



Audrey Page

All too often brilliant strategies come unstuck because organisations fail to recognise the enormous human implications of change, says Audrey Page*

Ignoring the human ingredient: a restructure recipe for disaster

From the swarm of companies to undergo major organisational change in recent times, how many will ultimately reap success? Well, according to extensive research the likelihood is not great. Indeed, only 20-25 percent of companies pacing down the mergers and acquisitions aisle arrive at a happy and productive conclusion.

Addressing clients of career management specialists, Audrey Page & Associates, Dr James Carlopio, a leading expert on human technology and organisational strategy, cited some disturbing trends surrounding the implementation of change:

- 42 percent of large businesses reported abandoning technological innovation projects.
- More than 50 percent of companies undergoing organisational change (i.e., mergers) reported staff turnover problems.'
- Less than half of all mergers and acquisitions reach their strategic and financial goals.
- Up to 70 percent of corporate mergers have failed to create value.

Putting people first

Typically, brilliant strategies come unstuck because organisations fail to recognise the enormous human implications of change.

Executives driving change often assume that if the latest technology, considered strategies and processes boast obvious advantages, people will naturally embrace these advancements.

Businesses frequently focus on technical issues, believing bottom-line impact is imperative. However, ignoring the human side of the equation ultimately stymies success.

Poor handling of the human implications of change can destroy a powerful brand name overnight and haunt an organisation for many years. Stories of how individuals, supposedly highly valued by companies, were tactlessly and insensitively shown the door, soon become folklore and can resonate through the organisation.

Failure to realise that it is people – and not organisations – who change, so often undermines the success of organisational restructures.

Adding the human touch

Career management specialists have developed an intimate understanding of the complexities of change. They provide change management services to many major Australian and multinational

corporations across broad industry sectors.

Audrey Page & Associates recognise every client is unique, so we make a point of getting to know their business, their people and their challenges, before tailoring interventions and solutions to meet their specific needs.

Change brings uncertainty, which can adversely affect people's sense of self worth and coping abilities. Without early intervention, organisations may encounter crippling resistance to new directions, coupled with low morale and productivity.

Audrey Page & Associates partner businesses early on in any change process to ensure their main point of difference – intellectual capital – is safeguarded. We can assist in developing plans to implement change. This would include strategies for clear communication, key employee retention and other necessary steps.

Nothing stretches the skills and abilities of managers further than the challenges inherent in major change. Our executive coaches ensure that the leaders of change approach these challenges with the required subtlety and deftness.

Similarly, our "Managing Others in Times of Change" seminar equips managers with the skills to lead and motivate teams through the turbulence of change and build employee commitment to the new vision.

We also host group seminars, "Self Management in Times of Change" which are tailored to assist employees in adjusting to the reality of change. These seminars provide individuals with a forum to discuss change-related opportunities and to confront and share their insights in relation to the shifting environment. During the process they are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, set goals, manage pressures and overcome resistance to change.

For the employee, retrenchment can be an unsettling and traumatic time. Our consulting team transforms a time of adversity into one of opportunity so that anger and confusion are replaced with optimism and clarity.

In the aftermath of organisational change the remaining employees settle more easily when the transition process is handled in a humane and dignified fashion. Feedback from ex-colleagues who are being significantly supported in their job search plays a major part in allaying anxiety and leads to a greater commitment to the new order.



AUDREY PAGE & ASSOCIATES

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