

Adapting the Personnel with the Changes at School

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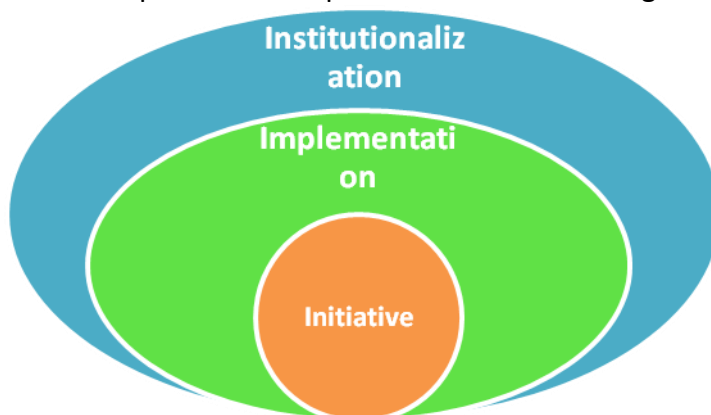
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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, it has to be emphasized that the need for changes in school is necessary and indispensable. But why should necessarily change schools? Even though this institution is of a big importance in a society, it is still sealed and resistant to innovations and cannot always fit to innovations easily, furthermore, with a domination of authoritarian-threatening style that is part of the tradition, overloaded curricula etc. The reasons for changes in schools are necessary because the school must provide a quality education. As a first point, schools should go in step with the time and adapt to the overall development which have to be done, change the ways of working, besides learning, also to develop the exchange of values and constellations, and at the end, necessarily to incorporate the element of research, tracking and exploring that enables the students to get acquainted with the ways of learning. But the changes at school shouldn't be understood only as a necessity, because the changes at school can be made even if it expressed a desire for something like this.

The developmental change will be successful only if it passes chronologically the phases of initiatives, implementations and institutionalizations.

The adaptation of the personnel with the changes



In the first stage, workers perceive the problems and needs to change. This level creates incentives for people to modify their attitudes and behaviors. Melting begins by providing staff with information that shows discrepancies between the desired behavior or performance desired and actual situation.

In the second phase, it is ensured the transfer of the changes into the desired situation. It is the stage of obtaining information and learning, new model of behavior, and new ways of behavior. This level can contain the specific plan for training the managers and employees. This stage requires the changing of the attitudes of personnel and individual behavior of people in charge for the process of implementation of the change. At this level it is considered the use of the change, when the ability and the meaning has been created then the initiative success has been achieved and the responsibility is delegated to a working group of the teachers.

In the third phase, the institutionalization, as a last stage also means reappearance of the change and consistency of a new idea. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to change the individual behavior of all members of the school organization, group behavior or organizational culture. This is the stage when the development ceases to be regarded as something new, and the change becomes part of the daily operations of the school.

The third phase in the process of change is called enforcement. There is a fundamental difference between the knowledge to be done differently and what it actually does. For the implementation of change it has to be gained a habit for the implementation of the new behavior.¹

The implementation should lead to the institutionalization of the changes. The main criterion for successful innovation or change of development is its "routinization". With that it becomes an integral part of the organization and it is not considered as an innovation.

Difficulties during the changes

The experience shows that most of the people express much more resistance to developmental changes. This resistance usually occurs as a result of incompetence or lack of preparation for the discussions about the problems that are the product of change; rejection of change because it is considered as a threat to individuals, etc. Resistance also appears as a result of the confrontation of the unknown and the loss of already known. This is a common and natural phenomenon, a

force that slows down or stops the establishment of developmental changes, by opposing to new situations, new problems and challenges, ambiguity and noncompliance.

Different authors identified a variety of reasons why people oppose the change. According to Bedijan Arthur (1980) there are four most common reasons for resistance to changes:

- Limitation of personal interest (the change threatens to divert the "comfort zone" away from things that are preferred or enjoyed by the staff).
- Misunderstanding and mistrust (incorrect and misunderstood information for implementation of the changes, result with uncertainty, mistrust and gossip in one space).

- Contradictory assessments (different ways that everyone perceives and evaluates the positivities and negativities of the changes)
- Fear of change (a doubt that leads to the question: can I do this?)

When a resistance appears and when a certain group or individuals attack the new ideas, the Director shouldn't lose the initial target and orientation. Therefore, it is important at the same time to be considered the objective of change as well as the resistance showed by the people. If the Director is mainly focused only in the purpose of the change, then the resistance can be increased dramatically. On the other hand, if the focus is only on the resistance, then it will not be able to assess what real support to move forward.

The strategy, which helps dealing with its resistance, is its acceptance. The resistance will be overcome easier when it will be accepted the fact that there are people in the school who will disagree or oppose. When they understand it, then they will be ready to discuss and explain their reasons. When the Director is ready to hearing the opinions of others and understand their attitudes, it is easier to establish a common ground and discover how to transfer the negative resistance into a support of incorporating the development changes.

If there are many reasons for the appearance of resistance to oppose the change, it is for certain that there are many ways to overcome them. Some authors, such as John Schlesinger and Leo Cotter, emphasize six methods for overcoming the resistance:

Education and dedication - Director should provide important and valuable program for training, like : counseling "eye to eye", group meetings and publication of printed material in the form of reminder, reports or similar. Teachers should be informed about the nature of problems that require changes. Resistance may be based on misconceptions and inaccurate information. Therefore, education and dedication help to overcome such situations or to obtain accurate facts and identify and reconcile conflicting aspects. This approach gives visible results only if there is a trust and understanding between the director and teachers.

Participation and involvement - The high overcoming of the resistance to changes can be made if those people, who are supposed to oppose the changes, are involved in planning and implementing the change. The Director may use this approach if individuals have the necessary knowledge and skills for effective input and desire to make it.

Relief and support - In numerous cases, teachers have a need for proper counseling, or a type of therapy that will help and facilitate them to overcome the negative attitudes and the anxiety related to changes.

Negotiations and Agreements - Director, in accordance to certain work tasks, should reach agreement through compromise and negotiation instead of reaching it through the imposition, especially when there are people or groups that are powerful enough for effective resistance.

Attracting and inclusion - The Director delivers attractive information concerning the changes that are selective, which emphasize only the benefits, and ignore the negative features. Their inclusion can be performed by appointing the individuals or groups that resist in high positions and reward them well.

Implicit and explicit imposition - The director, in this case, waives any effort to reach the consensus. This measure is usually applied where there is a major disagreement between the people involved in changes and those unlikely to change their opinions. This results in the use of force and intimidation, but without involving the violence. It is sufficient the threat of termination, transferring, obstacles in career or another similar crisis.

Perhaps these already mentioned six methods can be used in combination, depending on the situation described as resistance to change. Finally, the principal has to get used of living with resistance. They are natural phenomena and common occurrence of life and changes. The most important thing in this situation is to search a "neutral zone", which will include the interests of both parties.

Consequences of change

In order to be accepted developmental change, it is necessary, first, to be well explained, to be presented with all its values (and eventual deficiencies) that will be understandable as "clear" as possible. The school and teachers should recognize its advantages in terms of productivity, to exist one result as "apparent" as possible from the educational aspect or an evidence proved as much as possible. Acceptance of developmental change is the first important step. It can be expressed as creation of a positive attitude towards the change and its possible application to existing conditions. However, it is important that approved development change to be applied to a greater number of schools and to teachers.

Applying the change will be successful if it is defined by the program or if followed and evaluated the same like other task. It has to be a mandatory function for the school and teachers, i.e. it is necessary that the use of the change has the characteristic of planning, systematization, and education. When a change is planned, it becomes an integral part of the working program in the school and to the teachers, and at the same time has a mandatory character.

Therefore, it is necessary a strategy and a system of rational organization of change, and especially important to be operationalized in a number of "practical steps". In this sense, mainly

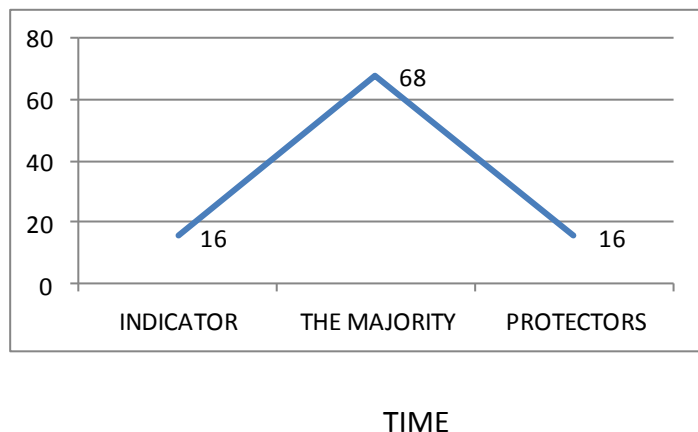
the relationships and requirements have to be changed, because it is the basic assumption for a faster acceptance, and application of innovation and change.

The Management information system in education EMSM, presents a tool for gathering, processing and presentation of data, information which are very important in the educational

process.²This system must contribute to the transparent and efficient process of the funding and investment in schools, enables communication between schools and also generates statistical reports necessary for education system.

Changes in time for acceptance and implementation of changes by school personnel are presented in the curve below:

Changes in time for acceptance and implementation of changes by school personnel



Source: Петковски К, (1998), |"Менаџмент во училиште", Shkup faqe (86-87)

The curve has been identified in the following way: 16% of the staff who adapt to the changes are called INITIATOR, 68% behave as Masses or MAJORITY, while 16% are identified as PROTECTORS. According to the definition, each change consists in itself INITIATOR, MAJORITY and PROTECTORS. If the developmental change is fully accepted at school, then the horizontal gridlines of the chart will reflect less time, but workers can still be identified as the INITIATOR, MAJORITY and PROTECTORS of that change.

Initiators, Majority and Protectors have their roles in adapting to changes, even though they are not identified with these names. Employees may or may not consciously choose these roles, but they create a good balance between them. In Western countries, the role of the Initiator is most often identified with his contribution.

It is of high value creating courageously new things, regardless of whether the work has been done well enough. Initiators are often the leaders at school.

The majority accepts the changes when a sufficient number of personnel change. They do not only see the information coming from the Initiator, but they also share their own ones. They want to have proofs that the change is worth. They, also, want to be strongly convinced that the change is really acceptable. Protectors, in most cases, have negative opinion about the changes, but they still play an important role in the school. It is a role that seems in terms of its positive impact on school. Protectors balance with a very impulsive nature at initiators by respecting the manner of the work done in the past. They also require more time for completion of the process of change. But, on the other hand, once they have been adapted to the work changes, they become completely loyal to them.

Even though the staff tends to play a role, they are not closely related to that role. An individual may be an Initiator for a change, a member of the Majority for another change, and a Protector for a third change. They probably prefer to play a role in an environment, such as a workplace, and another role in another environment, such as the House. In the table below we can see the information collected about these roles:

The roles of the personnel for changes

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <p>Initiators</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare answers for the environment • Maintain the relevance of the organization • They are mostly concentrated on the future |
| <p>Majority</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They don't see themselves as very important for the company • They are cautious, but also ready to adapt • They are mostly concentrated on the present |
| <p>Protectors</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the identity of the school • Evaluate the successes achieved in the past • They challenge the need for changes and the specifics of the changes |

SUMMARY:

Changes that occur in school necessarily reflect the various factors and therefore changes give schools the opportunity to exist, develop, and modernize. So, it consists in the fact that changes at school are and must necessarily be inalienable. Whereas, the acceptance of changes should be done willingly and without resistance, but after being thoroughly traced and analyzed. Having in consideration all what have been mentioned, mainly the following changes must occur at schools: the mission and vision of the school, the concept of the school, pedagogical environment, selection of teachers, the relationship between the teacher and students, the internal architecture of the school, the organization of the school year etc., in order to have effective schools, and productive and successful students.

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