

# The Mansis Update

## IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Can be easy to do . . .  
if your organization is organized !!

Robert H. Kent, Ph.D.

Your organization's **ability** to implement organizational change, including new plans, strategies, goals, values, programs, policies or procedures is a **characteristic of the organization**, more than it is a personal characteristic or skill of your management or employees. Reviewing the barriers (and requirements) to successful organizational change shows that most of these requirements are organizational characteristics.<sup>1</sup> And the majority of these requirements all centre on the need for an effective Performance Management System.

Without this core System, the change will be enormously difficult and expensive and it will almost always fail.

The bottom line is that sending managers to training programs to learn how to implement change, or even conducting motivational rallies to sell the employees on the benefits of a change are less likely to achieve success, than **strengthening your organization's capability** to implement change.

What have we seen for years: dozens of innovative, potentially useful programs, concepts and approaches for leading and managing people and organizations, that businesses spend fortunes in time and money to learn. These perceived 'flavour of the month' seminars, workshops, books and videos rarely get positive or lasting return on the investment; and the change fails or quickly fads away. The organization members learns that "change" usually fails, lowering their confidence in managements' ability to implement change, and consequently the likelihood of successful change in the future diminishes.

The tragedy (and it is tragic because of the expectations raised and the resources wasted) is that many of the concepts are quite legitimate and potentially very beneficial. They have likely worked successfully in other organizations. But the means to implement these changes in the organization trying to change was almost always missing. And what was missing was an effective Performance Management System.

An analogy would be selling the heart attack emergency drug epinephrine to a first aid centre without letting the staff know that it has to be injected into a patient and not taken orally. The staff did not know this, nor did

they have the equipment to administer intravenous drugs. They gave epinephrine orally, and patients consequently never received any benefit of this lifesaving drug.

A principle of organizational change is that you cannot purposefully change what you cannot control.<sup>2</sup> Any change in an organization ranging from new values to new procedures must eventually result in the behavior change of effected members, and the Performance Management System is the organization's tool to do that. Without this System, behavior -- past, present and future -- is left to chance. As a supervisor once told me in a company trying to implement a *Quality is #1* program, "They couldn't control the terrible quality we had before! How do they expect to ensure we have proper quality now just because we have a newsletter, posters, and pep talks?"

### What Would a Performance Management System Have Done?

A Performance Management System ensures that:

1. Everyone knows the new expectations related to a change
2. The expectations are measured
3. Management supports everyone in successfully achieving the required performance
4. All employees including Management are managed

## Summary

A Performance Management System is really a *Leader's principal tool* for implementing organizational change. A Performance Management System has tools to translate the “change” into expected employee behavior, and then to make it happen – this is the fundamental essence of implementing any organizational change. Implementing concepts or philosophies such as: Teamwork, Respectful Workplace, Initiative, Customer Service, Quality Assurance or Continuous Improvement into your administration or organization can be easy and happen as a matter of course if you use an effective Performance Management System.

An organization with an incomplete, or an ineffective, or no systematic means to manage performance – has little to no capacity to implement change successfully.

For more information on the details of an effective Performance Management System and how to implement it, go to:

[www.SimpleSensibleManagement.com](http://www.SimpleSensibleManagement.com)

---

© Copyright / Mansis 2011

---

<sup>1</sup> See [Mansis Article #23](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [Mansis Article #10](#), and [Mansis Article #24](#)



***The Mansis Centre for  
Management Training and  
Organizational Development***

Telephone: (204) 770-2184

e-mail: [information@mansis.com](mailto:information@mansis.com)

See our Web Site: <http://www.mansis.com>