Emergent Change
EMERGENT CHANGE

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A 2004 study of 49 published reports of organizational change, found that 33.3% of change effort were successful.

Smith, Martin; Performance Improvement; January 2002
Kotter’s Change Model

1. Establishing a Sense of Urgency
2. Creating the Guiding Coalition
3. Developing a Vision and Strategy
4. Communicating the Change Vision
5. Empowering Broad-based Action
6. Generating Short-term Wins
7. Consolidating Gains & Producing More Change
8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture
Yet

More recent studies show more of the same
The Current State of Affairs:

Only one-third of change efforts are very successful or extremely successful.

Chances are 1 in 20 that a critical change effort will be extremely successful.

Chances are 2 to 1 that a change effort will be (at best) somewhat successful or not successful at all.

We need to explore new new models of CHANGE.
Our emerging understanding of networks suggests an alternative approach for change.
Lewin’s main preoccupation was the resolution of social conflict and, in particular, the problems of minority or disadvantaged groups. ~ Lewin (1948)

OD is “an effort planned, organization-wide, and managed from the top, to increase organizational effectiveness ... using behavioral science knowledge” ~ Beckhard (1969)
## Overview of Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Organization</th>
<th>Sample &amp; Data</th>
<th>Focus of Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services</td>
<td>32 interviews &amp; archival data</td>
<td>Analyzes the dynamics of idea generation and idea flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Equipment</td>
<td>16 interviews</td>
<td><em>Interactive dynamic</em> of informal networks on emergent change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Small Non-profit     | Network Analysis  
60 Respondents | Social network analysis to identify *network structures* associated with change |
| Aerospace            | 25 interviews | Examine the *conditions for emergence* of complexity dynamics |
| Financial Services   | 80 participants social interaction analysis | The power of *cohesiveness* within micro networks in idea generation |
| Hospitals            | 27-hospital collaborative | Improving clinical practice to prevent healthcare acquired infections through learning networks |
1. Passion spreads
2. Friends really matter
3. Need to maintain
1. **Passion is Contagious**

2. **Leverage Friends (Social Capital)**

3. **Set Boundaries of Focus**

### Increasing Returns (Ground Swells)

- **Intuitionalized**
  - Resource Allocation
  - Standardized
  - Goal Alignment
  - Governance

### Institutionalized

1. **Local Interactions**
   - Sharing
   - Connecting
   - Exchanging
   - Initiating

**Change Starts Through**

**Emergent Change**
To be interesting, you must be interested

Passion & Conviction are Contagious
F2F Interactions drive Influence

Sales, salary negotiation: up to 30% increase

Social Signal prevail over business case - 86% accuracy

Dating signals that work at 75% accuracy

2300 hours of experiments with 800 people
FACE-2-FACE INFLUENCING

Passion Spreads

As much as 70-80% of our ability to influence is a result of face-2-face exchanges

Pentland, S. (2009), Honest Signals
Tap into your social capital really matter
Your strong ties provide **cohesion**;

driving influence

Your weak ties provide **richness**;

creating insights
**Discovery vs. Influence**

**Loose** networks (weak ties) help discovery

⇒ produce **25%** more insights

**Cohesive** networks help influence change

⇒ improves productivity by up to **30%**

Best Research Paper, ICIS 2008

(Wu, Waber, Aral, Brinjolffson, Pentland)
need to maintain

Concentrate your Powers and Efforts

Change spreads in cluster not through hierarchies
Clusters of Behavior Change

- Beatles Fan
- Killers Fan
- Fan of Both
- Fan of Neither
- Friendship Tie

Tight Clusters of Killers Fans
Diffuse Cluster of Beatles Fans

Source: connectedthebook.com
BOUNDARIES OF FOCUS & SOCIAL CAPITAL

- DARPA announced a Network Challenge to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Internet.
- 4,300 entrants competing, and the prize for this challenge was $40,000
- 5-person team from MIT built a finders website with incentive build in and then sent out only 5 emails
- Found all 10 in only 8 hours and 52 minutes
Case 1: Preventing Hospital Infections
CASE: PREVENTING HOSPITAL INFECTIONS

- C. diff death rate is rising by 35% a year
- A serious condition with a 25% mortality rate in elderly patients
- $1.1 billion in health care costs each year in the United States

- Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors created a 27-hospital learning collaborative to improve clinical practice and prevent C-diff infections
- Two year program designed to create weak ties and leverage strong ties
- Statewide and regional learning and sharing meetings deliberately structured to nourish networking and accelerate learning
Collaborative Hospitals have demonstrated a steady declining trend in C. diff.

While C. diff in non-collaborative hospitals has increased by 28% the United States.

**Intervention Discoveries: Preventing C-diff Requires Cooperation Across the system**

- Avoid unnecessary antibiotics - Even single regimes of antibiotics can permanently increase the likelihood of catching C-diff
- Hand washing – normal methods may not effectively destroy C-diff spores
- Contact precautions - private rooms, disposable gloves and gowns
- Thorough cleaning – C-diff spores can survive routine cleaning products
- It’s not just the hospital!
EMERGENT CHANGE

1. Passion became contagious to others

2. Strong ties influenced behavior

3. Boundaries of focus enabled to flow of insights across weak ties
Case 2: Call Center
Case: Call Center

- Studied large North American bank call center
- 80+ employees (4 teams)
- E-mail, productivity, and survey data
- Employees answered calls from customers with questions about financial products & problems
- Productivity measured as a function of average call handle time
Cohesion (Friends) Matters

- Cohesion predicted productivity ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$)
- The OPPOSITE of how call centers are managed!
INTERVENTION

Phase 1 Break Structure  Phase 2 Break Structure

15 Minutes
CASE RESULTS

- Cohesion increase: 30%
- Stress decrease: 20%
- Productivity increase: Estimated 25%
- Estimated $15 million/year performance gain

#2. Strong ties influenced local behavior as solutions emerged

#3. Boundaries of focus enabled local solutions to flow across weak ties
EMERGENT CHANGE - GROUNDSWELLS

SO WHAT:

- be contagious: passion can’t be faked
- leverage your social capital: your friends matter
- build pockets of support: change spreads in clusters not hierarchies
Want to Know More About Emergent Change?

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