



## Strategies for employees to effect change to improve performance of public organizations

Ibrahim Nasamu

Walden University, USA.

Email: [nasamubrahim@yahoo.com](mailto:nasamubrahim@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

Seventy percent of organizations fail in their organizational change initiatives because of failure to involve employees in the change process. Some managers lack the strategies to implement change initiatives successfully. Using Kotter's eight-step change model as the conceptual framework, this qualitative case study was conducted to explore public sector managers' strategies to include employees in implementing organizational change. Semi-structured interviews were used to identify public sector managers' strategies that include employees in implementing organizational change. Interviews were conducted with eight participants who met the inclusion criteria for this study. Data analysis included methodological triangulation and Yin's five-phase data analysis. The five resulting principal themes are effective communication, creating and sustaining employee engagement, leadership style effect, developing training programs and processes, and strengthening organizational culture. The findings indicate that managers should focus on how well their subordinates understand the overarching goals of the vision and mission of change initiatives. These findings have potential implications for positive social change that include catalyzing employees to have a healthier attitude at work, have a better sense of work-life balance, and have a sense of belonging. Understanding the contribution of an engaging workforce may enable organizations to improve performance and profits by catalyzing monetary and non-monetary contributions to benefit citizens.

### Keywords:

Employee engagement  
Organizational change  
Performance  
Strategies.

### JEL Classification:

D70.

### Copyright:

© 2023 by the author. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

### Publisher:

Scientific Publishing Institute

Received: 28 April 2023

Revised: 21 June 2023

Accepted: 5 July 2023

Published: 26 July 2023

**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The Ethical Committee of the Walden University, United States of America has granted approval for this study on 29 November 2021 (Ref. No. 11-29-21-1003464).

**Data Availability Statement:** Ibrahim Nasamu may provide study data upon reasonable request.

**Competing Interests:** The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

## 1. Introduction

Involving employees as change recipients is fundamental to every organizational change process (Oreg, Bartunek, Gayoung, & Boram, 2018). According to Boyd, Powell, Endicott, and Lewis (2018), tailoring change to align with the intended context is significant for organizational success. Improving organizational performance is also critical to every business. Across the literature, corporate performance has been associated with the effectiveness of change implementation (Boyd et al., 2018). Owing to the importance of change in organizational performance and the recommended involvement of change recipients in every change process, change managers should adopt viable strategies to involve employees in change processes (Boyd et al., 2018).

Managers are responsible for planning, implementing, and leading change initiatives; however, some managers lack the strategies to successfully implement change initiatives (Niess & Duhamel, 2018). Aside from the inability of managers to successfully implement change, resistance to change is also widely identified as a significant contributor to organizational failure (Amarantou, Kazakopoulou, Chatzoudes, & Chatzoglou, 2018). Amarantou et al. (2018) documented that involving change recipients, such as the employees, in the change process is an effective strategy to address resistance to change, and involving employees in the process is a widely recommended strategy to successfully implement change.

Failure to involve employees in a change process can result in lower work engagement as dissatisfied employees may distance themselves from the organization's success (Thomas, Tendai, Zororo, & Obert, 2019). Seventy percent of organizations fail in their change initiatives, resulting in resistance to change from stakeholders (Cândido & Santos, 2019; Gonzalez-Porrás, Heikkinen, Kujala, & Tapaninaho, 2021). However, limited research exists that discusses the assessment of managers' strategies to include employees in the change process, especially in Nigeria's public sector. This study explores public sector managers' strategies to include employees in effecting organizational change.

## 2. Review of Professional and Academic Literature

### 2.1. Kotter's Change Model

The conceptual framework used for this study is Kotter's eight-step change model (Kotter, 1996). The process detailed by this change model provides an adequate lens for understanding the strategies that public sector managers use to include employees in effecting organizational change. Kotter's change model is one of the most renowned models of change management. The assumption in Kotter's model is that a successful change of any magnitude goes through all eight steps, usually in sequence (Pollack & Pollack, 2015). Kotter expressed that skipping steps creates the illusion of speed and does not produce a satisfactory result. According to Baloh, Zhu, and Ward (2018), implementing change without complying sequentially with the eight-step approach outlined by Kotter increases the risk of failure.

The base of Kotter's model rests on the idea that the primary goal of organizational change is to make fundamental changes in how business is conducted and to help cope with a new and more challenging market environment (Kotter, 1996). According to Kotter, the primary function of management is to provide order and consistency through planning, organizing, staffing, controlling, and decision-making (Hughes, 2016). Kotter's central argument is that most organizational change efforts are not successful but that attempts could be improved by following an eight-step model for change management based on eight faults that Kotter consistently found in unsuccessful change initiatives. Kotter's dynamic model can be organized into three phases (Figure 1). The first phase is creating a climate for change and involves establishing a sense of urgency, creating a guiding coalition, and developing a vision and strategy. The second phase is engaging and enabling the organization and includes communicating the vision, empowering action, and creating short-term wins. The final phase is implementing and sustaining the change, which includes consolidating gains and producing more change, and anchoring new approaches in the culture (Kotter, 1996).

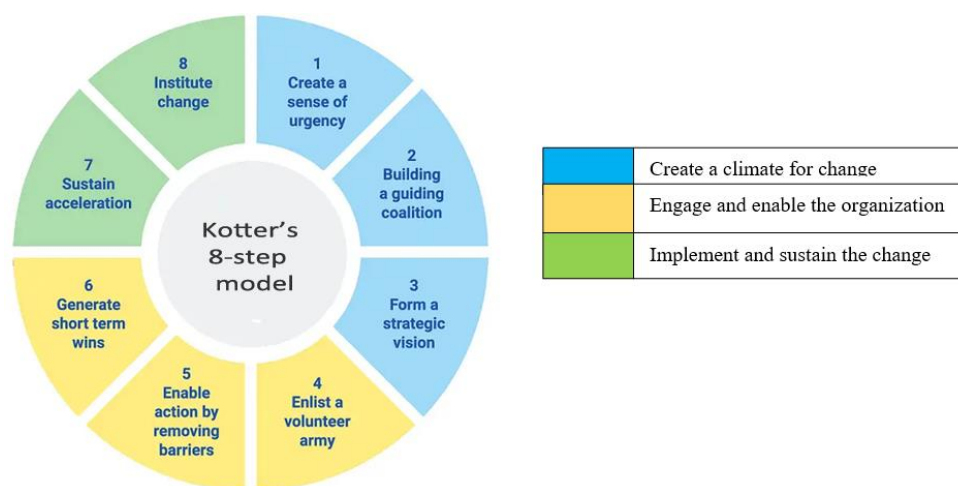


Figure 1. Kotter's dynamic eight-stage model.

### 2.2. Resistance to Organizational Change

Jain, Asrani, and Jian (2018) explained that resistance to change is perceived as needing to adapt a person's views or conduct in certain areas, often at the suggestion or requirement of an authority figure, with the person seeming unable or unwilling to do so. It was inferred that reducing resistance to change includes giving voice and paying attention to grief work, building capacity for change, communicating decisions on time, and not underestimating the emotional impact on the people involved in the change processes.

Additionally, completing the preliminary step of assessing the organization's current reality is necessary to implement change and catalyze events leading to change.

Preconditions for effective change management can be categorized into macro and micro factors. Macro factors include leadership, resources, and the surrounding infrastructure. Micro factors include employee empowerment, enablement, and supportive organizational processes, such as quality assurance. Employee resistance is a product of many macro and micro factors. [Rahaman, Campa, Decoster, and Stouten \(2020\)](#) inferred that employee change commitment mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and dysfunctional resistance. Employees' perception of change information not only moderates the relationship between change commitment and dysfunctional resistance but, more importantly, the indirect effect between ethical leadership and dysfunctional resistance through change commitment ([Rahaman et al., 2020](#)).

[Jain et al. \(2018\)](#) provided a pragmatic pathway to reducing resistance to change. First, create a common goal for employees and allow them to work on the same project. Second, increase the participation of employees in making decisions regarding various aspects of the process. [Thakur and Srivastava \(2018\)](#) suggested that managers should initiate open communications while honoring the existing practices of the organization. To reduce resistance, training is required, which explains why adapting to change can be difficult for employees. In a study, [Zhang \(2019\)](#) posited that pressure and employee resistance are caused by organizational change. Using Jingyi Network Co. Limited as a case study for understanding the nature of employees' resistance to change, [Zhang \(2019\)](#) identified changes in organizational structure, personnel, technology, and culture as categories when dealing with change management. [Zhang \(2019\)](#) concluded that members would resist the introduction of new technologies or any structural change because they are afraid of uncertainty, failure, and collective interests that are uncoordinated in the change processes.

### *2.3. Perceptions of Organizational Change*

There are several dimensions of discussions on organizational change, with some researchers acknowledging that employees should be involved throughout the process. Few researchers have sought to understand how human resource (HR) professionals and practitioners view organizational change. In a research paper by [Baran, Filipkowski, and Stockwell \(2019\)](#), HR practitioners view organizational change and their roles as a way to reshape these perceptions and create a foundation for identifying opportunities and challenges. Baran et al. concluded that HR practitioners have failed to consider the roles and perceptions of employees in an organizational change process. [Gover, Halinski, and Duxbury \(2016\)](#) combined the perspectives of both researchers and individuals on the culture of change. Employees have mixed feelings regarding the extent to which they support or refute existing research on changes in organizational culture.

[Aharonov, Cohen, and Tollaksen \(2018\)](#) asserted that organizational change should be implemented in a top-down hierarchical manner. [Aharonov et al. \(2018\)](#) used a case for organizational change among midlevel clinical staff in a hospital to demonstrate how success is often tied to the employees involved, including their awareness of the change, personal engagement, and taking ownership of it. The perspective of the employees in initiating and managing change is important in the success of the change process and in managing employees' concerns and alleviating negative expectations. Findings revealed that some clinical staff expressed apprehension and held negative expectations regarding organizational change. Inadequate staffing in a change management environment is also a concern in managing the change process effectively ([Baran et al., 2019](#)). Baran et al. concluded that employees viewed their role in organizational change as limited, which led to apprehension. According to [Dhir and Shukla \(2019\)](#), employers must be aware of creating a positive image and environment for the organization in which the employees can engage in their jobs and contribute meaningfully to the organization. [Thomas et al. \(2019\)](#) highlighted a common reality that has eluded most research, which is that researchers have ignored the role of employees in the change process, opting to blame them when the change fails. According to these authors, managers may consider the involvement of employees only during the implementation stage by way of announcements and directives after some top-level meetings in which employees are not involved or represented.

### *2.4. Role of Leadership in the Organizational Change Process*

[Sparr \(2018\)](#) evaluated that both leaders and followers experience paradoxical tensions, to which both parties react differently. While organizational leaders are anxious to get the change implemented on time, employees form an attitude of resistance to change by reacting defensively, thereby resulting in an organizational crisis. According to Sparr, leaders' sense-giving about paradoxes to followers is based on their sense-making processes. Stimulating followers to engage in paradoxical sense-making is seen as a crucial boundary for followers' fair evaluations which impact their subsequent reactions to paradoxical tensions ([Sparr, 2018](#)). It is important to understand the interplay between destructive leadership and organizational change, and the study used the management theory model to understand employees' reactions to paradoxical tensions in organizational change through the role of leadership traits.

[Duru, Shimawua, and Yakubu \(2019\)](#) studied the influence of leadership style on organizational productivity during an organizational change. The authors made a case for the Nigeria National Hospital, which was facing frequent organizational changes due to technological breakthroughs. The study found that leaders play strategic roles as communicators, innovators, and change agents. Using a case study approach,

Levene and Higgs (2018) explored leadership styles and strategic change implementation in a Russian context. The authors found that beyond understanding the concept of organizational change, leadership style can significantly impact the success or failure of an organizational change. Synthesizing the views of Duru et al. (2019) and Levene and Higgs (2018), one point to note is the existence of empirical evidence of the value of a relational style to ensure effective change implementation. Leadership skills are essential in the success of change within an organization (Hassan, 2019). According to Choi, Chung, and Choi (2019), organizational change is mostly driven by a quest to attain the desired future. Attribution to constructive intentionality diminishes undesirable implementation behavior among employees, such as avoiding or ignoring innovation. Organizational changes that are not adequately communicated but are led by competent leaders that have organizational commitment may still lead to resistance and reinforce negative employee behavior (Choi et al., 2019).

### *2.5. Effects of Organizational Change on Employees*

The outcomes of an organizational change can have a lasting effect on employees (Jones, Firth, Hannibal, & Ogunseyin, 2018). Hellman, Molin, and Svartengren (2019) mentioned that members of an organization could expect to enjoy the benefits of change when they contribute to the change. Change is a continuous process for most managers, as business dynamism is always changing. Consequently, leadership development, organizational change, and change management have become top priorities for many HR development practitioners. Organizational visions are rarely accepted by employees in their current work assignments, and this explains why most change processes fail (Jones et al., 2018). Bickerich, Michel, and O'Shea (2018) explained how middle management deals with organizational change as they are always caught in between top management's decision to make a change and executing the change projects that they were never involved in. Employees' anticipations and expectations are negatively affected when they are not involved in the change processes. During the pre-coaching phase, the executives spoke about their needs and expectations during a change as well as the benefits of coaching to meet their goals, which motivated the choice to engage in coaching. Their expectations for coaching focused on reactions arising from the change and the need to engage in leadership behavior (Bickerich et al., 2018). A lack of understanding, anger, anxiety, and operational performance losses—both at the individual and corporate levels—are among the effects of an organizational change (Busse & Doganer, 2018).

### *2.6. Strategies for Effective Organizational Change Management*

Cusick (2018) provided a rationale for the role of communication as an effective strategy for organizational change management. Results from Cusick's research showed that while much of the change plan focused on communication, it was balanced out with technical planning and the definition of leadership roles. Eriksson and Fundin (2018) appraised the relevance of communication as the tool used by leaders for effective strategic implementation. Concerning US health care, Mouhamadou, Jeanie, and Rosa (2017) asserted that transformational leadership and communication are strategies for managing change. Unsuccessful change initiatives can have long-lasting negative effects on employees if the right leadership style is not adopted in the organization. Management transparency and communication are critical to the beginning of change initiatives (Allaoui & Benmoussa, 2020; Phaneuf, Boudrias, Rousseau, & Brunelle, 2016).

In another qualitative research by Král and Králová (2016), organizational change is an apparent indicator and clear evidence of discrete organizational change. Change management precedes the change in the organizational structure, which includes the ability to initiate change and rationalize the change of organizational structure (Král & Králová, 2016). The leading component of the change originates from the terms of approach, and communication is an important factor. An organization could respond to environmental changes by changing its overall and communication strategies. There were varying degrees of change acceptance across the sampled organizations, but the importance of communication remained constant (Král & Králová, 2016).

## **3. Methodology**

### *3.1. Participants*

The participants in this qualitative single case study were eight public sector executive managers in an organization in Nigeria who have successfully implemented organizational change strategies. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study. Participants were contacted via email, requesting a meeting to discuss the purpose of the study. A follow-up via telephone was carried out to ensure that the email was received and to provide any clarification if necessary.

### *3.2. Ethical Considerations*

Ethical research in qualitative studies requires the researcher to consider the process for voluntary participation and how the privacy and dignity of the participants will be protected (Bromley, Mikesell, Jones, & Khodyakov, 2015). The Belmont Report of 1979 requires the researcher to ensure that focus is placed on the well-being of the participants throughout the study (Bromley et al., 2015). The ethical standards contained in

the Belmont Report were adhered to by ensuring respect for participants, disclosing the benefits and disadvantages of conducting the research, and maintaining fairness in dealing with the participants. Before conducting the study, ethical approval was obtained from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (Approval No: 11-29-21-1003464). Informed consent was also obtained from the participants.

### *3.3. Data Collection and Analysis*

#### *3.3.1. Data Collection*

Interviews were used to collect primary data from the eight public sector organization managers on strategies used to effectively implement and perpetuate employee participation and support for organizational change. One public organization in Nigeria was identified that had implemented change management successfully, and permission was obtained from the company's representative. The head of human resources of the identified organization was approached with the inclusion criteria for interviewing eight of the organization's managers, and an invitation letter was sent to each manager. All eight participants responded and were identified as study participants.

Upon acceptance to participate in the interview, each participant's consent was obtained, and interviews were scheduled through a Zoom (video conferencing app) meeting. Semi-structured interviews were scheduled at the preferred times for the participants from their offices. During each interview, a reflexive journal was kept to log the observations related to the participants' facial expressions, gestures, and body movements. The information in the journal was used to buttress the findings during the analysis. The reflexive journal was used in the analysis in parallel with the recorded interviews to help minimize bias and clarify the researcher's assumptions and belief system on the change process in the study.

A researcher can also reduce the potential effects of personal bias by using member checking (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking for qualitative research is when the researcher summarizes the participant's responses to each question in the researcher's own words and verifies with the participant that the summary reflects the participant's intended meaning. For this study, each participant was sent a copy of their report to ensure that it accurately reflected their responses to each question. The participants were given two days to review the reports.

#### *3.3.2. Data Analysis*

Qualitative researchers gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon through preparing, collecting, interpreting, organizing, and analyzing the data (Yin, 2018). According to Yin, the process of data collection includes sorting data into meaningful groups, coding data into identifiable themes, drawing conclusions based on analysis, and identifying other areas for further research. Reviewing data received from interviews with interview notes and member checking is critical to the process of data analysis for validity (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Yin (2018) defined data analysis as a continuous process during which the researcher identifies patterns, concepts, and themes to gain insights to answer the research question. The fundamental components of the qualitative data analysis process used in this study include: (a) organizing the data, (b) becoming familiar with the data, (c) classifying the data, (d) coding the data, (e) triangulating the data (including the use of feedback from member checking, the journal, listening to the interview records, and accessing the participating company's information from available documents or the web), (f) interpreting the data, and (g) presenting and defining the results of the data analysis.

NVivo 11 was used for data management and organization, and content analysis was used to determine the usage of certain phrases, words, and ideas or concepts from the transcribed data to identify themes to address the study's purpose.

### *3.4. Reliability and Validity*

#### *3.4.1. Reliability*

Reliability is the consistency and replicability of the research methodology for a case study (Yin, 2018). Tactics used to guarantee dependability are comprised of interviewees' participation in the analysis through member checking their responses and through providing a detailed description of the research method (Yin, 2018). The researcher can enhance the reliability of the study by asking the right questions during the interviews and by properly documenting the processes and rationale for any decisions made during the research process (Houghton, Murphy, Shaw, & Casey, 2015).

In this study, the potential for inaccuracy was mitigated by using an interview protocol to maintain focus and remain unbiased during the interview sessions. The interview questions were the same for each participant and the questions were asked the same order.

In addition to using the interview protocol for consistency, member checking was used to enhance accuracy and address any gaps or confusion in the interpretation of the data. Member checking allows the researcher to detect any personal bias by soliciting the participants' feedback regarding the interpretation of data (Birt et al., 2016).

#### *3.4.2. Validity*

The validity of qualitative research refers to the use of appropriate methodology for data collection and analysis to achieve credible results (Saunders et al., 2018). Cypress (2017) explained validity as the trustworthiness of the research. Trustworthiness is a concept that incorporates the transferability, confirmability, and credibility of research findings (El Hussein, Jakubec, & Osuji, 2015). For this study, transferability was ensured by providing a robust description of the problem under study and the use of the interview protocol. The confirmability of the findings was ensured by capturing detailed notes and engaging in member checking before publishing the results of the study. A researcher can enhance the validity of the study through the methodological triangulation of data from multiple sources, member checking, and peer debriefing (Yin, 2018). Both methodological triangulation and member checking were employed to ensure the study's validity.

### **4. Results**

To maintain participants' confidentiality, codes were used. Each participant responded to six interview questions. The duration of the interviews ranged from 45–60 minutes. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded. The data from the audio recordings was used for analysis. Following the process used by Yin (2018), the data was disassembled, reassembled, and interpreted to identify themes answering the research question. Five major themes emerged: (a) effective communication, (b) creating and sustaining employee engagement, (c) leadership style effect, (d) developing training programs and processes, and (e) strengthening organizational culture.

#### *4.1. Theme 1: Effective Communication*

The first theme that emerged from the analysis was effective communication. The findings showed the relationship between effective communication and the successful implementation of organizational change initiatives. The results revealed that effective communication improves the efforts of employees to plan and execute change strategies. All the participants emphasized the crucial role that communication plays during a change implementation. Participants declared that communication combined with a question-and-answer meeting is an effective way of interacting.

#### *4.2. Theme 2: Creating and Sustaining Employee Engagement*

All participants had a common viewpoint that employees who feel comfortable in their working environment are more likely to work effectively and enjoy the working process compared to employees who feel uncomfortable in their work environment. This study's results revealed that the ability to involve people through engagement is one of the most important skills during the implementation of any organizational change. According to Rozman, Treven, Mulej, and Cancer (2019), work conditions contribute to improving work engagement. Rozman et al. (2019) further stated that a positive work environment can enhance the level of employee engagement.

#### *4.3. Theme 3: Leadership Style Effect*

All participants indicated that they work to ensure that employees have a voice and that their opinions and input are valued. Such efforts and behaviors are typical qualities of a transformational manager who tends to coordinate with employees to share knowledge and to offer opportunities in organizational decision making (Hussain et al., 2018). One participant stated that managers should educate and introduce the reasons for the change to navigate the organization's thinking toward change and acceptance, adding that "the right management behavior inspires employees to exceed their interests for the good of the organization as a whole." Managers should know their employees and build relationships with them to be more prepared to deal with resistance to change (Cai, Loon, & Wong, 2018).

#### *4.4. Theme 4: Develop Training Programs and Processes*

All participants had one common message revolving around how commitment to change could reflect a state in which employees were made aware of a change, had the skills needed to implement it, were empowered to implement it, were motivated to do so by adequate rewards, and shared the vision exemplified by the change. Training and mentorship were sub-themes that the participants identified as important strategies to develop and manage a successful change initiative. All the participants emphasized the importance of coaching employees whose jobs or duties must change due to the initiative. The managers encouraged training on every change initiative so that all employees can have structured guidance and information. Multiple scholars have also revealed that providing processes, tools, and resources during organizational change was among the key strategies needed to successfully manage the change implementation phase (Ahmad & Cheng, 2018).

#### *4.5. Theme 5: Strengthening Organizational Culture*

The participants emphasized that the culture of the organization impacted change initiatives. Culture can influence how employees think and make decisions that may affect job performance and can hinder the

execution of strategy by generating opposition to change (Ben Saad & Abbas, 2018). During the interview process, several participants acknowledged that a culture of change started with managers who had to cascade down the information. An understanding of the mission and values of the organization was crucial to being supportive of organizational change. An organization with the best change strategy but without the adequate culture to support the change implementation will not succeed (Mouhamadou et al., 2017).

## **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

Improving the success rate of organizational change should serve as the overarching business strategy for the mid and long terms. The process of organizational change begins with a strategic vision that the managers have for their organizations. Effective managers influence successful organizational change and the integration of sustainability practices. Management needs to identify key enablers to help the business implement its overall strategy. It is important to first define the business strategy milestones and then develop a plan to make the best use of the available resources. Many managers acknowledged how a successful implementation of organizational change initiatives improved the portfolio performance and led to healthier financial results. Maintaining a level of flexibility and willingness to pause, align, refine, and revert to execute was also needed at all levels.

Organizational change is always about coping with change (Kotter, 1996). The participants of this study explained the importance of open and continuous communication, proactive and collaborative leadership, employees' commitment and engagement, and clear responsibilities and processes within the context of values and desired cultural influence. Effective communication facilitates the creation of a winning partnership at all levels and in all functions. Continuous communication inspires confidence and encourages candid opinions. However, the way in which change is communicated should be considered because this can be more important than the change itself. People's concerns can be addressed through formal and informal communication. Employee engagement and commitment are key enablers for a successful organizational change implementation. Management should consider staff as partners in both devising and implementing the change. Conducting employee surveys to gather data and feedback will ensure that the right steps are carried out for continuous change success.

The type of leadership style inspires employees to exceed their interests for the good of the organization as a whole. Not leading by example creates ripple effects in the organizations that can hinder successful organizational change. It is important for managers to communicate change with empathy while simultaneously noting the importance of making the effort to understand the feelings of the people affected. Empathy is essential for competent leadership, and not having empathy for employees and how they feel about the change could cause it to fail. Trust in management is what ultimately reduces resistance to change (Cai et al., 2018). Training programs are tools that support all levels of employees through a change process and to maintain the change. For a successful change initiative, it is imperative that managers include training and mentoring to enhance employee performance. A pre-change exposure could be helpful to familiarize employees with the change before its full implementation. Likewise, a clear understanding of the organizational culture (mission and values) can provide clarity on how the organization will change. It is also crucial to be supportive of organizational change. The link between change and the strategic direction of the organization can be an effective strategy to help employees interpret change in an accurate context.

All strategies were noted as being critical to ensuring successful change implementation. It was clear that all managers implicitly believed that the achievement of successful organizational change implementation was associated with Kotter's change framework. The participants indirectly indicated how most of Kotter's model steps, such as two-way communication, positive employee engagement, appropriate leadership style, proper training programs, cohesive culture, and adequate organizational systems, are important and necessary to ensure a successful organizational change initiative implementation.

A successful change process could help sustain employment practices and positively enhance employees' commitment and contribution to the greater good. Employees who are personally engaged cognitively and emotionally are more satisfied and more productive. Jones et al. (2018) found that employee participation in planning or involvement in pilot programs can help to increase commitment and deepen organizational knowledge, which can help in change acceptance. Employee engagement matters to both the employee and the organization. Amarantou et al. (2018) documented that involving change recipients such as employees in the change process is an effective strategy to address resistance to change.

This study's findings could contribute to business practices by helping managers in public sector organizations develop their strategies and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of change processes by identifying strategies that other managers have used to mitigate the cost of unsuccessful organizational change initiatives. As a contribution to public sector practice, managers may use the findings of this study to develop plans on how to deploy identified strategies to guide public sector organizations through a planned change. The findings of this study provide managers with examples of successful organizational change implementation. Managers can use these findings to understand change management implementation strategies, when to embrace change, when to engage employees, and how to develop change strategies to bolster performance. The results could also stimulate human resource managers, supervisors, and business

managers to improve their organizations' change implementation strategies, leading to growth and the stable employment of citizens to improve communities' local economies through increased tax revenues.

The limitation of this study is that the findings are based on the experience of eight public sector managers whose strategies are based on their organization's unique circumstances and are not necessarily transferable to other public sector organizations. Because the sample data was collected from the selected organization with a convenience sampling method, further research will be essential to verify and determine the appropriateness of generalizing these findings. For instance, future researchers might focus on different contexts, including certain organizations, industries, or occupations with a representation of each occupation, organization, and/or industry and consider different work groups (e.g., age, gender, full-time and contract workers) to further investigate whether there are any significant differences among such strata.

In conclusion, management's capability to leverage employee engagement strategies is important in an organization. Therefore, managers should consider identifying appropriate problem-solving strategies and strong cross-functional teams for implementing change management strategies. Managers should also focus their attention on how well their subordinates understand the overarching goals of the vision and the mission of the change initiatives. Through implementing and continuously reinforcing such communications, employees are more likely to be motivated to accept greater responsibility in reaching and maintaining higher performance goals.

## References

- Aharonov, Y., Cohen, E., & Tollaksen, J. (2018). Completely top-down hierarchical structure in quantum mechanics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(46), 11730-11735. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1807554115>
- Ahmad, A. B., & Cheng, Z. (2018). The role of change content, context, process, and leadership in understanding employees' commitment to change: The case of public organizations in Kurdistan region of Iraq. *Public Personnel Management*, 47(2), 195-216.
- Allaoui, A., & Benmoussa, R. (2020). Employees' attitudes toward change with lean higher education in Moroccan public universities. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 33(2), 253-288. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-08-2018-0232>
- Amarantou, V., Kazakopoulou, S., Chatzoudes, D., & Chatzoglou, P. (2018). Resistance to change: An empirical investigation of its antecedents. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(2), 426-450.
- Baloh, J., Zhu, X., & Ward, M. M. (2018). Implementing team huddles in small rural hospitals: How does the Kotter model of change apply? *Journal of Nursing Management*, 26(5), 571-578. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jonm.12584>
- Baran, B. E., Filipkowski, J. N., & Stockwell, R. A. (2019). Organizational change: Perspectives from human resource management. *Journal of Change Management*, 19(3), 201-219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2018.1502800>
- Ben Saad, G., & Abbas, M. (2018). The impact of organizational culture on job performance: A study of Saudi Arabian public sector work culture. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 16(3), 207-218. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.16\(3\).2018.17](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.16(3).2018.17)
- Bickerich, K., Michel, A., & O'Shea, D. (2018). Executive coaching during organisational change: A qualitative study of executives and coaches perspectives. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 11(2), 117-143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17521882.2017.1407806>
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802-1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870>
- Boyd, M. R., Powell, B. J., Endicott, D., & Lewis, C. C. (2018). A method for tracking implementation strategies: An exemplar implementing measurement-based care in community behavioral health clinics. *Behavior Therapy*, 49(4), 525-537. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2017.11.012>
- Bromley, E., Mikesell, L., Jones, F., & Khodyakov, D. (2015). From subject to participant: Ethics and the evolving role of community in health research. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(5), 900-908. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2014.302403>
- Busse, R., & Doganer, U. (2018). The role of compliance for organisational change: Qualitative evidence from German SMEs. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(1-39). <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-05-2017-0163>
- Cai, W. J., Loon, M., & Wong, P. H. K. (2018). Leadership, trust in management, and acceptance of change in Hong Kong's civil service bureau. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(5), 1054-1070. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-10-2016-0215>
- Cândido, C. J. F., & Santos, S. P. (2019). Implementation obstacles and strategy implementation failure. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 14(1), 39-57.
- Choi, S. Y., Chung, G. H., & Choi, J. N. (2019). Why are we having this innovation? Employee attributions of innovation and implementation behavior. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 47(7), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.8124>
- Cusick, J. (2018). Organizational design and change management for IT transformation: A case study. *Journal of Computer Science and Information Technology*, 6(2), 10-25. <https://doi.org/10.15640/jcsit.v6n1a2>
- Cypress, B. S. (2017). Rigor or reliability and validity in qualitative research: Perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 36(4), 253-263. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.0000000000000253>
- Dhir, S., & Shukla, A. (2019). Role of the organizational image in employee engagement and performance. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 26(3), 971-989. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-04-2018-0094>



- Duru, C. B., Shimawua, D., & Yakubu, S. (2019). The impact of leadership style on organizational productivity: A case study of National Hospital, Abuja. *Journal of Education and Learning, 5*(8), 13–35. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v5n2p9>
- El Hussein, M., Jakubec, S. L., & Osuji, J. (2015). Assessing the FACTS: A Mnemonic for teaching and learning the rapid assessment of rigor in qualitative research studies. *Qualitative Report, 20*(8), 1182–1184.
- Eriksson, Y., & Fundin, A. (2018). Visual management for a dynamic strategic change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 31*(3), 712–727.
- Gonzalez-Porras, L., Heikkinen, A., Kujala, J., & Tapaninaho, R. (2021). Stakeholder engagement in sustainability transitions. In *Research Handbook of Sustainability Agency, 5*(2), 214–229. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789906035.00021>
- Gover, L., Halinski, M., & Duxbury, L. (2016). Is it just me? Exploring perceptions of organizational culture change. *British Journal of Management, 27*(3), 567–582. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12117>
- Hassan, M. E. (2019). The role of leadership style in organisational change management: A literature review. *Journal of Human Resource Management, 7*(1), 18–31. <https://doi.org/10.11648/jjhrm.20190701.13>
- Hellman, T., Molin, F., & Svartengren, M. (2019). A qualitative study on employees' experiences of a support model for systematic work environment management. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 16*(19), 3551. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16193551>
- Houghton, C., Murphy, K., Shaw, D., & Casey, D. (2015). Qualitative case study data analysis: An example from practice. *Nurse Researcher, 22*(5), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.022>
- Hughes, M. (2016). Leading changes: Why transformation explanations fail. *Leadership, 12*(4), 449–469. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015571393>
- Hussain, S. T., Lei, S., Akram, T., Haider, M. J., Hussain, S. H., & Ali, M. (2018). Kurt Lewin's change model: A critical review of the role of leadership and employee involvement in organizational change. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge, 3*(3), 123–127.
- Jain, P., Asrani, C., & Jian, T. (2018). Resistance to change in an organization. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management, 20*(5), 37–43.
- Jones, J., Firth, J., Hannibal, C., & Ogunseyin, M. (2018). Factors contributing to organizational change success or failure: A qualitative meta-analysis of 200 reflective case studies. In R. Hamlin, A. Ellinger, & J. Jones (Eds.), *Evidence-Based Initiatives for Organizational Change and Development*. In (pp. 155–178). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Král, P., & Králová, V. (2016). Approaches to changing organizational structure: The effect of drivers and communication. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(11), 5169–5174. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.099>
- Levene, F., & Higgs, M. (2018). Leadership and change implementation in a Russian context. *Journal of General Management, 44*(1), 5–16.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2016). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Mouhamadou, S., Jeanie, M., & Rosa, O. (2017). The relationship between leadership style, organizational culture, and job satisfaction in the U.S. healthcare industry. *Management and Economics Research Journal, 3*(April), 1–10.
- Niess, A., & Duhamel, F. B. (2018). The course of recognition and the emergence of change initiatives. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 31*(5), 1071–1083. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-03-2017-0090>
- Oreg, S., Bartunek, J. M., Gayoung, L., & Boram, D. (2018). An affect-based model of recipients' responses to organizational change events. *Academy of Management Review, 43*(1), 65–86. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2014.0335>
- Phaneuf, J., Boudrias, S., Rousseau, V., & Brunelle, É. (2016). Personality and transformational leadership: The moderating effect of organizational context. *Personality and Individual Differences, 102*, 30–35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.06.052>
- Pollack, J., & Pollack, R. (2015). Using Kotter's eight-stage process to manage an organizational change program: Presentation and practice. *Systemic Practice and Action Research, 28*(1), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-014-9317-0>
- Rahaman, H. S., Campa, J., Decoster, S., & Stouten, J. (2020). Ethical leadership in times of change. The role of change commitment and change information for employees' dysfunctional resistance. *Personnel Review, 50*(2), 630–647. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-03-2019-0122>
- Rozman, M., Treven, S., Mulej, M., & Cancer, V. (2019). Creating a healthy working environment for older employees as part of social responsibility. *Kybernetes, 48*(5), 1045–1059. <https://doi.org/10.1108/K-12-2017-0483>
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., . . . Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality and Quantity, 52*(4), 1893–1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>
- Sparr, J. L. (2018). Paradoxes in organizational change: The crucial role of leaders' sense giving. *Journal of Organizational Change, 18*(2), 162–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2018.1446696>
- Thakur, R. R., & Srivastava, S. (2018). From resistance to readiness: The role of mediating variables. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 31*(1), 230–247. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-06-2017-0237>
- Thomas, B., Tendai, K., Zororo, M., & Obert, S. (2019). Employee involvement in change management in organizations: A case of the Zimbabwe electricity transmission and distribution company. *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance, 10*(2), 14–27.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zhang, Y. (2019). Research on employee pressure and resistance caused by organizational change – A case study of Jingyi network Co., Ltd. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 7*(5), 72–85. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2019.75005>