniques are necessary. This in turn facilitates planning, timing and determining the size of the budget, the scale of the project and the expertise required from outside the organisation to assist in this endeavour.

A Symmetrix Business Performance Assessment Tool is useful for capturing the perception of executive level managers (i.e. the business leaders) about managing change. This usually takes the form of a facilitated work session where the responses to questions on the hard and soft dimensions of change are measured firstly, as individual responses and then, collectively as a consensus response. Each survey question is rated on a scale of 0 to 5, “0=Don’t Know”, through “1=Strongly Disagree” to “5=Strongly Agree”. Thereafter the consensus vote for each hard and soft issue is prioritised by the executives in their order of preference. This rating serves as a weighting and it is the weighted score that is used to establish a baseline for measuring purposes.

The next step is to expand the survey by questioning the employee response to the same set of questions. Depending on the nature of the change requirements, even customers and external stakeholders can be included in the survey. The survey questions are distributed by means of an electronic form and the responses are totally anonymous, unless the executive managers motivate otherwise. The responses are tracked on a daily basis, but the period can be shortened or extended, as necessary. An “automated consensus” of responses to questions is produced so that the collective employee response may be compared to the executive response. Figure 1 illustrates a typical chart that may be used for comparison purposes to show out gaps and priority areas.

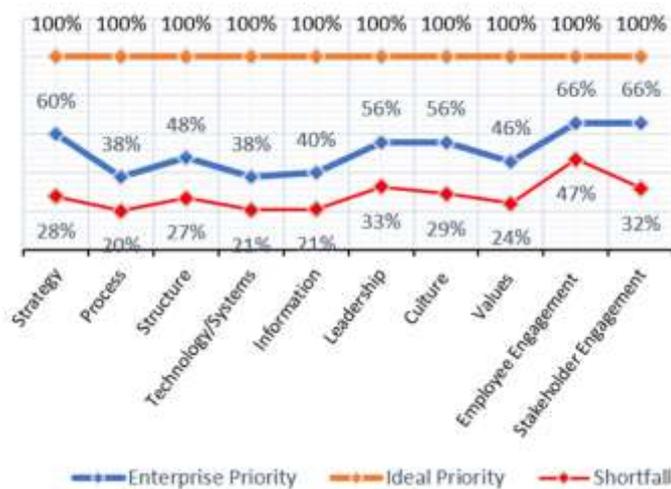


Figure 1: Gap Analysis in Expectations

In Figure 1 it is easy to see that focusing on technology changes may solve some business requirements, but it may be at the expense of stakeholders and employees who have different ideas about things like strategy, employee and stakeholder engagements. Thus, the change imperative may become wider than just a focus on technology. This type of graph has hidden spin-offs for the organisation, in that it may identify growth initiatives to work into the overall organisation strategy, for example, moving technology and information requirements towards the 100 % mark over a period of time. It is also easy to undertake follow up measures at regular periods to check on the progress of the strategy and to check if implemented changes are in fact making a real difference to business.

Other spin-offs of the Symmetrix methodology includes, but is not limited to:

- Business modelling, especially the business modelling canvas where the interaction between business and customers, via specific channels to generate revenue or contain costs may be mapped to find strategic initiatives that contribute to delighting the customer with service delivery or other value-adding propositions.
- Building a framework for organisation performance and/or an organisational performance management system that is specific to the organisation and not a generic or “customised” version of another organisation’s solution.
- Guiding strategic management and planning.
- Defining risk management strategies and disaster management plans.
- Defining business continuity requirements under varying conditions.
- Developing training scenarios for succession planning, talent spotting, employee development or disaster responding situations.

- Organisational creativity is encouraged and so the return on investment amounts to more than just investment money.

Symmetrix is revolutionising the management of change by putting organisations in full, direct control of managing change through:

- Assisting the organisation to gauge its appetite for change.
- Analysing the gap in expectations.
- Identifying change imperatives.
- Constructing a change plan that can be managed dynamically to ensure that cost and time targets are met and not exceeded.

With a change plan in hand, the organisation can buy in tools, techniques, methodologies, hire professional support and set them to work achieving the goals and objectives of a change plan complete with definitive milestones and accurate measuring points.

For more information on the Symmetrix Business Performance Assessment Tool, please contact Johan Opperman on 0826549356 or Cobus Terblanche on 0832817246. (VUCA: volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity)

## **PRODUCTIVITY IN GAUTENG WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**(Feedback from Workshop 1 August 2019)**

**Ms. Futhi Kgwefane**

Gauteng Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) is tasked with the responsibility to ensure support of the implementation of the approved Organisational Development & Design (OD&D) Framework. The Organisational Development and Design Framework covers 15 chapters, which outline core functions which express OD, as a discipline that is informed by relatively integrated set of theories, ideas and practices. The framework seeks to serve as guide to OD technocrats and further provide practical preparation for facilitating change processes and scientific method approaches to increase organisational effectiveness in Gauteng Municipalities. **Chapter 7 of the OD & D Framework focuses on Productivity Improvement.** This Chapter encourages OD Practitioners and Managers to constantly find mutual beneficial ways in assessing the Municipalities current performance and identifying gaps and areas of improvement. By means of finding valid and relevant productivity measures that can be reasonably applied to local government. The lack of appropriate productivity measures for Gauteng has contributed to the neglect of local government productivity management.

The impact of waste on the environment and health of humans is an immense cause for concern. As population and urbanization increase, so does waste generation, thus placing pressure on the environment. The increase in waste generation therefore calls for environmentally acceptable and cost-effective waste disposal mechanisms. Policies and legislation have been put in place to protect the environment and the public from the impacts of bad waste disposal practices. However, enforcement and monitoring of

Legislation has proven to be difficult due to various reasons inter alia a lack of adequate knowledge. CoGTA conducted productivity assessments in Waste Management, Gauteng municipalities.

CoGTA acknowledged that waste management services have been neglected in measuring and assessing productivity improvement in the midst of supporting service delivery departments. Furthermore, CoGTA consulted with Environmental Management industry experts to gauge the performance and depth of the Waste Management Services in South Africa. The work done by industry experts in Gauteng towards the advancement of Waste Management Services as a service delivery area and a field of study contributed to the need for CoGTA to conduct a workshop on Productivity Improvement key focus areas of Waste Management Services.

The workshop was aimed at equipping OD Professionals to consider Waste Management good practices, compliance matters, challenges and any developing trends in the provision of Municipal services specifically to Waste Management Services, as this target group has the responsibility in designing and maintaining functional structures that respond to the needs of the community. The Workshop was not a training session, but rather to gather information in a two-way communication, between the Facilitator/s, OD Professionals and Waste Management Professionals. The benefits from the workshop included:

- Knowledge Sharing;
- Enhancing awareness and understanding of Waste Management issues, based on the Priority key focus Areas:
  - Disposal Infrastructure Development;
  - Waste Collection Processes;
  - Institutional Capacity and Human Resources;
  - Financial Resources;
  - Waste Management Awareness and Waste Information System;
  - Management of Illegal Activities/Dumping;
  - Waste Minimization; and
  - Customer Satisfaction on Service Delivery.

Recommendations from the workshop considered that municipalities across Gauteng varies in size. Therefore, municipalities adopt different organizational structures, hence waste management services are not dedicated to the same department in all municipalities. Irrespective of where in the municipality the waste management function resides, it is important to have a dedicated section dealing with waste management issues. It is further important that waste related awareness creation and education must also be accounted for. From the feedback received during the workshop, it was clear that challenges or problems exist in the various waste management sections/departments. COGTA can assist in addressing the following important issues to ensure the success of an effective and efficient waste management service in the various municipalities namely:

- Assist in creating waste management awareness and establishing support to the waste management departments in the various municipalities,

- Understanding the core problems experienced by the waste management department in each municipality,
- Providing support in the development of policies and strategies to improve waste management in the various municipalities. Also intervene when the approval process is not adequate.
- Provide assistance/inputs into the human resource structure to ensure a dedicated and motivated workforce in the various municipalities,
- Provide guidance to formulate Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for each staff member in the waste management departments (according to their roles and responsibilities, from managers to general workers), and
- Assist in measuring productivity to ensure full utilization of waste management staff members.

## **Air Pollution Today – The Ink in the Pen to Sign the Future of Tomorrow.**

*The innovative ways countries are dealing with a global waste problem.*

**By Leandri Lotz**

Have you ever thought of harnessing all the carbon emissions in the air and produce ink from the soot?

This is exactly what Anirudh Sharma and a group of his friends did. In 2012 when he returned to India from a student trip, he saw a diesel generator blowing clouds of black soot onto a wall; and this got him thinking of the potential to create ink with this residue. Since traditional black inks are produced from burning fossil fuels, this idea was not so farfetched. Back in his Boston laboratory, he started with a primitive experiment using a candle, a computer fan, vegetable oil, vodka and an empty ink cartridge. By persisting and refining his primitive methods, he successfully managed to produce ink for a printer cartridge which actually worked.

Then Anirudh moved his vision back to India and started his stint as a not-so-mad scientist.

His first attempt was to build a prototype car emission-collecting unit fitted to the roof of a vehicle resembling something like the DeLorean in Back to the Future movie. He and his friends subsequently collected the carbon residue of the exhaust in the DeLorean-contraption from where they harvested it for their experiments. They were surprised by the amount of carbon waste that was collected from this one vehicle and as a result they were able to push their experiments until they successfully produced a very crude form of ink to write with.

After destroying the dorm room and blowing up the laboratory, the successful production of black writable ink at a small scale sent their imagination and business sense skyrocketing and it was not long before they started collecting carbon waste everywhere in New Delhi. One of their pursuits was to incentivise bigger producers of carbon waste to sell them the waste material by the bag full instead of dumping it illegally in rivers.

Since 4 to 5 million people die annually due to air pollution alone, this project had all the markings of a global game changer.

Anirudh and his friends started their business on the floor of his apartment, producing the ink, gathering orders and shipping their pens to the buyers. In order to share the vision, they managed to get an artist to incorporate their ink in an art project as part of their marketing plan.

This goes to show that waste that is effectively managed can be recycled to be used in a productive and profitable manner.

### **Solid Waste Management**

Carbon emission recycling is not the only way people are trying to save the environment from the plethora of waste we are creating daily.

Many countries have extensive waste management programmes where waste products are sorted between organic matter and all the categories of non-organic matter such as metals, plastics, rubber, etc. The organic matter like food scraps, garden cuttings, etc. are composted and re-distributed to the agricultural section and the rest is dealt with according to the components. Nothing is wasted.

In Asia they have extensive in-house recycling programmes. Residents are obliged to sort all their waste into appropriate categories and it involves more than just paper, plastic, metal and glass bins. Education on the different materials plays a major role in the waste management process and items are sorted by "ingredients" rather than just a general category.

Places like Britain, some cities in America, Sweden, Germany, India and China are on the forefront of waste management and they are using waste as a benefit rather than a liability. South Africa also has hopes of better waste management strategies for the future, but has a long way to go. Banning plastic straws and bags are just the beginning, but more innovation is required to deal with the existing waste. South Africa's recycling efforts is still in its infancy whereas Britain's salvage efforts started as far back as the second World War, where everything which could be recycled and even household bone scraps was recycled into glycerine to use in fuelling the items of warfare.

South Africa is nevertheless far from hopeless in the waste management endeavour, because companies such as EnviroServ Waste Management have been around since 1979 and was the first company of its kind to offer solutions for waste management which are still today recognised as best practices in the waste management sector. Then there is the "Urban Miner" culture that has rapidly grown and is helpful in the recycling of

waste. These people dig in refuse bins, removing what they can sell to waste companies to earn money for survival and even to pay for their education.

Recycling plastic into roof tiles and fence posts is not a new concept. Factories for the recycling of these materials are successfully implemented in various countries and it offers a waterproof, heat resistant product to deal with housing challenges as well as the pollution problem at the same time.

Plastic roads are another exciting avenue if you will, to deal with the problem of potholes and general road maintenance. I do however think extensive research is required into the manufacturing of roads from plastic instead of asphalt, because the handling of vehicles might differ on such a surface (the way the roads absorb the shock of traffic at different speeds, oil build up can cause roads to become more slippery, rain water will not soak into the plastic and dissipate as it does with tar roads, leading to wet surfaces and the danger of accidents).

Waste can also be turned into electricity as done by the UK exporting their waste to other European countries, who then in turn generate electricity from the waste to be imported back into the UK. South Africa could benefit greatly from such a project with the recent return of load shedding periods when the power supplier is under pressure.

With the strategies as mentioned in this article the aim is to send less waste into landfills, which leads to less emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane gases into the atmosphere. Just because something breaks down over time does not mean that harmful gases are not created and chemicals are not leached into the ground water systems. All of the above are ways that the citizens of the world are striving to ensure that the generations to come, still have a habitable earth and maybe as a bonus: a pen to document the rest of the history.

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