

# CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ITS APPLICATION IN A LUXURY HOTEL

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The study undertaken will make reference to Change Management and how it can be implemented to projects or organizations in need of changing their existing tasks and policies in order to become more efficient in doing business both locally & internationally. The study will focus on how change management can be planned and implemented in a Luxury Hotel located in Italy.

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT

### Definition

- Change management means to plan, initiate, realize, control, and finally stabilize change processes on both, corporate and personal level. Change may cover such diverse problems as for example strategic direction or personal development programs for staff. (Oliver Recklies, August 2001)
- Change management is the process, tools and techniques to manage the **people-side** of change to achieve the required business outcome. Change management incorporates the organizational tools that can be utilized to help individuals make successful personal transitions resulting in the adoption and realization of change. (Tim Creasey, December 2012)
- Change management, which is the term most everyone uses, refers to a set of basic tools or structures intended to keep any change effort under control. The goal is often to minimize the distractions and impacts of the change. (John Kotter, July 2011)
- Change management' is a comprehensive term used to describe change at both the individual *and* organizational level.

For example, the term *Change Management* is used to describe:

1. The task of managing change;
2. An area of professional practice;
3. A body of knowledge (consisting of models, methods, techniques, and other tools); and
4. A control mechanism (consisting of requirements, standards, processes and procedures).

Nickols, F (2010).

- Change Management is an organized, systematic application of the knowledge, tools, and resources of change that provides organizations with a key process to achieve their business strategy. (LaMarsh, 1995)
- The systematic approach and application of knowledge, tools and resources to deal with change. Change management means defining and adopting corporate strategies, structures, procedures and technologies to deal with changes in external conditions and the business environment.  
SHRM Glossary of Human Resources Terms,  
[www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org).
- Change Management: activities involved in (1) defining and instilling new values, attitudes, norms, and behaviors within an organization that support new ways of doing work and overcome resistance to change; (2) building

consensus among customers and stakeholders on specific changes designed to better meet their needs; and (3) planning, testing, and implementing all aspects of the transition from one organizational structure or business process to another.

<http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/bprag/bprgloss.htm>

**Why “Change Management” is necessary?**

What can happen if change is NOT managed?	What can happen if change is EFFECTIVELY managed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productivity declines as people become more consumed with the change being introduced.</li> <li>• Passive resistance festers.</li> <li>• Active resistance emerges and sabotages the change.</li> <li>• Valued employees leave the organization, a very costly proposition in terms of the lost contribution and the cost to replace them.</li> <li>• Employees become disinterested in the current state and the future state.</li> <li>• Employees begin arguing about change and the direction of the company.</li> <li>• People are left to wonder why the change is happening.</li> <li>• More people begin taking sick days or not showing up for work.</li> <li>• People find work-arounds to avoid implementing the new way of doing things.</li> <li>• Employees revert back to the old way of doing things.</li> <li>• Changes are not fully implemented.</li> <li>• Changes are scrapped and cancelled due to the lack of support throughout the organization.</li> <li>• Divides are created in the organization between ‘us’ and ‘them’.</li> <li>• The organization builds a history of failed and painful changes.</li> <li>• Many types of risk are created – risk to the project, to the organization, to the employees involved and to the individuals supporting or chartering the change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees have a solid understanding of why change is happening.</li> <li>• Employees engage in both the solution and the change.</li> <li>• Training is used to build knowledge after employees have made the personal decision to support the change.</li> <li>• Resistance is identified and dealt with early in the process.</li> <li>• Senior leaders demonstrate their own and the organization’s commitment to the change.</li> <li>• Communications are segmented and customized for different audiences, answering the questions that they care about.</li> <li>• Momentum is built throughout different areas and levels within the organization.</li> <li>• Changes are less painful to the organization and to the employees.</li> <li>• A coalition of support among senior leaders and managers creates momentum throughout the organization.</li> <li>• Probability of meeting project objectives is increased.</li> <li>• The organization begins to build a history of successful change, creating a better ‘backdrop’ for the next change initiative.</li> </ul>

(Prosci, 2005)

### How should "Change Management" be implemented?

#### John P Kotter's 'eight steps to successful change'

A helpful model for understanding and managing change has been devised by John P Kotter. Each stage acknowledges a key principle identified by Kotter relating to people's response and approach to change, in which people **see**, **feel** and then **change**.

Kotter's eight step change model can be summarized as:

1. **Increase urgency** - inspire people to move, make objectives real and relevant.
2. **Build the guiding team** - get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment, and the right mix of skills and levels.
3. **Get the vision right** - get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy, focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency.
4. **Communicate for buy-in** - Involve as many people as possible, communicate the essentials, simply, and to appeal and respond to people's needs. De-clutter communications - make technology work for you rather than against.
5. **Empower action** - Remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders - reward and recognize progress and achievements.
6. **Create short-term wins** - Set aims that are easy to achieve - in bite-size chunks. Manageable numbers of initiatives. Finish current stages before starting new ones.
7. **Don't let up** - Foster and encourage determination and persistence - ongoing change - encourage ongoing progress reporting - highlight achieved and future milestones.
8. **Make change stick** - Reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, and new change leaders. Weave change into culture. (John P Kotter, 1995)

#### Observations compiled and suggestions made for the implementation of "Change Management" within the organization

Observations regarding the establishment has been outlined and highlighted in summary below. Implementation of change management, will need to be applied over time with a plan covering the "8 steps to change management" in the hotel and the company at large.

Observations revealed that the change management will involve the following areas; IT (software & hardware) updates, improvement of physical facilities, improvement of productivity at work-place by applying better and efficient management systems, training of management and employees in team building, enforcing a more participative management style, application of analytical systems to review performance. Application of pro-active thinking and putting an-end to a re-active state of being,

Problems pertaining to each department will be listed in summary and the action plan to carry out the implementation will follow accordingly.

#### Sales & Marketing

A hotel of this magnitude requires a structured sales office with agents handling the corporate, leisure, incentives and e-commerce as well as GDS business. The fact that these activities being handled from the cluster office, will make hotel more vulnerable and depended on the operating company. The person in-charge at the hotel will have to oversee the seamless transition of issues related to sales and marketing of the property. The rate structure, room types, the dynamics behind central reservation system should be managed by the Director of Sales &Marketing.

DOS&M, Rooms Division, Front Office (reservations & receptionist) including the Revenue Manager must receive a detailed training on Property Management System (PMS) OPERA. The central reservations as well as business coming from the cluster office, as their rate and sales strategy must be understood and tracked down on a daily basis.

A proper action plan specific to the hotel should be devised encompassing the participation of travel trade & fairs as well as road shows. Hotels sales team should be visible in important marketing and sales events rather than the cluster. An affiliation or a sales & marketing partner should be considered such as "The Leading Hotels of the World", or "Preferred Hotels of the World", to increase hotel sales.

### **Public & Guest Relations**

Neither the department nor the PR agent exist in the property. There is a part-time person in charge of press and social media activities but her role is quite insignificant compared to the scale of the hotel. A proper PR agency as well as an internal agency dealing with publications and processing of printed materials, alongside planning and releasing of media material for promotions and events of the hotel is needed.

The social media side has to be monitored through a selective evaluation of materials and their release. Hotel must have a clear path in its mission as to what it intends to achieve. This should be identified and communicated clearly. A set of social projects must be declared and pursued accordingly. Such as (green hotel, involving in charity work, school aid projects etc.).

Guest satisfaction system is not being utilized to its fullest. Revinate system should be checked daily to track down guest comments both from TripAdvisor and Booking.com. There is no In-house tracking system of guest satisfaction. There is no tool or a system applied. The guest service attendants do not produce any interviews during guest stay and at the time of check-out. Interactive and cellular devices such as i-pads, i-phones and android's can be used to send questionnaires to guests automatically as they check-in. In-house upselling and promotions can be sent to guest through same tools.

### **Rooms Division**

Rooms Division Manager's role is to have direct relations with PR, Sales & Marketing, Reservations and the Revenue Manager on the property. Concierge; the heart of greetings-service-farewells need very energetic and highly extraverted people with language skills as well as a positive attitude. Guest Services, Bell Service, Housekeeping, Front office is managed by the Rooms Division Manager. However, at the present time the collection of data from departments above and the managing of the department is an issue.

Billing process should be handled without any problems. Cancellations, Late check-ins, VIP's and all other detailed chores must be followed by this department. Need to be proactive and monitor all aspects of guest while on the property. Anticipating guest's needs is the motto of this department and should be managed accordingly. The manager needs extensive training and coaching in management & leadership skills. Suggestion is that the present RDM is to be changed with an experienced manager, in order not to lose valuable time.

### **Housekeeping**

This is the most vulnerable department in the hotel. Rooms and public areas are big and need constant attention. The Executive HK is not an energetic person and usually does a desk job. She does not go around the property for routine controls. Most important issues of the department is the over staffing of maids and houseman.

The department does not have yearly cleaning and preventive up-keep programs. There is no software program for reporting-tracking room repairs and maintenance. Usually CRM section of OPERA is being used for this purpose where maids enter any repair work which needs to be done by the maintenance department. By utilizing this software technicians complete the work order in a specific time and close the process. The general public areas are not cleaned properly especially tall windows in guest

corridors are covered with spider webs. Window sills and stair wells are not properly cleaned. The pool area, historical building and conference facilities away from main building need more attention.

## **Revenue Management**

Revenue manager arrived to the property on July 2015 after the opening, He was sent for a two weeks of training to a sister property. The normal training which would take six weeks was completed in two. Hence, the PMS&CRS systems and loading of rates per business source by room types etc. were done a year before. Neither the Revenues Manager nor the DOS&M were present at the time. They were not given proper hand-over and induction to understand the system. These Executives need proper training and understanding as well as the RDM.

In summary there are 357 rates categories while majority of them are fluctuating rates and over 80 different contracts which are flexible with cancellation dates only hours before check-in. To manage a complex matrix one needs to understand what to do before engaging to any daily-weekly-monthly rate & sales strategy.

A property as such would also need an independent software program such as "Travel Click" where the competition can be identified and tracked on a daily basis both by occupancy and ADR. There are other valuable reports such as 365 degree report as well as daily rate management report.

## **Food & Beverage & Kitchen**

Department has been set-up with restaurants under aMaître d and wait staff. Bar's with Head barmen and bar staff. The F&B manager is an experienced person and performs his duties with the help of an operations assistant. The team is efficient especially at the breakfast and dinner. Lunch is mostly served at the Pool Restaurant. The Pool bar is also open from the morning till late afternoon. The other units such as the Garden bar is open during the afternoon. All Day Dining restaurant serving dinner at night is unfortunately competing with the Fine Dining Restaurant serving same cuisines (both places serve Italian food)

The concept must be re-evaluated and not all outlets should be opened at the same time. Especially when the hotel is running low occupancies. This department has very high staff costs. Along with staff working at the outlets, extra personnel is hired for events & organizations. The extra personnel is neither sufficient nor trained to handle the exclusive events on the island.

Food in general is liked by guests and the kitchen is very efficient with its cooks. However, the stewarding department need to be re-organized under an experienced Chief Steward.

Food & Beverage cost and calculation of menus as well as the pricing strategy is correct and this reflects on the departmental P&L's. The most critical factor in this department is over-staffing and hiring of extra personnel during the events.

## **Operations**

### ***Manning***

During the events the manpower is being outsourced from two major companies. Unfortunately the quality of service provided to the client is not up to standards and the extra staff is not adequate. It is also very costly as it constitutes 60-65% of total cost in majority of the events. During the service of the event not only hotel's F&B staff is used, also regular staff works long hours and have to be paid overtime. Payroll is the most expensive element in the overall cost of any event. Currently the HR office is not involved in the calculation of extra staff and rather is an intermediary between the outsource company and the hotel. The HR should have a strategic role in planning and controlling the amount of manpower needed. Accounting office should also be involved prior to any event and not just record the results after the event is over. In general the manning of each department must be re-evaluated with weekly rosters and monthly occupancy forecasts. However, a core staff of professionals must be

selected rather than having to hire outsourced personnel from outside. This is an important task for HR department to solve as they are aware of rules regulations and legal issues of Italian law.

### ***Service***

Overall rating of the service would be below standards. The only way to solve this problem is to find professional staff and sign seasonal contracts with employees. A training department must be devised in the hotel regardless of the operator. Hence, on the job and departmental service and quality standards must be taught by department heads & trainers in each department. In addition to this self-improvement sessions and trainings should be organized to be given by outsourced companies for managerial staff on effective management techniques, cost containment, leadership skills, team-work etc.

The service of cold and hot food should be done from a close location to the event. This is an absolute necessity to meet the required hygiene conditions. Currently the cold buffet is not equipped with proper cold sections including the breakfast buffet. The kitchens should be equipped with proper storage areas. Main kitchen is small and equipment is blocking fire exits, most of the cold fridges are in rooms or isles without proper ventilation. These areas are fire hazard and in addition to fire extinguishers proper sprinkler system must be installed. Mice-en-place areas as well as linen & napkin section to be separated with clean & dirty materials stored apart from each other. All pantries and satellite kitchens should be equipped with proper shelving and stewarding areas must be kept separately to prevent breakages, loss etc.

### ***Billing***

All items stated in the contract as well as extra and other consumption must be listed and recorded. The bill must be authorized by the client in order to eliminate any debates. All contracts and addendums with recent changes must be shared with the accounting office for follow-up to the end if legal action is required for the collection of outstanding amounts.

Proper order taking with guest room numbers on checks are important and posting to the correct room is essential. However, there are problems regarding wrong postings (voids-rebates, discounts etc.)

The staff needs a thorough training in Micros Fidelio. All corrections and discounts must have a valid explanation with the signature of the department head for the perusal of the accounting office and the GM on a daily basis. Billing from E&O must be followed-up by the Accounting office. Whereas individual guest accounts which are C/L in nature should be followed by the Front Office (Reservation-Reception) etc. Cash payments from outlets are the responsibility of F&B personnel and management where checks should be closed properly on Micros-Fidelio to enable a proper end of day procedure. On cash payments accounting office should do random checks on bars & restaurants. On the other hand cash transactions at the Front office must be fed through to the system and recorded properly to avoid future disputes.

### ***Events & Organizations (E&O)***

Preferably the E&O department should be under the Sales & Marketing Department and reporting directly to the DOS&M, which should also be in charge of Rooms Division. Reason being that; through the reservation and event management the revenue maximization can be effectively managed throughout the property. Currently this department is under DOF&B with links to the FO and S&M. However the management and utilization regarding rooms and conference facilities with meeting rooms are tools for the S&M office which need to be inventoried against the occupancy and sold accordingly. Hence this structure should be reversed and planned as part of the S&M. E&O should have the Sales & Catering module of OPERA to plan and schedule all E&O activities throughout the year. Utilization of the module will automatically prepare a Banquet Event Order sheet, (BEO). The module will also be linked to the Micros Fidelio's (Materials Control) and enable the calculation of costing the menus on a daily basis in order to double check the sales price of items sold. Having these systems will inform the kitchen, store & purchasing, accounting office on-line to take proper action and have controls on real time basis.

### ***Contracts***

In principle the hotel should select a designated vendor (outsource company) for each service provided. The contracts between vendors and hotel should be signed at the beginning of the year against a total fee to be paid to the hotel. This can also be arranged in the form of commissions paid per event.

The existing contract will be renewed with additional clauses such as transportation, flowers, lighting, decoration, live music, DJ, etc. with other extra amenities which client may request.

The contract should also include clauses clearly identifying hotels responsibilities and liabilities. Any other issues against loss of personal items and possessions, theft, fights, arguments between the client and his/her guests will not be responsibility of the hotel.

A standard contract format should be issued by the E&O office covering the menu identifying; food & beverages, service area of the event, the duration of the event as well as the time of closing.

Contracts should be tied with a deposit clause, stating the amount of pre-payment before the event taking place. Any other last minute items requested by the client should be added to the main contract with an addendum stating the form and time of payment. All need to be signed by the client before the event takes place.

### **Stewarding**

An expert Chief Steward is essential to prevent unnecessary breakage and loss of all valuable utensils and service-ware. Currently this department is being handled by standard porters and dishwashers of low profile. There need to be a monthly inventory taken to track down the breakage. As is, the storage facilities and back of house areas will need to be re-designed to prevent breakages.

### **Purchasing**

The use of "Materials Control" module of Micros Fidelio is strongly recommend where purchasing is compiled and transmitted after the purchase order is completed for the approval of relevant departments, accounting office and the GM. All stocks are identified according to specifications and a par stock level is established allowing some items to be ordered automatically through the system.

### **Accounting**

Department head is not sufficient and does not possess the necessary knowledge and know-how to run the department. Critical work needed from this office is to have control systems on revenues and costs of the property. Unfortunately most of the reporting done and presented without proper controls and analytics on the subject which does not allow management to take proactive actions.

Budget, Forecasts, P&L's, monitoring of Accounts Receivables, Purchasing policy, Manning levels and controls of manpower. Proper controlling of Rebates, Voids, Corrections etc. Month end inventories, CAPEX are just some of the few areas where this department is not focused and does not follow-up the transactions properly. This department must be re-designed and re-manned with professionals. The Accounting Manager to be changed with an experienced manager in order not to lose precious time.

### **Security**

The hotel needs to have a proper security department covering shifts round the clock. Especially a professional and trained Security Manager is essential to prevent events before happening and/or handle events which have already happened in a professional manner. A proper greeting is needed at the main gate where all arrivals especially VIP guests must be received properly. This can be coordinated with the RDM. Regarding the greeting of guests this ritual of welcoming must start from the boat pick-up at the city center. The Captains must receive an updated daily arrival list of guests and address them with their names at the time of first contact. The security department should be fully aware of fire prevention and maintain regular fire drills. The loss or theft issues must be handled as per policy-procedures. 3<sup>rd</sup>. party liability and insurance issues for the property in general involving weather conditions, earthquakes, storms etc. To maintain a problem free work environment search of personnel belongings while entering and leaving the property could be investigated. A system should be implemented to

monitor the movement of staff under Italian legal system. This is especially crucial for outsourced vendors and extra staff hired temporarily.

Surveillance system in the hotel and around the property as well as event areas must be identified and proper installations must be completed in order to prevent guest allegations.

### **Personnel - HR**

Analyzing P&L's of August 2015, it is evident that total payroll cost including the meals and benefits is 60% of total costs of the hotel. This issue has to be addressed immediately by implementing a more strategical HR policy.

### **Maintenance**

The property is huge and maintaining the old historical buildings as well as the hotel building is quite a challenge. Apart from the indoors the gardens and outdoors with pool and tennis court, golf practice areas need to be maintained at all times. Even if the hotel is seasonal the maintenance department should be present and do preventive maintenance and upkeep the island year around.

Technical equipment and machinery seems to be functioning well as these areas are clean and well looked after. Plantroom with Boilers (heating & cooling) Central AC unit (chiller), Generator, Electrical (high voltage) section as well as sub stations in different sections of the building. A Yearly preventive maintenance plan with monthly breakdown need to be followed with proper documentation both on equipment and PC. The IT room where; Servers, Fire systems, Telephones (switchboard), music systems, CCTV and UPS is not all in one location and scattered around the building.

A proper indoor-outdoor insect and rodent prevention plan must be devised on a monthly basis covering guest-rooms, public areas, conference building, personnel quarters, storage areas, kitchens, bars, laundry facilities, garbage areas and all other applicable points. As it is, the gardeners are maintaining outside areas and plants with success.

The maintenance of kitchens and should be supervised by the maintenance department. Along with the security department maintenance manager should be fully aware of fire prevention and maintain regular fire drills. The insurance of all machinery and equipment on the property must be covered and recorded by this department. CAPEX items will be recorded and maintained with coordination of the accounting office.

### **Preparing the "Change Management" in 8 steps**

1. **Increase urgency** - inspire people to move, make objectives real and relevant.

First and foremost the need for change has to be communicated to the Board of Director's and obtain their approval for the application of the detailed departmental works. The new chores must be clearly identified and shared with all management staff including the employees with set objectives against a time frame. The current situation should be identified and the urgency to change must be explained in meetings and briefings to everyone in the company. The period for this campaign is anywhere from 1-2 months depending on the size of the company and operation. However, anything beyond this is critical as it would lose its urgency.

2. **Build the guiding team** - get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment, and the right mix of skills and levels.

Evaluate and identify people with high energy and enthusiasm both on the managerial level and regular staff to follow set objectives and work alongside people to motivate them and form a team to get the job done as a committee rather than by individual effort. The formation of such groups will take 3 to 6 months, an effective team work can develop after this period where everyone will start feeling that they are a bone-fide person of the company.

3. **Get the vision right** - get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy, focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency.

This stage has to start immediately after the observations and suggestions are out and shared. These points are outline departmentally. Established teams in each department under their leaders will examine the remedies to be implemented whether it is training of people or getting the proper technical assistance and tools (hardware & software) must be carried out immediately. The vision can be summed up as "NOT RE-ACTIVE but PRO-ACTIVE" This message will deliver, to all that we; the employees care about the company. We will do better than our competitors, we will strive to give better service with high standards. All this emotional values must be shared with every employee of the company. Including, shareholders, clients, suppliers and general public.

4. **Communicate for buy-in** - Involve as many people as possible, communicate the essentials, simply, and to appeal and respond to people's needs. De-clutter communications - make technology work for you rather than against.

Now with the implementation of steps 1, 2 & 3 the project will start having the snowball effect. With each step it will gain a tremendous momentum. This is the time both internal and external factors should be receptive to what is going on with the company. This is the time for proper communication, sharing of the vision and creating a change atmosphere where people are actually part of it with prospects for the development of their company as well as their personal achievements.

5. **Empower action** - Remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders - reward and recognize progress and achievements.

The serious work is still underway. This is the time where the Board of Directors, GM and other leaders should be giving support to the employees who are making the changes in their departments and work groups. The successful works performed by departments and groups must be shared and presented to everyone. The teams will receive recognition for their efforts. There will also be a reward scheme designed to pay back hard work and also motivate all others to deliver similar results.

6. **Create short-term wins** - Set aims that are easy to achieve - in bite-size chunks. Manageable numbers of initiatives. Finish current stages before starting new ones.

Create success stories with the works of teams who has been effective in the "Change Management" process. Celebrate success in employee meetings. Enforce people to be more participative and instill the values that employees are the most valuable asset of the organization. That the company's ultimate success is to satisfy the needs of its employees. Company alone cannot and will not achieve long term existence without its employees. Re-enforce that each team has to complete their task and move on to the next issue while all completed tasks will have a major impact on the change process.

7. **Don't let up** - Foster and encourage determination and persistence - ongoing change - encourage ongoing progress reporting - highlight achieved and future milestones.

Monitor planned works and chores against the time schedule, reassess strategy, look for defects and obstacles, remove barriers and open the path for a free sharing and transparent & open communication channel in order to track down the ongoing change. Highlight all work completed against the time frame and present it as a success of mile stone. Instill positive attitudes by comparing your organization with the competition set and highlight your achievements. Review guest satisfaction scores comparing you with the competition. Share applicable financial reports as proof of improvement and success.

8. **Make change stick** - Reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, and new change leaders. Weave change into culture.

At this stage normally a full year would come to end. This is the right time to reward employees with a proper raise. Those who were outstanding will receive additional incentives or an extra monetary reward. Generally departmental promotions and internal changes will take place at this stage. This would be the time to reward people who have a prospective career path in front of them. This the time where company culture will encompass the new sprit instilled in each and every employee "NOT RE-ACTIVE but PRO-ACTIVE" and for the team work "ONE FOR ALL and ALL FOR ONE".

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