



**How To Be An Effective Change Manager**

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### THE RIGHT PROJECT SETTING

#### (1) ESTABLISH A WORKSHOP SETTING

We find a workshop setting to be the most appropriate approach to change management. Obviously, you need to talk to your stakeholders individually but doing your work in team sessions is where the actual change happens. Change management is an active role and not just a side job. You are most probably familiar with doing daily or at least weekly stand-ups. Stand-up meetings are a fast way to share progress, remove roadblocks, and stay aligned. Every team member stands up and presents their recent progress and upcoming deliverables of the project to the rest of the team.

In the project at hand, we also introduced a weekly stand-up just for change and we can highly recommend that approach. Here there was no project progress, but it created a positive work atmosphere, motivation, and stakeholder management by following a clear set of questions. As usual in these settings, keep it short and sweet. By the way, this works on-site as well as virtually.

#### (2) INTRODUCE AMBASSADORS IN YOUR PROJECTS

Every change process is likely to not only affect your project team but the business. To combine the two, we suggest introducing Ambassadors. For us, a good Ambassador is somebody from a different business unit, who is generally connected to the topic at hand. In our current project, the number of involved Ambassadors nearly equals the number of project members. We found this is a good distribution for our project, but this might vary depending on the project scope. How to include the Ambassadors into your project? Start by inviting them to all of your team meetings.

Moreover, start thinking about linking them to various workgroups. If the outcome of this workgroup will impact the Ambassador's department, simply include that Ambassador in the workgroup. In this manner, you have an easy way to circulate information and you can also benefit from the Ambassador's knowledge. At a project level, Ambassadors help you to keep your project aligned with the business.

### (3) MAKE USE OF LESS FORMAL SETTINGS

Obviously, you cannot include every employee affected by the change in your project and you don't have to. For our project, an approved method is "Lunch & Learn" sessions. During lunch in a relaxed atmosphere, we offer different sessions to everyone that may be interested. This can be purely knowledge-based, for example providing training on Asset Management related topics. On the other hand, those sessions can be used to create a free flow of information about upcoming topics and processes. There are literally no limits to the design of the "Lunch & Learn" – just adapt it to your needs and the audience.

**Having presented our current experience with the role of the "Change Manager" we can summarize the findings to answer the question: How To Be An Effective Change Manager?**

In our point of view, the Change Manager needs to establish a safe environment for change in the broader sense and translate change methods into the project set-up. The role of a Change Manager can be combined with the role of the Project Manager if being performed actively. Nevertheless, in large and complex projects we highly recommend introducing a separate change manager. The benefit of an external change manager is that employees might be more willing to openly discuss doubts and challenges with someone outside the normal hierarchy and even outside the organization.

No matter if change management is being performed as a separate role or as part of the project manager's responsibilities, it is inevitable for the change manager to also be involved in the project work itself. In this way the change manager can be part of the team, thus affecting the change process. Last but by no means least, change management needs to be a priority with key deliverables.

Remember: If you cannot measure it, it does not exist. You will see that your project outcome will be better because of it.