

LH Martin institute

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Implementing organisational change: some warning signs

Craig McInnis



1. Inconsistencies emerge around the language

Happens because:

- change goals open to interpretation and incremental change
- Stakeholders overly focused on operational issues
- project co-opted into other change agendas
- change leaders delude themselves that everyone understands the strategy

Solutions:

- “joined up thinking” with key players at the table
- get genuine consensus of the guiding coalition
- diligent monitoring of all documents against the original strategy
- use every media, forum, meeting possible to embed the language



2. Competing interpretations of performance data

Happens because:

- data is not clear and compelling
- competing internal sources of feedback
- data not designed to inform progress
- poorly designed instruments
- weak or non-existent baseline evidence

Solutions:

- less information gathering, more analysis
- strategies for using data including planned evaluation
- a clear program logic statement
- keep the focus on outcomes



3. Diluted accountabilities (and opting out)

Happens because:

- responsibility and accountability lacking in specifics
- key performance indicators not directly aligned with the goals
- soft performance targets and timeframes
- coordinating goals poorly articulated in the first place
- measures directed at groups/units rather than individuals

Solutions:

- set challenging performance targets and timeframes
- sharply focused expectations, managed firmly
- high levels of support, rewards and recognition
- work in progress reports on implementation of the organisational change



4. Declining support and sponsorship

Happens because:

- lack of awareness of initiatives across the university
- no convincing evidence of impact, especially early gains
- complexity of internal reporting
- ad hoc and limited circulation of reports

Solutions:

- planned communication and dissemination
- identify major transition points to celebrate milestones
- get out of the circle to check stakeholder perceptions
- accentuate the positives