

EMBRACING CHANGE WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS BRANCH
OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

BY
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

In
LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING

We accept this thesis as conforming
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ABSTRACT

This action research study explores how individuals within the Employment Standards Branch of the Provincial Government of British Columbia can learn to embrace change. The study comes at an opportune time, as it correlates with a Corporate Human Resource Initiative promoting employee engagement in the workplace. This particular opportunity examines elements of personal and organizational change, including the role mindset plays in our reactions to change. This study is significant because change within the Provincial Government is frequent; consequently, I believe it is imperative we learn to use it to our advantage, or challenge it in a constructive manner. The research was conducted through a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative research techniques; online survey, individual interviews and a teleconference, in accordance with mandated ethical principles and guidelines. The study findings and recommendations address themes from both a personal and organizational context, focusing on individual capacity and values-based leadership.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the staff of the
Employment Standards Branch
within the
Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services,
The Provincial Government of British Columbia.

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CHAPTER ONE – FOCUS AND FRAMING

Introduction

The once simple, stable organizations of yesterday have changed dynamically into the fluid, complex organizations of today:

It is pretty wild out there. We are moving from a psychological “terra firma” – the once apparently firm ground of corporate organizations, clearly-understood communities, families built on shared understandings, and lives that made sense – to a world that feels far more oceanic, with few landmarks, hidden and conflicting currents, and sudden overwhelming storms. The trend toward instability is long-term and global. It is not likely to get easier any time soon. We can learn to adjust. Or we can go beyond adjusting to change. We can use its power. (The change project, 1999, para. 1)

Change is a fact of life, yet to many, change can be a fearful prospect - like jumping off the edge of a cliff. Given this perspective, it is little wonder some people chose to simply adjust, or cope, with change. However, there is another way of dealing with it – learning to embrace change. This is the purpose of this action research study (Stringer, 1999): How can individuals learn to embrace change or challenge it in a constructive manner within the Employment Standards Branch of the Provincial Government of British Columbia?

As a long-term employee of the B.C. Provincial Government, my interest in this project arises from my desire to see the Employment Standards Branch within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services thrive as an organization in the face of change. I am passionate about the work I do as an Industrial Relations Officer, and have seen many colleagues lose their enthusiasm and motivation which we attribute, in part, to the constant changing environment in which we work. I believe we can overcome the challenges this type of work environment

presents, however, I believe success starts with us individually learning how to embrace change first.

Research Question

How can individuals learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch?

Sub Questions

1. What possible barriers to change currently exist within the Employment Standards Branch?
2. What factors may have an impact on how individuals learn to deal with change?
3. What possible learning opportunities and tools can the Branch implement to make change less stressful and disruptive?
4. What development opportunities can the Branch provide in support of organizational change?

The Opportunity

As discussed in the Introductory section, this action research project explores the opportunity to learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch. It is my experience that most organizations within Government continually face significant challenges due to changes in; a) political power, b) Executive staffing, c) legislation, d) corporate policy and procedures, e) organizational structure; including attrition due to an aging population, f) technology, and g) an expanding multicultural population. The Employment Standards Branch is no exception to these challenges.

Like most organizations, over the years, the Branch has experienced both positive and negative changes; however, as a long-term employee, it has been my observation that the negative experiences – whether real or perceived – have formed a general pessimistic culture

within our organization concerning any significant change initiative. While the reasoning for some of the undercurrent may be fully rational or justified based on past negative experiences, unfortunately, this has led to an entrenched mistrust of any initiative, which in turn, has a significant impact on the entire culture of the organization. Staff are generally suspicious and resistant of change and do not welcome it, “fearing the unknown and anticipating the worst possible outcome” (N. Vaughan, personal correspondence, February 9, 2006).

In recent years, the Branch has experienced many positive changes, but the negative cultural undercurrent still looms, and I have seen its power undermine some of the benefits of the positive initiatives. I believe this type of culture can be ultimately damaging to our organization. While I recognize that not all change initiatives will have a positive impact, and that some may even have a significant adverse impact on our lives personally, I believe we can learn to challenge our ingrained responses and assumptions by viewing change in a different light, seeking out and tapping into its positive power.

Vaill (1996) uses the metaphor “permanent white water” to define “the difficult conditions under which people exercise their will and judgment within society’s macrosystems” (p. 6). He suggests that in order to survive and stay current in our constantly changing environment, one must embrace learning as a way of being. I agree with Vaill’s viewpoint, and believe that we need to learn to constantly self-reflect and re-evaluate our own mindsets, learning as we go, transforming to stay current and thriving as an organization.

In pursuing this project, I experienced a significant personal growth opportunity by deeply learning to understand change concepts and principles, and embrace them in my own life. This included consistent self-reflection upon my own mindset and assumptions around change, and challenging my understanding and validity of my stance. As I move towards serving the

Provincial Government in an Executive capacity, this research opportunity has immensely broadened the scope of my understanding and skill set in the area of organizational change, which is a significant component of my Leadership studies. The valuable knowledge and experience I gained from this research project has been a life changing, and will be a significant asset to any future position I may secure in either the public or private sector.

The leadership stretch for me within this project was to “model the way” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Kouzes and Posner (2002) describe the five practices of exemplary values-based leadership as “model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart” (p. 13). I believe that by modeling a positive attitude and open, curious mindset concerning change, I have been able to encourage others to perhaps examine their own hearts and mindsets. Given the mixed culture within the Employment Standards Branch, it is my opinion that creating a positive paradigm shift may be a significant endeavor, but a shift that I believe can come to fruition one individual at a time. I also believe that the results from this study have the potential to reach far beyond the walls of our organization and into our personal lives. As individuals learn to understand the dynamics of change and view it in a constructive, more positive manner, this will ultimately enrich their capacity to cope with the changes life brings our way.

Significance of the Opportunity

This research study came at an opportune time, as it coincided with a Government wide initiative designed to explore and assess the workplace environment. The goal of the initiative was to determine how the various Ministries within the Provincial Government of British Columbia rate as far as being a “choice employer”. Consequently, employees of the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services participated in a series of surveys and focus groups designed to

gather information on how employees rated “aspects of their work environment, including their day-to-day work, training and development, physical environment and resources, colleagues, supervisor, executive and organization” (R. Connolly, executive update, November 6, 2006, p. 1).

The Associate Deputy Minister of Labour and Citizens’ Services, Rick Connolly, and his Executive team are committed to making the Ministry “a ‘Workplace of Choice’ where we retain and attract highly motivated individuals” (R. Connolly, executive update, November 6, 2006, p. 4). The first step in bringing this commitment to fruition was through soliciting information, listening, and acting upon the data provided by the surveys and focus groups.

One could almost view this study as an addendum to the Corporate initiative, because it specifically explores deeper into the culture of a single organization within the Provincial Government – the Employment Standards Branch. I believe this study is an important link in the commitment of our Executive leadership to promote wellness and excellence within our organization. Change is on the rise - so it is imperative we change the way we think about it and learn how to embrace it, “or question and challenge it in a constructive manner” (N. Vaughan, personal correspondence, February 9, 2006):

When we look at the trends underlying the rate of change - trends within society, demographic forces, technological shifts - nothing suggests that this is going to get easier. In fact, as we look forward into the new century, every indication is that the ride will get much wilder. (Flower, 1996, para. 3)

If we cannot learn to work together through change, the morale and motivation within the Branch will continue to decline, causing negative affects throughout the entire organization. “Three of the key elements in the art of working together are how to deal with change, how to deal with

conflict, and how to reach our potential” (Depre, 1992, p. 59). How we individually and corporately deal with change has a fundamental impact on the overall success of our organization. With new mindsets, knowledge, wisdom, and skill to deal with change, individuals will be able to look confidently towards the future – no longer fearing change within the Employment Standards Branch, or the Provincial Government, but able to meet it head on and rise to the challenge, viewing change as an opportunity.

Systems Analysis of the Opportunity

In order to understand change within the Employment Standards Branch, one must take a look at the systems which impact it - both from within and outside the organization. This global view of seeing the whole picture is called “system thinking” (Senge, 1994). “Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static ‘snapshots’” (Senge, 1994, p. 68).

When we view the world merely according to our own perspective, we often see only a part of the whole picture. When we view the world from a broad stand point, we begin to understand the impact the bigger picture has on our smaller world.

The Employment Standards Branch is the smaller world within a much larger universe – the Provincial Government of British Columbia. The Legislative Assembly within the Provincial Government is responsible for establishing the statutory framework through which the Branch operates, specifically, the *Employment Standards Act* and *Employment Standards Regulation*. The Act and Regulation are always subject to change by the Legislative Assembly, so it is one external system that has an immediate direct impact on the work of the Employment Standards Branch.

The Employment Standards Branch is one organization within a cluster of independent organizational groups; Employment Standards, Industrial Relations and Worker Compensation System, within a larger Government Ministry; Labour and Citizens' Services, led by the Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services, who reports directly to the Premier of the Provincial Government of British Columbia (see Figure 1).

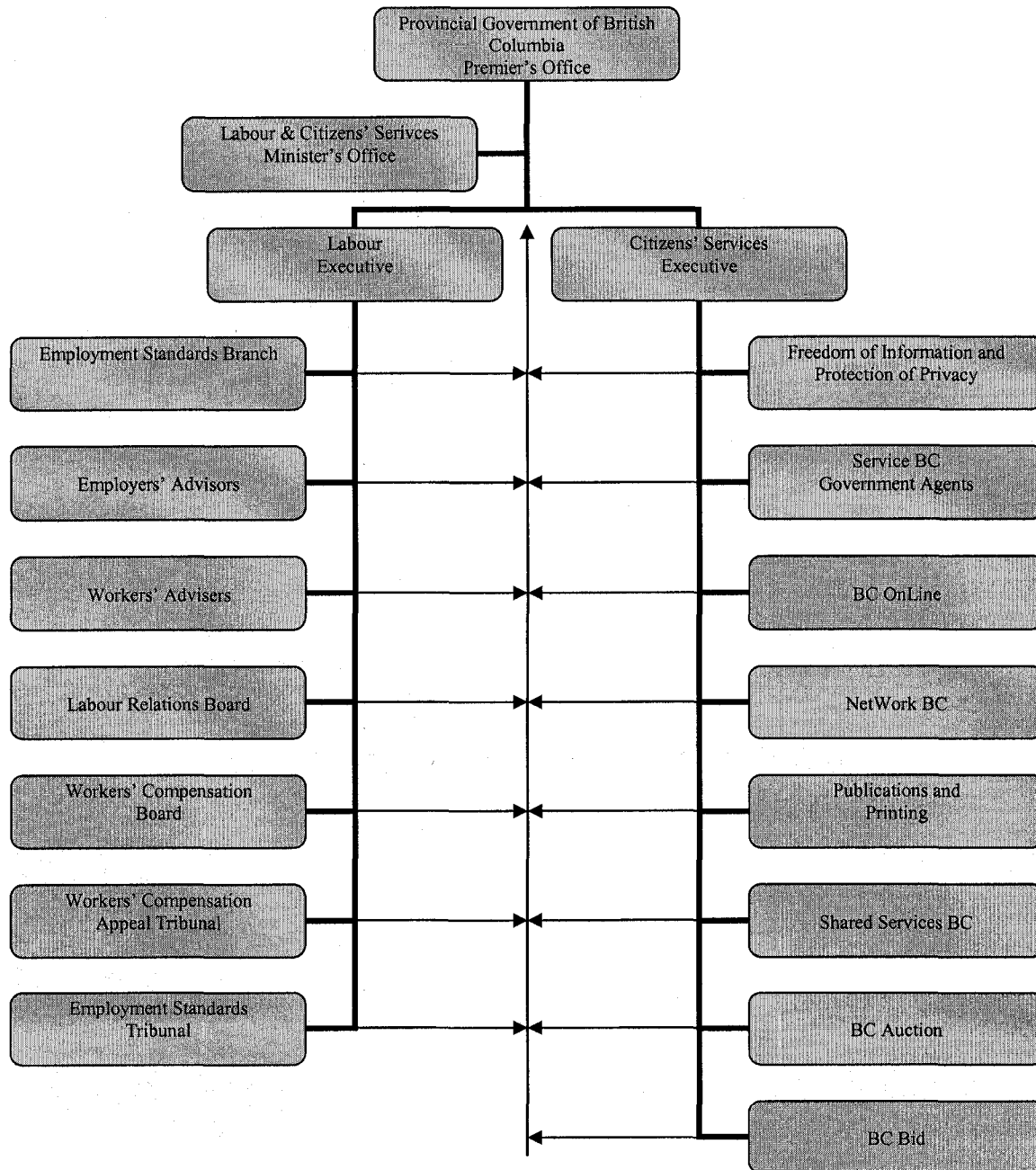


Figure 1. Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services Organizational structure

In conjunction with the statutes set out by the Legislative Assembly, the Government in power also drives the mandate of the Employment Standards Branch according to the agenda of its political platform. The Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services sets out the goals, objectives and strategies of core Branch business within a Ministry Service plan. "Service plans are public multi-years plans as required by the provisions of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*" (Province of British Columbia, 2003, p. 2.1.15). The Service plan is a public document that establishes the strategic plans, or changes, a Ministry will take over a three year period to fulfill its purpose:

The possibility of unforeseen change is built into organizational planning. Change is not necessarily a calamity; in fact, it may be an opportunity, and the organization must be prepared to identify it, understand it, change its plans around it, and if possible turn it to advantage. In the B.C. Government, this is recognized with three-year service plans that not only are broken down yearly for budget purposes, but also are updated on an annual basis to allow for the process of change. (Province of British Columbia, 2003, p. 2.1.3)

Ministerial Executive work closely with the Director of Employment Standards in order to achieve the mandates set out in the Service plan. This process is accomplished by constant review, evaluation, and adjustment of the Branch's program and policies to ensure outputs meet the expectations of the Service plan. Consequently, Ministry Service plans have a significant impact on the strategic direction of the work performed by the Employment Standards Branch.

Other systems which externally impact the Employment Standards Branch include legal decisions rendered through both the Court and Tribunal systems. These particular systems can have a dynamic impact, as the Branch must always ensure its interpretation and application of

Employment Standards legislation stays consistent with current common law principles and practices, or challenge interpretations when necessary.

In addition to the noted external systems that drive change within the Employment Standards Branch, there are also internal systems that have equal influence. The Branch itself is comprised of a Head office, five Regional territories and nine Field offices (see Figure 2).

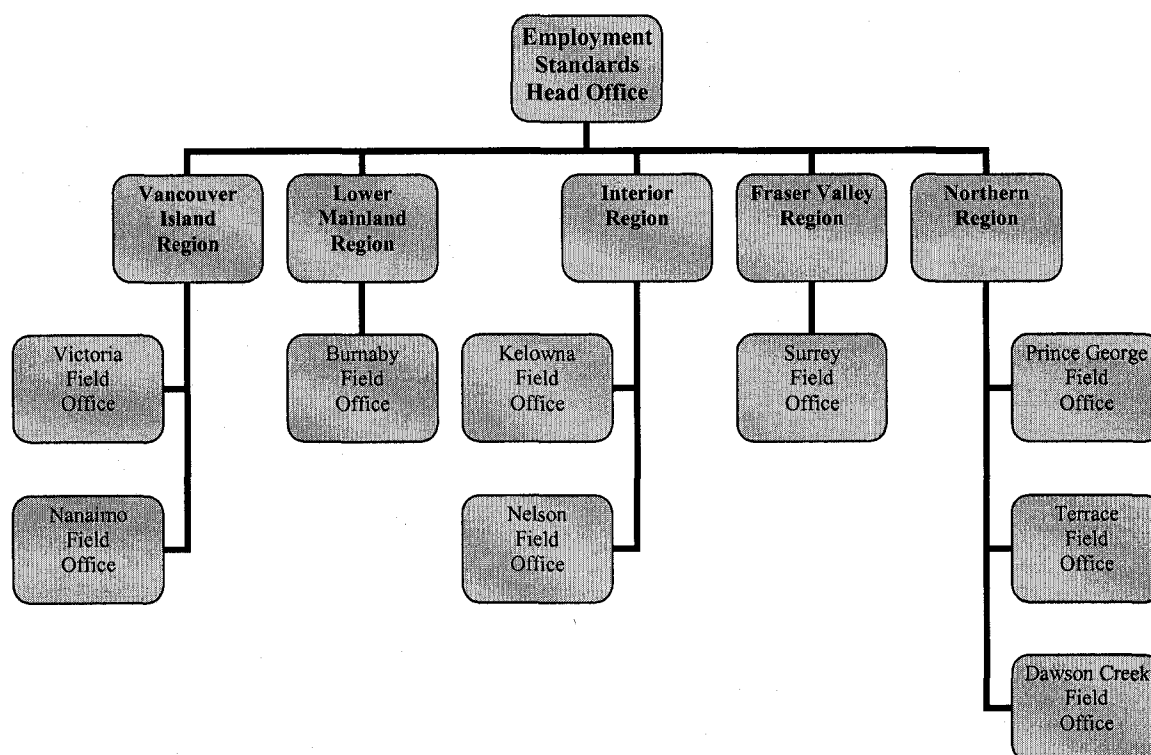


Figure 2. Employment Standards Branch Organizational Structure

The Head office of the Employment Standards Branch is comprised of the Director of Employment Standards, Manager of Finance and Administration, Program Support Coordinator, Program Advisor, Training Manager, and the Trust Department. Through policies and procedures, head office frequently implements Branch wide changes that range from interpretations of legislation to practices concerning day-to-day business operations. Head office represents one system within the Employment Standards Branch which interacts with the Branch

as a whole; regionally with each territory; individually with each field office, and individually with each staff member. Each of these systems has a distinct relationship due to personnel, geographic location and internal politics of the system.

Under head office, each regional territory is comprised of one Regional Manager plus Industrial Relations Officers, Employment Standards Officers, Employment Standards Assistants, and Administrative Assistants. Regional Managers have the autonomy and authority to implement changes within their specific regions according to their personal management style, and simply what works best. Each regional unit is also a system which interacts with the Branch as a whole; regionally with other territories; individually with each field office; individually with its members, and individually with Branch staff. Each of these systems also has a distinct relationship due to personnel, geographic location and internal politics of the system.

Three of the five regions consist of more than one field office, so each stand alone office is another system within its own regional territory. These satellite offices report directly to its applicable Regional Manager, but operate autonomously on a day-to-day basis. These satellite office systems not only interact within their own region, but with the Branch as a whole; regionally with other territories; individually with each field office, and individually with Branch staff. Again, each of these systems has a distinct relationship due to personnel, geographic location and internal politics of the system. These different scenarios are all examples of the various geographical systems operating within the Employment Standards Branch.

There are also internal systems according to the various groups of the employees; Regional Managers; Industrial Relations Officers; Employment Standards Officers; Employment Standards Assistants; and Administrative Assistants. The common functionality of each group designation binds them together systemically, although the individuals may be scattered

throughout the Province geographically. I personally believe this group designation is one of the key systems operating within the Employment Standards Branch, as I have experienced its power to influence and override other internal systems - specifically when facing change. One of the designate groups will band together in an alliance to exert pressure over others to influence an outcome according to the desires of the specific group. O'Connor and McDermott (1997) call this pressure "leverage", and describe it in this manner:

Systems can also suddenly change if you find just the right combination of actions. This comes from understanding the system and is know as *the principle of leverage*. This principle is simple... Imagine a system as a web with many parts connected. Suppose you want to change the position of one part. When you pull on it directly, it seems to resist, but really the whole system resists. However, cutting a small link in another place may free this piece, like undoing a crucial knot in a tangle of string. You need to know how the system is made up to know which knot to undo. (pp. 19-20)

The problem with individual designate groups blindly applying leverage to gain a particular outcome without considering the impact on the other parts of the organization, or system, is that the change can often make problems worse. While the designate group that exerted the leverage may be pleased with the outcome, its impact may have created much larger problems for an entirely different group within the organization. The use of leverage as a means of change is very effective, but we must first see the system as a whole, and how it is actually working, before we will know the point of leverage that will create the best solution for all.

The research question looks to explore the capacity of individuals dealing with change within the Employment Standards Branch. This project ties in with the vision of the Provincial Government who has recognized that the rigid hierarchal, authoritarian models of past

organizations no longer work in today's complex changing world. According to Senge (1994), a "learning organization" is "an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future" (p. 14). This is the organizational model that the Provincial Government is looking to embrace, and this project will assist the Government to meet this objective through the individuals engaged in the research study. By individuals learning their capacity for change, and how their individual actions impact on the entire system, the organization can move forward towards the new vision – one that continually expands creating its own future. As the organization shifts its model of operation, some boundaries or restrictions that may arise are legislation, policies and procedures of the Branch that may not be changeable. In addition, individuals may regard the new Government organizational model with suspicion, doubting if the shift is really authentic.

It is clear there are many external and internal systems that drive change within the Employment Standards Branch, so how can we learn to deal with the chaos, and embrace change in a constructive way?

Organizational Context

The organizational structure and many of the various systems operating within the Employment Standards Branch have been described in the Systems Analysis section. The vision, mission and values relevant to the Employment Standards Branch are set out in the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan Update, February 8, 2006:

Vision

British Columbia will be a leader in Canada and recognized internationally for excellence in public service delivery.

Mission

The mission is two-fold:

Labour will create an employment environment that meets the needs of workers, employers and unions and foster working relationships in safe and healthy workplaces.

Citizens' Services will transform public services to make them cost-effective, accessible and responsive to the needs of citizens and business.

Values

Integrity:

Individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

We are open and honest.

Service Excellence:

We work to know our customers and treat them as partners.

We are flexible, innovative and proactive.

Results-Oriented:

Performance is measured to ensure cost-effective business outcomes and value-added results.

We make and keep our commitments – we get the job done.

Teamwork:

We collaborate to achieve corporate goals.

Individuals and teams that achieve results and demonstrate creativity and calculated risk-taking are recognized.

Work Life Balance:

We support employees in balancing their personal and work commitments. (p. 6)

Each of the three tenets – vision, mission and values – embrace change in one form or another to accomplish its goal; vision – change through developing an innovative, creative modern workforce; mission – change through developing programs and legislation that benefit the province, and create dynamic work environments that meet the needs of employers and employees; and values – change through the application of principles that support the established goals. Essentially, change is written into the foundational concepts that support the very existence of the Employment Standards Branch. Therefore, how can the Branch possibly hope to achieve a mandate built around innovative change, if the individuals within the organization struggle to simply cope with it?

Several years ago, the Employment Standards Branch experienced significant changes in its organizational structure, governing legislation, and operating procedures due to a government wide initiative. Subsequent to those changes, the Branch engaged in the process of upgrading its information technology system and hardware. Currently, the Branch faces substantial changes in its workforce due to the expanding need to provide multi-lingual services to a multicultural society, and the imminent retirement of its aging workforce:

The 1990's put an end to the popular myth that governments are bureaucratic monoliths resistant to change. Deficit reduction and downsizing reshaped the role, size and structure of public administration. Even more sweeping change is on the horizon this decade, as governments embrace new information technology, strive to become knowledge-based learning organizations, and embark on massive workforce renewal as baby-boomers retire. (Lowe, 2001, p. 18)

As a long-term government employee, I can attest to the fact that governments are not “bureaucratic monoliths resistant to change” (Lowe, 2001, p. 18). Change happens; but it is how

individuals deal with the change that has often created difficulties or problems. I believe leaders within the Provincial Government recognized that dealing with change was becoming a dilemma all levels throughout the entire organization. In 2002, they launched the *Leading the Way* program to assist mid-level public service managers and higher, acquire the skills needed to foster excellence in the complex changing workplace of today:

As professional public service managers, you need to master the skills that involve, motivate and enable employees to successfully deliver government programs and services to our clients and citizens... Leadership skills of the future will be more influence-based, collaborative and focused on partnerships, team efforts and results... As leaders you will coach, educate, encourage and enable employees to deal with continual change, rise to challenges and anticipate problems. You will be instrumental in achieving personal, team and organizational success. (Leading the Way, 2002)

This comprehensive leadership program is delivered to the Provincial Government of British Columbia by a consortium of provincial colleges and universities including, Royal Roads University, University of Victoria and Camosun College. The program consists of three levels of modular training:

Level 1 - Discovering Leadership

Module 1: Making Change Happen

Module 2: Developing Teams

Module 3: Producing Results

Level 2 - Dynamic Leadership

Module 1: Building Dynamic Work Teams

Module 2: Promoting Change

Module 3: Optimizing Performance

Level 3 – Innovative Leadership

Module 1: Personal Leadership

Module 2: Strategic Leadership (Leading the Way, 2002)

While it is commendable that the Provincial Government took the initiative to offer such a valuable program to its managerial staff, I believe it is critical to the success of the organization that this caliber of learning reaches *all* level of workers. If the government is relying on its mid-level management team to communicate this critical learning to frontline workers, I am not convinced this is a realistic prospect. I fear much of the content of the program will be lost in the translation, or not passed on at all as pressures of day-to-day business operations will take precedence.

It is my opinion that the public service will not corporately achieve excellence until we, as individuals, learn to deal with the change we consistently face within our complex work environments. I believe this study, conducted within the organizational context of the Employment Standards Branch, will help move the Provincial Government one step closer to achieving its vision for the public service as stated in the *Leading the Way* brochure (2002):

To achieve excellence –

Service excellence: A professional public service that delivers the highest service, quality and value for British Columbians.

Work excellence: A dynamic work environment that promotes innovation, learning and results.

People excellence: Passionate people who take pride in making a difference for those they serve.

I believe this vision for the public service is obtainable – but we need to learn to help ourselves first, before we can fully help others.

CHAPTER TWO – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

A comprehensive review of the literature concerning change within an organization has identified several key focus areas. This literature review chapter will first explore the nature of organizations, followed by an examination of the concept of change itself. The chapter will then explore how self-awareness and mindset within individuals relates to the change process within an organization and barriers to change. Finally, the chapter will conclude with an examination of some current leadership models and theories within organizations.

Organizations

The research question in this study specifically addresses change within an organization. Consequently, I chose to focus first on literature and theories concerning organizations which had elements linked to change. This topic includes discussion on what an organization is, organizational culture, and what is a learning organization.

What is an Organization?

Funk & Wagnalls (1984) dictionary defines the word organization as “a number of individuals systematically united for some end or work” (p. 461). The Merriam-Webster (2004) dictionary defines an organization as “an administrative and functional structure” (p. 874). Each definition identifies two key elements of an organization - people and structure. Essentially, an organization is a group of people structured together for a specific purpose - without either component, there really is no organization.

Historically, theorists viewed organizations much like machines and operated them primarily through hierarchical command-and-control systems (Kotter, 1996, 1998; O’Toole, 1996; Yukl, 2002). I believe most branches within the Provincial Government currently use this

operational control method, which may have worked well when the world was a much smaller place, and change was relatively easy to manage. “It was, at first, fashionable to regard organizations as machines with human parts. Machines could be designed, directed, controlled, speeded up or slowed down... Indeed, much of the language of management was at one time borrowed from engineering...” (Handy, 1999, p. 20). Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) expressed a similar point of view stating, “Organizations-as-machines is a 17th century notion, from a time when scientists began to describe the universe as a great clock... Cause and effect were simple relationships; everything could be known; organizations and people could be engineered into efficient solutions” (para. 2). Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) also addressed this directive leadership style of early organizations stating:

Leaders could command and control many of them [changes] to their desired outcomes. This was possible for two reasons. First, leaders could often design and implement changes as separate initiatives, requiring little integration and no special attention to process... Second, these changes usually did not require any significant or profound personal change on the part of the leaders or the people. (p. 24)

However, the simple world we once knew evolved, predominantly due to the technological revolution of the 1990's and the creation of a global economy. The speed and complexity of change radically increased, and yesterday's methods of operating today's organizations no longer produced the desired results (Bridges, 1991; Cohen, 2005; Conner, 2006; Drucker, 1999).

Bellman (1990) observed, “Organizations as we have built them are more mechanical than ‘organical’. We have lost the ‘organ’ in *organization* as we have built awkward hierarchical structures with boxes and lines connecting them” (p. 68). Somehow we lost sight of the fact that organizations are not machines honed and calibrated to perfection; they are communities of

imperfect people who make mistakes and don't always succeed. Hesselbein, Goldsmith, and Somerville (1999) also recognized this flaw in how we viewed organizations, "Herein lies the fundamental failure of most leadership strategies. We fail to understand that what we are seeking to change is alive. Instead we see our organizations as machines" (p. 77). Bellman (1990) pinpointed the dilemma stating, "In this imperfect world full of imperfect people, we try to get things done through large, imperfect organizations-organizations of our own creation... We operate as though perfect performance is normal and all else is the exception..." (pp. 69-70). The organization as a perfect machine was a myth. We needed to shift our perspective away from this view of organizations and rethink the dominant command and control management techniques of yesterday in order to navigate in today's world of chaos and change (Gibbs, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 1999, 2002; Vaill 1996). "Traditional, top-down, command-and-control cultures, for the most part, cannot successfully deliver the fast-paced technological, consumer-focused, relationship-based, whole-system-oriented content changes required by today's marketplace" (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001, p. 100).

Theorists began to recognize the importance of the bond that holds people together within the organization – relationships (Bennis, 2003; Bushe, 2001; Covey, 1989, 1991; Gibbs, 2005; Julian, 2002; Maxwell, 1993). They also recognized that organizations are a compilation of relationship systems (O'Connor & McDermott, 1997; Oshry, 1995; Senge, 1994; Vaill, 1996, Wheatley, 1999). Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) wrote, "It is time to change the way we think about organizations. Organizations are living systems" (para. 5). These living systems are the human beings that make up the organization. Even according to Funk & Wagnalls' (1984) definition of the word organization, it includes the word "individuals", which of course, refers to people. Yet, until the 1990's, this "people" aspect of organizations was largely neglected by the

theorists of the day. Short (1998) argues that the very essence of an organization is within its relationships:

Relationships are the very heart and soul of an organization's ability to get any job done. Whether good or bad, effective or ineffective, relationships and their interactions are the organization's DNA – they create and define organizations. Without them there is no organization. (p. 16)

Kouzes and Posner (2002) also stressed the importance of this aspect of an organization, suggesting that its ultimate success depends on the relationships of its people:

Success in leadership, success in business, and success in life has been, is now, and will continue to be a function of how well people work and play together... Success in leading will be wholly dependent upon the capacity to build and sustain those human relationships that enable people to get extraordinary things done on a regular basis. (p. 21)

The tide has shifted. Where once theorists thought organizations consisted of people whose actions were independent, segregated and machine-like, they now recognize that the people *are* the organization, intrinsically intertwined through relationships. Short (1998) states, "relationships and interactions are the 'genetic code' of organizations. What goes on *between individuals* defines what an organization is and what it can become" (p. 16). Senge (1994) argues that every action is actually an interaction or transaction within a complex relationship system. Clearly, individuals and relationships are a key component in the change process. The message is simple; organizations need to pay attention to their people – their very survival may depend on it.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the underlying values, beliefs, assumptions, expectations, collective memories, and definitions present in an organization (Block, 2000; Bolman & Deal, 1997; Handy, 1999; Smye & McKague, 1994; Stringer, 1999; Vaill, 1996). Hesselbein, Goldsmith and Beckhart (1997) describe organizational culture as a “human society” (p. 25) stating:

Every company has its own language, its own version of its history (its myths), and its own heroes and villains (its legends), both historical and contemporary. The whole flourishing tangle serves to confirm old-timers, and to induct newcomers, in the corporation’s distinctive identity and its particular norms of behaviour. (pp. 25-26)

Not only is culture the unwritten beliefs and values of an organization, it is its underlying identity. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) confirm this analogy:

Culture is to organizations as mindset is to individuals. Culture is the sum of all the individual mindsets rolled into one set of common agreements. Within culture lies the company’s core values, its norms and operating principles, its myths and stories. Culture is the way of being of the organization, exerting influence over people’s morale and spirit. It determines what types of individual behaviours are acceptable or not and shapes the behaviours and style exhibited by the organization in the marketplace. Culture is the organization’s character. (p. 98)

It is my opinion that one could view culture as the “spirit” of an organization. This spirit resides within the hearts of the people, which are the “living systems” (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996) that create the organization itself. This opinion supports Short’s (1998) theory that the true essence of an organization actually lies within the collective spirit, or relationships, of its people.

It is interesting to note, however, that this underlying culture; character, identity, or spirit, may not reflect the actual values purported by the organization itself. Schein (2004) argues that when the underlying beliefs are inconsistent with the espoused values, then the values do not accurately reflect the organizational culture. He sets out a three level approach to examining the underlying culture:

Artifacts; visible organizational structures and processes (hard to decipher), Espoused Values; strategies, goals, philosophies (espoused justifications) and Basic Underlying Assumptions; unconscious, taken for granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings (ultimate source of values and actions). (p. 26)

I believe that when the levels of culture do not correlate as suggested by Schein, instability, turmoil and strife arises as a result of the conflicting positions, which in turn, perpetrates the formation of a negative organizational culture. Yukl (2002) states, “The underlying beliefs representing the culture of a group or organization are learned responses to problems of survival in the external environment and problems of internal integration” (p. 157). If the learned response is negative, these beliefs will form the overall culture and mind-set of the organization regardless if the declared values are positive. I have personally witnessed this phenomenon within the Employment Standards Branch. In circumstances where the expressed vision and values did not mirror reality, a negative belief culture formed, took root, and grew out of the inconsistency. I believe the consequences of these types of discrepancies can be costly, as the underlying culture of an organization can be a driving force in the success or failure of a change initiative.

Theorists agree that culture is such an influential dynamic, that it has the power and ability to effectively stifle or block leadership change strategies. They also concur that the

integrity between beliefs and values is critical to the health of an organization (Covey, 1989, 1991; Julian, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 1999, 2002; Maxwell, 1993; Meyer, 2001). However, as Schein (2004) points out, identifying the underlying culture of an organization can be difficult.

He states:

The pattern of basic underlying assumptions can function as a cognitive defense mechanism for individuals and the group, as a result culture change is difficult, time consuming and anxiety provoking. Cultures are deep seated, pervasive and complex and it can be extremely difficult to bring the assumptions to the surface. (p. 139)

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) support Schein's argument, expressing that one must dig deep into the assumptions of an organization to find the underlying mindsets of the culture before a change initiative can have any hope of success. The beauty of this particular research study is that the CultureSCAN (Beck, 2006) survey assessment tool used in the first phase of the project is specifically designed to reveal a snapshot of the underlying culture of an organization, thus providing the critical foundational information needed upon which to explore the research question(s).

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) believe that, "transforming culture is a central aspect of virtually all organization-wide transformation efforts... Culture change requires interventions at all levels of organization – whole system, team, relationships, and individuals" (p. 100). This argument again speaks of the significant power culture wields within an organization. It also stresses the importance of identifying and understanding the underlying culture within all levels of the entire organization, and ensuring as many potential stakeholders as possible are included in organization-wide transformation initiatives.

What is a Learning Organization?

According to Senge (1994), a “learning organization” is “an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future” (p. 14). Theorists recognized that due to the growing uncertainty in the world including economical and political instability, fluctuating global markets and trends, the traditional authoritarian, hierarchical organizations no longer met the needs of a world in constant change. As organizations, we needed to let go of our old assumptions and ways of doing things and learn how to continually expand in this new world of change – this is the fundamental nature of a learning organization (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001; Cohen, 2005; Kotter, 1996, 1998; Lebow & Simon, 1997; Wheatley, 1999; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996).

Senge (1994) argues that in order to become a learning organization, it involves a fundamental shift in how we think, which allows us to view the world and our relationship to it through a different perspective:

...Our organizations work the way they work, ultimately, because of *how we think and how we interact*. Only by changing how we think can we change deeply embedded policies and practices. Only by changing how we interact can shared visions, shared understandings, and new capacities for coordinated action be established. (p. xiv)

He expresses that an organization must first tear down the illusion that the world is a creation of separate, unrelated forces:

When we give up this illusion – we can then build ‘learning organizations,’ organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. (Senge, 1994, p. 3)

Senge (1994) advocates the convergence of five major disciplines to innovate learning organizations: systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision and team learning. He emphasizes that each component is critical element in the creation of a learning organization. His theory suggests that organizations who embrace the five disciplines will be able to continually adapt to change through the learning process.

Vaill (1996) supports Senge's argument also stressing the importance of personal learning. He describes the difficult, complex, ever-changing conditions individuals face in life as "permanent white water" (Vaill, 1996), and suggests the only way to navigate and survive in this type of environment is to embrace personal learning. "Learning must be a way of being – an ongoing set of attitudes and actions by individuals and groups that they employ to try to keep abreast of the surprising, novel, messy, obtrusive, recurring events thrown up by these macrosystems" (Vaill, 1996, p. 42).

Vaill (1996) further states that the problem with our existing model of learning is that it depicts learning as an institutional activity. While this traditional outlook and method of learning may be valid for some learning conditions, Vaill concludes that white water learning conditions require a different set of ideas. He suggests there are seven modes of "learning as a way of being": self-directed learning, creative learning, expressive learning, feeling learning, on-line learning, continual learning and reflexive learning. Each of these learning modes is a distinct mode which meets two criteria: they are almost absent in institutional learning and they are kinds of learning that are especially important in the world of white water.

Vaill (1996) defines learning as "Changes a person makes in himself or herself that increase the know-why and/or the know-what and/or the know-how the person possesses with respect to a given subject" (p. 21). Fittingly, learning is essentially a continual re-creation, or

transformation, of who we are individually, and a learning organization is a continual re-creation, or transformation, of who we are collectively – so learning and change go hand-in-hand, one is not independent of the other.

Change

Learning to embrace change is the central focus of this research project. In order to do this, we must first understand what change is and some guiding principles and theories behind the three stages in the change process; leaving an existing state, transition and readjusting to a new state.

What is Change?

The New World Dictionary of the American Language (1980) defines change as the process of “becoming different; to alter; to vary; to pass from one phase to another” (p. 237). Change is a transformation process with an expansive spectrum of dynamics, ranging from minute planned incremental phases to utter abandoned chaos, all depending on the factors involved. Theorists agree however, that as our world is becoming increasingly chaotic and subject to uncertainty, the state of change is faster and more unstable or unpredictable than at any other period in history (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001; Bolman & Deal, 2004; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Conner, 2006; Quinn, 1996; Senge, 1994; Vaill, 1996). Consequently, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to plan for, or control, unexpected change.

Not only do we face unsettling amounts of change in our personal lives through marriage, divorce, blended families, births, deaths, health problems, promotions, relocations, and the like, but we face significant changes in our corporate lives as well. It seems organizations just get used to the implementation of a new change initiative to find another looming on the horizon. Whether the change is in technology, policy, procedure, reorganization, restructuring, or the

shifting of responsibilities and duties, it appears organizations in the twenty-first century must face the prospect of change almost daily in some shape or form. While there will always be some steady state activities such as rules, procedures, policies and regulations that can be controlled, unexpected change due to a chaotic world state is becoming more frequent and increasingly difficult to control.

Change Models

Change models have been well explored and documented. Kurt Lewin (1951) introduced a change model he describes as unfreezing; creating the motivation to change, moving; making the change, and refreezing; internalizing and stabilizing the change. Edgar Schein (2004) built on Lewin's concepts and created a seven stage model consisting of unfreezing or disconfirmation, survival anxiety or guilt, overcoming learning anxiety, cognitive restructuring, imitation and identification, trial and error learning, and refreezing. William Bridges (1991, 2001) describes three stages of change consisting of endings, neutral zones and new beginnings, with emphasis on the importance of managing transition periods. Douglas Smith (1996) constructed the "wheel of change" (p. 58), in which he describes the stages of moving from an existing daily routine to a new daily routine through a process of circular steps: understanding, desire, minimum capability, planning, action and reinforcement. Dean Anderson and Linda Ackerman-Anderson (2001) identify a seven stage transformational change process beginning with birth, growth, success plateau, wake-up calls, chaos, death; mindset forced to shift, and reemergence through visioning and learning. Many of these theories frame their models in terms of repeating cycles or pendulum swings which have validity and merit; however, there is another change model concept based on the work of Clare Graves, who in the early 1960's developed a complex systems theory framework around the changing state of human nature.

As opposed to the fixed, back-and-forth, up-and-down repeating patterns of cycles, Graves proposed that an oscillating spiral vortex best describes the emergence of human systems as they evolve or change through levels of increasing complexity:

Each upward turn of the spiral marks the awakening of a more elaborated version on top of what already exists. The human Spiral, then, consists of a coiled string of value systems, world views, and mindsets, each the product of its times and conditions. (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 29)

Therefore, Graves' believed that patterns of cycles do not repeat themselves exactly, but evolve and emerge as life conditions change. Beck and Cowan (2006) summarize Graves' point of view as follows:

1. Human nature is not static, nor is it finite. Human nature changes as the conditions of existence change, thus forging new systems. Yet, the older systems stay with us.
2. When a new system or level is activated, we change our psychology and rules for living to adapt to those new conditions.
3. We live in a potentially open system of values with an infinite number of modes of living available to us. There is no final state to which we must all aspire.
4. An individual, a company, or an entire society can respond positively only to those managerial principles, motivational appeals, educational formulas, and legal or ethical codes that are appropriate to the current level of human existence. (p. 29)

Graves' complex theory integrates the whole man, combining the separate fields and disciplines of 'bio-', 'psycho-' and 'socio-' academia, "pointing to the critical importance of mind/brain research with a focus on how the mind is shaped by neurological structures and networks, and how it is activated by chemical agents and life's conditions" (p. 29). Beck and Cowan took

Graves' theory one step further creating the concept of "Spiral Dynamics" (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006).

Spiral Dynamics. Spiral Dynamics theory combines Graves' framework on the levels of human existence with an expanded "concept of 'memes' introduced by British biologist Richard Dawkins and later amplified by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi... [Spiral Dynamics] combines lessons from molecular biology and the neurosciences with more traditional psychological research" (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 28). "What biochemical genes are to the DNA, memes are to our psychocultural 'DNA'... They [memes] are the information units in our collective consciousness and transport their views across our minds" (Beck & Cowan, 2006, pp. 30-31). Spiral Dynamics looks deep into the heart of the human system and the core intelligences that actually drive our decision making processes.

Spiral Dynamics research identifies the existence of eight value systems, or "MEMEs" (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006) that are a core aspect of the complex adaptive capability that exists in human beings. "The MEMEs encode instructions for our world views, assumptions about how everything works, and the rationale for decisions we make" (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 32). Each one of these value systems is a level of thinking, or complexity, with an emerging intelligence that builds on the previous level, so one level is not better or worse than another, it is simply a different layer of complexity. "As MEMEs change, so do thinking and behavioural choices since the MEMEs' intelligences are at the core of both" (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 73). Each level of complexity or existence eventually requires at a certain point that we expand our comfort zone – or change – through greater levels of thinking, to solve the problems that we have created by the current level of existence. Thus, as our MEMEs change, so does our way of thinking, and the spiral of complexity continues.

Beck and Cowan (2006) suggest that there are six conditions that must be met in order for an individual or organization to experience lasting change:

Firstly, the *potential* for change must be there. Secondly, if there are still *unresolved problems* from a lower order, you cannot expect to effect change at higher Spiral levels. Thirdly, there needs to be felt *dissonance* within the current MEME system before change will be welcomed in. Fourthly, there needs to be sufficient *insight* into the causes of the dissonance, and awareness of alternative approaches to their resolution. Fifthly, the specific *barriers* to change need to be concretely identified, and then eliminated, bypassed, neutralized or reframed into something else. Sixthly and finally, when significant change occurs you can expect periods of confusion, false starts, long learning curves and awkward assimilation while *consolidation* of the new thinking occurs. (p. 6)

Beck and Cowan (2006) emphasize that all of these conditions must be in place to effect lasting change. If a condition is missed or skipped, the chances of lasting change are slim.

Beck and Cowan (2006) also describe five steps, or landmarks, in the pathway of change. Each landmark has been assigned a Greek letter which represents a different phase in the process: ALPHA (stable and balanced), BETA (uncertainty and questioning), GAMMA (anger and confusion), DELTA (inspired enthusiasm) and New Alpha (stability). Beck and Cowan suggest that this five phase process occurs each time an individual, organization, or society moves from one level of human existence to another up or down the spiral continuum.

While there are many different change models that vary in their design, complexity and descriptors, at their very core, the change process itself remains virtually the same: leaving an existing state, moving to a place of the unknown, readjusting to a new state.

Leaving an Existing State

Theorists (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006; Cohen, 2005; Kotter, 1996, 1998; Lewin, 1951; Schein, 2004) agree that the motivation for leaving an existing state of being generally begins with an unsettling, discomfort or disequilibrium with the current state. In *Spiral Dynamics*, Beck and Cowan, (2006) describe this state as the “BETA condition” which is a time of uncertainty, questioning and frustration that pushes us into realizing the need for change. “BETA problems are better felt than told. We experience the frustration and the discomfort in our hearts more than our minds... We can see it, touch it, taste it and smell it but not explain it” (pp. 87-88). It is an inner knowing that the status quo is shifting.

Schein (2004) believes that “if any part of the core cognitive structure is to change in more than minor incremental ways, the system must first experience enough disequilibrium to force a coping process that goes beyond just reinforcing the assumptions already in place” (p. 320). He goes on to say that it is his experience there has to be some real sense of threat, crisis, dissatisfaction or “burning-platform” (p. 324) before there is enough motivation present in an individual to really accept the fact that change is needed. Cohen (2005) agrees stating:

In successful change efforts, the first step is making sure sufficient people act with sufficient urgency – with on-your-toes behaviour that looks for opportunities and problems, that energizes colleagues, that beams a sense of “let’s go”... while a concrete business case may be necessary, alone it is not enough to successfully change behaviour; people first have to *see* and the *feel* the need to change. (pp. 13-14)

Kotter (1996) also concurs, expressing that “establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation. With complacency high, transformations usually go nowhere because few people are even interested in working on the change problem” (p. 36). So leaving

an existing state of being first starts with a shift in the basic paradigms we live in, where doing things as they have always been done is no longer an option. This unsettling shift in the status quo leads us to the next step in the change process where we enter the place of the unknown called the “transition period”.

Transition

The transition period is one of the main phases in the change process. William Bridges and Susan Mitchell (2000) describe it as “the state that change puts people into” (p. 30). They explain that *change* is the external process impacting the individual (new beliefs) while *transition* is the internal process the individual experiences (psychological and emotional readjustment) to come to terms with the new situation. Essentially, transition is a time of moving into uncharted territory. For some people, this internal process of stepping into the unknown can be so uncomfortable, intimidating, or even frightening that it can actually overwhelm them to the point of extreme resistance, or even debilitation. Conner (2006) describes transition as a “phase during which we disengage from the status quo... people are neither what they were nor yet what they will become” (p. 90). He suggests that it is during this stage that we develop new attitudes and behaviours that lead to the new desired state. Bridges (1991) confirms this thought expressing, “change represents a kind of inner ‘sorting’ process in which old and no longer appropriate habits are discarded and newly appropriate patterns of thought and action are developed” (p. 46). It is this change however, that can turn the world upside down.

Change theorists (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001; Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006; Bridges, 1991, 2001; Bridges & Mitchell, 2000; Conner, 2006; Schein, 2004) agree that the transition period can be a volatile time because of its chaotic, often indefinable nature. Conner (2006) states, “No one likes existing in a state of limbo because the in-between periods in our

lives are filled with instability, conflict and high stress” (p. 90). Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) agree suggesting, “Failure in transformation often results from the cancer of emotional immaturity and bad relationships made worse by the stress of marching into the unknown... fear and blame can run rampant” (p. 45). In turn, “many individuals often attempt to regain their equilibrium by reverting back to the way things were... because the people involved could not tolerate the sense of ambiguity and lack of control inherent to the transition phase” (Conner, 2006, pp. 90-91). Bridges (1991) warns however, “unless transition occurs, change will not work... transition begins with letting go of something... this is the no-man’s-land between the old reality and the new” (p. 5). Beck and Cowan (2006) agree expressing:

As we first leave ALPHA for BETA, we try ‘more of the same’ in the naïve belief that there is nothing wrong with existing ALPHA systems... We have failed to recognize that aspects of the *Life Conditions* ALPHA was handling have changed, making the operating systems incongruent or irrelevant. In fact, as we sharpen the edge of the ALPHA systems, we generally make things worse, not better.” (p. 88).

In order to get to a new reality, we must be prepared to leave and say goodbye to the old. Beck and Cowan (2006) explain that it is at this juncture two possible paths are set before us. We can become stuck in the negative emotional GAMMA TRAP, which is a time of deep anger and hostility where we can’t go back to the past, yet we can’t see our way through the barriers blocking the future, or we can move into the positive DELTA state, which is a time of hope, vision and drive that moves us towards the ideal, stable, New ALPHA state just ahead on the horizon.

Due to the serious ramifications of becoming stuck in this transition stage of the change process, I believe it is critical individuals within organizations are supported and encouraged as

they pass through this time of uncertainty. Beck and Cowan (2006) agree stating, “If there is no culture or nurturing *support* during the transformation, new MEMEs rarely germinate, much less bloom” (p. 6). Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) also believe that, “Core purpose, along with shared vision and shared values, become the DNA that leaders can use to carry the organization from its past, through the uncertainty, into its tangible future” (p. 45). Conner (2006) agrees adding, “Eagerness to reduce the stress of transitional ambiguity generally makes us more receptive to attaining the goals of the change. We seek information that will help us create a new stable state. Learning is the foremost opportunity stemming from change” (p. 92). Therefore, we need to create supportive, collaborative, learning environments that continually assist people through the transition time of uncertainty into a new readjustment state ready for the next spiral of change to come along.

Readjusting to a New State

Readjusting to a new state marks the end of the transition period. While the new beginning brings hope and ‘light at the end of the tunnel’, it still can be an unsettling time until new behaviours and attitudes become stable. Bridges (1991) states:

Beginnings are strange things. People want them to happen but fear them at the same time. After the long and seemingly pointless wanderings through the neutral zone [transition period], most people are greatly relieved to arrive at whatever Promised Land they’ve been seeking. Yet beginnings are also scary, for they are the time to make a new commitment and actually be the new person that the new situation demands. (p. 51)

We have arrived, yet our condition is still in a state of flux, while we settle in and become accustomed to our new life conditions. Schein (2004) agrees with this point of view stating:

As soon as confirming data from important environmental sources, external stakeholders, or internal sources are produced, the new beliefs and values gradually stabilize, become internalized, and, if they continue to work, become taken-for-granted assumptions until new disconfirmations start the change process all over again. (p. 328)

The cycle continues; people gradually move into a state of comfort with the new state until life conditions change sufficiently to cause discomfort and the need to move on, so the spiral of change begins again. In terms of Spiral Dynamic theory, Beck and Cowan (2006) explain:

The New ALPHA reflects the consolidation of the ideas and insights from BETA and GAMMA through the DELTA surge... The individual returns to a steady state as the world is once again in sync... Balance is restored between *conditions – without* and *MEME systems-within*. Many come to believe the ultimate has been reached; the world will stay thus forever. Of course, just over the horizon, around the end, or up the road lies the next BETA condition. (p. 92)

Whereas in the past this cycle of change moved at a much slower rate, in the twenty first century our chaotic and unpredictable world demands that we learn to embrace change at a lightening fast rate in order to not only survive, but excel in a world of constant change. So how do we as individuals and organizations learn to do this?

Self-Awareness

Many theorists (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001; Beck & Cowan, 2006; Conner, 2006; Johnson, 2002; Quinn, 1996; Senge, 1994; Short, 1998) believe that self-awareness plays a key role in how individuals interpret and react to change. I also believe self-awareness is one of the most critical elements in learning to embrace change because only when we change how we

individually perceive the world, can we then change deeply rooted cultures, practices and policies within our organizations.

Mindset

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) describe mindset as, “one’s worldview, the place or orientation from which you experience your reality and form your perceptions of it. The cornerstones of your mindset are your fundamental assumptions about reality and your core beliefs about self, others, and life in general” (p. 80). Senge (1994) refers to mindset as “Mental Models” which are “deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action” (p. 8).

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) suggest that mindset is different than awareness, knowledge, thinking, emotions and behaviours, in that it forms the context in which all thinking occurs. Consequently, mindset has a powerful impact on an individual’s perception of reality. Senge (1994) expands on this concept, arguing that the way our organizations work, or don’t work, is a direct result of how we think and interact through our own mental models. “New insights fail to get put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting” (p. 174). However, if we are not aware of our mindset, how can we see that it is impacting our behaviour and creating the results we reap? Unfortunately, the downfall to our own blindness is that this pattern will simply repeat until we begin to notice it and make different choices:

The more you notice, the more you catch yourself in your unique patterns. The more you learn about why, when and how you developed these patterns in the past, the more you will be able to be present here and now and make different choices. And by the way, you

just may wake up someday and realize that by not trying to change, but making here-and-now choices differently, you have changed. (Short, 1998, pp. 80-81)

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) agree with Senge and Short suggesting that mindset is causative. For example, a positive mindset leads to positive behaviour which ultimately leads to positive results; conversely, a negative mindset leads to negative behaviour which ultimately leads to negative results. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) support this theory using the combination of the mechanics of basic brain functioning and the “Fundamental Law of Success” (p. 87). They explain that the reticular activating system (RAS) within our brain is the gateway for incoming sensory information:

The RAS sends both valuable and threatening information to the *conscious* mind; you then become aware of it and can respond appropriately. The RAS sends information that is neither valuable nor threatening to the *subconscious* mind. Because this information is insignificant, the RAS does not bother you with it. Because you are not made aware of this information, you do not know it is being input into your brain. (p. 85)

It is the neo-cortex part of our brain, which in turn, programs and conditions the state of our mindset determining what incoming data is perceived as valuable, threatening, or inconsequential. This is why people perceive situations and events so differently. “Why are mental models so powerful in affecting what we *do*? In part, because they affect what we *see*. Two people with different mental models can observe the same event and describe it differently, because they’ve looked at different details” (Senge, 1994, p. 175). As Short (1998) puts it, “Your experience is not what happens to you, but what you do internally with what happens to you. You create your experience” (p. 82). Therefore, as individuals, our perceptions of incoming data and realities can vary so differently from one another. This is the classic “glass half-full or half-

empty syndrome based on our own mental models” (N. Vaughan, personal correspondence, January 3, 2007).

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) believe that most reality is comprised of “neutral” events registered through our senses of sight, sound, taste, smell and touch, to which our mindset adds meaning:

Specific information, valued or feared by your mindset, then becomes the trigger of an expanded or contracted emotional and behavioural response within you. Your state of being, moment by moment, is thus determined by your mindset. *The source of your reaction, whether it is positive or negative, is the meaning made by your mindset.* (pp. 85-86)

Taking this theory one step further, Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) also believe that mindset not only influences perception and internal experiences, but external performance and results:

A very simple equation called the Fundamental Law of Success (Anderson, 1988) plainly demonstrates the impact of mindset on performance. This law is stated as, Ability Level x Mental State = Performance. Your ability level establishes your *potential* for success... Mindset, which directly influences the inner state you are in when you are performing (or at any other time, for that matter), determines how much of your potential you actualize. (p. 87)

If we are one hundred percent focused, then we will perform at one hundred percent of our ability level. Essentially, positive or negative, we create our story based on our perceptions, potential, and mindset.

Self Mastery

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) believe that by transforming one's mindset, individuals and organizations can achieve more of their potential through Self Mastery:

Change leaders can *internally* influence their external reality through greater Self Mastery in two ways. First, they can be more focused and centered as they perform. This requires *self-management skill*, the ability to manage one's internal state of being in *real time* to generate maximum focus and a desired way of being. Second, they can overcome historical or conditioned fears, doubts, and self-limiting ways of being that either keep them from being fully focused in present time or cause undesirable behaviours. This requires *personal transformation skill*, a process that takes place *over time*. (p. 90)

Self Mastery is the practice of optimizing one's mindset or internal state of being to influence the outcome and results we achieve in life. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) suggest there are a number of processes, tools and techniques that can be used to improve Self Mastery skills including breathing techniques; body awareness and relaxation techniques; mental rehearsal tools, including visualization and affirmations; emotional release techniques; focusing techniques; behaviour pattern reprogramming; personal visioning and purpose identification; energy management; diet and exercise; values clarification; core belief identification; and behavioural style assessments.

Senge (1994) agrees with the theory of Self Mastery (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001) and expresses that individuals practicing a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. Senge (1994) believes that personal mastery is an ongoing, lifelong journey in which one never arrives. "Personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their

ignorance, their incompetence, and their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident” (p. 142). Moreover, people that practice personal mastery principles have a significant impact on an organization in which they work. Senge (1994) states:

People with high levels of personal mastery are more committed. They take more initiative. They have a broader and deeper sense of responsibility in their work. They learn faster... [and] ... Another and equally important reason... is the impact which full personal development can have on individual happiness. To seek personal fulfillment only outside of work and to ignore the significant portion of our lives which we spend working, would be to limit our opportunities to be happy and complete human beings. (p. 144)

Therefore, practicing the principles of personal mastery can lead to a life of fulfillment which creates the opportunity for happiness and contentment. Senge (1994) suggests that individuals who practice the discipline of personal mastery incorporate and practice the following principles: personal vision; creative tension; structural conflict; commitment to the truth; using the subconscious; integrating reason and intuition; seeing our connectedness to the world; compassion; commitment to the whole; and fostering personal mastery in the organization.

Capacity or Potential

Beck and Cowan (2006) also acknowledge that mindset plays an important role in the ability to change, referring to it as the potential or capacity to change; however, they observe that not all people are “equally open to, capable of, or prepared for change... [and] ... People vary in terms of their change potentials along a continuum from OPEN to ARRESTED to CLOSED (OAC)” (p. 76). Beck and Cowan (2006) believe that not only does one have to pay attention to

the Ψ MEME profile of an individual or organization, but the state of their change potential. They describe the various change potential states as follows:

OPEN: potential for more complex level functioning

Healthiest form with most possibilities for adjustment

History and capacities conducive to movement

Open state thinking changes as conditions/realities change

Deals effectively with barriers

Doesn't present as sharp a picture of the level as Closed does

ARRESTED: caught by barriers in self/situation

Possibility for change only if barriers are overcome

May lack insights that explain what is happening

Will require more dissonance be created to spark change

Makes excuses and rationalizes the *status quo*

CLOSED: blocked by biopsychosocial capacities

May lack neurological equipment or necessary intelligences

Historic traumas may have triggered closure

Unable to recognize barriers, much less overcome them

Threatened by change and fights to stay put or else (p. 77)

Basically, Beck and Cowan (2006) believe the more OPEN the Ψ MEME system is, the more capability or potential there is to change. "When in the OPEN state, we function in ways that remove restraints and allow us to step around or through the barriers to change. We work to change negative circumstances and revise conditions that are obstacles, either within the self or

in the *milieu*" (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 78). OPEN thinking allows us to move forward exploring new options, opportunities and possibilities.

The more CLOSED or ARRESTED the thinking is the more stress, resistance, denial and even push back will occur when that individual is faced with change. Beck and Cowan (2006) describe some of the characteristics of CLOSED thinking as:

Inappropriateness – lack of adaptability, behaviour awkward and contrived;

Insatiability – there is never enough;

Exclusivity – there is no other position;

Undue response to frustration – reactions to barriers are extreme, overreaction;

Fulfills task to extremes – perfectionist; and

Builds a shell – avoids exposure to other positions or view. (pp. 80-81)

These characteristics diminish and limit a CLOSED thinkers' capacity to change. Conner (2006) agrees with Beck and Cowan (2006) stating:

People can only change when they have the capacity to do so. *Ability* means having the necessary skills and knowing how to use them. *Willingness* is the motivation to apply those skills to particular situation. If you lack either ability or willingness, it is unlikely that you will successfully adapt to a change. (p. 128)

In some cases, it is simply the old analogy, "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink". An individual may perfectly well have the ability to change, but not the willingness.

Beck and Cowan (2006) suggest that CLOSED thinking can result from two sources: Firstly, outside life conditions or dynamics that have triggered the MEME system CLOSED, thus capturing the person in an unhealthy state that may only be alterable through therapy. Secondly, some people are biologically constructed in a CLOSED state because of damage or

developmental deficiency. “If the neurological equipment necessary for certain complex modes of thinking is simply not accessible, the person will be CLOSED. Until more is discovered about how brains and minds function, there is not much to be done” (p. 80). These individuals simply do not have the ability or capacity to change.

Resilience

Conner (2006) describes resilience as “the ability to absorb high levels of change while displaying minimal dysfunctional behaviour” (p. 224). He expresses that people tend to vary in their ability to be resilient to change, but believes we can learn to build our resilience level and become architects, instead of victims, of change. Conner (2006) suggests that individuals have a preference towards one of two orientations to change. “One tends to see primarily dangerous implications, the other typically focuses on the promise of new opportunities” (p. 235). He describes the two orientations as follows:

Danger-Oriented People: Type-D. These types of people view the crisis of change as “threatening and can feel victimized by it. Such people often lack an overarching sense of purpose or vision for their lives... they often find it difficult to reorient themselves when the unanticipated disrupts their expectations” (p. 235).

Conner (2006) explains that these types of people tend to interpret life in binary and sequential terms, thinking that change should progress in a logical, orderly fashion. Type-D people tend to respond to change in a negative, reactive fashion believing that change is an unnatural, unnecessary and unpleasant departure from the status quo, consequently, they are often reluctant to acknowledge the need for change and will try to avoid it. Type-D people also tend to feel insecure about themselves and their ability to manage uncertainty, and have a tendency to often blame or attack others for problems caused by a change because of their own

feelings of inadequacy and simply being overwhelmed. **Type-D people and the CLOSED or ARRESTED** profiles described by Beck and Cowan (2006) share many of the same attributes.

Opportunity-Oriented People: Type-O. These types of people view the crisis of change in a dramatically different way than Type-D people. “While recognizing the dangers, it [Type-O] positions change as a potential advantage to be exploited, rather than a problem to be avoided” (p. 238).

Conner (2006) explains that these types of people usually have a strong life vision that serves as a source of meaning, gives them a sense of purpose, and guides them through the turmoil and uncertainty of change. Type-O people view life as constantly changing, with new opportunities, choices and learning experiences. They tend to respond in a positive and constructive way to transition. While Type-O people experience the same disorientation and disruption Type-D people experience when faced with a change, they take it in stride as a necessary part of the adjustment phase; consequently, they tend to get on with change viewing the turbulence as part of the process. Type-O people also cope better with the stress caused by change because they do not expect the world to stay constant, so they are not surprised by life’s changes. Type-O people also do not expect that life will unfold in a neat, logical, clear-cut, rational way, so they can adjust to the fluid, neutral zone of transition. They also have the ability to achieve balance in their perspective, as they can see both the opportunities and dangers in the chaos of change. Type-O people and the OPEN profile described by Beck and Cowan (2006) share many of the same attributes.

A critical difference between Type-D and Type-O people “is not the feelings of discomfort generated by change – both have these emotions. It is their *reaction* to these feelings that differ” (Conner, 2006, p. 242). Again, this theory supports the arguments put forward by

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001), Beck and Cowan (1996, 2006), Senge (1994), and Short (1998), that it is our *reaction* to change that influences how we will deal with it, not the change itself. Therefore, it is critical that we understand the basic dynamics in how we think and react in situations, as we can severely limit our capacity and potential to make the best choices for ourselves. Conner (2006) believes, “You can gain a powerful advantage by learning about the patterns that influence your life, respecting the mechanisms that govern their operation, using this knowledge to conserve existing assets, and releasing additional resources that were previously unavailable” (p. 257).

It is important to note, however, that one Type state is not “good” while the other is “bad”. Conner (2006) expresses that everyone has both D and O tendencies, and there are situations and times when Type-D responses are very appropriate. “There is nothing wrong with resistance to change; it is a natural, healthy response to disrupted expectations... In fact, there are many situations where change should be resisted passionately. Problems arise when Type-D responses become predetermined, instinctive, and habitual” (Conner, 2006, pp. 248-249). We simply cannot become “stuck” in our Type-D responses, as Conner cautions that the key to enhancing resilience is learning (or teaching other people) to display as many of the Type-O actions as frequently as possible. Conner summarizes and describes the attributes of Type-O people into five basic characteristics:

1. Positive – Views life as challenging but opportunity filled;
2. Focused – Clear visions of what is to be achieved;
3. Flexible – Pliable when responding to uncertainty;
4. Organized – Applies structures to help manage ambiguity;
5. Proactive – Engages change instead of evading it. (pp. 244-245)

These five attributes are the cornerstone characteristics found in resilient people.

Conner (2006) also supports the view of Beck and Cowan (2006) that people vary in their ability to increase their capacity or resilience, and that some may never change. Both Conner and Beck and Cowan agree that personal barriers to change must be identified and overcome before lasting change will take place:

Barriers can make change difficult, if not impossible. They must be recognized (no more denial) and identified concretely (name names), and then (a) eliminated, (b) bypassed, (c) neutralized, or (d) reframed into something else. These barriers are first identified as part of the external field and the *Life Conditions*, then later purged from the mindset of the person or group. (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 83)

So, for the majority of us, we have choices – there is hope and the possibility for a new perspective on life. We can learn to embrace change. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) offer these thoughtful words:

Embracing the fact that you significantly influence your results and the quality of your life based on your mindset and way of being can be both liberating and terrifying. It is liberating to recognize your own self-imposed limitations and to choose new and more effective ways of being, relating, and working. However, this can be terrifying as you face the fact that you are much more powerful and capable than you ever imagined. (p. 96)

Barriers to Change

In previous subtopics, I discussed the human potential concerning barriers to change; however, there are also organizational barriers that affect the willingness of individuals to

embrace a change initiative. This subtopic will explore several key barriers to organizational change including resistance, complacency, and mistrust.

Resistance

Schein (2004) explicitly warns that before a sense of urgency is created to drive a change initiative, some effort must be made to “identify which changes are going to be made and which ‘new way of working’ will fix the problem and some assessment has been made of how difficult and anxiety-provoking the learning of the new way will be” (p. 324). In other words, it is extremely important that there are systems in place to support workers as they move through the change process. Cohen (2005) agrees, stressing that in order to change behaviour, “leaders need to know where any fear, anger or complacency might have built up within the organization, and these emotions must be addressed in the approach to change. If they are not, the change effort will be in jeopardy of not making it out of the gate...” (p. 14). Schein (2004) explains,

The change process starts with disconfirmation, which produces survival anxiety or guilt – the feeling that one must change – but the learning anxiety associated with having to change one’s competencies, one’s role or power position, one’s identity elements, and possibly one’s group membership causes denial and resistance to change. The only way to overcome such resistance is to reduce the learning anxiety by making the learner feel psychologically safe. (p. 336)

Schein (2004) suggests there are eight steps that must be taken simultaneously in order to create psychological safety for organizational members undergoing transformational change: a compelling positive vision, formal training, involvement of the learner, informal training of the relevant ‘family’ groups and teams, practice fields, coaches, feedback, positive role models, support groups in which learning problems can be aired and discussed, and a reward and

discipline system and organizational structure that are consistent with the new way of thinking and working.

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) also suggest implementing high-leverage people strategies to assist people move through the transition period including, “personal growth training, dialogue, Appreciative Inquiry, coaching, team learning practices, profound benchmarking experiences, experiential education and frequent communications” (p. 45). People need assurance that the fear of the unknown is okay, because they will be safe and supported as the organization implements change initiatives. Once people have that knowledge in their hearts, resistance will diminish.

Complacency

Theorists (Beck & Cowan, 2006; Cohen, 2005; Conner, 2006; Kotter, 1996, 1998; Schein, 2004) agree that significant change initiatives within organizations will be short-lived if complacency levels are high, and there is no commitment or significant effort from its people to want to change. There must be a sense of urgency, disconfirmation, or dissonance present in order to motivate individuals within the organization to see that change is not a one-time event, but a continuous growth process. This is not always easy, as “a sound business case is not enough. The need for change has to be *seen* by people so that they can become emotionally charged to make things happen” (Cohen, 2005, p. 15). Creating that sense of urgency means removing sources of complacency or, at the very least, minimizing their impact.

Although the list is not exhaustive, Kotter (1996) identifies several sources of complacency:

The absence of a major and visible crisis; too many visible resources; low overall performance standards; organizational structures that focus employees on narrow

functional goals; internal measurement systems that focus on the wrong performance indexes; a lack of sufficient performance feedback from external sources; a culture that avoids confrontation and kills the messenger; a culture of denial; and too much “happy talk” from senior management about achievements based on past successes. (p. 40)

Kotter (1996) and Cohen (2005) believe that creating a strong sense of urgency usually demands leaders and managers make the need for change apparent to the organization through bold actions that appeal to both logic and emotion including taking ownership of issues; paying homage to the past, as well as acknowledging the weaknesses of the present, as well as the challenges of the future; emphasizing the need for constant vigilance and ongoing support; communicating and engaging all stakeholders; enabling staff; inviting ideas; coaching and mentoring; and asking hard questions. These are the kind of actions a significant change initiative needs to ensure success. Through logic and emotional buy-in, these “two crucial attitudes and effects combine to generate the urgency needed to successfully launch the [a] change initiative” (Cohen, 2005, p. 21).

Mistrust

As we are finding, resistance to organizational change can come in many forms, including mistrust in the leadership. “People want leaders who are credible. Credibility is the foundation of leadership” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 32). Funk & Wagnalls (1984) define credibility as “capable of being believed” (p. 150). People want to follow leaders who are trustworthy and believable. “When it comes to deciding whether a leader is believable, people first listen to the words, then they watch the actions” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 37). If the leadership of an organization is preaching one thing while doing another, the credibility gap will be its undoing. “It is very important to align what we believe with what we do. This alignment between our

beliefs and actions will be the foundation on which we build employee loyalty” (Julian, 2002, p. 175). “Integrity is the basis of *trust*... It is the one quality that cannot be acquired but must be earned. It is given by co-workers and followers and without it, the leader can’t function” (Bennis, 1989, p. 33). The cost of mistrust within an organization can be high and actually lead to militant resistance. Conner (2006) states:

Behind-the-scenes resistance is usually the result of low trust and inadequate participation. If employees sense that they are not allowed to discuss their true feelings or if they are not involved in implementation decisions, they are likely to feel disenfranchised from the change effort. Many times, these feelings are in the form of clandestine unrest-from indirect complaining to outright sabotage. (p. 129)

Mistrust or suspicion of the intent of an organization often leads to disloyalty and lack of commitment from employees.

Bennis and Nanus (1997) observe, “Workers feel powerless. Few of them are willing to become fully engaged in a work situation and go the extra mile for an employer who regards them as easily expendable” (p. 7). Lebow and Simon (1997) agree expressing:

No one has ever encountered an organization where employees threatened to strike because their leaders wouldn’t bring in Total Quality Management, or wouldn’t downsize. What employees crave is more communication, the sense of feeling respected, the room to make mistakes without getting their heads chopped off. (p. 56)

Kouzes and Posner (2002) also agree with Bennis and Nanus, and Lebow and Simon stating:

Most of today’s workers seriously question whether organizations are going to be loyal to their employees. They hear all this talk about how the organization wants loyal customers and committed employees, yet they don’t experience life on the job as a reciprocal

relationship. It seems to many that the notions of loyalty and job security have gone the way of the dodo bird. A certain distrust and wariness has crept into the workplace, and yet we know that trust is the foundation of any good relationship – and fundamental to getting extraordinary things done. (p. xxii)

When employees feel undervalued and expendable they are not likely to engage fully. They are more inclined to simply meet the requirements of the job, but no more. The likelihood of “getting extraordinary things done” is slim to none. Lebow and Simon (1997) acknowledge the danger in this sad scenario recognizing, “when we [organizations] choose not to trust our associates, we undermine their confidence, deny them learning experiences, and lose the benefit of the contributions they could be making. Worse, we poison the atmosphere of the workplace” (p. 71).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) agree, expressing that when employees mistrust their managers and perceive them to have low credibility, they are significantly more likely to “produce only if they’re watched carefully; be motivated primarily by money; say good things about the organization publicly and criticize it privately; consider looking for another job if the organization experiences problems; and feel unsupported and unappreciated” (pp. 33-34). This is a disastrous position for an organization. If employees truly believe they can’t trust their leaders and their leaders don’t trust or care about them, why would employees be motivated to engage fully and care about the workplace?

Bennis and Nanus (1997) believe the problem stems from a commitment gap between the parties. “Leaders have failed to instill vision, meaning and trust in their followers. They failed to empower them” (pp. 7-8). Kouzes and Posner (2002) agree stating that organizations can only build trust through mutual collaboration and reliance. “Collaboration is the master skill that enables teams, partnerships, and other alliances to function effectively. Collaboration can be

sustained only when leaders promote a sense of mutual reliance – the feeling that we’re all in this together” (pp. 285-286). Without vision, collaboration, and commitment to one another, credibility and trust will simply not grow.

Incompetence

Perceptions of lack of credibility or incompetence in the leadership of our organizations are factors that can stop a change initiative before it even starts.

To enlist in another’s cause, we must believe that the person is competent to guide us where we’re headed. We must see the leader as capable and effective. If we doubt the leader’s abilities, we’re unlikely to enlist in the crusade. (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 29)

People won’t willingly follow those they don’t trust, or those they view as incompetent or incapable.

Demonstrated competence is essential for building the trust that is critical for the construction and continued health of authentic, effective communities [organizations].

Competence applies both to the specific skills and knowledge necessary to fulfill one’s task as well as to the ability to establish and maintain personal relationships among those who are working together to accomplish the task. Competence also includes the willingness and ability to accept responsibility as well as knowledge of one’s own limitations. (Gibbs, 2005, p. 137)

While there must be a base level of competence in understanding the fundamentals, it is not always a case of needing to be a subject-matter expert in every aspect of the organization; sometimes it is a case of competence in a leader’s track record and ability to get things done.

People who lead must know where they are going, and inspire confidence in others to want to go with them. “It is the kind of competence that inspires confidence that the leader will be able to

guide the entire organization, large or small, in the direction in which it needs to go” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 29). People want to feel confident in their leaders, trust them, and know that they are capable individuals who have our best interests at heart.

Leadership

Theorists (Bennis, 1989; Bridges, 1991, 2001; De Pree, 1989, 1992; Drucker, 1999; Maxwell, 1993) agree that we need to shift our perspective away from the command and control management techniques of yesterday’s organization in order to navigate within today’s world of change. The traditional role of management within the organization is giving way to the newer concept of leadership, which facilitates the notion of change.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) state, “Leaders make it possible for others to do good work. They know that those who are expected to produce the results must feel a sense of personal power and ownership... Leaders enable others to act not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away (p.18). This is a complete paradigm shift from the previously held views on acceptable, appropriate methods of running an organization. In fact, Gibbs (2005) comments: “Younger adults are walking away from those institutions characterized by a culture of control and a style of delegation that is considered disempowering...” (p. 13). Today’s society is rejecting yesterday’s stale management methods and techniques. People want to be empowered, not controlled or manipulated, so we must learn to incorporate both leadership and management skills into our organizations of today.

Leadership vs. Management

Theorists (Bennis, 1997; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kotter, 1996, 1998; Maxwell, 1993) agree that organizations that are over managed, but under led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. They lack the ability to be creative or innovative; to successfully implement change

in response to internal and external pressure; or to remain competitive in evolving markets – the key to succeeding in today’s world is balance. Leadership and management are both very important, but they seek to do different things. Bennis (1997) explains that to manage means to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, or to conduct. Leading is influencing, guiding in a direction, course, action, and opinion. “The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing” (p. 40). Bennis (1997) further describes the differences between leadership and management as follows:

The manager administers; the leader innovates.

The manager is a copy; the leader is an original.

The manager maintains; the leader develops.

The manager focuses on systems and structure; the leader focuses on people.

The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.

The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.

The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why.

The manager has his or her eye always on the bottom line; the leader’s eye is on the horizon.

The manager imitates; the leader originates.

The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.

The manager is the classic good soldier; the leader is his or her own person. (pp. 39-40)

Covey (1991) also agrees that both skill sets are needed and important. “If we learn to manage things and lead people we will have the best bottom line because we will unleash the energy and talent of people” (p. 17). Kouzes and Posner (1999) support this position expressing, “Leadership is a reciprocal process between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow...

Strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty without an understanding of the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and constituents” (p. 23). The ability to both lead and manage is necessary in the complex and challenging world we live in today.

Transformational Leadership

Senge (1998) defines leadership as “the capacity of a human community—people living and working together—to bring forth new realities” (p.78). Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) believe there are three critical elements that must be integrated together in order to lead and bring about a comprehensive transformational change: (1) content, (2) people, and (3) process:

Content refers to *what* about the organization needs to change, which are usually components found in the external domain such as strategy, structure, systems, process, technology, work practices, etc. *People* refers to behaviours, emotions, minds, and spirits of the *human beings* who are designing, implementing, supporting, or being impacted by the change (mostly internal domains). *Process* refers to *how* the content and people changes will be planned for, designed, and implemented. In other words, process denotes the actions that will produce both the external (content) and internal (people) changes. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) believe that neglect in any of these three areas will stop transformational change from happening within an organization, and the key to success is in the *process* element. “Content change and people change will become integrated into one unified change effort only if you consciously design the process of transformation to perform that integration” (p. 6). By consciously designing the *process* or the “how are we going to do this?” around the *people* involved and the *content* of the change, that will ensure the greater the chances

of a successful change initiative. It is the collective “we” part that gives the *process* its momentum and power.

Smith (1996) offers a similar argument to Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson stating it is by linking principles, purpose, performance and people that transformational change takes place within an organization. Smith (1996) also adds, “Change is as change does. You cannot lead behaviour-driven change in others without changing your own behaviour... The golden rule of leading change: *Do unto yourself what you would have others do unto themselves*” (pp. 118-119).

Smith (1996) advocates that transformational change starts from the top down. Leaders learning to empower themselves and others through self-reflection and modifying their own behaviours to model the way. Beck & Cowan, 2006; Conner, 2006; Kotter, 1996, 1998; Meyer, 2001; Senge, 1994, 1998; Short, 1998; advocate that transformational change starts from any point within an organization and not necessarily with the man or woman at the top. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) agree,

In today’s business environment, significant transformation cannot happen without the simultaneous transformation of a critical mass of leaders’ and employees’ mindsets and behaviour. Conscious transformation means attending to the consciousness of people in your organization, including your own. (p. 27)

Regardless of our title, position, or station in life, transformational change can start from within each one of us, if our hearts and minds are willing and able.

Values-based Leadership

Lebow and Simon (1997) have a somewhat different view from change strategies that simply focus on *mindset, personal mastery and building potential or capacity in individuals.*

They affirm that while evidence supports a positive mindset, visualization, affirmation techniques, incentive and motivators play a large part in short-term wins and successes, “the problem isn’t necessarily with the ability or the character of the employee” (p. 46). Lebow and Simon (1997) believe individuals and organizations have to go beyond just trying to fix people’s behaviours, they have to establish a new context in the existing environment:

The primary human motivator grows out of what makes most people resonate, which comes neither from developing new skills nor from concepts that the human potential movement deals in. People respond and relate to *values*. And values don’t have to be sold to people, because all of us already have a set of values deeply imbedded... Values like trust, loyalty, the need to feel apart of something larger than ourselves are common in virtually all humans regardless of culture, education, or social class. (p. 48)

Personally, I believe that *both* individual (personal mindset and behaviours) and organizational (corporate values) strategies have to be present before transformational change can take place.

Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) agree:

In today’s business environment, significant transformation cannot happen without the simultaneous transformation of a critical mass of leaders’ and employees’ mindsets and behaviours. Conscious transformation means attending to the consciousness of people in the organization, including your own... Leaders and consultants who place personal mindset change for both themselves and employees at the center of their organizations’ transformations will succeed. Those who refuse to acknowledge this need will fail. (p. 27)

We need to adopt a holistic or systemic approach in how we view ourselves and our organizations in order to learn to embrace change in a transformational way. “Values-based

leadership is a motivational approach to leadership that inspires people to do their best for the common good” (Watson, 2003, p. 1). It is not about being a perfect leader, “it is an attitude about people, philosophy, and process” (O’Toole, 1996, p. 14). It is about leading from the heart with openness, honesty, integrity, respect, sincerity, humility and balance.

O’Toole (1996) describes the individual characteristics or traits displayed by values-based leaders as “courage, authenticity, integrity, vision, passion, convictions, and persistence” (p. 21). Kouzes and Posner (2002) describe five practices of exemplary leadership as:

1. Model the way: Find your voice by clarifying your personal values. Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.
2. Inspire a shared vision: Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.
3. Challenge the process: Search for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve. Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes.
4. Enable others to act: Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust. Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion.
5. Encourage the heart: Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence. Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community. (p. 13).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) recognize that people already have potential; they just need it unleashed:

Putting people in charge and control of their lives is a key factor in liberating the leader within each person... People already have tremendous power. It is not a matter of giving

people power – it’s liberating people to use the power and skills they already have. It’s a matter of setting them free, of expanding their opportunities to use themselves in service of a common and meaningful purpose. What is often called empowerment is really just letting people loose, liberating them to use their power. (p. 288)

Lebow and Simon (1997) set out on a quest to discover what people want in their work environment to be more productive and to perform their very best:

We stumbled up a research project that had begun at the University of Chicago, in which a team had collected 17 million surveys of workers in 40 countries around the world on what people wanted in their work environments to be productive, creative, fulfilled, and competitive. The data outlined what it would take for everyone in an organization, regardless of the job or industry, to play at the top of his or her game. (p. xxv)

What Lebow and Simon discovered was eight shared values that affirm Kouzes and Posner’s view on achieving lasting change within an organization:

1. Truth: Treat others with uncompromising truth.
2. Trust: Lavish trust on your associates.
3. Mentoring: Mentor unselfishly.
4. Openness: Be receptive to new ideas regardless of their origin.
5. Risk-taking: Take personal risks for the good of the organization.
6. Giving credit: Give credit where it is due.
7. Honesty: Be honest in all dealing; do not touch dishonest dollars.
8. Caring: Put the interests of others before your own. (p. 64)

While these characteristics and practices are not new, sadly, many organizations have forgotten or set aside these critical components of exemplary leadership, deeming them as being

unimportant; however, could it be that this neglect has resulted in the downfall and decay of our organizations today?

Conclusion

In summary, there are many theories regarding the concept and process of change itself. There is also a broad spectrum in theories on how to learn to embrace change within our lives as individuals and within our organizations. Regardless, the literature clearly supports the fact that how we individually and corporately choose to approach and deal with change has a fundamental impact on the overall success of our organization. Change is a part of life, so it is of utmost importance that we learn to anticipate it, sometimes question it, but certainly not longer fear it. We must overcome barriers that inhibit our ability to successfully transform as change moves us through life. We cannot stop change; it is moving at a faster rate than any other time period in history, but we can learn to use it to our advantage, both individually and corporately, if we have the capacity and willingness to do so.

CHAPTER THREE – CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter sets out the conduct of the research project including the research approach, the participant selection process, research methods and tools (CultureSCAN, Individual Interviews, Teleconference), the study conduct, the data analysis method and process, and lastly, concludes with ethical issues.

Research Approach

This study was conducted through an action research approach that combined a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Stringer (1999) describes action research as:

A collaborative approach to inquiry or investigation that provides people with the means to take systematic action to resolve specific problems. This approach to research favors consensual and participatory procedures that enable people (a) to investigate systematically their problems and issues, (b) to formulate powerful and sophisticated accounts of their situations, and (c) to devise plans to deal with the problems at hand. (p. 17)

The key principles at the heart of action research are fairness, peace, acceptance, collaboration, and understanding. It is a process of inquiry that embraces democratic, equitable, liberating and life enhancing characteristics, and seeks to engage participants as full and equal partners in the research (Stringer, 1999). As stakeholders collectively investigate their own situation, they build a consensual vision of the life and community. “Community-based [action] research seeks to develop and maintain social and personal interactions that are nonexploitative and enhance the social and emotional lives of all people who participate” (Stringer, 1999, p. 28). This research approach beautifully tied in with the underlying purpose of my research study, which was to

discover how individuals can learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch. As each phase in the research took place, individuals were able to express their opinions and considerations on the data as it was being revealed during each step in the process.

Stringer (1999), Glesne (1999) and Berg (2007) express the action research model in terms of a continual spiraling process; look, think, act; observe, reflect, take action; ideas, theory, design, data collection, analysis. What is critical to this process is that at each stage in the cycle, there is a time for reflection, re-evaluation and adjustment. “With every two steps forward, you take a step or two backward before proceeding any further. What results is no longer a linear progression in a single, forward direction. Rather, you are spiraling forward, never actually leaving any stage behind completely” (Berg, 2007, p. 24). I chose this method of research as I felt it was the most suitable approach in answering the research question; “How can individuals learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch?” because of the intimate, observational and reflective nature of the methodology. This proved to be a valuable research approach, as each phase of the research unfolded and the data revealed to the researcher and participants, there was time for reflection, re-evaluation and adjustment that is critical to the action research cycle.

Glesne (1999) also expresses that the actual research paradigms should determine the research approach and methods used. She distinguishes the various paradigms stating:

Positivists [quantitative research] seek explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and place. They use primarily quantitative methods with careful sampling strategies and experimental designs that help them produce generalizable results. The researcher’s role is to observe and measure... Interpretivists [qualitative research] assume that they deal with multiple, socially constructed realities or ‘qualities’ that are complex

and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. (Glesne, 1999, p. 5)

Both positivist and interpretivist modes of research inquiry were suitable for this research project because I chose to use a mixed sequential method of quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (individual interviews, teleconference) techniques to gather the research data.

Berg (2007) states, “Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things... quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things” (p. 3). As this study was interested in measuring both the cultural norms and exploring the hearts and minds of individuals, again, I believe the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was very appropriate.

Project Participants

It is very important to consider and choose the participants in an action research study carefully. Stringer (1999) emphasizes:

To the extent that people can participate in the process of exploring the nature and context of the problems that concern them, they have the opportunity to develop immediate and deeply relevant understandings of their situation and to be involved actively in the process of dealing with those problems. (p. 35)

Essentially, it is critical that the actual stakeholders in the research participate in the study in some fashion. This research question asked, “How can *individuals* [emphasis added] within the Employment Standards Branch learn to embrace change?” The very nature of the question defines every individual within the Branch as a stakeholder. Consequently, I felt it was important

to invite the entire staff of the Branch to participate in some area of the study. In order to do this, I conducted the research in three stages.

In the first stage, I sent a Branch-wide e-mail inviting all staff to engage in an anonymous survey. The second and third stages of the research project consisted of individual interviews and a teleconference with random participants from all geographic areas and hierarchy levels within the organization; Head Office Staff, Regional Managers, Industrial Relations Officers, Employment Standards Officers, Employment Standards Assistants, and Administrative Assistants. A benefit in choosing a cross-section of random individuals is that some of these people may be in key positions of influence through either position or culture. Based on the action research cycle; look, think, act, (Stringer, 1999) these individuals could potentially create the leverage needed to spark systemic change throughout the entire organization. Senge (1994) states, “The bottom line to systems thinking is leverage – seeing where actions and changes in structures can lead to significant, enduring improvements” (p. 114). Small actions and changes within influential individuals in the organization have the potential to actually lead to significant long-term improvements in how the organization as a whole embraces change in the future.

Research Methods and Tools

As previously discussed, this research study used three methods of data collection: an online survey, individual interviews and a teleconference. Glesne (1999) states, “The use of multiple data-collection methods contributes to the trustworthiness of the data. This practice of relying on multiple methods is commonly called *triangulation*” (p. 31). As the integrity of the data in any research project is vital to the accuracy and reliability of the findings, I believe it was important to choose more than one method of data collection to validate the results of the data collected.

How individuals deal with change is a personal, contextual, complex issue. In order to get an initial understanding of how individuals regard change in general, and how they view themselves responding and adapting to change within the Employment Standards Branch, I first invited Branch staff to participate in an online survey in order to gather this preliminary data.

CultureSCAN

I chose to use an existing change assessment survey tool called “CultureSCAN” (Beck, 2006) developed by Dr. Don Edward Beck Ph.D., Co-founder of the National Values Centre. Appendix A provides a sample of the complete CultureSCAN survey. The assessment tool is specifically designed to provide a “snap-shot in time” concerning the dynamics and patterns of thinking within an organization in relation to change. As change and patterns of thinking concerning change was the central theme of this research study, the CultureSCAN was the ideal assessment tool to gather my preliminary data. In addition to providing foundational data in the study, the CultureSCAN also directly tied into the literature review, as the design of the tool uses the concepts and theory of “Spiral Dynamics” (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006) discussed in Chapter Two. As the CultureSCAN is subject to proprietary regulations, a registered provider of the assessment, Dr. Marilyn Hamilton, Ph.D., CGA, of TDG Holdings, was contracted to administer the survey online, collect the data, compile it and provide it to the researcher for analysis. For ethical considerations, Dr. Hamilton, Ph.D., CGA, was required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix B) concerning the data she would be collecting.

The CultureSCAN is a self-assessing multiple choice tool consisting of questions that provide insight into an individual’s job and culture fit, personal priorities, stages of change, preferred work structures and flow, patterns of thinking and processing information, and forms of executive intelligences. When applied in an organizational setting, the individual assessments

are consolidated to give a reading of the interconnections in the current change state of the work environment, which provides an overall look at the group dynamics and patterns of thinking within the organization. The group average provides a picture of the overall current conditions, while the variations in the individual patterns show the deeper dynamics of what is going on beneath the surface.

The CultureSCAN looks at eight areas in relation to change; Fit Factor, Multiple Priorities, The Value System Assessment, The Change State Assessment, Executive Intelligences, The Present and Desired Codes of the Organization, Preference for 1st Order or 2nd Order Change, and ProcessSCAN – The dominant digital and analog capacities within a group. Each area examines specific elements as follows:

Fit Factor

The fit factor assessment indicates how individuals perceive they fit to their jobs, to their direct supervisors, to their work group, and their degree of security as an employee. It indicates the gap between present and desired work structures and flows, and the alignment of perception across many aspects of the individuals' life. The fit factor also looks at the change state of an individual, specifically focusing on states that may indicate high stress. Beck and Cowan (2006) identify five step phases or states:

The ALPHA step is stable and balanced; BETA is a time of uncertainty and questioning; GAMMA is full of anger and confusion; DELTA is inspired enthusiasm; and Next ALPHA is stability in the next system(s) up or even down the Spiral. (p. 85)

A high score within the fit factor reflects a high degree of dissonance within the organization or individual.

Multiple Priorities

The multiple priorities assessment indicates what individuals or a group feel are important regarding the work and how it relates to Purpose, Principles, People, Planet and Trust. It is essentially a comparison of what matters most to the individuals or the group as a whole.

The Value System Assessment

The CultureSCAN (2006) report explains that:

Value system codes (VMEME codes) determine how people think rather than what they consciously value. They are the dynamic and ever changing inner forces that drive human perceptions, organizing characteristics and influence the deeper processes of change.

They are a core aspect of human development and influence all aspects of individual, group and organization alignment. (p. 5)

The CultureSCAN assessment captures the level of thinking, or level of intelligence, and what value sets, or personal priorities, individuals or groups are using at a particular moment. Beck and Cowan (2006) describe the eight value systems, or VMEME codes, as follows:

Level One (Beige) – SurvivalSense. “Staying alive through innate sensory equipment” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with meeting basic survival needs: food, water, warmth, protection, and procreation – essentially what it takes to stay alive. The CultureSCAN does not actually measure this level, as virtually all individuals, groups or organizations exceed this assessment level.

Level Two (Purple) – KinSpirits. “Blood relationships and mysticism in a magical and scary world” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with the way we relate to each other on a basic connection level. This is the level of complexity where family ritual occurs such as Easter, Christmas, Birthdays – the belief system rituals we build into our lives.

In the workplace, these types of rituals are often overlooked or downplayed and their value discounted; however, friendships and relationships do matter and when challenges arise in the organization people tend to fall back to this level of connection to see them through the difficult times.

Level Three (Red) – PowerGods. “Enforce power over self, others, and nature through exploitive independence” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with power, or ego, and is where individual self-confidence comes from. It is very action oriented, and the challenge with this level is that it has fiery power to it, but no management or supervisory skills because of the focus on self rather than others. People all need this level of thinking to give us self-confidence and individuality, but it must be tempered with the ability to manage the power and look beyond ourselves to the needs of others.

Level Four (Blue) – TruthForce. “Absolute belief in one right way and obedience to authority” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with self-discipline, respecting authority, laws and rules. At this level of complexity people are in control of their emotions and recognize that authority does have value because expertise and rules help us all live together better, and that self-discipline actually helps us get more out of life individually. The challenge with this level of thinking is that it can become legalistic, or rule bound, with little or no flexibility.

Level Five (Orange) – StriveDrive. “Possibility thinking focused on making things better for self” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with striving and strategic orientation. Not only does it focus on authority, but success, results, strategy and growth. It tends to be very business oriented. The challenge with this level of thinking is that it is

very materialistic and not very people oriented, so people feel under valued because there is no individual or community caring and spirit.

Level Six (Green) – HumanBond. “Well-being of people and building consensus get highest priority” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with reintroducing the humanistic perspective. It is at this level of complexity that diversity awareness takes place. The challenge with this level of thinking is that because it is so egalitarian, or focused on consensus, it is difficult to resolve problems, so the issues just keep going in a circle and little gets accomplished. It is at this level of complexity that level seven, or systems thinking, is introduced.

Level Seven (Yellow) – FlexFlow. “Flexible adaptation to change through connected, big-picture views” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with systems thinking. It looks at all the previous levels of thinking, one through six, and recognizes that each level of complexity is actually interconnected and valued. We need all these levels of thinking, or intelligences, to be able to flex, flow and be adaptive and complex in our levels of thinking. It is at this level of thinking that we have real capacity to respond and embrace change.

Level Eight (Turquoise) – GlobalView. “Attention to whole-Earth dynamics and macro-level actions” (Beck & Cowan, 2006, p. 41). This level of thinking concerns itself with a whole world flex flow systemic perspective. The CultureSCAN does not actually collect level eight data at this point in time, as it is a rarity that organizations are designed from a whole world perspective.

Spiral Dynamics (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006) research indicates that the levels of thinking do not end at level eight, but continue indefinitely as each time we progress to a level of

complexity, we create problems that require greater levels of thinking, so we continue to expand our levels of thinking to solve the problems created at our current levels of thinking.

The Change State Assessment

The change state assessment tracks how individuals or groups move in and out of stability and chaos, which occurs between each of the global value system levels. At some point, the value system level is stable; however as life conditions change through greater levels of thinking that forces us to move on.

Weather descriptors are used to describe the change state, which correlate with the various stages in readiness for change: Stable (Alpha) – signifies good stable conditions; Turbulence (Beta) – signifies there could be light showers or intermittent winds, but this can change back into stable conditions, but there is no certainty what the conditions are going to do; Tornados (Gamma) – signifies a major energetic intervention that identifies that an individual or group in the tornado or gamma state has high change happening. There is no comfort in this state, and the conditions are too difficult to get back to the stable alpha state. Movement towards the stable state only leads to turbulence, which keeps bouncing one back to the tornado. This state is very difficult for people to exist in and they will exhibit signs of stress at this point such as unhappiness or depression; Tipping Point (Delta) – The difficult life conditions in the Gamma state lead to the Tipping Point or Delta state, which is where an individual or group see the light at the end of the tunnel. There is blue sky ahead and moving into this new state brings new stability known as the New Stable Condition (New Alpha).

Executive Intelligences

The CultureSCAN examines the preferences within the group for three primary modes of intelligence. The CultureSCAN (2006) report describes these intelligences as:

Entrepreneurial – which is “the capacity and aptitude to launch a completely new entity or system working independently from others”; Translational – which is “the temperament and good sense to preserve, elaborate on, or expand on existing systems”; and Transformational – which is “the insights and skill necessary to change one operational system into a different one, from the present to the desired”. (p. 6)

The Present and Desired Codes of the Organization

The CultureSCAN assessment measures the gap between the present and future desired states of the organization through codes and principles that correlate with the Level Two through Level Seven colours assigned to the value systems or ‘MEME’ codes. “Each code and supporting thinking has discrete capacities for coping with increasing complexity” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 7). The higher the code or principle level, the more an individual has the increasing capacity to cope with complexity. The six organization code levels are as follows:

Purple – Tribal Order, Safety Driven. This organization code level is about families and individual safety.

Red – Exploitive Empire, Power Driven. This organization code level is about single hierarchy, the king at the top ruling downward through power and force.

Blue – Authority Structure, Order Driven. This organization code level is another form of hierarchy, the expertise and authority is on top and it is organized in a way that there is order below.

Orange – Strategic Enterprise, Success Driven. This organization code level is also another form of hierarchy, but it is much more complex because the power not only moves from top downwards, it moves from side to side, and from the bottom upwards. This level is very strategic and organized to accomplish a goal.

Green – Social Network, People Driven. This organization code level is structured in a circle, similar to the Purple – Tribal Order, Safety Driven level, but it is much greater in complexity because at this level we recognize and accept the value and diversity in every individual.

Yellow – Systemic Flow, Process Oriented. This organization code level is about systemic flow and is process oriented. It has elements of all the previous organizing structures and is a system that works together to really maintain a process.

The CultureSCAN allows individuals to recognize their present organization code level, or where they see their current work structures and flow, and their desired work structures and flow, or where they would like to fit.

Preference for 1st Order or 2nd Order Change

The CultureSCAN assessment identifies two Orders of Change within which individuals prefer to adapt change – 1st Order and 2nd Order. Within the two Orders themselves, there are seven themes of variations.

1st Order Change. 1st Order Change “occurs within a system, which, itself, remains unchanged. Restore balance; improve within givens; rooted in past decisions; renew – refurbish – reform; work harder and smarter. Basic theme: more of the same” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 15). Beck and Cowan (2006) describe the characteristics of the four variations that pertain to 1st Order Change: “1st Fine-TUNE, 2nd Expand-OUT, 3rd Stretch-DOWN, 4th Stretch-UP” (p. 93). 1st Order Change is essentially making change one little step at a time.

2nd Order Change. 2nd Order Change is a “mega-system shift to new paradigms, new assumptions, and new structures. Generated by outside events and influences; driven by perceived future; puzzling – unexpected – paradoxical; new emergents; new life conditions.

Basic theme: reframing” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 15). Beck and Cowan (2006) describe the three variations that pertain to 2nd Order Change: “5th Break-OUT, 6th UP-Shifts, 7th Quantum” (p. 93). 2nd Order Change is essentially making quantum change.

Most individuals prefer one Change Order method over the other, and when asked to work against their preferences for prolonged periods of time, this can lead to a high degree of stress which can manifest into more serious problems.

Process SCAN – The dominant digital and analog capacities within the group

“This assessment determines if a full range of Digital/Analog (formerly known as left brain and right brain dominance) thinking capacities is contained within a group” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 14). The ideal is to have a mixed thinking style within a group or organization, which provides balance in being innovative yet able to put thoughts and plans into action.

In summary, by revealing a detailed current picture of the change culture within the Branch, the CultureSCAN played an instrumental role in setting the second stage of the research project which was the individual interview process. Alreck and Settle (1985) advise:

The questions that are asked of respondents are the ultimate core of the survey project...

The reliability and validity of survey results depend on the way that every aspect of the survey is planned and executed, but the questions that are addressed to the respondents are the most essential component. (p. 97)

If the survey assessment presented irrelevant questions, or omitted critical questions, I could have easily been collecting irrelevant data from which I would have developed interview questions that in all likelihood would not have led me to the answers I seek. Palys (2003) insightfully comments, “Gathering data is easy; gathering *meaningful* data is a whole other

challenge” (p. 150). Using the CultureSCAN assessment essentially eliminated the possibility of gathering irrelevant data or omitting critical questions, while it provided the meaningful data needed to set the stage for the individual interviews.

Individual Interviews

From the foundational data provided by the CultureSCAN, I developed the questions for the individual interviews. Glesne (1999) aptly states:

Researchers ask questions in the context of purposes generally known fully only to themselves. Respondents, the possessors of information, answer questions in the context of dispositions (motives, values, concerns, needs) that researchers need to unravel in order to make sense out of the words that their questions generate. (p. 68)

It was important to develop interview questions that would dig deeper into the data revealed by the CultureSCAN, while ensuring they were contextual and relevant to the research question(s). The pilot testing of the interview questions was critical in determining whether the line of questioning was on the right track. The testing revealed that additional questions needed to be added to prompt depth and substance in the answers, which would draw out the data I was seeking. A complete set of the interview questions is set out in Appendix D.

At the beginning of each interview, I provided an introduction in which I reiterated the purpose of my study, discussed confidentiality issues, and then revealed the basic findings of the CultureSCAN assessment in order to set the context for the interview questions.

As the Employment Standards Branch has offices located throughout the Province of British Columbia, it was not practical or cost-effective to conduct the interviews face-to-face other than in the Vancouver Island Region; consequently, I was limited to using a mixture of telephone and face-to-face interviews. Berg (2007) states, “To be sure, telephone interviews lack

the face-to-face nonverbal cues that researchers use to pace their interviews and to determine the direction to move in” (p. 108), but admits that sometimes telephone interviews are the only viable research method available, as was the case with this research project. I was conscious, however, of trying to be consistent in the interview processes, so I purposefully posed the same questions in the same manner regardless of which interview method I used.

Berg (2007) also suggests that qualitative telephone interviews are best when the researcher has fairly specific questions to ask, and it helps if the researcher already has built a rapport with the study participants. The CultureSCAN provided me with an excellent framework for developing my interview questions, and as I have been an employee of the Employment Standards Branch for many years, I have a strong rapport with the majority of my colleagues throughout the Province.

I was very comfortable with the idea of interviewing individuals by either telephone or face-to-face, and trusted that I would have a high level of support from potential participants regardless of the interview method, which was the case. While it was true that the nonverbal cues and intimacy of face-to-face contact was absent from the telephone interviews, one could discern the different emotions, including passion, sadness and even anger, in the tone of the voices of the participants as they engaged in conversation. Regardless of the lack of personal contact, the telephone interviews still provided meaningful rich data, which I fully attribute to the openness, thoughtfulness, and sincerity of the participants involved.

As expected, the face-to-face interviews did provide a deeper level of connection due to the intimacy of the process. Palys (2003) comments, “Face-to-face interviews tend to be longer and more detailed, tend to seek greater depth of response, and tend to be more open-ended in their construction to allow for phenomenological input from respondents” (p. 160). The most

notable difference between the processes was the atmosphere in the room and the non-verbal cues in the face-to-face interviews. For example, the room would become charged with positive energy when the participant recalled a positive change experience; their body language and facial expressions showed excitement, pride, and their eyes shone. The opposite was also true when the participants were recalling a negative change experiences; their body language and facial expressions openly showed hurt, distress, anger, and even humiliation.

All in all, both methods of the individual interview process proved to be very fruitful in providing further data and shaping the research study, which again, I attribute to the willingness and openness of the research participants to fully engage and collaborate in the exploration of the answers to the research question(s).

Teleconference

Prior to conducting the teleconference, much preparation was taken to compile and theme the data gathered through the CultureSCAN and individual interviews into a deliverable format that would set the context for the teleconference discussion and draw out a deeper level of conversation around the research question(s).

As stated earlier, one of the key purposes in using three methods of data collection was to triangulate the data gathered through the first two collection methods: the CultureSCAN survey and individual interviews. Berg (2007) states, "By combining several lines of sight, researchers obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements" (p. 5). I believed the teleconference would flesh out the data and information provided in the first two phases of research.

As with the interview phase of the research, the more curious, probing and explorative the level of discussion became during the teleconference, the more clearer, understood and validated the data became as well. Plus, in addition to providing more substantive data, the teleconference was another valuable phase in the continual look, think, act, spiral process of action research (Stringer, 1999).

At the beginning of the teleconference, I explained in detail the elements of the CultureSCAN survey and the actual data it revealed, followed by the questions asked and data themes collected in the individual interviews. As I revealed each interview question and accompanying data theme, the participants were invited to collaborate, discuss, and explore the data further. “One of the operative principles of action research is to inform and empower people to work collectively to produce some beneficial change” (Berg, 2007, p. 229). This process drew out some rich discussion and confirmation of the data gathered. It also revealed areas that needed more exploration, including points that had been omitted altogether. Again, as with the telephone and face-to-face interviews, it was interesting to note the body language and tone of voice in the participants as they discussed the research questions and data. When discussing positive ideas and thoughts concerning change initiatives, there was a definite positive mindset and energy in the conversation, and the converse was true when discussing change initiatives that had a negative impact.

In conclusion, by choosing three different research methods, and incorporating the collaborative look, think, act, action research cycle (Stringer, 1999) in each phase of the process, I believe this ensured the data and information gathered during the research study would provide a high degree of authenticity, reliability and trustworthiness in the overall findings of this study.

Study Conduct

At the beginning of the research study, Dr. Hamilton, Ph.D., CGA, and I collaborated on the process of administering the CultureSCAN survey (Appendix A), and entered into a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix B) concerning the data she would be collecting.

The CultureSCAN survey was then pilot tested online by a small group of individuals. Based on the data received and participant feedback, modifications were made to various aspects of the survey instructions to more accurately reflect the organizational structure of the Employment Standards Branch, which would result in greater accuracy and authenticity of the findings.

Once the survey was ready to go live online, the entire Employment Standards Branch was contacted by e-mail to advise staff of the research project and invite them to participate. The e-mail was comprised of a letter of introduction (Appendix C) which set out the purpose of the study; my role as researcher; research methodology and how the research findings would be used; the freedom of choice to participate or withdraw at any time; the length of participation; and confidentiality and anonymity of the data gathered. The letter also contained consent to participate in the online CultureSCAN survey, and included instructions and an internet website address through which participants could access the tool.

The CultureSCAN survey was open for a period of five days. During this time, I forwarded three e-mail reminders to motivate and encourage staff participation. Following the closure of the survey, I analyzed the data compiled by Dr. Hamilton, Ph.D., CGA, and developed the individual interview questions. I also compiled an introduction that I shared at the beginning of each interview, revealing the data gained from the CultureSCAN survey to set the context and a self-reflective mood for the line of questioning. The introduction and interview questions were

pilot tested with a few individuals. Based on the feedback gathered, several additional interview questions were added to draw out more in-depth data (Appendix D).

Once I was satisfied the interview questions were ready, using the staff directory, I selected random participants from the various geographic regions and hierarchy levels within the Branch and contacted them directly to invite them to participate in the interview process. If the employee agreed to participate in the research, I provided them with an informed consent form (Appendix E) for signature to return to me and arranged an interview time and date. During this initial discussion, I also again reinforced the confidentiality of the research project and assured the participant that there would be no distinguishable indicators in the research report that would reveal their identity. Glesne (1999) stresses, "Trust needs to be developed before people can be willing to release certain kinds of information" (p. 40). As I sincerely value the relationships I have developed with Branch staff over the years, my commitment to protecting the trust and anonymity of the participants was unwavering. It was of extreme importance to me that they understood that the motives for my research study were of the highest integrity. The sole objective of my research study was to ultimately benefit our organization as a whole, which in turn, would have a positive affect on each of us as individuals.

During the telephone and face-to-face interviews, I took field notes and digitally recorded the conversations for accuracy purposes. The interviews were transcribed and forwarded to the applicable interviewees for validation. Once all the interviews were complete and the information validated, I proceeded to analyze and theme the data to form the basis for the teleconference discussion. I again selected random potential participants from the various geographic regions and hierarchy levels within the Branch from the staff directory, excluding those persons who had participated in the individual interviews. The reasoning for this exclusion

was to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible had the opportunity to participate in the qualitative part of study, as this was their opportunity to collaborate in this action research study.

Teleconference invitations were sent to potential participants by e-mail (Appendix F). The e-mail expressed the purpose of the teleconference, and requested individuals to respond either confirming their interest or passing on their participation. The e-mail also advised that by participating in the teleconference individuals would be giving their informed consent.

At the beginning of the teleconference, I set out the purpose of the research study and reiterated to the participants that there would be no distinguishable indicators in the research report that would reveal their identity. As this segment of the research study was conducted in a group setting, I also requested that the participants respect the confidentiality of those involved by keeping the discussions confidential. As with the individual interviews, during the teleconference, I took field notes and digitally recorded the conversation for accuracy purposes.

In conclusion, I purposely chose to conduct the study using three different research methods that had the potential to reach all relevant stakeholders, and provide a significant opportunity to take systematic action in resolving problems concerning the change process through discussion, exploration, and planning.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a critical piece in the research process. It brings together all the information that creates the final product – your research findings. Glesne (1999) describes data analysis as follows:

Data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned. Working with the data, you describe, create explanations, pose hypotheses, develop theories, and link your story to other stories. To

do so, you must categorize, synthesize, search for patterns, and interpret the data you have collected. (p. 130)

In this particular research project, data analysis was interpreting and making meaning of the raw data collected through the online survey, individual interviews, teleconference, and my field log in which I had recorded the peripheral information captured during the interviews and teleconference. Glesne (1999) and Berg (2007) express the importance of recording the thoughts, observations, moods and non-verbal cues of participants that are not part of the raw data collected, yet an integral part of the research study, as this type of information provides context for the raw data.

Glesne (1999) advocates executing the data analysis simultaneously with the data collection, as it allows the researcher to focus and shape the study as it progresses. “Writing memos to yourself, developing analytic files, applying rudimentary coding schemes,... help you to learn from and manage the information you are receiving” (Glesne, 1999, p. 130). Testing and exploring, organizing and sorting, familiarizing and immersing in the data helped give it meaning. So as the research study progressed, I continually worked with the data, to not only understand it, but also look for the correlations between the data and research question(s). Berg (2007) states, “Data analysis, from the action research perspective, involves examination of the data in relation to the potential resolutions to the questions or problems identified during the first stage of the research process” (p. 227). Therefore, it was of utmost importance to keep the research question(s) in the forefront of my mind to ensure the research unfolded and moved in the direction of answering the research question(s).

I collected, analyzed and connected together the research data through a process called “coding” (Glesne, 1999). Glesne (1999) explains:

Coding is a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected data... that are applicable to your research purpose. By putting like-minded pieces together into data clumps, you create an organizational framework... Eventually, you can place the various data clumps in a meaningful sequence that contributes to the chapters or sections of your manuscript. (p. 135)

The cyclical, or spiralling, sorting and defining process of the data was similar to the emergent action research cycle (Stringer, 1999); look, think, act, and the spiralling principles of Spiral Dynamics (Beck, 1996). All three research methodologies I incorporated in this project operated in a repetitive cyclical or spiralling manner. In the coding process specifically, each concept or idea contained in the raw data was assigned a theme code or name, and this procedure was repetitively cycled through each research phase as the data continued to emerge. For example, the emerging themes from the online survey gave me insight into the character of the basic data, which allowed me to shape and structure the interview questions in a manner that further explored the developing patterns and themes. The data gathered from the interview questions allowed me to explore further and theme, shape and structure the format for the final teleconference discussion. Each emergent step of inquiry drilled deeper and drew out the necessary data needed to answer the research question(s).

This method of mixed quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (interviews, teleconference) inquiry processes is called a “sequential explanatory strategy” (Creswell, 2003). “The purpose of the sequential explanatory design typically is to use qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a primarily quantitative study” (Creswell, 2003, p. 215). As expressed at the beginning of the chapter, using a combination of two or more types of data collection methods not only flushed out the data, but gave credibility and trustworthiness to

the information through the triangulation process. The data resulting from the three research methods was integrated and converged into the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this report.

Considerations I was aware of during the gathering, analyzing and interpreting of the data for coding were my own biases and the limitations of the study. “Continual alertness to your own biases, your own subjectivity... also assists in producing more trustworthy interpretations. Consider your subjectivity within the context of the trustworthiness of your findings” (Glesne, 1999, p. 151). As an adjudicator and mediator in my profession, I must continually be aware of my own biases; therefore, I was determined to use the same self-awareness throughout the entire research project, treating all aspects of the process with care and subjectivity.

It was also my intention to be transparent in recognizing the limitations of the study. “Part of demonstrating the trustworthiness of your data is to realize the limitations of your study... Detailing those circumstances helps readers to understand the nature of your data” (Glesne, 1999, p. 152). By including the limitations I identified in the scope of the project, I believe the reader will have a clearer perspective in which to frame the research findings, giving more credibility to the overall project.

Ethical Issues

This research study was conducted with the highest regard for ethical standards. It adhered to the principles and guidelines of the Royal Roads University (RRU) *Research Ethics Policy* (2004) and *Policy on Integrity and Misconduct in Research and Scholarship* (2000) documents, and the guiding principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (2005) specifically:
Respect for human dignity.

Throughout the research project, participants were treated with the utmost respect and dignity through open communication, understanding and regard for their wishes as an individual. Care and concern for the mental and physical well-being of the participants in relation to the research project took absolute priority over the interests of the researcher, or the research project itself.

Respect for free and informed consent.

All potential study participants were provided with an e-mail comprised of a letter of introduction, an invitation to participate in the research, and informed consent to participate in the online survey (Appendix C). The e-mail also set out the purpose of the study; research methodology, and how the research findings will be used; the freedom of choice to participate or withdraw at any time; the length of participation; my role as researcher; and confidentiality and anonymity of the data gathered. In addition, prior to engaging in the interview process, the participants were provided with another informed consent form (Appendix E), which again reiterated the details of the study as noted above. Prior to the teleconference, again an e-mail was sent out inviting participants to take part (Appendix F). The e-mail described the purpose of the research study and that participation in the teleconference would indicate informed consent.

By disclosing the information regarding free and informed consent many times to potential participants throughout the entire research project, I believe they were in the position to make an informed decision whether to participate or not.

Respect for vulnerable persons.

I believe this principle intertwines with the basic respect for human dignity. As I conducted my the research within the organization in which I work, and the study participants are my colleagues, I was extremely vigilant in my efforts to protect the vulnerability of

participants as there was the potential for adverse ramifications, including damaged or destroyed relationships, should “dangerous knowledge” (Glesne, 1999) be revealed. Palys (2003) explains further:

When we approach people and ask them to divulge information about themselves, and especially when that information could cause them embarrassment or harm if it were to be released, it is incumbent on the researchers to take every precaution to ensure that confidentiality is respected. (p. 91)

As there was the potential for embarrassment or harm as a result of this study, it was critical to protect the anonymity of the participants at all times, so participants were given pseudo identities by myself and Dr. Marilyn Hamilton, PhD., CGA, to disguise their true identities.

Respect for privacy and confidentiality.

Glesne (1999) states, “Researchers must consciously consider and protect the rights of participants to privacy” (p. 122). As noted above, the privacy and confidentiality of the research participants in this study was protected at all times by ensuring there were no descriptors or names attached to the research data that could reveal the true identity of the participant. Dr. Marilyn Hamilton, Ph.D., CGA, who administered the CultureSCAN survey assessment, was also required to sign a letter of confidentiality to ensure participant privacy and confidentiality (Appendix B).

Respect for justice and inclusiveness.

All members of the organization in which the research was conducted were invited to participate in the study at some stage in the research process. Individuals had the exclusive right and freedom to select whether they wished to participate or not, without pressure, coercion, or influence from the researcher.

Balancing harms and benefits.

When an individual chose to participate in the study, every effort was taken to ensure their dignity, rights and interests were respected, and that potential harm to participants did not take second place to the potential benefits derived from the project. Palys (2003) explains, “Research ethics refers to the principles that guide the way we interact with research participants and the commitment to safe guard their rights and interests” (p. 80). Cassell and Jacobs (1987), as quoted by Glesne (1999), also express that “a research code of ethics is generally concerned with aspirations as well as avoidances; it represents our desire and attempt to respect the rights of others fulfill obligations, avoid harm and augment benefits to those we interact with” (p. 115). I was diligent in my efforts to weigh the data gathered from an ethical perspective, looking for areas of benefits or potential harm to stakeholders. In the case of a questionable area, I took into consideration whether the benefits of including such data was necessary in the overall impact of the study. The protection of the participants was always forefront to any possible benefit gained from the research project, and I carefully balanced any decision concerning the data I chose to reveal or not.

Minimizing harm.

In addition to the checks and balances expressed in the harms and benefits section, I always ensured the participants were subject to risks no greater than they would normally be exposed to in their everyday lives in relation to the research.

Maximizing benefit.

In addition to the considerations set out in the harms and benefits section, I endeavoured to focus and frame both my findings and recommendations in a constructive, positive manner, remembering that the basic purpose of this study was to explore an opportunity for positive

change throughout the organization. To further this end, it was important to circulate the knowledge gained from the study as widely as possible, so that in addition to the project participants, others can benefit from the findings.

In conclusion, as a participant and learner myself in this action research study, I was constantly mindful of my own cultural biases and mindset as a result of my familiarity and experiences with the organization. “When you are already familiar with a culture or group or school, your angles of vision are narrowed by preformed assumptions about what is going on” (Glesne, 1999, p. 25). I tried to be cautious and not allow my own preconceived notions or assumptions influence me in a manner that would channel the outcome of my findings in a particular direction. I strongly felt it would be ethically and morally wrong to skew the research data in any way. My role as researcher was not to build a case around a preconceived notion or assumption, but to discover truth or fact, with the purpose of exploring it in ways that would ultimately benefit us as individuals, and our organization as a whole.

CHAPTER FOUR – ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a detailed description of the research findings, observations and conclusions gathered through the three research methods: CultureSCAN, Individual Interviews and Teleconference, in the quest to answer how individuals can learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch and related subtopics. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the scope and limitations of the research project, setting out several factors that had an impact on the overall project.

Study Findings

As a prologue to the study findings in this research project, I believe it is important to include a brief summary of the findings of the Corporate Human Resource Assessment initiative discussed in Chapter One, Significance of the Opportunity, as both studies correlate in several areas of their research.

The current Provincial Government of British Columbia is focusing on promoting a positive, healthy workplace, and improved employee engagement as part of its service quality and employee retention strategy. A corporate research study was developed to assess how satisfied employees are with their jobs and with their organizations, and how committed and loyal they are to their organizations overall. This particular research study also focused on promoting a positive, healthy workplace, and improved employee engagement by exploring “How individuals can learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch”. The corporate study provided a large scale assessment across Government and within entire Ministries, while this study provides a smaller scale, in depth picture of the dynamics within a single Government Branch.

In Associate Deputy Minister Rick Connolly's Executive Update communiqué of December 19, 2006, sent to all Ministry of Labour staff, he discussed the findings revealed by the corporate research study. Based on the data provided through the employee surveys and focus group sessions, five overarching areas of priority were identified: Recognition, Communication, Employee Performance and Development Plan (EPDP), Empowerment, and Corporate Values. Within each Branch of the Ministry of Labour, initiatives are currently being developed to improve performance in each of these areas. Table 1 lists a compilation of the five key priority areas and highlighted themes.

Table 1. Summary of Corporate Key Priorities and Highlighted Themes

Priority Area:	Highlighted Themes:
Recognition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition is not a "one size fits all" program. How a person prefers to be recognized is individual; 2. The recognition database is perceived as an artificial quota system; 3. The existing recognition programs are not working and require a redesign.
Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff requested more information/background in order to field questions; 2. There is not enough information shared about Ministry business; 3. There is a desire for more face-to-face interaction with Executive.
Employee Performance and Development Plan (EPDP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is confusion around the purpose of the EPDP – is it a performance tool or a development tool? 2. It is often perceived to be a waste of time, not a collaborative process between management and employee and not helpful in assisting with career planning.
Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are some "old school" management styles that may impede employee empowerment; 2. More opportunities need to be developed to

	engage employees; 3. Decision making should be delegated down to the appropriate levels.
Corporate Values	1. The existing vision statement is too vague and does not resonate with staff; 2. The vision statement does not allow staff to link their work with our strategic goals.

Adapted from R. Connolly, executive update, December 19, 2006, pp. 1-3.

The significance of incorporating an overview of the corporate data into this research study is that it further validates and gives credibility to the findings, and visa versa, as the majority of the same individuals participated in both research studies. As the areas of inquiry within both research studies paralleled in many respects, theoretically the data findings should be consistent and correlate as well.

CultureSCAN Survey Findings

The CultureSCAN survey provided a “moment in time” picture of how individuals perceive the dynamics and patterns within the organization. It assesses the value systems “within” people, as opposed to assessing “types” of people. The value systems are essentially the intelligences within us that awaken as life conditions change. As individuals, we all have various capacities to move along the spiraling continuum of change, awakening and building on the various value systems that inherently reside within us.

Of the 101 Employment Standards Branch staff invited to take the CultureSCAN assessment 46 individuals participated, which is slightly under a 50% participation rate. The data was collected on an individual basis, summarized, and categorized into eight specific areas: Fit Factor; Multiple Priorities; Value System Assessment; Change State Assessment; Executive Intelligences; Present and Desired Codes of the Organization; Preference for 1st Order or 2nd

Order Change; and ProcessSCAN – The dominant digital and analog capacities within a group.

For ease of reference, the findings have been compiled according to these eight specific areas:

Fit Factor

“Fit factor is an assessment of potential internal misalignment... Possible scores can range from 4(aligned) to 66(mal-alignment) points. A preferred target range is 7 to 12 points” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 9). The CultureSCAN revealed the average group fit factor was 26 points, which is a little higher than the preferred target range, but about mid-range on the scale. This indicates some discrepancies in how individuals view the work being structured versus how they would prefer to work.

The lowest fit factor in an individual was 13 points, while the highest was 45 points. There were ten individuals that had fit factors in the 30’s, and three individuals whom had fit factors in the 40’s. The concern with a high fit factor (40+) is that it indicates extreme stress or emotional distress in the particular individual. While the CultureSCAN does not indicate the source of the stress; whether it be a work situation, or personal situation such as separation, divorce, death, moving, financial problems, or a combination of factors, it is critical that these people are noticed and provided with support and help to address the problems.

The CultureSCAN also revealed that the average present and preferred mismatch factor between how individuals perceive themselves being managed and how they would like to be managed was less than a 1 point spread, which indicates that some perceive they are working in less complex ways than they would prefer, while others perceive they are working in more complex ways than they would prefer. One individual, however, had a 5 point spread which indicates they believe they are being under managed.

Multiple Priorities

Multiple Priorities is a “comparison of what matters most to the individuals surveyed” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 11). Trust and Principles were the key elements that matter most to organization followed closely by People and Purpose. This indicates that overall integrity, honesty, justice, standards and protocol are very important to this group. The lower Planet and Profit priorities indicates that the large scale picture (how we impact the world) and results (strategies, effectiveness and efficiency) are less important to the group. Within each of the six elements: Trust, Principles, People, Purpose, Planet and Profit, there was quite a significant spread between the minimum and maximum deviations. This indicates that although the overarching elements were the key priority, the priority level of value varied greatly between individuals.

Value System Assessment

This assessment indicates the level of thinking, or level of intelligence, and what value sets, or personal priorities, individuals or groups are using at a particular moment. Currently, the group average indicates that individuals perceive the organization is centered around the Blue value systems (36 points) which concerns itself with self-management, organization, order, rules, legislation, authority and hierarchy. The challenge with this value level of complexity is that it tends to be rule bound and rigid, with little or no flexibility. The Yellow value systems (32 points) was perceived as the next highest value system which indicates there is a high degree of systemic thinking within individuals and the capacity to grow in this area as a group.

The assessment also showed that the organization has a high capacity and/or need for collective ways of operating (Blue/Green) and there is also capacity for individual ways of operating (Orange/Yellow). The cool colours, Blue, Green and Purple, tend to align themselves

with collective values, whereas the warm colours, Red, Orange and Yellow, align themselves with individualistic values. This can cause friction, frustration and tension within the organization because of the differences in the “we” values of collective thinkers versus the “I, me, my” values of individualistic thinkers. Exploring and encouraging the moderately low Purple value systems (20 points), which relates to relationships and bonding, would encourage and support movement towards more collective values and the desired Social Network (Green/People Driven) structure as a whole.

The assessment also shows that there is high strategic capacity (56 points) and growing systemic thinking (54 points) in individuals within the group, which supports taking a more strategic approach to accomplishing the work, and moving towards more flexibility within the organization.

Change State Assessment

Overall, the group surveyed showed a fairly stable change state. The high Alpha state (10 points), relatively high Delta state (9 points), and high New Alpha state (10) indicates people are mostly happy and expressing signs of optimism. The high Delta indicates that the group has gone through a major change and has not yet completely stabilized at New Alpha, but on the whole, the group is now seeing the “light at the end of the tunnel”. In this process, however, the peak ranges of 14 points in the Beta and Gamma states indicate that there are still some individuals who are struggling (Beta), or feeling stuck in the tornado (Gamma) of change.

Executive Intelligences

The CultureSCAN assessment revealed there was a high preference for translational thinking (46%) among the group surveyed, which is the “temperament and good sense to preserve, elaborate on, or expand on existing systems” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 17). This

preference also could be a reflection of the preference for 1st Order Change, or “more of the same”. Transformational thinking (29%) was the second preference, which is the “insights and skill necessary to change one operational system into a different one, from the present to the desired” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 17), while Entrepreneurial thinking (25%) was the third preference, which is the “capacity and aptitude to launch a completely new entity or system working independently from others” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 17). The data also indicated there was a balance in all three Executive Intelligences, with most people having capacity for all three. This is a great strength in an organization because the Transformational and Entrepreneurial thinkers bring the creative ideas, suggestions, and insights while the Translational thinkers come up with the strategy to translate and implement the Transformational and Entrepreneurial ideas.

Present and Desired Codes of the Organization

This assessment measures how individuals perceive the organization is currently structured versus how they would desire the organization be structured. Based on the group average of the individuals surveyed, 28.3% view they work in an Exploitive Empire (Red/Power Driven), 19.6% view they work in an Authority Structure (Blue/Order Driven), while 37% view they work in a Systemic Flow (Yellow/Process Driven). However, 58.7% indicate that they desire to work in a more Social Network (Green/People Driven) and 19.6% indicate that they desire to work in a more Strategic Enterprise (Orange/Success Driven).

No one prefers the Exploitive Empire (Red/Power Driven) structure, and in fact, there was someone who indicated a Tribal Order (Purple/Safety Driven) structure was desired which indicates there may be some fear in the workplace. In addition, the Systemic Flow (Yellow/Process Driven) structure appears to be somewhat challenging for individuals at this

time; however, coaching, mentoring, training and resources could assist in helping individuals gain comfort with this organizing structure in the future.

Preference for 1st Order or 2nd Order Change

1st Order Change “occurs within a system which, itself, remains unchanged... Basic Theme: More of the Same” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 15). 2nd Order Change relates to a “Mega-system shift to new paradigms, new assumptions, and new structures... Basic Theme: Reframing” (CultureSCAN, 2006, p. 15). The CultureSCAN revealed that on average there was a stronger preference for 1st Order Change over 2nd Order Change overall. However, of the individuals surveyed, 37% *strongly* preferred 1st Order Change (more of the same) and 22% of the individuals *strongly* preferred 2nd Order Change. This indicates that when individuals are asked to work out of their preferences for extended periods of time, it could result in high levels of stress.

Process SCAN – The dominant digital and analog capacities within the group

The CultureSCAN revealed that the survey group is very well balanced and possesses a wide spectrum of capacities across both digital and analogue thinking (formerly known as left and right brain thinking). The median of the group (66%) spans the Moderate Digital, Mixed and Moderate Analogue systems. This indicates that the group has the capacity to see the whole system: details (digital thinking) and the big picture (analogue thinking). This group is effective at creating new ideas, putting them into action, and seeing them through to fruition. Again, due to the digital and analogue balance, this group can be very flexible, which is a great strength to the organization.

Figure 3 is a summary of the CultureSCAN findings adapted from the CultureSCAN Report, September 2006, pp. 9-17.

Job and Cultural Fit: 26

Multiple Priorities:

Group	Purpose	Principles	Profit	People	Planet	Trust
Ave.	5	6	4	6	4	7

Value System Assessment:

Group	Purple	Red	Blue	Orange	Green	Yellow
Ave.	20	21	36	25	30	32

Change State Assessment:

Group	Alpha	Beta	Gamma	Delta	New Alpha	
Ave.	9	5	5	8	9	

Executive Intelligences:

Group	Entrepreneurial	Translational	Transformational
Ave.	25.4%	46%	28.6%

Present and Desired Codes of the Organization:

Present	4.3%	28.3%	19.6%	4.3%	6.5%	37%
	Tribal Order	Exploitive Empire	Authority Structure	Strategic Enterprise	Social Network	Systemic Flow
	Safety Driven	Power Driven	Order Driven	Success Driven	People Driven	Process Oriented
Desired	2.2%	0%	6.5%	19.6%	58.7%	13%

Preference for 1st Order or 2nd Order Change:

Group	1 st Order	2 nd Order
Ave.	15	10

Process SCAN: The dominant digital and analogue capacities within the group

High Digital			Moderate Digital			Mixed Systems			Moderate Analog			High Analog			
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7%	2%	9%	7%	13%	7%	4%	7%	7%	7%	11%	13%	4%	2%	2%	0

Figure 3. Summary of CultureSCAN Findings

Individual Interviews

Ten participants ranging in position level and geographic location were interviewed. The interviewees were given an introduction to the research study, followed by the data themes revealed by the CultureSCAN assessment. The interviewees were then asked a series of eight questions concerning how they personally perceive and deal with change. The questions were developed to explore both positive and negative change experiences, as well as facilitate open discussion on how individuals perceive they can personally learn to embrace change.

Question #1

The first question asked interviewees to recall a time when they really enjoyed the opportunity to participate, or contribute, to a change initiative and what motivated them to embrace it. 100% of the interviewees expressed that they were motivated to embrace the change initiative because of two factors; they had input into an initiative that would impact them directly, and the overall experience was positive. Interviewees also expressed that they felt supported, valued, challenged, listened to, and there was reciprocal trust between the parties.

“I really, really enjoyed this opportunity because it was a huge issue with a lot of complicated factors. It involved a lot of people. It involved the issue of power and sharing power. It involved a lot of values around let’s do what is efficient, logical, and right in the community” (L5).

“What motivated me was the positive, educational, pro-active change instead of reactive” (F6).

Several of the interviewees indicated that although the change initiative itself was in many ways negative or simply a necessity, they were eventually able to embrace it because of

the fact they had input and some influence on the outcome, which made the experience positive in light of the negative attributes of the initiative itself.

“I did appreciate that I was asked to participate in the process, in being part of the solution in how we were going to deal with it. I felt valued and the fact that my opinions were being asked for and considered made the change easier to deal with” (L9).

In cases of positive change initiatives, interviewees enjoyed the experience and were motivated to embrace the change because it was logical, efficient, made sense, pro-active, reduced duplication of work, produced a higher product standard, created more credibility, the initiative would succeed, they had freedom and control over process, ownership, and an opportunity to make a difference.

“I was motivated to embrace the change because I felt it was a more professional or credible system we were developing... so I felt that the organization looked better or more credible as a whole” (R3).

Question #2

The second question asked interviewees to describe what would interfere with their desire or ability to embrace a change initiative. 100% of the interviewees responded that if they believed the change was not good and going to impact them directly, it would definitely interfere with their desire and ability to embrace the initiative. Further, if initiative was forced upon them without communication, consultation, or input, this would lead to significant demoralization. Several interviewees expressed:

“What would interfere with my desire or ability to embrace change is when I am not valued, or my opinion is not valued, and my position is threatened” (L5).

“If the change initiative was something initiated by the employer and it was perceived as something negative and I didn’t have all the reasons and information behind the change and it was something that was forced on me without being able to be involved with the change, it would be something that would interfere with my ability to embrace the change” (P1).

“If I felt the motives and the sincerity of those that were driving the change, or responsible for the change, were questionable. If there were a lack of trust, or lack of respect in other people’s abilities, or what their motives were, that would undermine it completely. Trust and respect has to be there” (L9).

Interviewees also explained that they would feel unsupported, under valued, and disrespected. This would lead to a lack of trust in the organization and overall suspicion of the change initiative and the reasons behind it; Is there a hidden agenda? Is the change ethical? Why is the organization so secretive? Interviewees would also view the process itself as inefficient or illogical, especially if the initiative actually increased workload or simply made no sense.

Question #3

The third interview question asked interviewees if “fear of the unknown” was a factor in embracing a change initiative. 60% of the interviewees said “Yes”, the uncertainty and fear of not knowing the outcome of a change initiative and what possible impact it could have on them personally, such as job security, would certainly be a factor. Consequently, these individuals would feel threatened or fearful of the change. Others expressed that the lack of communication setting out expectations and desired outcomes would lead to fear of failure. One interviewee shared:

“If the person didn’t communicate what they expected, and I wasn’t sure, that fear could cause an inability to deal with it. Not getting all the information about what is going on would interfere with my ability to embrace the change” (L8).

40% of the interviewees said “No”, fear was either not a factor, or too strong of a word. Several of these participants expressed they may feel anxious, overwhelmed or frustrated, while others expressed they look at the unknown as an opportunity and would be curious about the situation.

One interviewee stated:

“The unknown is an opportunity in a lot of ways. What is the reality that we are working with? If someone is imposing a change that I don’t see any benefit in, then I am going to resist or comply reluctantly, but there is no fear in a change that I embrace” (RTR2).

Question #4

The fourth interview question was presented to the interviewees in two parts. Part (a) of the question asked individuals to consider and describe what they personally do to contribute to the success of a positive change initiative. 100% of the interviewees responded that they put 100% plus of themselves into the initiative. They would have a positive attitude and support and champion the change. This would include being flexible, working really hard, and speaking highly of the initiative. Several interviewees expressed:

“I give 150% of me. I talk it up in really positive terms. I am willing to champion it in all corners, and do everything in my power to make sure the change happens” (L5).

“I would give 100% support and embrace the initiative. My attitude would support the change and I would do whatever I could do to make the change work” (P1).

“If it is something that I believe in and feel like it is a good thing that I am doing then I will put my heart and soul into it” (B7).

Part (b) of the question asked individuals to describe what they do personally to embrace a change initiative that may have a negative impact, or one that they only half-heartedly agree with. 10% of the interviewees stated they would self-reflect and try to move on in spite of the change. 90% of the interviewees expressed that their attitude and motivation would suffer negatively. These interviewees expressed they would personally feel stressed, mistrusting, resentful, cynical, undervalued, unsupported and not listened to. However, 70% of this group also said that after a period of time they would try to re-adjust their attitude, looking for the positive aspects in the change. Several interviewees expressed:

“If it is something that goes against my values and my soul, and I don’t want to do it, I would find it really hard to give 100% of myself to it. I would just take action, whatever action I would have to take, to try to change it to more of a positive situation for myself” (P1).

“For me, I would flow with the change. For example; if it was a negative change I might be more distant and I might feel there is an issue of trust, especially if it was around communication in the case where an initiative was implemented, or people making decisions, without talking to the people the decisions are impacting” (L8).

Question #5

The fifth interview question asked individuals if it is easier to accept a change initiative if you have a lot of information about it rather than someone simply springing it on you, or does this have any impact on whether you embrace the change or not. Interviewees were not so concerned with incidental changes; however, 100% responded that the more information one has regarding a significant impending change the better, especially in cases where the change has a direct impact on the individual. Several interviewees stated:

“The more information the better. Nothing makes a person feel more de-valued than change being imposed without any consultation, input or feedback into the process. People feel and have ownership of their jobs - it is a huge part of their identity. People spend a huge amount of their waking hours and adult lives doing their jobs, so when you have a sense of ownership and then someone treats the whole process as if you don't have any ownership that creates a problem. This is about lack of respect or courtesy. If you have a higher-up who communicates the change, tells why there is a change, this is what we want to do, this is why we want to do it, this is how we think it should play out and if people have that kind of information about the change, it is better than nothing; however it would be even better if they were asked their input or what they think of the change before it is ever implemented. Even if they don't accept our input, it would be better if at least we were acknowledged” (R3).

“The biggest thing is open communication... If change was sprung on us I'd be really concerned about the motivation of the person doing that. Why would someone do that? I would say the more information the better. That allows me to prepare my expectations, so that I am personally prepared. I always like to see things in the larger context. Springing things on me makes me wonder what is the real reason behind this. I have had no say in this? Obviously, the result has been decided and I am the product of the result. That doesn't work for me – I need to contribute to the initiative to embrace it” (F6).

Several interviewees also expressed that having information about the change may not make it any easier to accept:

“Does having more information have an impact on whether you embrace the change? Not necessarily... I had so much information that it made me more suspect and more

distrustful of the change. Was this change efficient? No. Was this change effective? No. Did this change fit with my values around how services should be delivered to the public? No. Even though I had tons of information, it didn't help me embrace it any better. There can be two sides to this. Certainly, on a day to day basis, the more information is better. Greater information on a change initiative such as policy or procedure will certainly move people towards implementing it, but they still may not agree with it" (L5).

Question #6

The sixth interview question asked interviewees to describe what actions their boss, supervisor, or manager have taken that assisted them in making change happen. 100% of the interviewees stated that open communication, two-way dialogue, and support from their manager greatly assisted them in embracing a change initiative. In addition, the boss, supervisor, or manager allowed the individuals to have ownership, input, direction and even control in the change initiative. There was a trusting relationship between the parties built on mutual respect and courtesy that was honest, authentic, agenda free and non-threatening. The interviewees also had the freedom to voice their concerns and were acknowledged, listened to, and their advice acted upon if possible. Several interviewees stated:

"She gave me ownership, supported me, allowed me to make decisions relative to the project, act on my own initiative, develop the outputs, like what was going to be expected, and an open door to come back to her to discuss it and also to make recommendations for further actions... Two way communication, working together to make the initiative work, as well as, and this is a critical thing for me - let me do it, let me manage it - don't manage me" (F6).

“He was available to answer questions, whether on a global basis or personal basis. He let people know what was going to happen every step of the way. Regular, open communication and two-way dialogue in every step of the way. If there was a major transition happening and lot of people were impacted, every step of the way. Not shying away from being honest... It was his authenticity, agenda-free and non-threatening communication that was key, nothing was secret. There was trust through comprehensive, regular and honest communication” (L5).

“He took a chance and trusted me with being able to do the project and make it a success. That assisted me in gaining self-confidence, and I felt supported. His confidence in me gave me self-confidence” (B7).

Question #7

The seventh interview question asked interviewees to describe what actions their boss, supervisor, or manager had taken that had obstructed them in making change happen. 100% of the interviewees responded that no communication and lack of trust obstructed their ability to embrace a change. Many individuals voiced that they felt disrespected, unsupported, devalued, not listened to, helpless, and shut down because of the lack of input or control due to the command and control leadership style. The experience was very demoralizing and even damaging. Several interviewees recalled specific actions that undermined their ability to embrace a change:

“When they dismiss objections or concerns off hand without ever listening. You say, “I really don’t like this new system”, and they respond with “That is the way it is, too bad” without ever hearing or asking about your concerns. Dismissal” (R3).

“Lack of trust and if my manager said, “I don’t want to hear from you, and this is the way it is, and this change is happening whether you like it or not”, would really impede my ability to accept the change” (L8).

“If I have trust issues or respect issues with the individual delivering the message, I also may not embrace the change very well. Respect is feeling that the people making the change are highly competent and the change is coming from a good, well thought out process and that the change is a good change; it is well reasoned, logical, and solid. You can observe managers making these kinds of decisions, which, after a while, it adds up to a high respect or low respect for that individual. You can have an incompetent individual that you trust to some degree, but you won’t respect their decisions. If I respect the individual, I can accept the change better, even if I don’t believe in it” (L9).

Question #8

The eighth and final question asked interviewees to consider and describe how they believe they can personally learn to embrace change with the Employment Standards Branch. 80% of the interviewees responded that they could learn to embrace change within the Branch by having a positive attitude, and if there was open, two-way communication within the organization. 50% of the interviewees also expressed they needed to be more open minded to new ideas and look for the opportunities in change initiatives instead of being suspicious or mistrusting. Several interviewees stated:

“Be open-minded to change. Change happens; it is a part of life, it is a frame of mind. Change is good sometimes. If we don’t have change, life is boring and we stagnate. You are not always doing things the best way; we always have to be open to a new way of

doing things. Successful people or organizations approach every day like that. They are always looking for ways to improve, which means change” (L9).

“I think a lot of it boils down to taking initiative and action yourself. Looking for opportunities and if you are not happy, change the situation. Take responsibility for yourself. If it is something positive; build on it, if it is negative; try to change the situation into a positive” (P1).

25% of the interviewees also expressed that they felt the organization needed to work on building vision, values, trust, respect, and caring within. Several expressed:

“Even though I have the initiative to move forward on my own, two-way communication, trust, supporting, caring, respect and value would help me embrace change better.

Everyone wants to feel they are worth something in the organization and that they are valued. I believe this is important to everyone. We are all facing change all the time and someone just saying, “How’s it going?” would really help. Communication is all part of this” (L8).

“If there was respect, courtesy, and value placed on employees, this would open my heart more towards embracing change initiatives” (B7).

Another interviewee passionately expressed:

“This Branch needs a vision, a clear vision of where we are going and how we are going to get there. In fact, we need more than that – we need to communicate that to the public.

If we are accountable to anyone, we are accountable to the person walking through the door. Let’s be as public as possible about who we are, and what is wrong with being a caring organization? Why would I want to be a part of any organization that didn’t care about me? I am important and you are too. That is something we need to communicate to

both our internal staff and the general public. People need to know what we are about and they need to know what our values are.... We need to know at the very beginning what we are about. If you can't establish that, then we have short-term projects under wonderful names such as human resource committee, policy group, and training committee, that people are not going to embrace because the values and vision has not been articulated first. Once we do that, then you can hang the policy committee or training committee, or whatever else you want to hang on that... People will connect with it" (F6).

Table 2 lists a summary of the Individual Interview findings highlighting key points.

Table 2. Summary of Individual Interview Findings

<p>1. What motivated you to embrace the change?</p> <p><u>100% of the participants said:</u> It was a positive experience, and individuals had input into the initiative.</p> <p><u>Participants felt:</u> Supported, motivated, valued, challenged, trusted, listened to, open-minded and there was a work/life balance.</p> <p><u>Process and reasoning behind the change:</u> The change was efficient, logical, clear, pro-active, reduced duplication of work. It created a higher product standard and gave more credibility to the Branch and individuals. Individuals knew the initiative would be successful and had the opportunity to make a difference. Individuals had ownership, freedom and control over process. Individuals felt the change was a necessity.</p>
<p>2. What would interfere with your desire or ability to embrace a change initiative?</p> <p><u>100% of the participants said:</u> If the change was perceived as bad, or ending in negative results.</p> <p><u>Attributing factors:</u> Lack of communication, two-way dialogue and if opinions were not asked for, or valued. If the change was implemented through a command and control style of delivery. If the change was forced, or there was a hidden agenda behind the change. If positions were threatened. If the change was unethical.</p> <p><u>Participants would feel:</u> Unsupported, disrespected, de-valued, suspicious, mistrusting, pessimistic, closed minded and resistant to the change.</p> <p><u>Process and reasoning behind the change:</u> If the change was inefficient, illogical, unclear, increased workload or created difficulties in other areas.</p>
<p>3. Is “Fear of the unknown” a factor in embracing a change initiative?</p> <p>60% - Yes Fear of the unknown and what impact the change would have on individuals personally. Not knowing the outcome of the change. Fear of losing job and feeling threatened.</p> <p>30% - No Fear is too strong a word – anxious, suspicious, or resistant if the change was against personal</p>

ethics or principles.

10% - No fear, suspicion or anxiety. These individuals view change as an opportunity.

4. (a) What do you personally do to contribute to the success of a positive change initiative?

100% of the participants said:

Give 100 – 150% to the initiative.

Have a positive attitude.

Champion and support the initiative.

Participants would also:

Be flexible, work really hard, and speak highly of the initiative.

4. (b) What do you personally do to embrace a change initiative that may have a negative impact, or one that you only half-heartedly agree with?

10% - Self-reflect and try to move on in spite of the change.

90% - Attitude and motivation would suffer negatively because their heart and soul would not be in it. After a period of time, 70% would regroup, changing their attitudes to look for the positive.

Participants would feel:

Mistrusting, stressed, resentful, cynical, under-valued, unsupported and not listened to.

5. Is it easier to accept a change initiative if you have a lot of information about it rather than someone simply springing it on you, or does this have any impact on whether you embrace the change or not?

100% said:

Yes, a change is easier to accept if you have a lot of information, especially concerning an initiative that has an impact on the individual.

90% said:

Yes, in the case of significant change initiatives, not having information about it can effect whether I embrace it or not.

Participants said:

Communication is very important. The bigger the change, the more need for information; the smaller the change, the less need for information. Whether you agree with the change or not, it is easier to accept if it has an explanation.

6. Describe what actions your boss, supervisor, or manager has taken that have assisted you in making change happen.

100% said:

By being supportive, and having open communication and two-way dialogue.

Participants said:

Allowing me to have ownership, input, direction and some control in the change initiative.
Having a trusting, honest, authentic, non-threatening, agenda-free relationship built on mutual respect and courtesy.

Allowing me to voice my concerns, and listening and acting on my input.

Providing resources and training.

7. Describe what actions your boss, supervisor, or manager has taken that have obstructed you in making change happen.

100% said:

By their lack of trust and communication.

Participants said:

Command and control dictatorship style leadership.

No input in the change initiative.

Lack of respect, no support, feeling de-valued and not listened to.

False intentions, hidden agendas.

Fear of retribution for raising questions or presenting ideas.

8. Describe how you believe you can personally learn to embrace change with the Employment Standards Branch.

Participants said:

Look for the opportunities.

Have a positive attitude.

Look for the positive in the situation.

Communicate.

Be open to ideas and not closed-minded.

Self-reflect.

Find out as much information possible about the change.

Teleconference

Potential teleconference participants were again randomly selected from all position levels and geographic locations within the Employment Standards Branch, excluding those individuals who had participated in the individual interviews. Although six participants confirmed their intention to participate in teleconference, unfortunately, several were unable to attend at the last minute. The four remaining participants engaged in an open discussion

regarding the findings revealed by the CultureSCAN and individual interviews. The dialogue was structured around the eight questions asked in the individual interviews and the themes that had emerged from the data. Participants were requested to consider the findings and provide their input and point of view on each subject matter.

The teleconference group 100% supported data revealed by CultureSCAN and the eight individual interview questions. This group also identified several themes previously not considered or discussed. Table 3 lists some of the additional comments made by the teleconference group.

Table 3. Teleconference Comments

Questions:	Additional Comments:
1. What motivated you to embrace the change?	“The important thing for me was the need to be part of a team that is willing to make a change. If the team is going a certain way, I like to be part of that team. Also, I have to be realistic, I am partially money driven due to my financial circumstances, so I will absolutely change in order to keep my job” (D15).
2. What would interfere with your desire or ability to embrace a change initiative?	“Volume of change. If there were tons of changes all at once you would simply be overwhelmed” (T20).
3. Is “Fear of the unknown” a factor in embracing a change initiative?	“Yes, fear of losing your house. That would be a realistic and real thing” (T20). “Yes, Fear of losing everything” (D15).
4. (a) What do you personally do to contribute to the success of a positive change initiative? (b) What do you personally do to embrace a change initiative that may have a negative impact, or one that you only half-heartedly agree with?	No additional comments to this question. “Keep it in perspective – some changes I don’t accept or agree with and some changes I don’t have to look for the positive, because in the grand scheme of things, we still have our jobs, we live in a peaceful country, and we have our reasonable health” (T20).

5. Is it easier to accept a change initiative if you have a lot of information about it rather than someone simply springing it on you, or does this have any impact on whether you embrace the change or not?	“The big thing with a significant change is that people have a need to understand. What is it that you want at the end of the tunnel? So if you know what they want at the end you can work with it and figure out how to get there. But when you just have huge turmoil and don’t know what the idea is at the end, how do you cope with that? How do you put it in perspective?” (S25).
6. Describe what actions your boss, supervisor, or manager has taken that have assisted you in making change happen.	“Leading by example – actually walking the talk. Trying to be a stabilizing and constant force that people can rely on” (T20). “Believing in your staff – having the faith in them that they will make the change happen” (D15).
7. Describe what actions your boss, supervisor, or manager has taken that have obstructed you in making change happen.	“If it is very apparent that your manager is against the change, regardless of whether it is positive or negative, that will make it extremely difficult for me to embrace the change” (D15).
8. Describe how you believe you can personally learn to embrace change with the Employment Standards Branch.	“You lead by example, and I believe it has to come from the top down. If the top doesn’t respect the bottom, no one is going to respect the bottom” (S25). “Pray” (D15).

The teleconference group agreed that key barriers to change would include a lack of communication, lack of information, and no input into an initiative that directly affected them, which would have an overall demoralizing impact on their attitudes. This group also identified that key motivators to embracing a change are communication, information, and being included in the decision-making process, especially if the initiative affects them directly. This group also stressed the importance of leadership setting an example and modeling the way.

Study Conclusions

In summary, the CultureSCAN assessment revealed that the group surveyed has the capacity and potential to shift into more complex levels of thinking, so learning to embrace

change is within the realm of possibility for this group. Trust, Principles, People and Purpose are of utmost importance to this group, and they desire to see the organization operate in a more People Driven and Strategic Oriented manner. This group is well-balanced in the areas of Executive Intelligences and Digital and Analogue thinking, so it has the ability to see the big picture and put the steps in place to make it happen. This is of significant value and benefit to the Employment Standards Branch, as not only do individuals have the capacity to change but the ability to see and understand the positive power in change and put it into action.

Areas of challenge for this group include finding a balance between 1st and 2nd Order Change preferences; some want instantaneous quantum change, whereas others want incremental slow change, and the differences in the “we” values of collective thinkers, versus the “I, me, my” values of individualistic thinkers. In addition, there are some individuals who are struggling with processes; others who are internally misaligned in how they view the structure of the work versus how they would prefer to work; and finally, some who are having difficulties coping with the current change state of the organization. However, with capacity, willingness, knowledge and support from both individuals and the organization, we can address and overcome challenges collectively facing them in a positive and constructive manner.

The individual interviews and teleconference brought out many themes regarding how individuals perceive and react to both positive and negative change initiatives. To some, the fear of the unknown or outcome of an impending change is a significant negative factor, while others feel mildly unsettled, anxious, or suspicious of change, while yet others view change as a positive opportunity to explore new possibilities. This finding shows a wide spectrum in how the individual participants view the dynamics of change. It was not surprising to learn, however, that individuals embrace positive initiatives much easier than negative ones. Regardless of the

various points of view on the status of the initiative – positive or negative – interviewees were clearly able to identify many factors that they believe either assist or hinder their ability to embrace change.

Some of the factors identified that participants believe encourage and promote change include open communication; including two-way dialogue and listening, information exchange, transparency, competence, input, ownership, training, resources, flexibility, authenticity, trust, respect, courtesy, ethics, values and vision. Participants confirm that when these factors are in place, they are highly motivated, open-minded, resilient, positive, and committed to the initiative. They feel supported and valued by the organization. Many of these factors correlate with the findings revealed by the Corporate Human Resource Assessment, giving further credibility and validity to the findings in both studies. Figure 4 summarizes some of the key factors identified by participants that they believe promote change. They have been categorized under four of the five corporate priority areas: Recognition, Communication, Empowerment and Corporate Values.

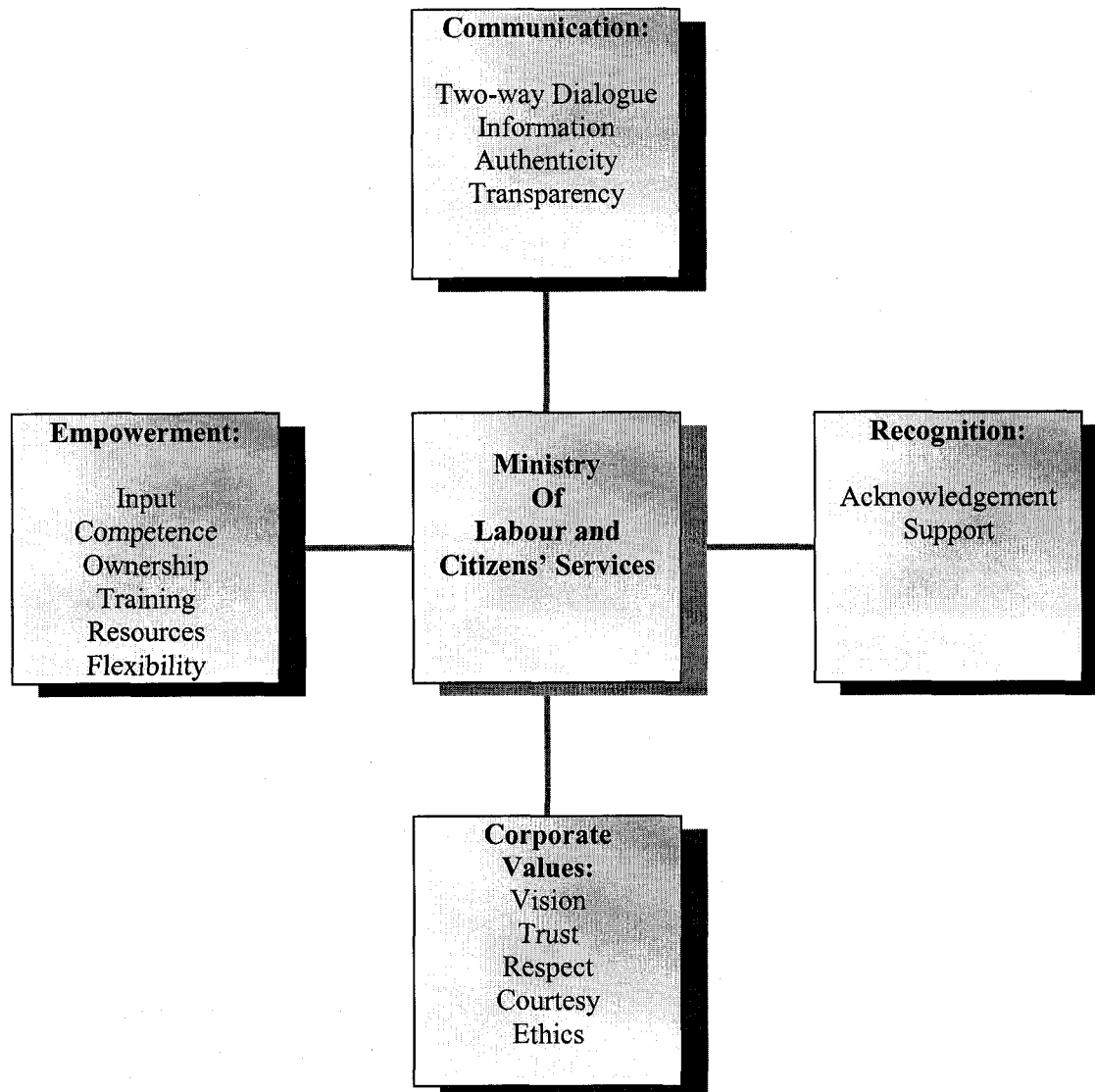


Figure 4. Corporate Human Resource Assessment Priorities

Some of the factors identified that participants believe discourage and hinder change include command and control style leadership, lack of communication, lack of information, no input into an initiative that has a significant impact on the individual, incompetence at all levels, initiatives that are wasteful, unclear, senseless or illogical, forced change, and change with a hidden agenda. Participants confirm that when these factors are in place, they are unmotivated, uncommitted, rigid, mistrusting, suspicious, negative, resistant to the change and closed-minded.

They feel demoralized, undervalued, unsupported, pessimistic, disrespected and stressed. The negative emotional impact can literally shut an individual down; apathy takes over and their engagement becomes minimal to non-existent.

Upon reviewing the findings in this chapter, a clear story unfolds as to the power and impact our relationship with change has upon our lives as individuals, and collectively within our organizations. With new learning and fresh perspectives, we can choose our paths wisely – seeking those factors and elements that allow us to step into the opportunity of change, instead of allowing it to drive and defeat us.

Scope and Limitations of the Research

Setting out the scope and limitations of the research study is important. Glesne (1999) states, “Part of demonstrating the trustworthiness of your data is to realize the limitations of your study. Your responsibility is to do the best that you can under certain circumstances” (p. 152). With ease, I can say that I believe I devoted my best this study because of the passion I have for the work we perform in the Employment Standards Branch, and the truly fine, dedicated people I work with. My regret is that one notable limitation within this study was time limits and deadlines.

As this research study was a requirement for a Master’s Degree in Leadership and Training, it was subject to be completed within a specific time period. Consequently, the scope and magnitude of the project had to be fairly limited from the beginning to allow for an attainable completion date of the research and compilation of this thesis. Had the project been subject to a more liberal time schedule, there could have been much more exploration into the research question(s) and greater opportunity for stakeholder participation.

I believe another limitation within the research study was due to the anonymity of the project. The CultureSCAN is a sophisticated assessment tool purposefully designed to reveal an in depth picture into the dynamics and patterns of ways of thinking within individuals and groups. These complex findings not only reveal areas of strength, but also areas of challenge or even crisis. As set out in Chapter Four, the CultureSCAN did reveal that several individuals within the organization were facing significant challenges. Unfortunately, as the study was required to be structured in a manner that would conceal and protect the identity of participants, there is no way to provide direct support or assistance to these specific individuals.

Finally, a further limitation to the study is that not all staff chose to participate, so the findings must be viewed within a limited context. They are not based on the entire staff population of the Employment Standards Branch, but a smaller sampling of participants from each of the five geographic regions at various position levels. While the findings may not reflect the entire view of the organization, they certainly give valuable insight, credibility and further clarity to the Corporate Human Resource Assessment Initiative, plus a starting place from which to initiate further exploration into the research question(s).

CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter sets out study recommendations based on the findings and conclusions gathered in Chapter Four. The recommendations explore both individual and organizational aspects of the research, as well as implications for future research.

Study Recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to determine how individuals could learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch of the Provincial Government of British Columbia. The following sub-questions were used to guide this topic:

1. What possible barriers to change currently exist within the Employment Standards Branch?
2. What factors may have an impact on how individuals learn to deal with change?
3. What possible learning opportunities and tools can the Branch implement to make change less stressful and disruptive?
4. What development opportunities can the Branch provide in support of organizational change?

The answers to these questions have been incorporated into four recommendations; Know Thyself, Become a Collective Leader, Become a “Workplace of Choice”, and Support Staff through Training and Resources. As the literature review and research study explored the research question(s) from two perspectives – individual and organizational points of view – the recommendations have been set out in the same manner.

*Individual Aspects**Recommendation #1 – Know Thyself*

As many study participants identified and existing theory from the literature review suggests, provided that individuals have the physical capacity to do so, several key factors in learning to embrace change are self-reflection, mindset and attitude. How do we “show up”? What is the picture we portray to the world, and how do we react to life’s changing conditions? Are we victims of our circumstance, or do we seek to be victorious in spite of our circumstances?

The first step in discovering who we are is learning to become self-aware of our personal mindsets, behaviours and attitudes. To do this, we need to take a self inventory.

Self-awareness enables us to stand apart and examine even the way we ‘see’ ourselves – our self-paradigm... It affects not only our attitudes and behaviours, but also how we see other people. It becomes our map of the basic nature of mankind. In fact, until we take how we see ourselves (and how we see others) into account, we will be unable to understand how other see and feel about themselves and their world. Unaware, we will project our intentions on their behaviour and call ourselves objective. This significantly limits our personal potential and our ability to relate to others as well. (Covey, 1989, pp. 66-67)

Without self-awareness we actually handicap ourselves, denying the potential that dwells within each of us to choose our responses to life and how we relate to others. “God chooses what we go through. We choose how we go through it” (Maxwell, 1993, p. 104). We need to ask ourselves, what is my first reaction to life’s changing conditions? What lenses do I look through? Do I seek to find the opportunity, or do I automatically respond negatively, looking for the pitfalls? Our

destinies in life will never be determined by our complaining spirits or high expectations. Life is full of surprises and the adjustment of our attitudes is a lifelong project.

The pessimist complains about the wind.

The optimist expects the wind to change.

The leader adjusts the sails. (Maxwell, 1993, pp. 102-103)

The key to our success is that we must learn to adjust our sails, as the need requires. We need the appropriate balance in our mindsets, behaviours and attitudes.

The literature reviewed for this study established that “mindsets are causative” (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001, p. 101). Consequently, if we have a negative mindset, we will reap negative results, if we have a positive mindset, we will reap positive results. So not only do we need to learn to try and adjust our attitudes positively, as it affects our personal ability and success in adapting, but our attitudes also have an impact on everyone within our sphere of influence. “People catch our attitudes just like they catch our colds – by getting close to us... It is important that I possess a great attitude, not only for my own success, but also for the benefit of others” (Maxwell, 1993, p. 105).

Unfortunately, many people suffer from a condition called “psychosclerosis, which is a hardening of the attitude” (Maxwell, 1993, p. 107). However, the good news is that we have a choice in the behaviours and attitudes we embrace – no one is destined to a life of misery; it is simply an option. Life conditions may have an influence on my choice in how I behave, but ultimately, it is I who *choose* my behaviour and reaction in response to those life conditions.

Novelist William Faulkner told us that the past isn’t dead. It isn’t even past yet. Each of us contains his or her entire life. Everything we did or saw, everyone we ever

encountered, is in our heads. But all that psychic baggage can be turned into comprehensible and useful experience by reflecting on it. (Bennis, 1989, p. 62)

Our life experiences are unique to us all. No one travels the same path, and some paths can be extreme in their degree of difficulty, while others are relatively easy; however, within each one of us dwells the power to reflect upon our life paths and purposefully *choose* how we will let our experiences shape our responses – either positively or negatively.

Many times people who have suffered adverse situations in their lives become bitter and angry. Over time, their lives will be negative and hardened towards others. The tendency for them is to point back to a difficult time and say, ‘That incident ruined my life’. What they do not realize is that the incident called for an attitude decision – a response. Their wrong attitude choice, not the condition, ruined their lives. (Maxwell, 1993, p. 105)

So, how do we learn to change our negative attitudes and mindsets? We must be proactive and make conscious choices. It is not easy; it takes courage to truthfully examine our hearts, willingness to want to change, and hard work and practice learning to “notice what we notice” about ourselves. The good news is that the payoff is worth the price. There is strength, confidence, peace and empowerment in knowing that we don’t have to be victims of our circumstance. Hope and promise are ever present when we learn to look for the opportunity in our circumstance.

In his book, “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”, Stephen Covey (1989) advocates that not only must we learn to embrace positive attitudes, but also we must be proactive in choosing positive responses to the circumstances life brings our way – both the good and the bad. In order to do this, we must constantly be self-reflective in choosing our actions and

reactions. Maxwell (1993) identifies a general plan for proactive attitude self-improvement, which he sets out in six stages:

1. Identify Problem Feelings.

This is the earliest stage of awareness and the easiest to declare.

2. Identify Problem Behaviour.

Now we go beneath the surface. What triggers wrong feelings? Write down actions that result in negative feelings.

3. Identify Problem Thinking.

William James said, "That which holds our attention determines our action".

4. Identify Right Thinking.

Write on paper the thinking that is right and what you desire. Because your feelings come from your thoughts, you can control your feelings by changing one thing – your thoughts.

5. Make a Public Commitment to Right Thinking.

Public commitment becomes powerful commitment.

6. Develop a Plan for Right Thinking.

This plan should include:

A written definition of desired right thinking.

A way to measure progress.

A daily measuring of progress.

A person to whom you are accountable.

A daily diet of self-help materials.

Associating with right thinking people. (pp. 108-109)

Maxwell (1993) further suggests that in order to increase the probability of our success, we must commit to following these steps:

Resolve – to carry the change through.

Reframe – change our attitude: I may not be able to change the world I see around me, but I can change the way I see the world within me.

Reenter – change our behaviour to match our new mindset. Begin to act like the part of the person you would like to become.

Repeat – Attitudes are nothing more than habits of thought and can be acquired. An action repeated becomes an attitude realized.

Renewal – Over a period of time, a positive attitude can replace a negative one. (pp. 110-112)

Maxwell (1993) warns however, “The battle is never over, but it is well worth our efforts. The more that negative thoughts are weeded out and replaced by positive ones, the more personal renewal will be experienced” (p. 112).

The most obvious implication from this recommendation is that proactive behaviour and a positive attitude pave the way for a positive outlook on life. When we have a positive outlook on life, it gives us confidence and enables us to be calm and centered, not easily defeated or overcome by the challenges or adversity that changes in life conditions may bring. With proactive, positive mindsets and attitudes, we are equipped and able to look for the opportunity in change, regardless of the avenue it comes through, in our organizations or our personal lives.

Recommendation #2 – Become a Collective Leader

When we think of leaders, we often think of them in individualist terms, such as Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, or John F. Kennedy.

Especially in the West, leaders are *heroes* – great men (and occasionally women) who ‘rise to the fore’ in times of crises. Our prevailing leadership myths are still captured by the image of the captain of the Calvary leading the charge to rescue the settlers from the attacking Indians. These traditional views of leaders – as special people who set the direction, make the key decisions, and energize the troops – are deeply rooted in an individualistic and nonsystemic worldview. So long as such myths prevail, they reinforce a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes rather than on systemic forces and collective learning. (Senge, 1994, p. 340)

Leaders within our organizations simply cannot single-handedly keep up with the complexity and speed of change in modern day society. In order to rise above the daily demands and challenges our organizations face, we must learn to tap into the collective leadership potential found in every individual throughout all levels of the organization. “The days when a single individual, however gifted, can solve our problems are long gone. The problems we face today come at us so fast and are so complex, that we need groups of talented people to tackle them” (Bennis, 1989, p. xviii). Consequently, our organizations need the best of our abilities from each one of us in order to excel and succeed. From the top executive to front line worker we need to become collective leaders, working together for the good of our organizational community.

We have learned that an organization is a group of individuals brought together for a specific or common purpose. Generally, our organizations have chosen figureheads or leaders and management; however, each one of us has leading potential in the capacities and talents we bring to our organization. “An organization is a living organism, in which all members find personal significance in the context of relationships, which enables them to develop their full potential as they make their distinctive contributions in conjunction with others” (Bennis, 2003,

p. 34). We need to learn to develop the leader within us by stepping out and positively leading as the need calls, creatively taking on challenges and tasks using the skills and abilities inherent in each one of us, no matter what position or level within the organization we may occupy. To many, this is a new way of thinking about leadership.

Leadership is not about being the person at the top issuing all the directives; it is about having the ability to influence and using that influence positively and wisely, no matter where life places you. “True leaders do not always have to lead, but can allow others to lead when it is more appropriate. At such moments, leaders don the role of follower” (Greenleaf, 2003, p. 7). So, the role of a collective leader within an organization changes and expands as the needs of the organization flux – it is not about having a title; it is a way of being, which starts through the commitment and willingness to look for opportunities to lead.

The implications of this study recommendation have the potential to be transformational. “People individually – and even more so when they act together – have the power to achieve unlimited things” (Lebow & Simon, 1997, p. 54). In order to become our very best, we need to learn to embrace and celebrate who we are. An inspirational passage from God’s Little Devotional Bible (1997) thoughtfully expresses this sentiment:

God created each of us with certain gifts and talents. When we focus on the gifts and talents we don’t have, and envy others who do have them, we get nowhere. God never asks us to become something that we aren’t, all He asks is that we use our gifts to best of our ability. As we work to develop our gifts, *our best gets better* [italics added]. (p. 75)

When we choose not to develop ourselves, or engage and lead as opportunities present themselves, we limit our potential, accomplishments and success; not only as individuals, but together as an organization. We need the best in each other.

By choosing to collectively lead, we lift each other up when we combine our strengths and talents together, exercising the gifts and abilities unique in each one of us. “The basic role of a leader is to foster mutual respect and build a complementary team where each strength is made productive and each weakness is made irrelevant” (Covey, 1991, p. 246). It is within this collective leadership spirit that potential and empowerment lie. The results can be powerful and the possibilities limitless, but it all starts as willingness and commitment within each of us to develop ourselves and lead from wherever we are.

Organizational Aspects

Recommendation #3 – Become a “Workplace of Choice”

Over the past year, Associate Deputy Minister (ADM) Connolly has expressed his commitment to making the Ministry of Labour a “Workplace of Choice”. In the November 6, 2006 issue of the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services Executive Update, he stated:

Our corporate value is a culture which promotes integrity and ethical behaviour and is essential to the ongoing health and productivity of our organization. Our corporate values are merely just words on a page unless they are acted upon. We must collectively be committed to bringing these words alive. This will require commitment and dedication from all staff at all levels. The environment will require an enlightened leadership style throughout the organization and I am committed to working with you in creating that environment for all staff. Following are the values (as stated in the HR plan) that we at Labour need to re-familiarize ourselves with and model.

Commitment: We approach our work with enthusiasm and purpose.

Accountability: We each assume ownership for the outcomes of our work.

Integrity: We approach our work with the highest ethics; we treat one another with honesty, respect and trust.

Teamwork: We work together and support one another to achieve the goals of our Service Plan.

Flexibility: We respond to changes in the workplace with resiliency and resourcefulness. (p. 2)

This message was plainly an invitation, and a challenge, for staff to take the initiative and join in ADM Connolly and his Executive Team's commitment to co-create a healthy, progressive work environment – a community in which we can all be proud to belong. ADM Connolly recognized the ambition and magnitude of this goal, stating up front that the task would be challenging, “We can't be everything to everyone and that change takes time. But with all the data we now have, we can start to take small steps toward seizing these opportunities and building on them” (R. Connolly, executive update, November 6, 2006, p. 3).

ADM Connolly and his Executive Team followed through with their commitment to the plan by taking action and developing initiatives to improve performance in the five priority areas identified by Ministry staff: Recognition, Communication, Empowerment, Corporate Values and Employee Performance and Development Plan (EPDP). The December 19, 2006 issue of the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services Executive Update sets out the action initiatives developed for each area:

Recognition:

Provide adequate resources at the regional level so that each office can determine their own form of recognition;

No longer participate in the data base pilot project with PSA;

Suggest ideas for recognition activities rather than prescribe programs.

Communication:

Provide timely communications to staff group in a manner that enables the most effective utilization and distribution of information;

Expand the communications provided on the intranet by including more updates on programs and policy;

Regional tours will focus on two way interaction rather than presentation format and will include an opportunity for corporate dialogue across branches when appropriate;

Move the “Feedback” button contained in the HR plan to the front page of the Labour Intranet.

Empowerment:

To encourage creativity and development, we need to be risk tolerant and recognize there will be some mistakes;

Provide more opportunities to empower staff, i.e. job shadowing; coaching; temporary assignments;

Flexible work options are being very successful and we will continue to expand on the opportunities that fit for each branch/office;

Create an environment of safe dialogue and open communication. Staff should be able to voice opinions, raise questions and present ideas without fear of retribution.

Corporate Values:

Work with branch staff to develop a simple vision that speaks to all staff and addresses the question, “what makes you come to work everyday”?

Employee Performance and Development Plan (EPDP):

Provide EPDP training and support at all levels of the organization, that fits with our Ministry’s overall engagement and development planning;

Allow the EPDP template to be modified, where needed, so that it encourages more dialogue;

Devote more time to the EPDP process to ensure that it is meaningful to everyone. (pp. 1-3)

Not only are these initiatives concrete first steps in moving our organization towards becoming a workplace of choice, but they align themselves with the values-based leadership principles discussed in Chapter Two. Lebow and Simon (1997) have termed this values-based approach to organizational development “Third Generation Training” (p. 48).

Third Generational Training melds social psychology and organizational development into a new process linking people to their organization in a totally non-manipulative way... Shared values are the glue that bonds universal human needs and aspirations to an organization’s goals, business strategies, and vision in a process that creates a dynamic balance between Business-Values and People-Values needs. (Lebow & Simon, 1997, p. 49)

Third Generation Training (Lebow & Simon, 1997) is essentially a systemic approach to leadership that addresses all the components needed to bring about transformational change in an organization: “people, content, and process” (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2001). Shared

values and standards address the people component, while systems and structures address the content and process components.

The whole of the Shared Values philosophy shouts out this one central idea: the belief and conviction that people want to be great. Why do people leave one company for another? Sure, there are lots of reasons, but a leading one – you may well have had the experience yourself – grows out of the search for a situation where the person will find an opportunity to use his ability, her talents... a place where initiative and the willingness to take risks is rewarded with recognition and opportunity. (Lebow & Simon, 1997, p. 54).

Values-based leadership principles essentially allow people to be great, but first, people have to take the initiative and want to be great, by being the very best we can be as individuals.

Based on the findings in this study and the Corporate Human Resource Assessment study, it is abundantly clear that people desire a workplace that models shared values principles. More importantly, the findings indicate that people believe shared values principles play a *critical role* in enabling and promoting change or learning, and employee engagement within an organization. Trust, honesty, respect, courtesy, openness, communication and two-way dialogue, risk-taking, empowerment, vision, giving credit, mentoring, caring, awareness, competency and credibility, are all cornerstone values and principles that people believe, and theorist support, are needed within an organization to break down barriers to change, and build dynamic, healthy and successful learning organizations.

Each of us is intimately connected to the other, and in recognizing that connection, we are moved to greater service; to a more profound understanding, appreciation, and tolerance of one another; to an honest self-examination of our own attitudes and behaviour; and to the building of community. (Greenleaf, 2003, p. 5)

Community, communication, trust and respect are the underpinnings in learning relationships and a learning culture within an organization. Short (1998) describes “Learning Culture” and “Learning Relationships” as:

A learning culture is a collective phenomenon that emerges from expectations that everybody will be appropriately open about inferences, judgments, attributions, desire and feelings. You’ll know when you are in a learning culture when you feel free to be yourself and are expected to routinely bring what is going on inside you to the table. Cheating in a learning culture means to have information and not share it... [and] ... In a learning relationship you mutually expect each other to be open about inferences, judgments, attributions, desires and feelings when appropriate. The relationship is marked by mutual respect and trust. Conflict and disagreement are openly dealt with in a timely fashion. (pp. 150-151)

Building learning relationships and a learning culture within our organization, modeled through shared values principles, is the expressed desire of participants of this study, the Corporate Human Resource Assessment study, and the essence of ADM Connolly’s vision for the Ministry of Labour. Together, this vision can be realized through mutual trust, commitment and community. Seeing this vision to fruition is imperative, as it is a critical step in learning to embrace change within our organization, or question and challenge it in a constructive, positive manner:

Ultimately, it’s all the people in an organization who are its underlying strength and underlying weakness. How people deal with each other; the agreements they make and keep, both implicitly and explicitly; the standards that are established and supported; the values shared: these are the elements at the root of human survival, the elements that hold

the key to true success and *lasting change*. The reward is a work environment where everyone puts the interests of others first, where managers and employees freely mentor one another, where everyone is open to new ideas, truth is common, and trust abounds.

(Lebow & Simon, 1997, p. xxviii)

The positive implications of becoming a “Workplace of Choice” are exhaustive; increased job satisfaction and morale among employees, increased employee engagement, increased employee retention, wellness in the workplace, higher employee productivity, lower employee absenteeism, creativity, innovation, caring, sharing, and general contentment in the workplace. All of these benefits translate into lower operating costs for the employer, so the benefits are tangible and systemic, as not only do they affect the Employment Standards Branch, but the entire Ministry of Labour within the Provincial Government of British Columbia.

Recommendation #4 – Support Staff through Training and Resources

As change can often bring times of chaos and uncertainty into an organization, it is critical that resources are available to staff for training and development as they move through change initiatives. Bennis and Nanus (1997) stress the importance of supporting individuals through training and development, crediting it for the success of many change initiatives:

While much training is intended to improve individual skills, an increasing proportion is devoted to team building and group learning experiences. Some training programs – as, for example, courses on new technologies and industry trends – are clearly and directly related to helping the organization learn about changes in the environment. (p. 187)

Cohen (2005) agrees stating:

Change efforts usually involve people learning new ways to do their job. This often throws employees into a state of uncertainty and can potentially create a lack of

confidence in themselves and in the change effort. Providing employees with effective, timely, and relevant training increases their confidence in their own skills and makes them more likely to support the change. Furthermore, creating new information systems and norms specifically around the change effort will reduce uncertainty as well as resistance due to poor or scarce information. (p. 135)

As identified by participants in this study and discussed in the literature review, the more significant the change; specifically initiatives that impact individuals directly, the more information and support individuals need. The CultureSCAN revealed that the Systemic Flow (Yellow/Process Driven) organizational structure identified by many study participants is somewhat challenging, but not beyond their capabilities. With support through training, coaching, mentoring or other resources, staff would gain the skills and competencies needed to operate comfortably at this level of complexity in the future.

Cohen (2005) also recommends that organizations need to ask the people who will be doing the work what skills they already have and what training they will need to be successful, and then provide training to develop new skills and attitudes:

At the right time: Training should not only help people to start in their new roles but also provide follow-up to help solve problems related to the change later on.

For the right skills: People are often taught the technical skills but not the social skills to make the transition. Be sure individuals have the change leadership skills to accept and perform well in the new environment.

Using the right approach: An educational experience where a real-life scenario is acted out may be more effective than lecture. (p. 120)

In addition to technical training to improve skills and abilities, resources may also be needed to address the psychological aspects of change. Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2001) explain:

Failure in transformation often results from the cancer of emotional immaturity and bad relationships made worse by the stress of marching in the unknown... Change leaders cannot stamp out or negate the predictable human reactions to the unknown, nor can they manage around them. However, they can – and must – create processes to support people to deal effectively with the unknown and, by doing so, assist these people to evolve...

For this reason, organizational transformation strategies must include personal transformation strategies. (p.45)

As we have learned, in order for a transformational change to be successful all three of these components need to be addressed – people, content, and process.

Although there are obvious financial implementations to providing training and resources to staff, the benefits may far outweigh the costs. In fact, the success of a change initiative could very well depend on the skill and ability of the worker performing the task, so appropriate and adequate training is critical. Other benefits from providing training include increased job satisfaction and morale among employees, increased employee motivation, increased efficiencies in processes which can result in financial gain, increased capacity in employees to adopt new technologies and methods, and increased innovation in developing program and policy strategies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, learning to embrace change or the manner in which we deal with it essentially comes down to personal choice. Further, barriers in learning to embrace change or factors that facilitate finding the opportunity in it can come in both individual and organizational

forms. Individually, we can either limit our capacity, or release our potential through purposefully choosing our mindsets, attitudes and behaviours. Our organizations can either assist transformational change through values-based practices, training and resources, or hinder change through lack of support and outdated, ineffective, command and control style management practices. One thing is clear however, regardless of the forum in which change is occurring – our personal lives or our organizations – transformational change requires our best effort and commitment from all parties involved to work together and learn to seek the opportunity change presents and in doing so, we will enable its positive power and potential to be unleashed.

Implications for Future Research

One of the limitations in the study was that not all staff of the Employment Standards Branch participated because of the voluntary nature of the research project. As a result, the study findings had to be viewed within a restricted context, and the CultureSCAN assessment tool could not be used to its fullest capacity. I believe it would be of future value to re-administer the CultureSCAN assessment to the entire Employment Standards Branch, but in an open forum, so that the information gathered could be used to its fullest potential, providing strategic and proactive support to both individuals and the organization as a whole.

Given the commitment of ADM Connolly and his Executive Team to promote values-based leadership practices and the desire of staff to embrace these principles, I believe it is of utmost importance that follow-up measures, such as future studies designed to measure employee engagement, in addition to regular check-ins be implemented in order to keep our organization on track with the goal of becoming a “Workplace of Choice”.

CHAPTER SIX – LESSONS LEARNED

Introduction

This final chapter explores several key lessons learned about the process of conducting an action research project and leading organization change from two different perspectives: organizational lessons learned and personal lessons learned.

Research Project Lessons Learned

Organizational Lessons

The process of conducting a three-phase action research project in an organization consisting of over one hundred individuals was no small task. It took much planning and coordinating of schedules and timelines in order to be able to meet target dates designed to ensure that the project would complete on time. Consequently, although several unexpected scenarios arose that conflicted with the timing of the various research phases, there was no option to reschedule dates, so the project had to move forward despite possible limitations to the number of participants.

In addition, as the study was conducted on a strictly voluntary basis, I had to always ensure there was a balance between inviting individuals to participate and respecting their rights to decline, again, regardless of the potential impact that limited numbers of participants could have on the overall outcome of the organizational research. Recognizing that there was no way to control this factor, I had to keep the project in perspective and realize that regardless of the final number of participants, if the study had the power to impact even one individual, that one individual now has the power to impact others, and it is through our individual change efforts that ultimately transformational change occurs within our lives and our organizations.

Finally, while embarking on my journey to explore how individuals could learn to embrace change or challenging it constructively within the Employment Standards Branch, I quickly learned that not all people view change as an opportunity, nor do they view it as learning. Consequently, the leadership challenge for me not only involved modeling the way throughout my own learning, but teaching concepts about change to others and presenting the information in such a manner that it would invite curiosity; opening up the possibilities for transformational learning through engaging individuals to explore their own mindsets, assumptions, and current ways of coping with change within our organization.

Personal Lessons for Future Learners

First, one of the most valuable lessons I could pass on to future learners in the Master of Arts in Leadership program is to keep the scope of the research project manageable from the very beginning. Choose a topic that can be limited in size and complexity; be organized; stay focused and on top of your research study; in the action research process be prepared to take two steps forward and one step backwards; try to balance your studies with some personal time as well; and remember to keep the research project in perspective – this is not your life’s work, it is setting the stage for the possibilities to come.

Second, adopt a positive vision for your major project journey and never lose sight of it. During residency two, several MALT graduates attended one of our seminars to give some pointers, strategies and advice on completing the research study and compiling our thesis. The comments of one graduate in particular stuck with me, as she relayed her major project experience in terms of “slogging through a swamp”. This analogy did not sit well with me at all. I was left with the impression that the research project would be significantly more difficult than I already was nervously anticipating. I almost felt defeated before I started. How was I ever

going to cope with the challenge of this insurmountable major project in addition to working full-time and trying to have some assemblage of a family life?

As it turns out, I was not the only student impacted by the graduate's story. Another cohort member shared with our class that the swamp story had gravely impacted her too, and she was determined that she was not going into any swamp, but her major project journey would be through the cool, clear, flowing waters of a beautiful stream. I was so touched by this positive reframe on the graduate's story that I decided to make it my own as well. During the late nights, writers block, mountains of data, confusion, and sometimes just plain exhaustion, those reframed words painted a vision of serenity and hope which kept me from leaving my stream and crossing over into the swamp.

Finally, some of the first words of advice given to our cohort by Royal Roads University faculty members, upon enrolling in the MALT program were, "Trust in the Process". I thought this was rather odd, as I could not connect how "trusting in a process" would be in any way applicable to scholarly learning in a university setting. Over the course of the two year program, when I would become stressed over the magnitude of the work before me, or a seemingly insurmountable project or assignment, my various faculty members would calmly say, "Trust in the Process". In the beginning, this seemingly glib answer frustrated me. What do they mean, "Trust in the Process?" "Don't they know the chaos and difficulty we all are going through?" I thought their response to our distress was highly insensitive, especially as it was our own faculty giving us this advice, and of all people, I felt they should be MORE sympathetic to our plight! I didn't understand the meaning or depth of this little phrase until well into the program.

What I came to understand was that it was I who was putting the expectations and pressures upon myself, and in doing so, I was taking on undue stress and hardship, while

projecting my insecurities and angst. When I learned to relax and become curious about my learning instead of anxious and driven, I began to see the process as it naturally unfolded and from that experience onward, my learning began to flow. You see, the program was not only about achieving your Masters Degree, it was about learning about yourself. So I say to you future Master of Arts Leadership graduates, I wish you well and remember, "Trust in the Process".

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Appendix A: Spiral Dynamics CultureSCAN

Dr. Don Edward Beck, Ph.D.
National Values Centre

Spiral Dynamics



Spiral

DYNAMICS

Assessing Bottom Lines
Identifying Life Priority Codes
Reflecting Readiness for Change
Profiling Patterns of Thinking and
Executive Intelligences
Mapping Work Flows

SDi CultureSCAN

SDi CultureSCAN

Thank you for participating in this CultureSCAN. There are no right or wrong answers, so please respond based on how you actually think and feel. No single individual will be identified in the responses. We are only interested in group profiles.

JOB AND CULTURE FIT

- Check one: I fit my job My job stretches me too far I'm under challenged in my work
- Check one: My supervisor and I are compatible (Yes No)
- Check one: My work group and I are compatible (Yes No)
- Check one: I'm a short-term employee I see a future for me in my line of work

For my company to survive and prosper in the future, it should ...

	Lowest Priority				Highest Priority		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Believe in a higher purpose than being successful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow principles and procedures by doing what is right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strive to be more competitive by stressing bottom line results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Become more sensitive to the total needs of all people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respect the natural habitat by leading in planetary concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect among all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

PERSONAL PRIORITIES

WHAT MATTERS MOST?

	Lowest Priority				Highest Priority		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b Be Safe by staying close to friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c Be Strong by taking charge and calling the shots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d Be Dependable by doing what's right and responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e Be Successful by setting goals and getting ahead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Be Sensitive by experiencing feelings and promoting harmony	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Be Authentic by integrating natural functions and flows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

WHICH GROUPS OF WORDS DESCRIBE YOU THE BEST?

	Least Like Me				Most Like Me		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c Spunky, risky, bold, daring, often rebellious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d Self-reliant, autonomous, flexible with multiple interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e Loyal, dependable, ordered with firm convictions and beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Ambitious, competitive, a "winner" with strong aspirations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Warm, open, inclusive with focus on feelings and community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Superstitious, "tribal" with family/group/clan rituals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

I CAN BEST BE MANAGED WHEN I HAVE ...

	Least Like Me				Most Like Me		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e The power and status to influence my own destiny	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c A boss who is tough but lets me be tough, too	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d A management system that is fair and rewards diligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b A "caring parent" supervisor who takes care of us	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f An atmosphere that is sensitive to needs and feelings of all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Access to information and freedom to do the job in my own way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

WHEN UNDER STRESS OR THREAT I ...

	Least Like Me				Most Like Me		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c Become defiant and go on the attack	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e Manoeuvre strategically to land on top	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Return to my roots and hunker down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d Pray that our faith will see us through	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Join with others to share and care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Do what I can to flow with turbulence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

I LIKE TO WORK FOR AN ORGANIZATION THAT ...

	Least Important				Most Important		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d Treats everybody by the same rules and is stable and dependable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c Gives me the respect I deserve and stays off my back	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g Does what is natural while being open and flexible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Preserves traditions, customs, festivals while protecting our groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Tends to the inner and outer health so we can be fully human	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e Thinks strategically and is competitive so we can be successful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>







From the statements above, please circle only one statement that best describes your perspective. Circle only one statement.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE GO THROUGH DIFFERENT STAGES OF CHANGE. IN MY CASE...

	Does Not Describe Me				Describes Me Totally		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
a Everything's OK with me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b I'm feeling edgy but don't know why	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g I feel trapped and helpless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d I'm excited and hopeful of good times ahead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
aa I've found fresh ways to deal with my new challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g All hell is breaking loose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b I fear trouble is brewing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d A huge burden has lifted off me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a I'm still on a clear, steady course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
aa I've been through a lot but like where I am now	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PREFERRED WORK STRUCTURES AND FLOWS

Different people work best in different types of organizational designs. Look at the following six designs and respond in two ways (1) Pick the one that best describes your present working arrangement, and (2) Pick the one that best describes the way you would like to work.

	Present Arrangement (check one)	Desired Arrangement (check one)
 Safety Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Power Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Order Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Success Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 People Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Process Driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PATTERNS OF THINKING AND PROCESSING INFORMATION

Please pick options A or B in the following choices:

1. A My mind scans over complex information
B My mind sorts out detail and step-by-step sequences
2. A I'm "high tech" and prefer precision
B I'm "high touch" and value feelings
3. A I sense the power of feeling tones
B I am better at handling facts and numbers
4. A I paint the world with fresh ideas
B I pride myself on my common sense
5. A I thrive on changes, novelty, variety
B I prefer my world to be "cut-and-dried"
6. A I'm often criticized for being matter-of-fact
B I get criticized for being "far out" and idealistic
7. A I generally see the "trees" instead of the "forest"
B I am much more aware of the "forest" than the "trees"
8. A My mind roams over changing landscapes
B My mind sorts out and evaluates ideas and projects

PICK OUT ONLY ONE WORD FROM EACH PAIR ...

- 9. A Intuitive or B Logical
- 10. A Organizer or B Synthesizer
- 11. A Patient or B Impulsive
- 12. A Detailer or B Scanner
- 13. A Spontaneous or B Methodical
- 14. A Visionary or B Pragmatic
- 15. A Calculative or B Instinctive

FORMS OF EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCES

Roles: Pick six of the following roles as most descriptive of you.

- 1. Challenger of boundaries
- 2. Sculptor of beauty
- 3. Agitator of complacency
- 4. Manager of established boundaries
- 5. Synthesizer of diverse paths
- 6. Expander of horizons
- 7. Promoter of ideas/products
- 8. Expeditor of fresh remakes
- 9. Visualizer of the future
- 10. Transformer of the old to new
- 11. Protector of truth/order
- 12. Maintainer of machines
- 13. Inventor of something new
- 14. Organizer of people/ideas
- 15. Agent of change and renewal
- 16. Implementer of emerging systems
- 17. Preserver of traditions
- 18. Pursuer of risky ventures

Below are six groups of descriptions of the kind of work people do at your company. Rank order the groups of statements (think of the three statements as a group). Which set of statements is most like you, then the second most like you, all the way to the 6th group that will be the least like you. While you may not agree with every statement in the group, pick the group that explains what you do better than any other group.

My job requires ...

- 1. Doing whatever my supervisor/boss wants me to do
Helping my work group do what's expected of it
Protecting our cultural beliefs and practices
- 2. Doing a tough job that requires a tough worker
Calling the shots and being where the action is
Keeping people off my back so I can do my own thing
- 3. Following a work plan or set of procedures closely
Doing the same thing over and over
Maintaining standards or equipment and enforcing rules/regulations
- 4. Creating and executing the best course of action
Selling ideas or products either inside or outside of the company
Influencing the thinking and actions of others
- 5. Doing a job that contributes to our feelings of personal worth
Responding to the needs of people by being a helping kind of person
Making this organization a more wholesome, healthy, and happy place to work
- 6. Working independently without much supervision or direction
Integrating the work of different individuals and functions
Seeing the big picture and connecting everything to everything else



Dr. Don Edward Beck, Ph.D.

Co-founder, National Values Center • Founder, Institute of Values and Culture
Facilitator, The Spiral Dynamics Group

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Web: www.spiraldynamics.net • www.globalvaluesnetwork.com

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Appendix B: Confidentiality Agreement

I, Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Ph. D., CGA, agree to hold in strict confidence all information gathered or exchanged in relation to the research project being conducted by Shelly Burchnall as part of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership and Training, Royal Roads University, Victoria, B.C., which is being sponsored by the Employment Standards Branch within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Service, Provincial Government of British Columbia under the direction of xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Director.

Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Ph.D., CGA.

Date

Witness

Name

Date

Appendix C: Letter of Invitation and Consent to Research Participants

Royal Roads University, School of Leadership Studies
 Master of Arts in Leadership and Training
 Research Project: *Embracing Change*
 Researcher: Shelly Burchnall

September 18, 2006

Dear Colleague;

I would like to introduce myself and invite you to be part of a research project I am conducting. This project is part of the requirement for a Master's Degree in Leadership and Training at Royal Roads University. The project is being sponsored by the Employment Standards Branch within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Service under the direction of xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Director.

My name is **Shelly Burchnall**, and I am an Industrial Relations Officer working out of the Victoria Employment Standards Branch Field Office.

Study Purpose: The objective of my research project is to explore *how individuals can learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch*. This opportunity will allow you to share your views, thoughts and experiences with the researcher(s), and will help identify what support individuals need to learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch.

Role of Participants: Participants will be invited to take part in a Branch wide survey, which should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. At a later date, a random sampling of individuals from each region within the Employment Standards Branch will be requested to participate further in the study through an individual interview. The interview will consist of a limited number of open-ended questions concerning change and should take no longer than 45 minutes to an hour.

Confidentiality: All information in this study will be kept confidential and summarized in an anonymous format into themes. There will be no distinguishable indicators to reveal the true identity of a participant. I request that all participants reciprocate the same confidentiality with the information they may receive or exchange during the research study. The data from the research will be kept for a period of up to one year following the research study then destroyed.

Risks/Benefits: The risks associated with this project are minimal and no greater than those encountered in daily life. You are not compelled to take part in this research project. If you do elect to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time with no prejudice. Similarly if you choose not to take part in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence. The benefits of participating in the project can lead to a personal growth opportunity through a better understanding of how to embrace change.

Consent of Survey Participants

This research project is part of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership and Training, and is being sponsored by the Employment Standards Branch within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Service, Provincial Government of British Columbia under the direction of xxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Director.

The learner concerned is **Shelly Burchnall**. Mrs. Burchnall's credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Gerry Nixon, Director of the School of Leadership Studies, Royal Roads University at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

This document constitutes an agreement to take part in a research project, the objective of which is to examine how individuals within the Employment Standards Branch can learn to embrace change.

The research study will consist of a Branch-wide survey, which should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. The online survey I will be administering is an existing change survey tool called CultureSCAN originated by Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Ph.D., Co-founder, National Values Center. An independent consultant, Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Ph.D., CGA, will be administering the survey tool and collecting the data on my behalf. Dr. xxxxxxxx will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to her participation in the research project.

The survey consists of general multiple choice questions relating to job and culture fit, personal priorities, stages of change, preferred work structures and flow, patterns of thinking and processing information, and forms of executive intelligences. The survey will be accessed online through the URL:xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

At a later date, a random sampling of individuals from each region within the Employment Standards Branch will be requested to participate further in the study through an individual interview. The interview will consist of a limited number of open-ended questions concerning change and should take no longer than 45 minutes to an hour. During the interview, the information will be audio-taped and recorded by hand.

The information from the survey and interviews will be summarized in anonymous format into themes. The ensuing findings and recommendations will be part of the final report. There will be no distinguishable indicators to reveal the true identity of a participant. I request that all participants reciprocate the same confidentially with the information they may receive or exchange during the research study. A copy of the final report will be housed in the head office of the Employment Standards Branch and at Royal Roads University where it will be publicly accessible.

The risks associated with this project are minimal and no greater than those encountered in daily life. Prospective research participants are not compelled to take part in this research project. If an individual does elect to take part, she or he is free to withdraw at any time with no prejudice. Similarly if employees or other individuals elect not to take part in this research project, this

information will also be maintained in confidence. The benefits of participating in the project can lead to a personal growth opportunity through a better understanding of how to embrace change.

Your completion of this survey will constitute your informed consent.

Appendix D: Individual Interview Questions

1. Tell me about a time when you really enjoyed the opportunity to change or contribute to a change initiative?
2. What motivated you to embrace the change initiative?
3. a) What would interfere with your desire or ability to embrace a change initiative?
b) Was fear a factor in interfering with your desire or ability to embrace a change initiative? Please explain your answer:
4. a) When faced with a positive change initiative, what do you do to contribute to the success of the change?
b) When faced with a negative change initiative, or one that you only half-heartedly agree with, how do you embrace the change?
5. With a change initiative, is it easier to accept it if you have a lot of information about it rather than someone springing it on you? Does this have an impact on whether you embrace the change or not?
6. What actions have your supervisor or manager taken that have assisted you in making a change happen?
7. What actions have your supervisor or manager taken that have obstructed you in making a change happen?
8. How can you learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch?

Appendix E: Consent Form for Interview Participants

Royal Roads University, School of Leadership Studies
 Master of Arts in Leadership and Training
 Research Project: *Embracing Change*
 Researcher: Shelly Burchnall

This research project is part of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership and Training, and is being sponsored by the Employment Standards Branch within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Service, Provincial Government of British Columbia under the direction of xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Director.

The learner concerned is **Shelly Burchnall**. Mrs. Burchnall's credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting the Gerry Nixon, Director of the School of Leadership Studies, Royal Roads University at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

This document constitutes an agreement to take part in a research project, the objective of which is to examine how individuals within the Employment Standards Branch can learn to embrace change.

The research study will consist of a Branch-wide survey, which should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. The online survey I will be administering is an existing change survey tool called CultureSCAN originated by Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Ph.D., Co-founder, National Values Center. An independent consultant, Dr. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Ph.D., CGA, will be administering the survey tool and collecting the data on my behalf. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to her participation in the research project.

The survey consists of general multiple choice questions relating to job and culture fit, personal priorities, stages of change, preferred work structures and flow, patterns of thinking and processing information, and forms of executive intelligences. The survey will be accessed online through the URL:xx.

At a later date, a random sampling of individuals from each region within the Employment Standards Branch will be requested to participate further in the study through an individual interview. The interview will consist of a limited number of open-ended questions concerning change and should take no longer than 45 minutes to an hour. During the interview, the information will be audio-taped and recorded by hand.

The information from the survey and interviews will be summarized in anonymous format into themes. The ensuing findings and recommendations will be part of the final report. There will be no distinguishable indicators to reveal the true identity of a participant. I request that all participants reciprocate the same confidentiality with the information they may receive or exchange during the research study. A copy of the final report will be housed in the head office of the Employment Standards Branch and at Royal Roads University where it will be publicly accessible.

The risks associated with this project are minimal and no greater than those encountered in daily life. Prospective research participants are not compelled to take part in this research project. If an individual does elect to take part, she or he is free to withdraw at any time with no prejudice. Similarly if employees or other individuals elect not to take part in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence. The benefits of participating in the project can lead to a personal growth opportunity through a better understanding of how to embrace change.

By signing this letter, the individual gives free and informed consent to participate in this research project.

Name: (Please Print): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F: Teleconference Invitation and Agreed Consent

Good Afternoon!

I am hoping you can help me in the final stage of my research project, by joining me in a teleconference on:

9:30 am, Friday, December 15, 2006

(For those invited participants who are in the Victoria location, please join me in Boardroom #2)

Your participation is strictly voluntary; however, I would greatly appreciate your input.

The objective of my research project is to explore *how individuals can learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch*. This opportunity will allow you to share your views, thoughts and experiences and will help identify what support individuals need to learn to embrace change within the Employment Standards Branch.

My intention in the teleconference is to first share with you the findings I have gathered to date from the Branch-wide survey and individual interviews, followed by a group discussion on embracing change. I respect that each one of us has busy schedules and workloads, so I will try to limit the conversation to approximately 1/2 hour.

As with the other phases in this research project, the information from the teleconference will be summarized into an anonymous format into themes. The ensuing findings and recommendations will become part of the final report. There will be no distinguishable indicators to reveal the identity of a participant and I would request that all participants reciprocate the same confidentiality with the information they may receive or exchange during our teleconference.

For the purpose of simplicity, your participation in the teleconference on Friday will constitute your informed consent to take part in the research study.

If you could please RSVP to this e-mail asap I would be extremely grateful!!

Thank you for your consideration!!

Shelly