Challenge and Change: A Complete Metamorphosis

Organizational Dynamics

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 In his book *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within*,Robert Quinn explains that it makes sense for groups to oppose change because organizational procedures and structures favor stability over change. He goes on to say that in order to attain excellence, power must be released. Risk-taking and the possibility of failure are requirements for change. The book explains that changing our perspective presents many possibilities for innovation and how decision-making may transform into a ritual that provides solace and support in extreme duress. When re-framing an organization, emotional intelligence and cultural awareness are just as crucial as data analysis (Quinn,1996). Everyone has the potential to die a slow death if they do not continue to grow or if they do not have the determination to go beyond what is comfortable for them; the same may be said about other organizations. Reflecting on the workplace culture and assessing whether or not your business is suffering from a slow and painful death will determine the need for engagement in profound change (1996). Organizations may successfully solve difficulties and create innovation by recognizing the complex dynamics within groups, utilizing multiple viewpoints, and establishing an open culture to change (1996). The proactive involvement of executives who are prepared to accept new feelings, take on fresh viewpoints, and make bold decisions is crucial to this process because it will move their companies closer to a future characterized by innovation and adaptability.

A notable instance of leadership and vision in the growth of a small but successful Montessori school occurred in 2018 at the Montessori School of the Mahoning Valley. The newly appointed Executive Director was not completely new to the Montessori school, as their daughter had been attending for a few years. The decision to enroll their daughter was based on various factors, primarily the belief that she would thrive in Montessori Philosophy. Upon assuming leadership, there was immediate confusion regarding whether the school offered an authentic Montessori program or incorporated Montessori materials and some philosophical practices into a private school setting. This uncertainty prompted a reflection on the analogy of Cecropia Moths, which symbolizes transformation, hidden knowledge, inner wisdom, and shadow work. Cecropia Moths are believed to facilitate intuitive discoveries, reveal hidden desires, and awaken one's true self. Despite their short lifespan, Cecropia Moths undergo complete metamorphosis, accomplishing much in a brief period (Brindley, 2021). Drawing inspiration from this analogy, the Executive Director embarked on a 360-degree program review and engaged with all stakeholders to better understand the situation. The initial focus was on the most critical stakeholders: the students. A video series titled "What does Montessori mean to you?" was created, featuring drawings and statements from each student about their Montessori experience. Additionally, previous graduates were invited to share their perspectives through drawings and statements. This initiative proved enlightening, captivating, and aesthetically pleasing, eventually evolving into a valuable community marketing tool. Central to this approach was recognizing the most essential resource: the students and their voices. Children are inherently capable of expressing themselves across various aspects of life, and regulations, laws, and global agreements must empower them to exercise these rights within educational settings. In an ideal society, children are not merely recipients of proposed changes but active participants in driving improvements. As such, policymakers, academics, professionals, and school leaders should view children as equal partners in decision-making processes. A stakeholder is a partner, indicating equal decision-making authority. If schools are places of democracy where engagement goes beyond sending kids to school, true partnership is rooted in school practices where all stakeholders interact as co-learners and leaders. Children are encouraged to speak about their education (Nthono, 2017).

The Executive Director faced a second urgent problem: the growing student body necessitated a significant building extension. Although the school's enrollment had seen healthy growth in previous years, it became evident that the current infrastructure was insufficient to accommodate the increasing number of students. The pressing need for additional classrooms, particularly for lower primary students, could not be ignored. Swift and decisive action was imperative to maintain educational standards and sustain the school's growth trajectory. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the head of the school conducted a thorough investigation into the institution's history and culture. According to Quinn, in his book *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within*, you are not doing your job if you are not gambling on it every couple of years. Making a difference is critical for both individuals and organizations. Sometimes, we have to take on the system for it to change. Failure is a steady companion that travels next to every great leader. You take more steps toward a slow death if you do not make concessions to opposing standards. Comprehending the distinct character of the educational institution was considered crucial in determining a future path that would maintain its fundamental qualities even as it grew (Quinn,1996).

The only way for organizations to construct the future is if their leaders experience new emotions, consider new thoughts, and take new actions. Instead of addressing transformational challenges, teams deal with technical issues that cause problems to persist (Watzlawick et al., 2011). All facets of the school community participated in the project, which is a tribute to teamwork. Members of the School Board, Finance, Capital Campaign, Marketing, Grants, Building, and Equipment were organized into committees. Every committee was essential to coordinating the reframing of this complex project. Reframing is placing a situation in a different frame that matches the facts of the same actual scenario or, even better, and as a result, alters the whole meaning. It also refers to altering the emotional environment or perspective regarding which a situation is perceived. Reframing is a successful transformation method because we cannot return to the torment of the previous perception of reality once we comprehend the alternative perspective. It is almost hard to return to our previous futility and discouragement regarding the potential of a solution after someone has revealed it to us (2011).

The servant-leadership hierarchical model upends traditional organizational structures; this illustrates a thoughtful concept of community: the leader serves everyone rather than everyone serving the leader. Research shows unexpected links between mindfulness and servant leadership, including those with forgiveness, spirituality, and morality. Due to cultural consciousness, servant leadership encourages acceptance of, presence with, and openheartedness toward others. This school's culture, work satisfaction, and employee retention matrices strongly correlate with mindfulness practices (Kozak,2021). Every facet of the expansion project was painstakingly planned, from marketing campaigns to architectural planning, from fundraising efforts to logistical concerns—every decision was made to provide a complete educational experience in mind. Thus, the expansion served the institution's long-term objectives and present demands. Leaders should thoroughly evaluate each team member's skills and abilities and promptly take appropriate action based on their assessment. Many individuals discover that allocating time to create a visual representation of team members based on their skill sets using a fundamental matrix may provide a valuable understanding of the tasks that need attention. Utilizing approaches such as forced rankings or forced distribution might clarify each team member's capabilities and level of commitment (Keller & Schaningr, 2019). Effective change agents do much personal work to share their narratives across the organization. If you want people to follow you, you must make yourself visible. Effective change management necessitates interacting with individuals inside and outside the organization (Keller & Schaningr, 2019). Motivational Language Theory describes leadership communication as a method for motivating and fostering organizational learning. Greater organizational understanding and more instruments for leader development will result in improved leader decision-making, employee satisfaction, and organizational outcomes (Holmes & Scull, 2019).Listening to and learning from stakeholders while providing information is part of the engagement process. The primary purpose of stakeholder engagement is to support companies' operational excellence and strategic direction and contribute to sustainable development that benefits organizations, their stakeholders, and society. Most experts recognize the benefits of stakeholder engagement and that it lets decision-makers work more effectively and create better outcomes; stakeholder engagement may raise the possibility of equality in decision-making and provide solutions to conflict situations; and allows ideas to be tested and developed before implementation (Filho & Brandli, 2016).

Effective change agents do much personal work to share their narratives across the organization. If you want people to follow you, you must make yourself visible. Effective change management necessitates interacting with individuals inside and outside the organization (Keller & Schaninger, 2019).  The quality of education is harmed by misconceptions and poor communication between teachers and anybody else interested in education. Stakeholders must be aware of their responsibilities, what they do, and their rights and duties when contributing information to education in the form of questions, comments, suggestions, and complaints. Prioritizing ethical principles and functions is crucial while working with the school for all involved. It is also crucial that educational institutions keep the procedures and guidelines pertinent to their role and the learning process current (Sulthani & Thoifah, 2022).

Ultimately, the school emerged from this growth phase stronger and more resilient than ever due to teamwork, visionary leadership, and a resolute dedication to academic success. The legacy of this momentous project bears witness to the transformational potential of group action in influencing the direction of education.

The year 2018 marked a pivotal moment in the school's journey, similar to the emergence of the adult moth from its cocoon. The Montessori School confronted the pressing need for expansion with determination and foresight. Much like the Cecropia Moth, which must navigate obstacles and challenges within its brief lifespan, the school encountered hurdles in its quest for growth. Initial plans for new construction faced resistance from the local community, mirroring the moth's struggle against environmental constraints.

Undeterred, the Executive Director initiated a journey of community outreach and engagement, similar to the delicate dance of a moth in attracting mates. The Executive Director cultivated strong bonds with neighbors and stakeholders through peaceful gestures and heartfelt conversations, ultimately securing the required space for the school's needed expansion.

Just as the Cecropia Moth transforms its surroundings with its vibrant presence, the Montessori School emerged from its cocoon of limitations, spreading its wings across new classrooms and facilities. The addition of lower elementary and primary classrooms, alongside improved infrastructure and community partnerships, symbolized the school's metamorphosis into a stronger, more vibrant institution. Much like the Cecropia Moth's fleeting lifespan with the sole purpose of reproducing, the journey of the Montessori School continues with ongoing challenges and opportunities for growth. Through dedication, collaboration, and a commitment to its core principles, the school continues to navigate the ever-changing landscape of education, enriching the lives of its students and community with each transformative step. This underscores the critical importance of proactive executive involvement, as it necessitates accepting new emotions, embracing fresh perspectives, and being willing to make bold decisions. Such leadership is imperative in propelling companies toward a future defined by innovation and adaptability.

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