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Organizational Change Management (OCM) as a mindset



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BUSINESS INSIGHTS

More Than Meets The Eye

Far too often, Organizational Change Management (OCM) is misunderstood or its value discounted. Frequently, organizations think a high-level communication plan or well-detailed project plan translates to organizational change management.

OCM is all about how your organization leads, manages, and facilitates change – especially things that are transformational in nature. And it's so much more.

- It's more than project management and communications plans.
- It's more than a methodology and checklists.
- It's more than a Project Management Office (PMO) or Change Management Office (CMO).
- It's more than having a healthy, happy, and whole culture.
- It's more than all hands meetings, beer fridges, and ping pong tables.
- It's more than a perfect score on engagement satisfaction surveys.

Engagement drives enthusiasm

OCM is how your organization engages people at every level in the change. By approaching employees where they're at – level in the organization, involvement, interest, and impact – the change can be less disruptive, more easily adopted, and a positive experience. It's not just a strategy or a list, it's a mindset.

When a whole organization embraces change with open arms and with excitement, it is because the employees know what the change means to each of them. They understand the vision and impact of the change to the entire organization. They understand the next steps and timeline. They understand the impact upon the internal and external customers they serve.

Organizational inventory

OCM can provide a very positive impact, but only if done in a way that is the right way for each organization. When processing all OCM considerations and components, and how they relate and integrate with each other, there's a nearly-endless list of variables to consider.

Before getting started and discussing the tactical "how-to" of incorporating OCM, what needs else to be considered?

Take inventory of:

- **Evolving leadership and management styles** – has management structure or function recently changed? Before introducing a new change, there may be a current ongoing change that needs to be addressed.
- **Current culture, and desired culture** – are there cultural components that may serve as barriers to incorporating an OCM mindset? What are those barriers and how to mitigate any risks they represent?
- **Organization's history and relationship with transitions** – has there been change in the past? Or has there been relative stability in the organization, with change on the horizon? Introducing change to an organization that has had relatively no changes in the past will require a different approach than one that has been subjected to more changes – regardless of whether they were seen as positive or negative.

Context will inform selecting and integrating OCM framework and practices. Leadership must support and acknowledge that organization functions may change drastically. There may be a great deal of work to integrate and align the culture to think and perform with an OCM mindset before and during the transition time.



Context guides OCM development

When you have taken an inventory of the organization's current state, that information will inform the next three pieces to developing your OCM plan.

Methodology. Use well-known OCM methodologies, while also understanding that there is no one-size-fits-all approach and often the best answer is a hybrid. As each organization is unique, each OCM success story has a unique framework and set of practices.

Culture. The organizational culture will be the biggest wild card and factor in determining the success in your OCM experience and outcome. Understanding the culture and having a clear vision in how it will be in a post-OCM state vs. how it is currently will have a great impact on how to execute OCM.

Right-size. Determining how to, and how not to, right-size and tailor OCM for an organization is yet another step on this journey. There are common pitfalls to avoid and best practices to embrace that will start your OCM initiative off on a healthy trajectory.

Nothing but opportunity

As it is in painting, preparation is most of the work in organizational change management. If you ask the right questions, take the time to explore your organization's current state, and think hard about where you want it to be, set that as your goal and intention, then the sky is the limit and there is nothing but opportunity.

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