

**Yahaya M Dokochi, Lecturer 11, Federal university of technology, minna,
Niger State Nigeria.**

THE EFFECT OF OVERCOMING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE ON ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH IN NIGERIA.

ABSTRACT

Introduction as well as implementation of new ideas is inevitable for organizational growth, its gives competitive edge and also reposition organization in competitive environment, even with that when ideas are presented in an organization employees tend to resist it for some reasons. This study examined causes for resistance to change and how they can be overcome. Descriptive survey design was adopted to collect data from 120 employees working at different managerial levels and branches. Findings of this study reveal that employees' openness to change, participation in change, communication to change, and trust in management had significant effects on employee's resistance to organizational growth.

Keywords: Resistances to change, overcome resistance to change, organizational growth.

Introduction

Everything in this world today is experiencing an unprecedented and dramatic change, the environment within which organizations operate in Nigeria is characterized by instability resulting from increased competition, technological , product , service innovation and change, limited resources, deregulations and privatization (Carnall 1995). Change is an unavoidable phenomenon arising from the dynamics of environment and it is inevitable for an organization that desires to grow, achieve its mission, vision and objectives. Organizations have to adapt to the environment that is the internal and external forces to become competitive and stay in the lead or at least keep afloat. processes and rules of work are revisited and revised, new equipments are introduced for effectiveness , product lines are dropped and added, and workforce is adjusted as internal and external conditions change. Change refers to putting something in a different form from its initial position and that involves confrontation with the unknown situation and loss of familiarity. Carr et al (2006) claim that it connotes a significant disruption in established patterns of behavior and/or expectation and could lead to discontinuity, destruction and replacement of familiar social structures and relationships. It could alter set patterns of behavior, define relationships with others, work procedures, and job skills. All these might present individuals with new situations, new problems and challenges, ambiguity and uncertainty.

On an organizational level, they could lead to alteration of policies, procedures, sunk costs, organization structures, and manufacturing processes and flows (Harvey and Brown 2001). Invariably, change might affect authoritative allocation of both human and material resources and encourage

competition which heats up the political climate in organizations. The politics of change is very critical and sensitive. The manager could change four basic aspects of the company: its strategy, technology, structure and employees (Desler 2007). Strategic change affects the way the company creates and markets its products or services. It covers the purpose and mission of the organization, its corporate philosophy on such matters as growth, quality, innovation and values concerning employees and customers, competitive positioning and strategic goals for achieving and maintaining competitive advantage and for product-market development (Armstrong, 2009) Structural change focuses on reorganizing the chart and structural elements of the firm. This may involve replacing, dismissing or adding personnel. Technological changes are mostly concerned with automation of processes. Influences of information and communications technology have made this change not only desirable but also an on-going process as the dynamism of technology continues to dictate the competitive strength of business organizations. Employees may be changed through learning activities such as training, education and development programs. They need new orientation to ensure that the organization keeps pace with changes in the environment. The principal models of change management stem from the work of Kurt Lewin in the 1940's who developed the planned approach to change. Graetz et al (2006) states that Lewin's approach to organizational change is grounded in a general system of ideas termed 'force-field theory'. This theory stipulates that organizations are constantly exposed to two forces of those that maintain stability and those that break it down. The normal state for organizations is one of equilibrium in which the forces for stability are dominant.

To achieve change, the organization would need to reduce the forces for stability or increase the forces for change. If creative conditions are successful, new ideas will be generated that must be carried forward for acceptance and implementation. This is where idea champions come in. the formal definition of an Idea champion is a person who sees the need for and champions productive change within the organization. Idea champions often discover that other employees are unenthusiastic about their new ideas. Members of a new-venture group may be surprised when managers in the regular organization do not support or approve their innovations. Managers and employees not involved in an innovation often seem to prefer the status quo. Employees appear to resist change for several reasons, and understanding them helps managers implement change more effectively.

Resistance does not necessarily surface in standardized ways. It can be overt, implicit, immediate or deferred (Robbins 1996; Nadler 1998). Whichever form it takes, it is usually viewed as a negative force because it can occur irrespective of the value of the change effort proposed. Today, organizations in Nigeria most especially large organizations hardly change they tend to continue with the status quo and that affect their level of performance and productivity, the worse part of it is the fact that even if successful ideas were brought out by idea champion employees and the employers tend to resist it for some reasons. The main objective of this paper is to examine resistance to change in an organization and how that can be overcome for successful implementation of new ideas.

Literature review

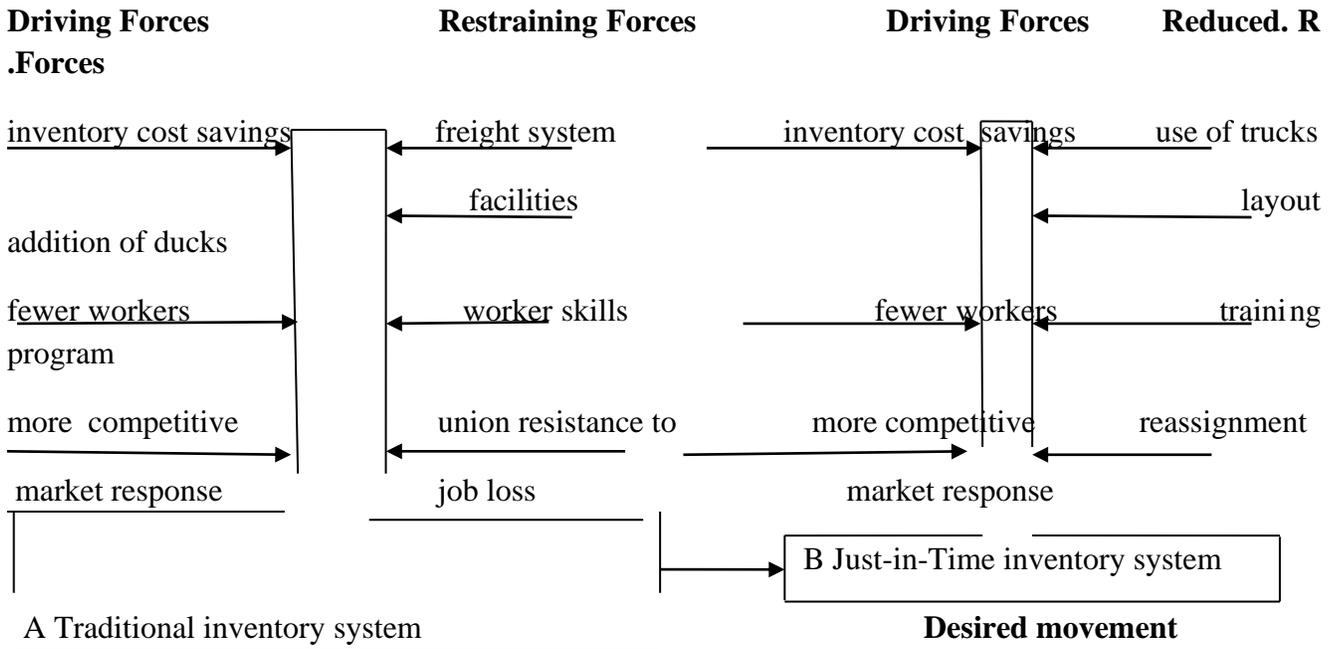
The significance of the degree of change is measured mainly by how those affected perceive and react to it (Car et al 2006). In organizations, resistance to change which concerns thought of the implications about change appears to be any attitude or behaviour indicating willingness to support or make a desired change (Mullins, 2005; Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 2005). In fact, resistance to change is a resistance to loss of something that is valuable or loss of the known by moving to the unknown. Sometimes, people resist the imposition of change that is accepted as a universal truth (Burke, 2008). Nonetheless, resistance can be passive resignation or deliberate sabotage (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). In dealing with issues of resistance to organizational change and overcoming inertia ('roadblocks to innovation and change'), Moss Kanter, in her earlier work on change management, suggests a number of actions that can be taken:

- 1) As a prerequisite to change, top management must be personally committed to supporting innovation and must learn to think integratively.
- 2) A 'culture of pride' should be encouraged within the organization, in which achievements are highlighted and where experienced innovators serve as consultants to other parts of the organization
- 3) Access to power sources (management committees, etc.) should be enlarged to improve support for innovatory/experimental proposals.
- 4) Lateral communication should be improved. Cross-functional links should be developed, and staff mobility should be encouraged.
- 5) Unnecessary layers of hierarchy should be reduced (i.e. a flatter structure should be aimed for) and authority should be pushed downwards ('empowerment' of staff).
- 6) Information about company plans should be more widespread and given as early as possible to enable people to contribute to change before decisions are made (for instance, by means of task-forces, problem-solving groups, etc)

Force –Field Analysis

Kurt Lewin introduced the term resistance in his field theory of which he develops the concept of Force-field analysis; he proposed that change was a result of the competition between driving and resistance forces. Driving forces can be thought of as a problems or opportunities that provide motivation for change within the organization. Restraining forces are the various barriers to change, such as lack of resources, resistance from middle managers, or inadequate employee skills. When a change is introduced, management should analyze both forces that drive change (problems and opportunities) as well as the forces that resist it (barriers to change). By selectively removing forces that restrain change, the driving forces will be strong enough to enable implementation, as illustrated by the move from A to B in table below. As barriers are reduced or removed, behavior will shift to incorporate the desired changes.

Table- Using force-field to change from traditional to Just-In-Time



Just-in-time (JIT) inventory control systems schedule materials to arrive at a company as they are needed on the production line. In an Ohio manufacturing company, management’s analysis showed that the driving forces (opportunities) associated with the implementation of JIT were Large cost savings from reduced inventories, Savings from needing fewer workers to handle the inventory, and a quicker, more competitive market response for the company. Restraining forces(barrier) discovered by managers were a freight system that was too slow to deliver inventory on time, a facility layout that emphasized inventory maintenance over new deliveries, a Inappropriate worker skills for handling rapid inventory deployment, and Union resistance to job loss. The driving forces were insufficient to overcome the restraining forces.

To shift the behavior to JIT, managers attacked the barriers. An analysis of the freight system showed that delivery by truck provided the flexibility and quickness needed to schedule inventory arrival at a specific time each day. The problem with facility layout was met by adding four new loading docks. Inappropriate worker skills were attached with a training program to instruct workers in JIT methods and in assembling products with uninspected parts. Union resistance was overcome by agreeing to reassign workers no longer needed for maintaining inventory to jobs in another plant. With the restraining forces reduced, the driving forces were sufficient to allow the JIT system to be implemented

Implementation tactics

The other approach to managing implementation is to adopt specific tactics to overcome employee resistance. For example, resistance to change may be overcome by educating employees or inviting them to participate in implementing the change. The following five tactics is summarized in table below

Approach	When to use
Communication, education analysis to	- Change is technical - Users need accurate information and Understand change
Participation	- Users need to feel involved -Design requires information from others -Users have power to resist
Negotiation	- Group has power over implementation -Group will lose out in the change
Coercion failed	-A crisis exists -Initiators clearly have power -other implementation techniques have
Top management support reallocation	-Change involve multiple departments or Of resources -Users doubt legitimacy of change

Method

Data were collected with questionnaires as part of a survey feedback research. Descriptive approach was used to collect data. The goals of the research work was to examine resistance to change and how its can be overcome for the successful implementation of new ideas .Top managers handling their own companies were given questionnaire.

Result

The survey carried shows that resistance to change in most organizations in Nigeria are as a result of Self interest, employees typically resist a change they believe will take away something of value. A proposed change in job design, structure, or technology may lead to a real perceived loss of power, prestige, pay, or company benefits. The fear of personal loss is perhaps the biggest obstacle to organizational change in Nigeria. Employees often distrust the intentions behind a change or do not understand the intended purpose of a change. If previous working relationships with an idea champion have been negative, resistance may occur. Uncertainty is especially threatening for employees who

have a low tolerance for change and fear anything out of the ordinary. They do not know how a change will affect them and worry about whether they will be able to meet the demands of a new procedure or technology. For example, union leaders at most of the organizations, resisted the introduction of employee participation programs. They were uncertain about how the program would affect their status and, thus, oppose it. Another reason for resistance to change is that people who will be affected by an innovation may assess the situation differently from an idea champion or new-venture group. Critics frequently voice legitimate disagreements over the proposed benefits of a change. Managers in each department pursue different goals, and innovation may detract from performance and goal achievement for some departments. For example, if marketing gets the new product it want for its customer, the cost of manufacturing may increase, and the manufacturing superintendant will resist. Resistance may call attention to problems with the innovation.

Conclusion

The best procedure for managers is not to ignore resistance but to diagnose the reasons and design strategies to gain acceptance by users. Strategies for overcoming resistance to change typically involve two approaches: the analysis of resistance through force-field by Kurt Lewin and use of selective tactics to overcome resistance. It is important particularly for the managers to communicate and educate those that would be affected by the change, when employees are properly informed that drastically reduced the level of resistance. Employees must be participant of the change project. People tend to become less resistance to change when they feel among. Participation also helps managers determine potential problems and understand the differences in perceptions of change among employees. Negotiation is a more formal means of achieving cooperation. Managers are to use formal bargaining to win acceptance and approval of a desired change. Coercion means that managers use formal power to force employees to change. Resisters are told to accept the change or lose rewards or their jobs. In most cases, this approach should be avoided because employees feel like victims, are angry at change managers, and may sabotage the changes. However, coercion may be necessary in crisis situations when a rapid response is urgent, the visible support of top management helps overcome resistance to change. To all employees, top management support is especially important when a change involves multiple departments or when resources are being reallocated among departments. Resistance to change can be reduced to the barest minimum, idea champions can have their innovative ideas accepted and implemented by considering the driving forces and strategically reducing it to the barest minimum.

REFERENCE

- Dube Like. (2009). *Managing Deviant Behavior and Resistance to change in Selected Organizations*, Unpublished Submitted to the Department of Management, Faculty of Business, University of Botswana, as Part of Assessment for MGT 674
- Bennebroek Gravenhorst, K. M., Werkman, R. A., & Boonstra, J. J. (2003). The change capacity of organizations: General assessment and five configurations. *Applied*

Psychology: An International Review, 52, 83-105.

Conner, D. R. (1998). *Managing at the speed of change. How resilient managers succeed and prosper where others fail*. Chichester: Wiley.

Coch, L., & French, J. R. P., Jr. (1948). Overcoming resistance to change. *Human Relations*, 1, 512-532.

Judson, A. S. (1991). *Changing Behavior in Organizations*. Massachusetts and Oxford: Basil Blackwell inc.

Lawrence T. B., & Robinson, S., L. (2007). Ain't Misbehaving Workplace Deviance as Organizations Resistance. *Journal of Management*, 33, 378-394

Mooketsi, D. S. (2009). Managing Deviant Behavior and Resistance to Change, Department of Management, Faculty of Business, University of Botswana, as Part of MGT 674.