

Avoid The “Pitfalls”: Specific Features of Organizational Change Governance

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Abstract

The exponential growth of technology contrasts with the slower linear relationships of organizational growth. In the face of constant changes in the world, it is important to understand whether an organization is ready to implement innovative ideas, since otherwise this will not increase its creativity and competitiveness. However, many organizations today are exactly the same as they were in the previous days. This situation mainly concerns the practice of interaction and change management. This means that the organization must be able to realize its potential at the same speed as new opportunities appear in the world. This empirical study is aimed at managing change in an organization, as well as addressing the question of how to act so that the implemented changes are comfortable, appropriate, useful and take root; how to ensure that a smart idea is executed well and ultimately delivers value. The real situation is researched from an observational point of view. An empirical model for managing organizational change in conditions of intense changes in the eco-environment and human nature itself is presented.

Keywords: *Organization, Changes, Environment, Human, Obstacles.*

Introduction

The world is changing at an alarming rate. On the one hand, the rapid formation of a new technological structure, when modern technologies become an integral part of the life of not only an individual but also the entire society as a whole. Technologies are developing so quickly that they are changing both nature and man himself. On the other hand, there is a constant change in the eco-environment — a complex dynamic system that includes a set of living organisms and their habitats and, accordingly, the rapid blurring of market boundaries, a shortening of the life cycle of products, and changing requirements for processes and people in organizations.

Positive expectations from the prospects for the introduction of new ideas and products, methods of producing goods and providing services, increasing productivity, and creating new jobs increase hopes for improving the quality of human life. This is also included in the driving factor of change in organizations. At the same time, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)², which ensures the safe entry of new ideas into the market, records that in 2022 there were mixed dynamics in investment in innovation in the face of numerous problems and a decline in funding for innovation. And, for 2023 and 2024, they gave a completely uncertain forecast³. Humanity wants consistency and security, but this is difficult to achieve when change is inevitable.

It must be said that the term “uncertainty” fully characterizes the current economic situation and the state of the socio-economic environment. The increase in uncertainty requires a person to become increasingly independent and responsible when making decisions (Asmolov, 2015). It also requires personal changes and knowledge that improve awareness and identity and play a key role in a person’s interaction with the living environment. At the same time, it is important to remember that all human behavior should be aligned with organizational change, the process of continuously updating the organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to meet ever-changing needs (Moran, 2001). We consider the field of organizational change management as a special case of changes in a person’s living environment, where the

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transition from one state to another is the manifestation of new properties, functions, and relationships in this process (Aldrich, 2006).

Even though the opinions of members of the global expert community coincide on the issue of the need to develop systems and mechanisms for managing organizational change, there is no consensus on its methods. Some focus on leadership issues (Rudnev 2020), on how the values of working people relate to changes that make work more dynamic or more structured (Långstedt, 2020), on the balance between order and disorder, on the strategic approach to the organizational performance (Beeson, 2020). Others believe that the main pitfalls in managing change are organizational culture (Setyanto,2019), communication system, staff satisfaction (Bordia, 2004) or formulas for calculating how well a company is implementing or will be able to implement its change initiatives (Sirkin,2005).

However, against the backdrop of rapid global changes in technology, demographics, and climate, research into the general specifics of change management becomes necessary, regardless of what area of the organization's activity they relate to. Of course, it is much easier to notice changes in business processes, material assets, organizational structure, finances, equipment, and many other areas of organizational activity and explain why these changes are needed; it is much easier to show the visible effect. Changes in the internal environment of an organization depend on many intangible assets: the needs, values, and abilities of a person, the perception and influence of the environment on the individual, etc., which seem invisible and such an important change in the organization as an upgrade of the interaction system itself remains in the change project underrated. This is a subtle point that can greatly change an organization because, by and large, an organization is a people whose activities are consciously coordinated to achieve common goals. Organizational change projects are notably specific and have certain painful points.

The main idea of applying an eco-humanistic approach in considering the sphere of organizational change management is based on the following principles: the value of a person and his experiences about himself and others; support and stimulation of the development of creative abilities; recognition of human dignity, his potentials, and opportunities for growth and self-realization. This approach determines the integration of such components of human interaction as rational-cognitive, spiritual-emotional, and natural-ethical. At the same time, pitfalls arise during the integration process. Knowledge about them allows avoiding many mistakes and expand the capabilities of employees, push them to realize their potential and integrate their natural-biological, spiritual-psychic, and social forms of being. This article proposes a mechanism for overcoming the most sensitive difficulties when implementing organizational change management projects.

Literature Review

The humanistic approach to management has deep roots associated with the traditions of cultural thought of mankind and determines the basic principles of modern practice. The use of theories that emerged in the twentieth century (scientific schools of “human relations” and “behavioral sciences”) made it possible to create conditions in organizations for motivating employees, developing their potential, and increasing the efficiency of their work. The history of the emergence and development of a humanistic approach to human resource management in organizations is quite fully described in the works of many scientists (Loza & Habisch, 2013).

Active development of the eco-humanistic management paradigm began in the last third of the 20th century. The universal values of human existence are described by S. Schwartz as three groups of needs: 1) the needs of individuals as biological organisms; 2) the need for coordinated social interaction; and 3) the needs for survival and well-being of groups. (Schwartz, 1992). However, scientists still identify many reasons for the paradigmatic discrepancy between the traditional (economic) business paradigm and the humanistic paradigm of business management (Pirson, 2023).

As we know, the economic paradigm of business prioritizes profit maximization and efficiency, often to the detriment of social and environmental considerations. In this system, success is measured by stock market performance and quarterly profits, which results in the long-term well-being of people and the

planet being ignored. Placing a person at the center of the economic system will undoubtedly increase its stability, which, in turn, will create a strong foundation for business development. (Esposito & Roos, 2023).

The humanistic business paradigm involves the integration of economic processes with human development, with his skills, needs and ambitions. On the other hand, modern management includes both people and technology (Grijak & Solesa, 2014). A humanistic approach to doing business postulates a combination of social goals and economic success, as it creates value for all interested parties: employees, clients, stakeholders, and everyone who is interested in working with a company that puts people at the center of its activities. According to Mele, such a transition can be organized as follows:

the structure of the organization is built on the basis of correspondence between people;

people in the organization participate in decision-making and have a high degree of involvement and commitment;

the organization becomes a community of people, and not a package of internal contracts;

values-based management (Melé, 2016).

The development of the humanistic paradigm in management is facilitated by research devoted to global processes and management styles. Thus, the assumption that open systems can achieve their goals in different ways, using different input data, methods and processes, allowed T. Morden highlighting the principle of parallelism, which means the emergence of a much larger number of questions for managers, multifaceted solutions, a higher level of ambiguity and completeness, as well as the greater uncertainty that will have to be faced. This approach enables the enterprise to address the requirements of both individuals and the community simultaneously. (Morden, 2004). Exploring humanistic alternatives, scientists come to the conclusion that changes in business are not only a recombination of material resources, but also a reconfiguration of intellectual resources to “give new meanings” and rethink contexts (Lubinski et al., 2023).

At the same time, in the context of rapid scientific, technical and economic progress, which sometimes brings with it destructive consequences, the problem of ensuring conditions for the development of world is particularly urgent. Sustainability as the co-evolution of economic, social and environmental systems while meeting quality/productivity objectives related to each of the three areas. Economic activity, although it has its imperatives (innovation, competitive search for profit, etc.), must serve a broader social sphere, and this presupposes that its goals and values ensure environmental sustainability (O'Connor, 2006). This issue also concerns the co-evolution of interconnected organizations and reflects their strategies and practices for using management models in a rapidly changing era (Rong et al., 2011). Moreover, the lack of serious attention to change management processes implemented in advanced ecosystems undermines the advantages of technology leaders, as the effectiveness of change management strategies increases over the life of any system (Adner & Kapoor, 2010).

The human organism is always responsible for changes in elements of the natural environment through adaptive reactions and various forms of interaction of living organisms with each other. At the same time, with the theme, the evolution of the natural environment occurs much faster than the change in human nature, which eliminates the contradiction between the resistance of economic and social systems and the tendencies to preserve the image of a person (Babkin, 2014). Though the fact of biological foundations of human nature is well known, its behavioral characteristics are fully determined by historical and cultural circumstances. In this sense, the fundamental goal of all human actions is not only biological survival but also the constant improvement of activities to manage changes in the environment external to a human being (Muoz-Rubio, 2002).

Consideration of eco-oriented philosophical concepts leads scientists to conclude that humanity needs the transition to a new level of its existence and the formation of a qualitatively new social type of personality, which can be designated as environmentally oriented and a bearer of ecological culture (Afanasyeva, 2016).

On the other hand, within the framework of business ecology, there is a search for a productive set of processes for developing new technologies characterized by rapid prototyping, short product development cycles, early marketing, etc., which is a change process anyway (Lindgren, 2022).

Methods

This study uses an empirical method of cognition, which involves a description of sensations obtained experimentally. Considering that the role of subjective conscious experience is great in determining the paths of development of humans and communities, empirical research methods seem to be the most productive (Kolb, 1984). Descriptive research involves observing, recording, and describing manifestations of management processes based on visual and auditory sensations.

Management processes often have overly complex structures and cannot be described as easily as, for example, hierarchical structures. Therefore, for reasons of expediency special methods of the research were used: observation method, expert assessment method, narrative interview method. Recording the manifestations of the change management process made it possible to propose an empirical model of the process. The activities are decomposed into components, which makes it possible to represent the entire chain of operations and notice bottlenecks and errors (pitfalls), predict risks at each stage, and describe ways to overcome them. This, in turn, allows building more effective change management processes in the short term. And in the long term, it helps to adapt and improve under changing conditions and goals.

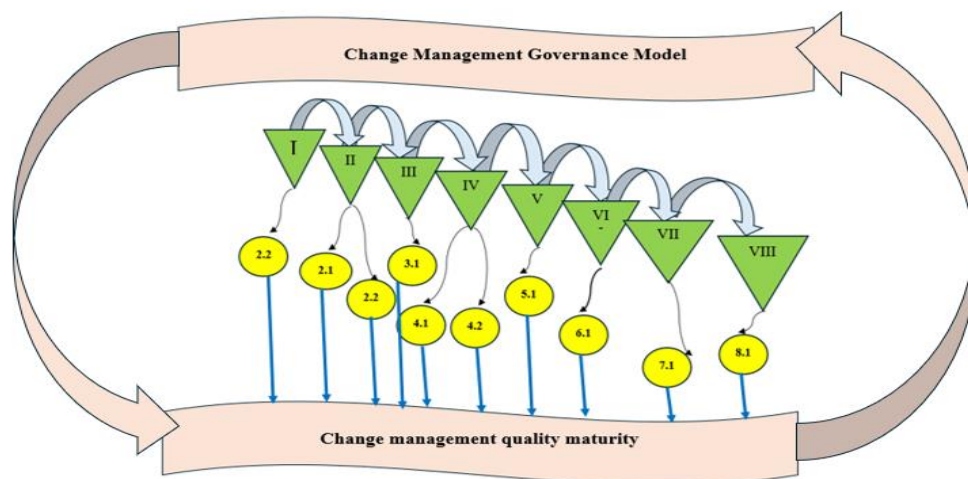


Figure 1. Change Management Process Model

Ideas about the relationship between the biological and social man's nature make it possible to identify new properties of the system in this model. It is important for managing organizational change and the behavior of individuals that are not typical for other components of the general management system (the phenomenon of emergence). The descriptive nature of the study also allows us to obtain valuable information about the characteristics, behavior, and trends in the development of human capital of organizations in a constantly changing external environment.

Research Findings and Discussions

Ideas about the determinism of the biological and social nature of man and at the same time their close relationship make it possible to construct the so-called Map of Changes in the Organization, a tool that

helps to analyze existing experience and to identify pain points and opportunities for step-by-step improvement:

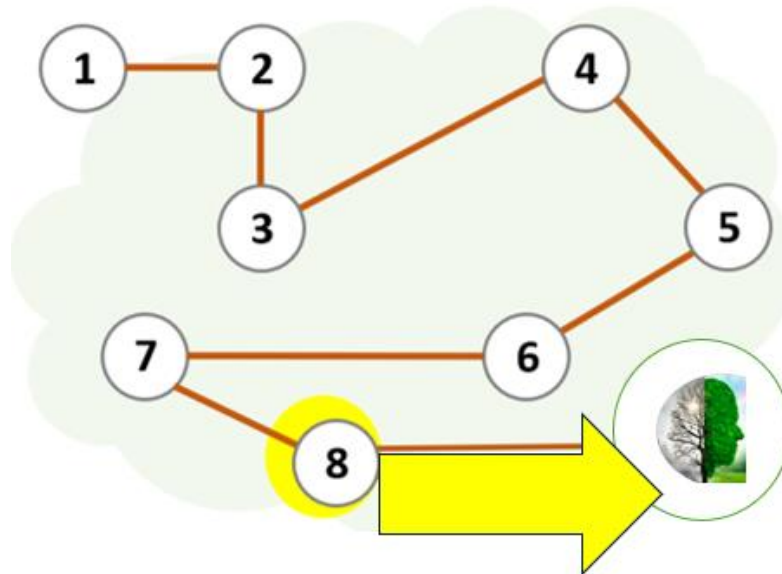


Figure 2. Change Map.

Step 1. Motivating. Changes never begin unless there is a motive for change. Because the change is not a very natural function of the brain. The individual wants to save resources. To abandon his usual way of activity and change the familiar to the unusual, a person needs a strong motive. Motives are divided into 2 groups: the motive of a wonderful future that will come if you move along a new path, or a terrible future that will come if you continue to act as before. There are theories that say that motives are rational and emotional (Schwartz et al.,2012). We combine these theories and create a Motive Matrix.

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Rational expectation of fear	Emotional anticipation of fear
Rational expectation of happiness	Emotional expectation of happiness

Figure 3. Motive Matrix.

A person can think about the beautiful things that await him, but he can model this beauty in two ways: he can draw beautiful pictures for himself at the level of sensory experience, or he can make calculations:

"What'll be a profit?", "How many orders will be there?". But the change project manager must be occupied with the question "Which motive is stronger?" It often happens that the emotional expectation of fear is much stronger, but the emotional expectation is more fleeting. On the other hand, fear seems to force people to get up and go, but it doesn't feed them at all, and the brain can say, "Oh well, it'll work out." And the expectation of "joy" makes them want to have the change. However, it is possible to find a certain "seed" of triggering in each of these cells. Kurt Lewin said that a person is initially wrapped in a crust of ice: this is his inertia, these are his habits (Lewin, 2013). And this crust needs to be broken through... But companies often turn off the presence of the crust. Although Daniel Goleman, considering human nature, believed that not considering the power of emotions means showing woeful myopia. (Goleman, 2009).

Step 2: Creation of Vision. It is vital that this vision needs to be a product that can be replicated and alienated from the carrier. A product is something that lies on a medium: a document, a picture, a presentation, a manifesto, a movie, that is, something that is transmitted not only by airborne droplets. Otherwise, you won't be able to do 2 important things: a) a replication: after all, a change project assumes that as many people as possible are involved in it over time; the circles begin to diverge, cascading new ideas, new knowledge; b) a person is designed in such a way that he constantly comes up with something new, and not all people are disciplined: there must be infographic on the approach; text list of goals with numbers; road map. Until the team has gone through the process of putting the vision on paper, a file, or a videotape, one cannot say that the team has a vision as the clarifying vision process is at last the process of its creating.

Step 3. Creation of a team. All change framework authors have very different ideas about when to create a change team. According to the authors of the SIMPLE frame, we need to create a vision at first and then to invite people to the team. It is impossible to know whom to put on the team if there is no vision (Hussey, 2002). Kotter argues the opposite: at first, there is the need to choose a team and then to create vision (Kotter, 2014). And then everyone on the team will be able to become a co-author of the vision and an agent of change and will carry this vision further throughout the company. Let's reconcile these 2 opinions: Factually this happens in parallel, and there may be several iterations. Because the change team is people who have agreed on common goals, on general principles of movement towards these goals, and on normalizing operations among themselves. They have experienced some first psychological shake-ups, as in the natural hierarchy. They understand who's who, i.e. some social connections have been built. Such a team cannot be formed, like a group, when you set up a meeting in the room, everyone gathers, and here is the group. Teams are created through activity, where roles are defined, and participation is approved. That is, the activity of concentrating (evaporating) the vision is at the same time an activity of creating a team.

Step 4. Create a change product. There is the need to overcome two pitfalls before taking this step: a) *The wait-and-see attitude* of the participants. In a change project, participants need several qualities such as lightness, softness, and plasticity. Most people who have even shown interest, no matter whether they have emotional or rational motivation, always try to save on the activity. They do not know how many "incentives" (money, career opportunities, interest, etc.) they'll receive from their activities. Almost all people behave much the same throughout their whole life. They take a wait-and-see position until they do not know everything in an original activity exactly. And if at this time someone starts saying that "This is not enough", "This is not good enough", "This is not ambitious enough", etc., then the person will not participate in the project. Perfectionism is good when people are focused on improving what they already do. Perfectionism concerning dreams (intentions) is rather an "empty" story; b) *Neuroplasticity.* People put a lot of effort into making a process efficient. At the beginning of any activity exactly, you have to expend great effort and get little results. You need to come to terms with this to internally get more results, and continue to move along the time scale, and gradually the skill will become stronger, the neural chain will become denser, and less effort will be required to get greater results. Ideally, you can achieve such a wonderful state when you have to put in a little effort, but the result will be significant. This is quite a long way along the time scale, but the behavioral, motivational, and neural chains are already becoming strong.

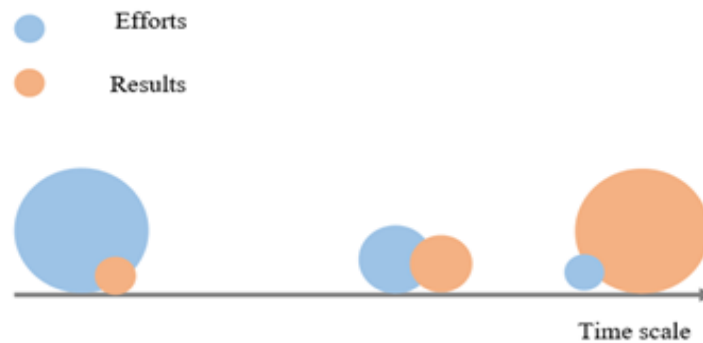


Figure 4. Neuroplasticity

At this stage of the change project, which includes the actual development of the planned product, you can use the ADJAIL methodology. There must be motivators of joy, they will help overcome problems much more than motivators of fear. Inside the brain, there is a competition between focuses of attention, ideas, and habits. What is not used dies. What is trained gets stronger. So, in the classical management practice of project management "Lessons learned" are collected only at the end. But in SCRUM methodology the whole activity on the project is divided into certain periods (weeks, months) by seeking answers to the questions: "What was done wrong?", "What was done well, but could be done better?", or "Could they have set more ambitious goals?" All these questions are addressed at the end of each short sprint.

The timing of the project never depends on the size of the team or the industry; each team can only compete with itself in comparison with the previous period. There cannot be statistics on the timing of the implementation of changes, because everything depends on the quality of organizing. The better the quality of organizing, the more optimistic and ambitious the deadlines can be. In any case, people want to get results as quickly as possible, otherwise, fatigue sets in (for example, they work on a project for a long time, but the product cannot be felt), and their ideas about the result change. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure quick victories. Victory can be fast if the tasks are divided correctly (i.e., if the task is large, it will not work out quickly: you need to bite off exactly as much as you can chew). If you have already started doing something at this stage, that's already good, so it is important to create a prototype of the product that will allow you to see how it will look and work in real life and improve its functionality in the future. The main thing is to get intermediate results since it is difficult for people to work efficiently without visualizing goals. In any case, projects that ignore this side of human nature do not end well or never end. They become zombies - projects when it seems that the project is still ongoing, but there is already emptiness there...

At the end of each sprint, it is possible to record the result not as a product, but to mark several repetitions of process points. It was developed for some change projects to celebrate some points as a success: "the first 100 users registered"; "there the first 50 thousand "likes" appeared"; and "the first 50 articles appeared on internal Wikipedia". Such indicators acquire serious motivational support.

Step 5. Formation of public opinion. The pitfall at this stage is the practice of dull listing of goals, objectives, results, and other information about the project. It is necessary to plan for clear and widespread communication of the change project to:

to captivate all employees of the organization with the idea of change and form new habits;

provide a new vector for disseminating information on recognizing success based on new signs of activity and behavior, since a person's self-esteem depends on responses.

present bright, exciting, inspiring presentations on a project that will make you want to join, which will significantly increase the "sales-conversion" of this idea.



Figure 5. “Starfall” Of Information

On the one hand, it’s good when a person expects a reward, and this reward finds him. On the other hand, to create an “adventure” factor, when excitement, surprise, luck, and gamified action motivate and form the “Reward – Motivation – Habit” cycle. This is where group dynamics begin to work, and the density of emotional life is formed. Overcoming despondency will be facilitated by information (both expected and unexpected) that shakes the imagination and is not known in advance. Advocating for change pushes people to take the first step, and then initiates quick victories, which are made victories by the Starfall around them.

Step 6. Overcoming sabotage. If saboteurs are detected during the transition to this stage, then mistakes were made in the previous 5 steps. No triggers were found, or the triggers did not work, they were formal and did not influence anyone; a vision has not been created to which one could return and correct (everyone is already confused about what is happening because everything is in words); the team is not built up (the group is assigned, but people do not feel like members of the team); the goal is not broken down into specific tasks, or the wrong dimension is chosen (moreover, if the tasks turn out to be small, then they can be corrected by combining them, but if they are too large, then nothing can be done, and this project does not bring anything joyful to people (they get no pleasure for the brain). On the other hand, even if everything more or less works out, what to do with the saboteurs?

Recommendations could be:

- Do not include those who are clearly “waiting” in the project at the first stage;
- Check whether messages are “customized”;
- Promise a reward (change the KPI for participants);
- Reduce the “entrance fee” for this project;
- Co-opt the saboteur (offer him a role that is more suitable for his psychological characteristics);
- Change the perimeter of the project so that it does not pass through the saboteur;
- Use a person with greater political power as a resource (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008);
- Discharge the saboteur;
- Don't do the project.

Step 7. Consolidating success. Project change is good when it has become embedded in the organization and feels like it has always been there. That is, there is no rollback. To consolidate success or to find out there are some “pitfalls” lurking deep down, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research into the quality of organizing:

tasks are clearly “cut”, "kangaroo" tasks are recognized ("Kangaroo" task is when within one task there are many other unsolved problems);

Roles are defined;

Time management is clear;

Planning system is created + system for updating the planning system;

Regular management procedures for the project are designed, launched, and operational;

The way to discuss problems/opportunities of the project is adequate;

The system for processing and storing information on the project is created;

The rules, principles, standards, and people have changed really.

In this case, there is confidence that changes have occurred, and the quality of project management has improved.

Step 8. Institutionalization. There, in any organization are norms that have been developed historically: Corporate culture; Systems of material and non-material motivation; Strategy; Personnel management policy; Image, rituals, and communication practices, etc. Since any change project is always associated with a way of thinking, attitude, consciousness, worldview, mindset, and way of thinking of the staff, the institutionalization of a change project means that no matter to what area of the company's activity it is associated with, the change management project must be brought into compliance with all norms, that exist in the company. If a knowledge management change project has been implemented (for example, Knowledge Base, Corporate Wikipedia, etc.), this means that, by cultural norms, the company welcomes when a person shares knowledge and involves other people in this process, and this may be a factor in moving up the hierarchical ladder, that knowledge management becomes important for the survival of the company and other important moments in the development of strategy, etc.

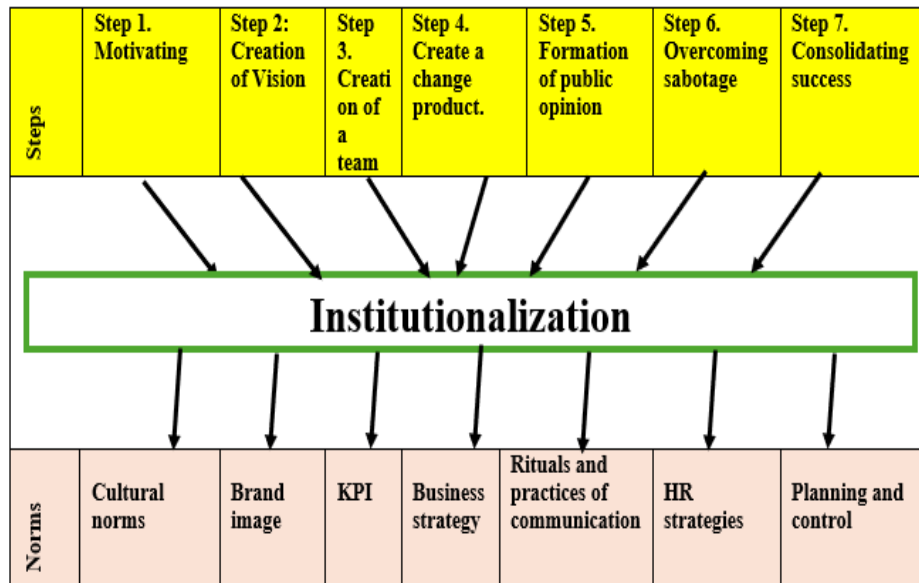


Figure 6. Highway of Institutionalization

The rooting of the results of a change project in the existing norms and practices of the organization can indicate its integrity, coherence, structural orderliness, and completeness of the stages. However, it is important for the organization itself that all change project management practices move through the stages of maturity. This will allow:

recognize change projects among all other projects and processes;

agree on a minimum level of standardization within each change project;

transfer successful practices to all other change projects;

manage a portfolio of change projects;

conduct so-called “built-in” improvement, when a project is undertaken with the expectation that this project will improve the quality of change management throughout the company.

Conclusion

An empirical model for overcoming the difficulties associated with managing organizational change allows obtaining information about the important properties of this management process, predicting its development, and acting so that the changes introduced are comfortable, expedient, beneficial, and take root. This study allows identifying the practices of interaction between people to introduce changes in the relationship between the motives, means, and goals of each person. Consistent progress by the “steps” presented in the organizational change management model allows determining what different people think, feel, experience, and how they behave regarding changes, and what difficulties may be encountered on their path to change. The descriptive nature of the study allows for discussion of possible options for overcoming these difficulties. From a practical perspective, this article will allow managers who ensure the most effective management process to initiate change projects, cascade best practices of interaction, and improve their quality so that the organization can realize its full potential and change by new opportunities emerging in the world.

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