

Organizational Culture Framework: A Key Element for Successful Change Management

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Abstract

There is a clear consensus that the pace of change has never been greater than in the current continuously evolving business environment. It comes in all shapes, forms, and sizes and affects all organizations in all industries. However, theories and approaches to change management currently available in the literature are mostly lacking empirical evidence and supported by unchallenged hypotheses concerning the nature of contemporary organizational change management. This study provides an empirical framework, based on three organizational culture levels, to successfully implement and manage organizational change. Particularly, it focuses on practices and behavior patterns that distinguish one organization from another, through an individual level (values, internal power relations), a collective level (team cohesion, decision-making strategies), and an organizational level (mission and standards). Based on Schein (1985) and Thevenet' (1984, 2003) theoretical approaches, this article reports a longitudinal study that examines change management strategies during significant jolts, such as the COVID 19 crises, in three large multi-site private-sector organizations. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis are used to examine the effect of change on individual, collective and organizational levels and to empirically challenge our proactive framework. Eventually, the aim of this article is to orientate change management strategies and make them more effective and responsive to these three levels of organizational culture analysis. The article concludes with recommendations for further research.

Keywords: change; culture; framework; management; organizational