

The Ten Challenges

Challenges of Initiating

These challenges are often sufficient to prevent growth from occurring, almost before it starts. They are consistently encountered at the early stages of significant organizational change. The capabilities to deal with them must be developed under high pressure; but in managing these challenges effectively, organizations develop capabilities much sooner than otherwise for dealing with challenges down the road.

- 1 Not Enough Time: "We don't have time for this stuff!"**
This is the challenge of control over one's time. This challenge represents a valuable opportunity for reframing the way that workplaces are organized, to provide flexibility and time for reflection and innovation.
- 2 No Help: "We're like the blind leading the blind!"**
Some managers believe that asking for help is a sign of incompetence; others are unaware of the coaching and support they need. Meeting this challenge means building the capabilities for finding the right help, and for mentoring each other to develop successful innovations.
- 3 Not Relevant: "Why are we doing this stuff?"**
A top priority for pilot groups is a clear, compelling case for learning and change. If people are not sufficiently committed to an initiative's goals, a "commitment gap" develops and they will not take part wholeheartedly. Building relevance depends on candid conversations about the reasons for change and the commitments people can make.
- 4 "Walking the Talk" - Leadership values**
What happens when there is a mismatch between the things the boss says and his or her actual behavior? People do not expect perfection, but they recognize when leaders are not sincere or open. If executive and line leaders do not provide an atmosphere of trust and authenticity, then genuine change cannot move forward.

Challenges of Sustaining Momentum

These challenges occur sometime during the first year or two, when the group has clear goals and has discovered that new methods save more than enough time to put them into practice. Now the pilot group's real troubles begin. Sustained activity confronts boundaries - between the work of the pilot group and "internal" attitudes and beliefs, and between the pilot group's needs and the larger-scale company's values and ways of measuring success.

- 5 Fear and Anxiety: "This stuff is ----"**
The blanks represent the fact that everyone expresses their fear and anxiety with a different form of defensiveness.) How do you deal with the concerns of team members about exposure, vulnerability and inadequacy, triggered by the conflicts between increasing levels of candor and openness and low levels of trust? This is one of the most frequently faced challenges and the most difficult to overcome.
- 6 Assessment and Measurement: "This stuff isn't working"**
How do you deal with the disconnect between the tangible (but unfamiliar) achievements of a pilot group and the organization's traditional ways of measuring success?
- 7 Believers and Nonbelievers: "We have the right way!" say pilot group members. "They're acting like a cult!" say their other colleagues and peers.**
Riding on a wave of early success, speaking their own language, the pilot group becomes increasingly isolated from the rest of the organization. Outsiders, meanwhile, are put off

and then turned off by the new, unfamiliar approaches and behavior. These misunderstandings easily accelerate into unnecessary, but nearly unavoidable, opposition.

Challenges of System wide Redesign and Rethinking

These challenges appear as a pilot group's work gains broader credibility and confronts the established internal infrastructure and practices of the organization.

8 Governance: "They won't give up the power."

As the pilot group's capabilities and activities increase, it runs into the priorities and established processes of the rest of the organization. This leads to conflicts over power and autonomy and to a destructive, "us-versus-them" dynamic that nobody wants - and that could be avoided if the capabilities are in place for organizational redesign.

9 Diffusion: "We keep reinventing the wheel!"

Unless organizations learn to recognize and deal with their mysterious, almost unnoticed

inability to transfer knowledge across organizational boundaries, people around the system will not build upon each other's successes.

10 Strategy and Purpose: "Where are we going? and "What are we here for?"

How do you revitalize and rethink the organization's intended direction for success, its' contribution to its community and its future identity? How do you improve the processes of conversation that lead people to articulate and refine their aspirations and goals for achieving them?