Abstract: The Only Thing Constant is Change
The only thing constant in education is it is always changing. This paper will discuss the aspects of change from developing, implementing and sustaining change. When developing a process for change, the majority of the organization needs to be involved in the plan. This paper will discuss the benefits in using a change agent to implement the new program or idea. The key to sustaining change is having successful PLC’s and a supportive administration team.
Change in education is the only aspect that is constant. This is accomplished by understanding the different needs between the stages of change. When developing a plan, the whole group must be considered. It must be understood, however, that the individuals are the key to change. Implementing the change is a process, not an event, and cannot happen overnight or without appropriate interventions (Hall & Hord, 2006). The change process is not successful without a supportive administrative team. A good administration is the vital to sustaining change; therefore, the key to successful change is developing, implementing, and sustaining the plan.

Developing a practical and sustainable plan is the key to any change. This can be done in a number of ways, but it is important to consider the individuals that will be implementing the change. One process of developing a plan is the Organization Development (OD) model. The OD model focuses on individuals and groups skills that are beneficial in the organization and encourages teamwork (Hall & Hord, 2006). OD uses an outside consultant who taps into the organization’s expertise. This encourages the group to take ownership of their change process. Change facilitators in the developmental stage are dynamic and engaging. This gets the first three stages of adopters on board: innovators, early adopters, and early majority. Not all change has the luxury of being an internal change. Some change is external; for example, it could be mandated by federal, state, or district levels. In external change, the plan itself may not be a shared vision but the implementation of the plan can be. It is very important for the change facilitator to engage and unify the group under these circumstances.

Once the majority has adopted the plan, it is time to form professional learning communities (PLCs) to customize the plan to fit the particular school. PLCs help facilitate planning by unifying a shared vision and thus sharing responsibilities. A benefit of many groups
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working on the same plan is that obstacles can be exposed and avoided. Developing a plan can take many years to develop. The PLC can monitor the development and help the organization keep moving forward in a timely manner. Once the plan is developed, it is time to implement the plan.

The implementation stage is very different from the planning stage. The planning stage is dynamic and visionary. The implementation stage calls on a change facilitator that has the qualities of patience and persistence. The planning facilitator may find the task of implementation to be tedious. The plan facilitator still has a role in implementing when it comes to problem solving and troubleshooting, but she will probably not be involved in the day-to-day activities of implementation. It is clear in *Implementing change patterns, principles and potholes* that change will not happen until the individuals of the organization change (Hall & Hord, 2006). It is the role of the administrator to monitor PLCs and individuals involved in the change.

A great plan is just a plan unless it is put into action. When putting a plan into action, an organization should expect to adapt the plan when interventions are needed. Implementation of a change can take years. During this time the PLCs should continually monitor the progress and success of the implementation. Many times plans are implemented at schools and they are not monitored; as a result, the plan just fades away. This is one of the reasons many teachers are resistant to change. The feelings are if the plan is ignored it will eventually being forgotten and go away.

The textbook informs the reader that facilitating change is a team effort. A good administrator is the key to successful and long-term change. The administrator may change leadership styles as the process of change proceeds. When the PLCs are established and successful, the administrator can take a nurturing role and monitor the progression. Remember
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The plan is not developed or implemented overnight nor will the results of the change show a positive influence overnight. After the plan is implemented, there must be monitors in place to sustain the plan. It is very important to monitor the change for intended results. Often a plan is executed for several months without achieving desired results and the plan is abolished (Fakinlede, 2007). This is where the administration must monitor the activities and evaluate the integrity of the implementation. Milestones must be celebrated to keep the staff engaged and motivated to carry out the change.

The role of an administrator in a change effort is crucial. The administrator serves as an instigator, a motivator and an encourager. An administrator helps develop leadership teams that can plan and implement ideas. After this is established an administrator can shift to the role of a guide and a trouble shooter. The most important aspect of an administrator’s job is to recruit and hire an excellent staff.

In conclusion, change is a group effort. The dynamics of the group changes as the progress of the plan develops. Initially, a needed change is identified and a plan is developed. The change can be an internal change or an external change. The planning stage can unify the group by using a change facilitator to excite and engage the organization. Several methods to develop the plan can be used, but the most important influence of the plan is the organization’s impression of ownership. Once the plan is developed it must be implemented to attain any results. The text book informs us for change to take place the individuals of the organization must change. For this to occur smoothly, it is important for the individuals to be a part of the planning and implementing change. Planning and implementing are very different in process. Change facilitators involved in planning are dynamic and visionaries while facilitators involved in implementing have characteristics of patience and persistence. Sustaining a plan is also a
group effort. The plan must be monitored for desired results. Activities must also be monitored and adapted to sustain the plan. Administrators are crucial in all stages of change. Administrators must lead and unify the organization. A good administrator will develop PLCs to share the responsibilities of the change process. With unity, shared vision, and responsibilities schools can plan, implement, and sustain necessary changes needed to ensure student success.