



Metamorphosis - A Successful Organizational Change Management Pattern



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Abstract

Organization change management initiatives of various kinds including process changes, organization structure changes and policy changes are often met with a lot of apprehension and skepticism. To ensure the success of the change in an organization, a certain series of actions need to be in place and this usually tends to have a particular pattern. Successful change management initiative is an attempt through this pattern. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate a pattern that will help successfully implement, change management initiatives in an Organization

In our organizational context as in our personal lives, change is an essential part. Rather than meeting change head on and resisting it, we should rather embrace it and move along in the changed context. Establishing this pattern will help us individually and as an organization deal with change in a suitable manner.

Metamorphosis originates from biology and has a connotation of drastic transformation, like in the case of a larva turning to a pupa and then transforming itself into a butterfly, which has little or no resemblance to the previous phase. However for a butterfly to exist, it has to pass through the stages of Pupa and larva.

Metamorphosis is an organizational pattern; every Organization is greater than sum of its parts. We have focused on the “big picture” or the “forest” rather than granular areas viz.”Individual Trees”. As in nature, a large change cannot be attributed to few changes; it is often a result of large number of small changes.

Likewise, the actions proposed and smaller things achieved through this pattern, will not have a direct resemblance to the final outcome, we believe the outcome will be colorful and successful.



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Introduction

After some natural caution and hesitation, a number of people get enthusiastic about a change in the organization (this could be various type of changes including organization structure, new process initiation, etc.), throw themselves into this new style of working and things begin to move on. The work force begins to smell success in the environment of change and they can now see the causes of many chronic problems.

The team begins with greater sense of self confidence, a belief that can actually nail some long standing issues. Most people they speak to, already know about the right things to do but they speak about how lack of time, ownership and lack of right direction is hindering them doing the right thing. The organization gives a mandate to some people to independently report the causes of issues.

However, some people in position begin to get uncomfortable with the situation; although they are too anxious to see the results. People who are used to evaluating and screening information before it is reported see this as publicizing embarrassing shortcomings; some they are aware of but haven't got the time to fix the issues themselves.

This eventually leads to a cascading situation where the changes are eventually even on the verge of being rolled back.

2.1. Problem

The move to the new building is announced, everyone wants to be in the new building. The management expects for such a simple task people have the common sense to make their way over to the new building allocate spaces, move furniture, hook phones and all these to happen over the weekend. What is the likelihood of this project being successful? None. The shift may happen but with lot of chaos.

Whether we are looking at an office move or a major organizational change; unless someone takes responsibility for masterminding the whole affair, either nothing will happen or there will be complete chaos.

Organizations go through turmoil, while institutionalizing processes, Tools, Policies, Frameworks etc. which meet with partial success, soured relationships and submissive compliance.

Success is never an accident: it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution. It represents wise choice of many alternatives.

"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order to things." – Niccolo Machiavelli



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Solution

Newton's First Law of Motion states **"A body continues to maintain its state of rest or of uniform motion unless acted upon by an external unbalanced force"**. Arguably, no other law holds good more for a change management initiative. As human beings, our tendency to be comfortable in continuing with "things as they are" is similar to that of a body described by Newton's first law. For a change management initiative, it is critical that an external unbalanced force is provided to ensure that the initiative kicks off and is carried out successfully. Many analogies can be provided for this and one such analogy would be that of a satellite. To position a satellite in a geo-synchronous orbit, continuous rocket propellers are used till the satellite reaches its orbit. A change management initiative requires similar continuous "external unbalanced forces" to make it successful.

3.1. Change Management

"The only thing constant in life is change itself". A successful change management initiative requires various conscious steps to be carried out to ensure its success. We believe that a change management initiative is akin to a machine that has a motor driving various gears – these gears along with the motor working together ensure that the initiative chugs forward. The figure below indicates our depiction of the change management initiative as a pattern:



Fig. 3.1A

The central motor in the change management engine is what we refer to as the Mind-Wheel. This is perhaps the most critical component of the engine and without this wheel; the engine itself would cease to function. Along with the Mind-Wheel, there are nine other gear wheels that contribute to the success or failure of a change management initiative depending on how these are applied. All these peripheral wheels are important for a change initiative to be successful and should be applied in the right direction with required force.

Embracing change is a mindset, like in agile methodology, change if anticipated, expected and embraced; only then it can be successfully implemented.

Sections below explain each one of these wheels starting with the motor.

3.2. Mind-Wheel

“I think therefore I am”. The Mind-Wheel is the core of the engine and holds the key to success or failure. There are various key elements that contribute to this wheel. The core team that is formed to lead a change initiative forms the essence of the Mind-Wheel.



While the other wheels manage various functions, the Mind-Wheel or the motor is the soul that keeps everything together. In the event that one of the wheels slows down or stops performing its function, the motor is the one that gets it started again. During the course of implementing the change, the motor helps overcome the hurdles that come in the way of the change being successfully implemented. The motor provides the huge energy that is required to overcome the tendency of the organization or organizational entity that is impacted by the change to remain in a state of inertia. While a change initiative is underway, there are various opportunities for things to go astray and in such an event; the motor provides the situational leadership to overcome the current situation and to move on.

Resistance to change is the balancing force that creates the inertia to change. The core team provides the first level of “external unbalanced force” to move out of that inertia. However, without the larger team being influenced, there is a chance that the resistance is greater than the unbalanced force trying to overcome it. Hence, the core team that forms the motor should be able to influence the larger group that is impacted by the change and therefore is a part of the change initiative.

That being said, resistance to change is a good thing and a necessary part of change management. The absence of this resistance could often mean “submissive compliance” which results in less desirable results and defeats the purpose of change. Doing something “because it should be done” versus “because I want to do it” often determines the amount of success from the change initiative.

Leadership, Culture, Perseverance, Attitude, Passion and Drive forms the oil that makes the efficient functioning of the central motor – The Mind-Wheel

“A leader is a person who people opt to follow to a place where they would not go by themselves” – Joel Barker. In the change initiative, the leader is a person of utmost importance.

3.3. Managing Success Quantitatively

“To be or not to be – that is the question”. The strategic objectives of a change initiative should be clearly articulated and communicated. Special emphasis should be placed on how these connect to the bigger picture at an organization level. The impact on the organization in terms of a positive benefit should be clearly brought out.

The strategic objectives should be driven top down and the very fact that it is part of the senior management goals sends a strong message about the importance of the initiative itself. These should be carried forward through the line function downwards. This mode will ensure that everybody in the line function will breathe these objectives and will make it a success.

The objectives should have clear measurement criteria that are monitored at regular intervals to know the progress. Necessary corrective action needs to be taken if they fall short of the expectations. Measurable incentives can be tied to these objectives, to make them attractive and to provide strategic importance.



The management should carry and “live the message” about the initiative day in and day out. This will ensure that importance is visible and the criticality felt. Apart from formal reports, corridor chats, or even any casual remarks one might make in a meeting, should have questions revolving around these. This will keep the message alive.

The right team must be put in place to take the initiative forward. Right team will consists of the following:

- Capable team, possessing necessary skills
- Team that has right authority and power
- From the line function, where this change is affected

While choosing the right team, it’s important to choose members that are passionate about the initiative at hand. This brings positive thrust and will act as additional gear during heavy / tough loads when needed.

The following criteria to be used while framing the goals and objectives:

- Objectives to be realistic
- Objectives to be time bound
- Objectives to be measurable

The key to note here is that the ultimate target and hence any applicable objectives should not change midway through, unless the situation really demands.

A step by step approach is to be used towards goal achievement. Each step in this cycle will have an upper and lower control limit, within which the output of the step is expected. This way, it will be easy to predict whether the next step can be achieved or not, and if not action plan can be formulated to achieve this.



Fig. 3.3A

Moral authority plays a vital role in terms of achieving the objectives during execution. The moral support can add boost if things are falling short and to get that extra bit done.

In addition to line function goal setting, other informal ways like networking through channels can provide added value, as depicted below. The use of boundary spanners across various organizational social networks is critical to the permeation of the message across the organization. This way any hurdles that might come across can be overcome.

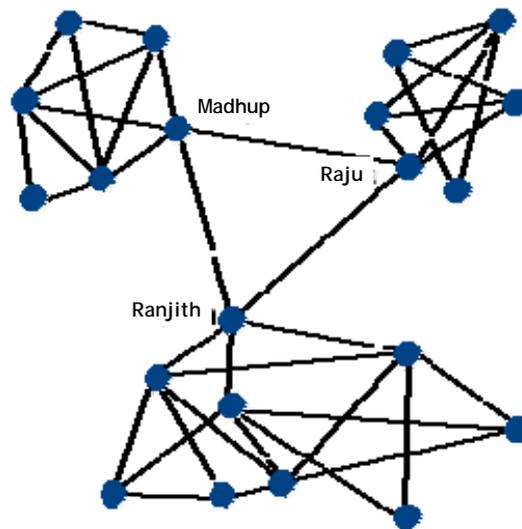


Fig. 3.3B

It's important for the core team (change management team) to know the informal team networks involved and who are the real boundary spanners that connect different teams. While the objectives set will get things done, in parallel, the informal networking should be used to emphasize the message. This will re-enforce the need, and have the required buy-in to get things done.

Another important aspect one should remember is related to the responsibilities. The boundary of responsibilities needs to be very clearly understood. If activities are falling outside these boundaries, then right help to be sought at the right time, rather than getting involved in it and then realizing later that enough help was not provided by the concerned party.

3.4. Process Standardization & Improvement

“Citius, Altius, Fortius – Swifter, Higher, Stronger”. The way in which the processes are carried out needs standardization, meaning procedures executed in a uniform manner. By doing this the following benefits are achieved.

- Brings in consistency – uniform working across entities
- Gives predictability – so that one can know what's coming
- Sets basis for further improvement
- Makes the process individual independent rather than person dependent

Once the given process is standardized, then it has to be improved and can be taken up to the next level. Once higher level is achieved, it should be standardized and then this becomes the base for the next improvement. The following picture articulates this perfectly.

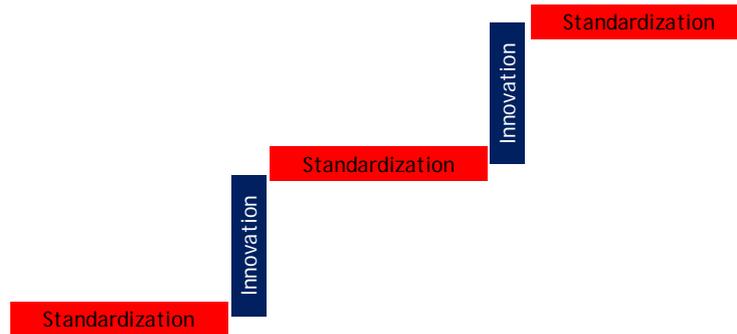


Fig. 3.4A

Constant improvement is needed, because

- we will lose ground, as someone else or the competition will reach high before us
- someone else will catch up at where we are, and hence it's important to go higher level
- it acts as encouragement and inspiration for the team, bringing in challenge
- by nature we want to be best at what we do
- there is also another angle, customer wants to know how we are improving day by day

3.5. Education

“None of us are as smart as all of us” – One cannot over-emphasize the importance of “collective learning”. A change management initiative needs to be ably supported through education to help people answer the critical question “What’s in it for me?” This is intended to cover both the negative and positive aspects of the change initiative and it is important that the larger team realizes the impact of the change, be it positive or negative. Preparing people for change is as critical as the change itself and unpreparedness or under-preparedness can often lead to the collapse of the change initiative. To educate a person implies setting an expectation in terms of the individual’s contribution to the initiative as well as what the individual is to expect from the core team. There are various dimensions of education as depicted in the figure below:

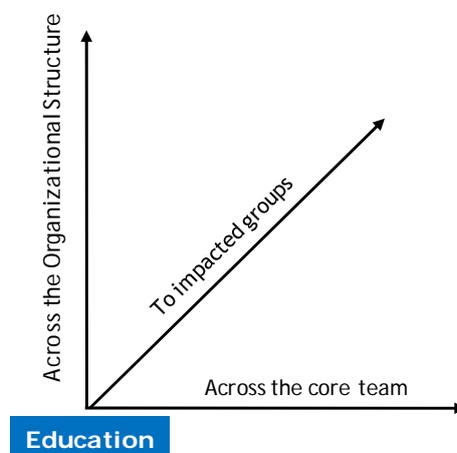


Fig. 3.5A



An important aspect of Education is that before educating others, it is important that one educate oneself. This is an essential step to developing the required conviction and belief in the message that is to be passed on.

The core team must profile the people and provide relevant education based on the dimensions given in Fig 3.5A.

3.6. Optimized use of Automation

“Let the machines analyze – let humans apply judgment and take decisions”. The goal of automation is to ensure maximum productivity. To achieve this, it is necessary to reduce the impact of manual errors and also ensure repeatability and reproducibility of the gauge itself. Errors in the gauge should not impact decision making. For improved speed of decision making, one should use automation optimally so that the analysis speed is increased. An important caveat of using automation is that we should not use automation for automation sake – the end result should be the “achievement of the goal” and should not be confused with “use of automation” as the goal itself.

3.7. Governance

“In God we trust, rest bring data”. Governance provides the “scaffolding” for a successful change initiative. Just as the scaffolding needs to be in place prior to the actual task being taken up, the Governance mechanism should be set in place ahead of the change initiative being kick-started. The Governing body is analogous to the brain which requires the sensory perceptions from nerve endings to be fed back to it before it can react with an adequate and appropriate response. The sensory perceptions are received from the other wheels in the form of information, issues, communication, success stories, data, etc. through the change actors who are part of the core team. Occasionally, the perceptions can be obtained through feedback from other channels as well. Governance should be a formal process that is “cast in stone” and should be treated that way – in essence, what is defined as the governance process during the change initiative should be resistant to change!

3.8. Independent Visibility & Feedback

“He who told me that I wasn’t doing the right thing was my well-wisher”. While the governance will ensure that monitoring and control happens through the central vertebrae, there should be host of other mechanisms that need to be used to get the visibility.

Some of the mechanisms that can be deployed are:

- Outside representative assigned for monitoring the workings and reporting independently to the leader
- Informal chats, corridor, water fountain conversations
- Feedback from the team where the change is being done, formal or informal
- Body language of the team during discussions
- Informal networking, through boundary spanning



These inputs should be used to control directly or indirectly the things that need attention. The feedback loop ensures that the process self corrects itself in order to run smoothly.

At times it is noticed that the vital feedback actually comes through the independent channels. This feedback in conjunction with the governance will ensure proper monitoring and bring in required control.

3.9. Reporting, Improvement, Correction & Prevention

“An apple a day keeps the doctor away”. Prevention of an issue from occurring helps ensure the fastest possible way to drive through a change initiative. However, prevention is not always possible given the context that the change initiative often involves getting into previously uncharted waters.

Given this, Reporting is a mechanism to help monitor the overall change initiative. This does not imply that the reporting is only done for consumption of senior management but it essentially has to work hand in hand with communication to ensure that the right details are reported to the right audience. For example, the measurement of a parameter against control limits should be reported to the group that has concerned itself with the monitoring of this parameter. Reporting provides a platform for recognition of problems and hence kick-off of corrective action.

Correction involves fixing the issue and also includes setting in place a feedback mechanism so as to prevent the same issue from occurring in the future. This cycle leads to improvement and resulting success for the initiative.

3.10. Communication

“What surprised me was not the surprise itself, but the fact that it was a surprise”.

This should be the basic tenet with regards to communication in a change management initiative. The quality, quantity, timing and audience of the communication are all to be given equal importance. The importance of communication too cannot be over-emphasized and there should be a belief that there is no such thing as over-communication.

At the onset of a change initiative, communication helps in education and setting objectives. Once the change initiative is in progress, communication helps governance, feedback and reporting. In essence, communication works in tandem with the other wheels to act as a vehicle facilitating the change by supporting the other wheels. The various dimensions of communication are indicated in the figure below:

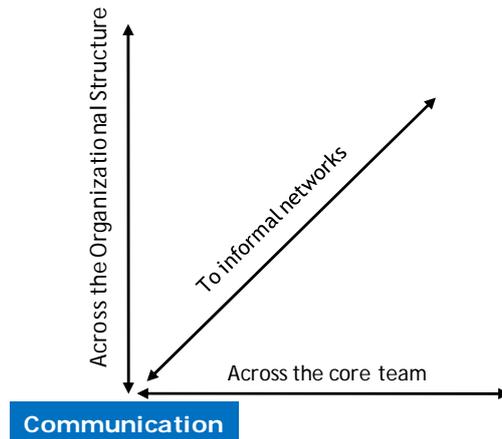


Fig. 3.10A

The core team must profile the people and send the relevant communication to the teams as depicted in Fig 3.10A.

3.11. Rewards & Recognition

“Reward me not for what I am but for what I have achieved and how I have achieved it”. Rewards & Recognition and Reprimand are two sides of the same coin. During the change process, it is essential that people within the organization who help facilitate the change and act as “change agents” be rewarded appropriately and in a timely manner. There are various ways in which to use Rewards & Recognition. While these can be used at times to “recognize” the efforts of people, these can be used to send a powerful message in terms of setting an example for the “water cooler crowd”. The same is true of using a reprimand. There are innovative ways of applying these concepts and sometimes reward for some can be used as a reprimand as illustrated by the following anecdote.

Six Sigma folklore has it that when GE decided to use Six Sigma as a driver within the organization, Jack Welch requested his leadership team to pool in their best people for the initiative. It didn’t take him long to realize that not the “best people” were driving the initiative. To counter this, he proposed an incentive where he recommended that the annual bonus be paid only to the best people and since the best people are in the six sigma initiative, only they would be eligible for the bonus!



4

Consequences

In the example where the change to a new building is announced, if the management used the Metamorphosis pattern the move would have been without any hiccups.

A core team could have been formed and a goal of successful movement could have been given to them. A seat allocation plan could have been created and people would have been allocated seats, cabins, prime locations based on designations or other pre-defined criteria. People could have been educated on staggered move and a process could have been established to be followed. Some rewards for the organizing team could have been planned by the management for a successful move within specified time. A complete report of number of seats, number of network connections, phones, etc could have been published if the pattern was used.

“The satisfaction of a thing well done is to have done it!” A change management initiative is successful if the objective of the initiative sees the light of day.



5

Known Uses

This Metamorphosis pattern can be used for any change initiative, small or large. Depending on the initiative the emphasis of each of the wheels will vary. Following are indicative areas where this can be used:

- **Process Changes:** Changes or introduction of quality processes and standards
- **Behavioral Change:** Building a high performance team
- **Organizational Change:** Implementation of a strategic vision or goal – e.g. Becoming a Billion Dollar Company

Please refer Section 6 for an example



6

A Scenario - Offshoring

6.1. Context

An Organization called MR2 wants to experiment with the offshore model. MR2 is an organization that designs and develops applications in the area of Learning and education. MR2 works with various universities within the country.

6.2. Problem Statement

A new policy of the government which encourages distance learning had enabled universities from other countries to provide learning and training solutions. One day while CEO was having a meeting with the board members, they pointed out on the declining sales figures of the organization. The sales head was almost giving up as none of the normal sales methods were proving to be yielding the results that their competitors were demonstrating. The competition was nowhere near MR2 during the last 2 years and they seem to be doing very well now; in fact they were happy due to the change in the government policy.

Competition analysis was done, they found that the competition was able to build the solutions faster; they were agile with changes in the products. Another startling thing that the competitive analysis showed was that significant portion of the revenue was coming from outside the country. MR2's management took note, they decided to make changes to the way MR2 thinks, manages itself and operates.

MR2 had 50 year old legacy of methods of doing things which were not yielding results in the changed market scenario. They analyzed culture being the root cause of it. Culture which was built over time and they were proud of it once was holding the organization back.

6.3. Forces

The forces identified were:

- Business trend
 - Globalization of market; competition started using offshore as a value partner
- Changed Government policy



- Government policy of opening of the domestic market to international players thus encouraging distance learning program.
- Government was providing tax holiday for organizations dealing in Foreign exchange
- Declining sales
 - Sales were declining as competition was providing solutions at competitive price
 - Competition was charging premium pricing for value added services
- Reputation at stake
 - Customers were getting attracted to competition
 - It was difficult to attract new and fresh talent
- Impacted morale of workforce
 - It was no longer 'cool' to say I work for MR2
 - Declining sales and profitability was adding to the misery
 - Work force perceiving greener pastures outside the organization

6.4. Solution

Management decided to take a few steps; they needed to embark on the offshore model. But it was not as simple as it seemed. They were faced with resistance to bring in this change due to change in work timings, working with folks who speak different language, need of traveling, collaboration issues, etc.

They managed the solution by using the gears as depicted in the pattern in the following manner:





6.4.1. Example of approach followed:

The central gear serves as the engine to get the process rolling. Although there is no one sequence that is mandated through this pattern, an organization needs to discover its own sequence, size of the gears, and intensity with which they need to be applied. Every problem is different and so will be the application of the pattern. The pattern suggests that all gears need to be necessarily applied for successful change, only the size and intensity might vary.

The approach that was followed by MR2 is depicted in the table below; they used the various gears and outlined actions to bring about the needed change.



Name of Gear	Weight/Size Low - High(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	Solution/Action
MindWheel	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A core team was identified along with a Mentor who had worked in multiple countries * The Mentor explained the importance of change management within the organization * A vision was articulated to bring in the change. * A three month plan was prepared * Key people were identified to work on the plan (now these people were the best people they had in the Organization not the ones who were available) * The criteria to select the task force was people with - High energy, positive mindset, perseverance, respected for their area of work, who can think differently * Three pilots projects were chosen for offshoring * Part two of the vision was to sustain the changed way of working without slipping back
Education	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A week long workshop was planned with the identified task force led by the mentor * Senior management was involved * When one of the Senior Directors talked about not attending the complete program the mentor explained the importance of driving from the front. CEO requested the Director to spend full time during the workshop (<i>part of change management</i>) * Mentor trained people on cultural aspects * Team Communication skills were refined * Culture appreciation trainings were conducted * Core Team was educated about offshore model and its pitfalls * Identified skeptics were educated on the concept of offshoring
Communication	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Advantages of offshore were communicated to everyone through a newsletter * Advantages like working with offshore, time difference, cost arbitrage, higher productivity were emphasized * Out of the three pilots, two pilots were managed well, the third pilot ran into issues. Learning from both the experiences were documented and communicated * First they started with monthly meeting and then changed to Newsletter every month and meeting every two months. The management went around doing road show within the organization about benefits of offshoring and showcasing people who were being the role models at that time * The work force was asked to speak freely about what could be hindering the progress, people were being rewarded and news communicated * Case studies were published on how offshoring is increasing the market share demonstrating the value add with numbers



Name of Gear	Weight/Size Low - High(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	Solution/Action
Independent visibility and Feedback	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Management appointed a small group to review and report the progress * The management wanted to make sure that all actions that were being suggested by the core team were getting implemented completely * There was some early visibility given by this group on the third pilot not going well. This helped in mitigating the actions. Though the third pilot was delayed, it finally got accomplished due to the early visibility provided
Reporting, Improvement, Correction and Prevention	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weekly reports were published as per the quantitative goals set for the offshore partner, some of these included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress on the scheduled plan, percentage completion - Percentage of bandwidth released for MR2 managers - indication on cost savings - Service level agreements tracking * The reporting format/data was fine tuned with the pilot phase concluding. * Corrective actions were put in place, especially related to the third pilot learning, where things didn't go that well. * By the end of the third pilot, the management and the core team had a handle on the steady state method of operation
Governance	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Weekly meetings were conducted to review and monitor progress of the three pilots, involving Project Managers from MR2 and offshore partner * Monthly steering reviews were held with MR2 management and offshore partner management * All numbers (wins and losses) were reviewed every fortnight * Actions were taken against underperformance and non-performance
Process Standardization and improvement	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The working process at MR2 and at the offshore partner was analyzed. A common understanding was arrived at by looking at the best of the two process models, with minimal investment required by MR2. * At the end of the pilot phase improvements were listed and the processes were fine tuned, taking the learning into account.
Managing success quantitatively	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Two small teams were sent to two identified locations to study feasibility of offshoring * Due diligence was done and offshore partner was chosen * Three pilots were chosen for the three month pilot phase * The partner was given quantitative goals to demonstrate their competence, which were monitored through the pilot phase.
Rewards and recognition	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The 2 successful pilots were rewarded. * During the steady state phase, Bonus was declared for the first 5 units to move work offshore and also for the first 5 business wins outside the country * There was a press release issued quoting the names of the managers that successfully piloted the offshore initiative.



Name of Gear	Weight/Size Low - High(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	Solution/Action
Optimized use of automation	1	* Collaborative tools were put in place to encourage distributed development, leveraging different time zones. * Various Dashboards were put in place for reporting metrics, so that all data is available at one place on a real time basis; which is core to taking management decisions



7

References

7.1. QUOTES

The only thing constant in life is change itself - François de la Rochefoucauld

I think therefore I am - René Descartes

To be or not to be – that is the question – William Shakespeare

Citius, Altius, Fortius – Swifter, Higher, Stronger – Olympics Motto

None of us are as smart as all of us – Japanese Proverb

Let the machines analyze – let humans apply judgment and take decisions: One of Us

In God we trust, rest bring data - W. Edwards Deming

He who told me that I wasn't doing the right thing was my well-wisher – One of Us

An apple a day keeps the doctor away – Idiom

What surprised me was not the surprise itself, but the fact that it was a surprise – One of Us

Reward me not for what I am but for what I have achieved and how I have achieved it – One of Us

The satisfaction of a thing well done is to have done it! – One of Us

Some goals are better not met – One of Us

I know not fear when I dive into the deepest realms of my imagination – One of Us



8

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge all individuals who have triggered our thoughts and have been examples of resistance to change. They have essentially quite literally set the wheels in motion.



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