

Strategic Management of Change

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Chapter 6. Political perspective of change

Objectives of the chapter

- Understanding the variance in individual interests within organizations;
- Understanding the roots of conflict in organizations;
- Recognizing that conflict necessitates negotiation for the resolution of divergent interests.

Political perspective of change

Organizations as areas of conflict:

- Just as governmental entities are considered organizations, it should also be understood that organizations are essentially governments containing political activities.
- Given the presence of diverse political interests, conflict becomes an inherent aspect of life in large organizations.
- Merely intensifying communication, tolerance, and patience does not eliminate conflict. However, it can be employed as a tool for negotiation.

Political perspective of change

The Triple Mix of Politics (3Rs): Rules - Relationships - Resources

- The triple mix allows for the exploration of alternatives and dimensions of action.
- Organizations contain conflicts arising from the natural diversity of individuals and interests.
- Formal structures create connections among themselves, and these connections must be managed.
- There are continuous differences among coalition members at the levels of values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions.
- At the decision-making level, we will need scarce resources (strategy).

Political perspective of change

The Triple Mix of Politics (3Rs): Rules - Relationships – Resources

This implies that:

- Conflict becomes a central element, and power becomes a crucial asset for negotiating the conflicts that could impede the progress of the change project.
- Objectives and decisions arise from the process of bargaining and negotiation.

Political perspective of change

Explanations for the inability to change:

Lessons that are overlooked in conflict areas surrounding the change process:

1. Successful change requires personal effort, capability, and qualifications.
2. There are correct and incorrect decisions, as well as half-right and half-wrong decisions (see the example).
 - The quality of a decision is assessed after its implementation.
 - The ratio of analysis to action must be measured, as organizations are dynamic zones that do not pause during analysis.
 - The management of decision implementation will determine the outcomes.

Political perspective of change

Example of Decisions:

After a meeting related to the acquisition of another company:

1. **Strategic Analyst:** The decision expressed as per my assessment. We have no long-term interest in the acquisition of that company.
2. **Chief Financial Officer:** The decision was expressed as is, the capital market showed an increase in our stocks, and I believe the decision is good.
3. **Chief Executive Officer:** It is nothing until I express my impression about it. You will hear about the decision in the next meeting, which may be on time or before its time.

Political perspective of change

Problems Related to Change Implementation:

These are problems related to political will and skill. Therefore, the person in charge of the change process must play the role of a mediator or broker by:

- Framing the agenda.
- Building coalitions.
- Being politically astute to achieve the vision.
- Considering the Triple Mix of Politics (3Rs).

Actions in the areas of conflict

Diagnosing conflict areas:

1. What are the relevant sub-units to the change process (specific issue)?
2. What are the linkage patterns?

Stakeholder's pattern	Low interest	High interest
Low power	Minimum effort	Stays informed
High power	Remains satisfied	Key actors

3. What is the nature of continual differences (with their temporary aspects)?
4. What is the quality of scarcity that we need?

Summary

- All organizations have politics;
- Divergent interests lead to conflicts that are resolved through negotiation, and conflict management must be controlled.
- Successful leaders act as mediators (brokers).