

Using change to build competence

How to use **change** to build competence, develop ownership and promote development of high potentials

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Organizations will experience change. Whilst change sometimes has negative associations, it should be a time for learning, reflection, development and personal growth.

Smart organizations utilize change while it is happening to build competence in leading and implementing change. A bold concept that is an effective, engaging and motivating way of enhancing the success of the change initiative.

Combining relevance with structure has proven to provide ownership for and engagement in change, whilst building a common approach, language and a united organization-wide team.

The challenge: Timing

As a business, when do we normally invest in building change competence? Before the need arises or afterwards, when the lack of competence becomes clear?

Too early leads to participants often finding it difficult to connect this to their everyday work and business situation. Feedback often shows that it was good “training” or “education”. Using ‘training projects’ instead of real life situations is often also seen as a drawback.

Too late results in immense consequences, from both business and personal perspectives.

So when is the right time for leaders and specialists to introduce internal building competence in leading change?

The case: European business transformation

A healthcare company was looking into a Europe-wide business and cultural transformation already initiated in some regions. The initial situation showed that, while the executive leadership team had successfully led change before, the organization lacked competence in some areas.

These included identifying core drivers for successful change, structuring and planning change, building commitment and ensuring one voice across the leaders and specialists implementing change.

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The European HR director wanted to lead and implement the transformation, making use of the situation to build internal change competence and ensure ownership and motivation across the HR department, senior leaders and high potentials.

Together with the sponsor, we addressed using this period of uncertainty to enable the required change and harvest the benefits by creating ownership for the outcome, ensuring internal change competence and promoting the development of high potentials, thus investing in core talent.

The results: Investing in uncertain times pays off

The business transformation was successful, ensuring high ownership and commitment throughout the period of change.

Value creation was achieved via the following approach:

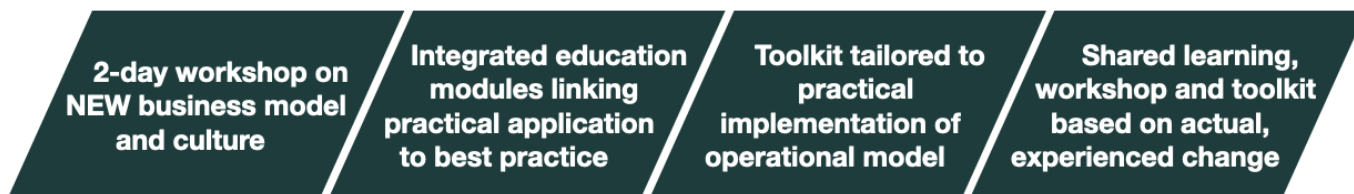
- tailored 2-day workshop centered around the new business operating model and desired culture with clear links to relevant change competence and practical tools
- integrated bite-sized change education modules, focusing first on building change competence and then linking theory and best practice
- toolkit tailored to the business operating model: all participants could test these tools in relation to their own situation throughout the workshop
- shared learning, workshop and toolkit were based on the real life context of the ongoing transformation.

Senior leaders, HR leaders and high potentials took part and each workshop was sponsored by the executive leadership team. As one participant stated: “The combination of having senior leaders and HR together in a room discussing change, organizational development and talent is really valuable – should be done more often!”

Feedback was extremely positive with participants responding that they had immediately applied the toolkit with high value creation. To quote one participant: “The content enables me to plan better for any changes, big or small, and how to implement them” and “Using the tools shared will boost the implementation of transformation within my organization.”

The workshop was repeated several times, building a broad taskforce within the organization.

Approach to value creation:



”Each workshop reflected the current business context and stage of ongoing change. Therefore, the workshops and supporting toolkit were highly relatable to the ongoing journey, enhancing ownership, improving cost-efficiency and driving momentum.”

Our approach: Building competence *during* periods of change

At Enabling Change we specialise in building ownership and competence for leading and implementing change while change is happening: we support executives bridging transition and leaders/specialists in leading and implementing change.

Our unique approach ensures value creation:

- understanding our client's situation, drivers and desired business outcome
- proven best practice within change and the latest research
- our successful track record: enabling our clients to turn 'business unusual' into business as usual.

What happened next? Virtual competence building

Over a period of two years, we saw participants form a network, actively supporting and learning from each other, frequently using the toolkit with positive change results. Participants felt empowered, and in further demand by those who had not been able to participate in physical workshops.

In order to enable a wider use of the toolkit and to ensure easy application when relevant, we created a virtual toolkit.

At Enabling Change, our approach ensures an external Centre of Excellence for Change with flexible support when required and costs kept at a minimum.

For a successful transformation we:

- enable active **sponsorship** and **ownership** amongst senior leaders
- **build change ownership** and desired outcome across the business and HR
- **provide a shared structure and language** for the change journey
- **strengthen HR** as business partner in leading and implementing change
- **build internal competence** and enhance dedicated change resources going forward
- **develop competencies of high potentials** and provide real life **opportunities for growth**
- **provide insight** into who engages in the journey

This need was further escalated by the COVID-19 situation.

We quickly developed a toolkit introduction video, supported by short instruction videos for each tool, connecting both the desired outcome and the physical toolkit supporting materials. This approach enabled individuals to choose the right tool for the situation at hand, and initial feedback has been very positive.

Note: Part of this white paper has been published by HRTechOutlook in 2020 in USA.

Find out more about how Louise and ENABLING CHANGE can support you at enablingchange.eu.