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## ***“CHANGE MANAGEMENT” - THE 12 STEP PROCESS***

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### **Introduction**

The two chief trends currently at work in the business world, rapid development of technology and globalization, have brought not only business opportunities and opportunities to grow that were unforeseeable a decade ago, they have wrought serious challenges to for profit companies and non-profit organizations. In order to adapt to this challenging environment that we call the “rugged landscape” and in order to develop and maintain a competitive edge, Growth Strategies, Inc. assists organizations launch and carry through on transformation programs to realize significant and lasting change.

How to create, fund, staff and manage successful change programs in such diverse areas as leadership and governance, general business strategy, organizational development, strategic alliances, employee empowerment and productivity/quality improvement programs have all become key issues for today’s business leaders.

The Center for Organizational Transformation at Growth Strategies, Inc. assists organizations in identifying the challenges and opportunities that confront your organization in order to develop, promote and manage the transformation necessary to keep your organization ahead in this rapidly changing business world. Significant change should be an integral part of your organization’s operations, fully supported and implemented by both management and employees throughout the work flow and governance processes of your organization. The change process that we have found successful involves twelve steps:

### **Beginning A Change Process**

**1.0** Understand trends in your industry, the competitive context and assess the key areas where your organization is not keeping up with or leading these trends. Create the incentives to fuel change. Get a strong grasp of the tough organizational challenges your organization faces and identify the root causes and solutions to these operational and structural challenges.

The organization should conduct research and analysis to understand the changing external environments and to make a detailed assessment of the internal organizational environments. Then, it must identify the organization’s transformation needs, both in specific areas and in the priority for each necessary change. Questions such as the ones listed below can guide the change/transformation process:

- Why are we beginning the transformation?
- What are the needs for change?
- Why is it the right time to make the change?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages/risks to change?

### **Plotting the Landscape**

**2.0** Map all current change activities – both the ongoing initiatives and those that are planned to be carried out at all levels of the organization. Usually there are change processes going on that are not fully understood, may require contradictory behavior and management must have a clear road map if what is going on before it embarks on yet another “change process.”

### **Will It Work**

**3.0** Assess the implementation feasibility of the change program within the organization. As part of the development of any change program, leaders in the organization must analyze the state of the organization, its ability to absorb the change and identify the financial and human resources necessary and available to implement the change/transformation program. Such an analysis should focus on:

- A clear budget that allocates financial resources clearly
- Technologies required and the competence to successfully implement them
- Internal and external political and emotional support
- Human/personnel resources and their capabilities
- Set timetable/milestones
- Define key roles (including champion’s role)
- Define measurable desired results
- Establish key change monitoring roles/ functions

### **Tracking Change Efforts**

**4.0** Develop a Change Matrix to keep records and to monitor the changes in the process.

In this case, your organization will identify the particular stage that each activity is in to ensure the change program is following the correct course.

- Name of project
- Major goals
- Sponsors
- Budget
- Start/end date
- Implement
- Assessors

### **Describe The Results**

**5.0** Develop a Results Matrix

A Results Matrix should be developed to capture detailed information on the status of the activities being implemented. By comparing obtained results with the desired results, both in the areas of finance and performance, management and employees can assess whether the change programs have achieved their expected results and measure their contribution to improvement in performance.

- Name of project
- Results sought
- Results obtained
- Version explained
- Projected budget
- Actual budget

**Learning/Growth/Capacity Building Are the Key Results**

**6.0 Develop A Learning/Growth/Capacity Building Matrix**

Through developing a Learning or Capacity Building Matrix, management can not only receive implementation feedback and identify improvements in each area; it can also summarize and analyze invaluable lessons derived from the change process: assessment, design, launch, implementation and review. All of this information should be stored in the organization's database as reference documents for later change programs and organizational learning.

- Name of project
- Process Implement
- Skills improvement
- Knowledge improvement
- Organizational cultural change
- Leadership Improvement

**7.0 Develop A Best Practice Matrix**

Both the successful and unsuccessful change efforts should be analyzed step by step to assist management and employees improve their strategies and determine the leadership style, implementation and change approaches that optimize performance. These best practices should be written up so that their teachings can be adapted to shifting circumstances as the environment changes.

- Name of project
- Specific example of best practice
- Genealogical lesson from best practice
- Contact person for more information

**Communications**

**8.0 Develop a Communication Plan for each change program.**

To ensure the success of the program, full involvement of all segments of the organization at all levels is critical. Because divisions and functional departments are closely connected and influenced by each other, use of an efficient and effective communication plan is necessary to guarantee that all information related to the change program is posted to all of the organization's members and that cooperation is achieved within the organization on the change program itself.

The Communication Plan will also serve as a feedback channel in the transformation process. A communication plan which promotes information flow both up the ladder and down the latter will make an organization an open-opinion system and contribute to the effective implementation of the change program.

Before implementing the change programs, management must solicit input from employees, vendors, customers, board members and other stakeholders of the organization. After evaluating this input, management must explain the transformation mission and goals clearly to all members of the organization and again seek opinions at all levels and from each division. Then in the launch and implementation phases, different, specific roles should be assigned clearly and communicated to all of the members. This step is meant to stimulate the employees' active participation in the transformation process and promote support from all sectors of the organization, which will disburse the implementation of the change throughout the organization, rather than allowing it to remain an operation of only the top-levels of the organization.

Anticipate reactions. Any change program will produce intended and unintended results effects. Management should forecast both the likely positive and negative reactions and impacts that might arise in response to the changes in each division and prepare a contingency/mitigation plan to avoid going too far down a change program that is producing the wrong results.

### **Feedback**

#### **9.0** Communicate initial results and call for feedback

After the change program has begun, management should communicate findings in the following areas:

- Finance
- Productivity improvements
- Collective learning
- Organizational cultural changes
- Leadership changes

### **Regroup**

#### **10.0** Revise and re-implement

Having assessed the implementation results of

the change program, management must make corresponding modifications to the original change program to correct errors will re-implement the revised change program, following the above steps.

### **Take A Rest**

**11.0** Declare end/completion of change program.

### **Acknowledgment**

**12.0** Build in rewards and recognition for all participants.

### **Conclusion**

These twelve steps may seem cumbersome. They are essential. Most change efforts fail. Many are dead on arrival. We find the maxim “If you want to change nothing, change everything,” to be useful. Leaders have a duty to lead successful change efforts. In today’s business environment, failure is just too expensive.