Strategically Communicating Organisational Change

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Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to help organisations more effectively implement change. One key to this process is communication. The essay suggests a series of critical questions designed to help change initiators develop a strategic communication plan. Four stages of the planning process are discussed: contextual analysis, audience analysis, strategic design, and tactical development. A case study is presented in which the planning model was used as a focal point for a reengineering project.

Key Words: Change, Strategic Planning, Communication, Reengineering

Strategically Communicating Organisational Change

An organisation's long-term survival may best be judged by its ability to manage change rather than by its current balance sheet. Yet, most organisations are far more adept at evaluating budgets and rates of return than they are at measuring the effectiveness of their change efforts. Perhaps it is easier to judge financial results than it is to evaluate the rate and degree of acceptance of a change effort. To be sure, some changes, like downsizing, result in short term economic gains. But the long-term financial results are often questionable. James Champy, one of the founding fathers of reengineering, acknowledged quite candidly: "On the whole, however, even substantial reengineering payoffs appear to have fallen well short of their potential" (Champy, 1995, p. 3). One reason for an organisation's spotty record on change management is that the methods used to introduce change are poorly understood.

Take your pick of recent managerial buzz words: empowerment, reengineering, quality, or corporate "rightsizing". Implicit in each of the ideas is change. More precisely, each of these notions require major communicative efforts. Employees do not just accept an idea because it sounds progressive. For example, an underlying assumption of empowerment is that employees want to be empowered. And yet, we have interviewed numerous employees who freely admit that they would prefer to be told exactly what to do. Thinking is hard work, or least a kind of work that the many employees are not used to doing. Reengineering usually requires employees to take on new or different duties. How are they convinced to do so? In short, regardless of the organisation's motivation for implementing change, there is a need to properly communicate it. Ironically, almost all the fathers of these movements recognize the importance of communication but few develop a systematic communication plan.

Over the past few years we have developed a model that can be used to strategically plan a communication effort. While the model may appear to be static, it is really rather fluid. Indeed our focus is on asking the right questions in the right order rather than a series of "how to's". The specific action plan emerges from the dynamic interplay of critical communication principles and the answers to these core questions. These are presented in Table 1.

The Iceberg

Most of an iceberg's bulk lies below the surface. Ships that ignore the ice below the water are in mortal danger. Likewise, organisational change efforts may flounder because of a lack of strategic communication planning--the "below the water-line" issues (see Figure 1). This essay outlines a strategic approach to communicating change based on four levels of planning:

- ? Contextual Analysis (Level 1)
- ? Audience Analysis (Level 2)
- ? Strategic Design (Level 3)
- ? Tactical Preparations (Level 4)

Most employees are aware of the tactical issues: the timing of a message, the channels used, the messages sent, the safety valves and measuring the level of effectiveness. These are the "above the water-line" issues that are the focus of many communicative efforts as indicated by comments like the following:

- ? How many pages should the brochure be?
- ? Should we prepare a speech for the CEO?
- ? What day of the week should we release the announcement?
- ? Should we communicate our message over E-mail?
- ? Who in the organisation should communicate about the change?

These are all legitimate questions but they are really secondary. They are, in fact, indicative of a *tactical* rather than a *strategic* approach to communicating change. Indeed, most companies spend 80% - 95% of their time and resources dealing with these issues. We believe that resources should be allocated in precisely the opposite direction. From 70%-80% of resources should be devoted to the first three levels of planning: contextual analysis, audience analysis and strategic design. When these issues are resolved, the tactical decisions are usually fairly simple and straightforward. This essay discusses the actual thinking process and a case study based on the framework.

Contextual Analysis

Gravity beats rocket fuel every time. Eventually rockets run out of fuel and succumb to gravitational fields. In a similar way, one must understand the contextual field in which a change is to be assimilated. If not, the change effort may be crushed by the weight of the status quo. Hence, information about the written and unwritten organisational rules is essential in planning. External consultants can be at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to understanding the nuances of the organisational culture. The background knowledge about the organisation serves as a base for understanding how the change might be perceived.

The first issue involves assessing the type of change. One potential problem involves perceptions about the magnitude of the change. Those instituting changes often underestimate the impact that the change will have. For instance, upgrades in software may cause organisational havoc because the programmers

see the changes as relatively minor, but users have a decidedly different view. This is illustrated in quadrant D of Figure 2. The key in situations like this is to get the change initiators to understand the situation as receivers do (moving from quadrant D to B). This is often not an easy task . A committee might devote weeks studying a new office procedure. They become familiar with all the arguments and counterarguments for various perspectives. Yet, they will devote little time communicating about those matters and instead, only communicate the final proposal. This essay focuses on changes that will be perceived by others as fairly nonroutine, such as a change in benefits, a reengineering, job design, or moving to a new office building. (The strategy for communicating fairly routine change is quite different.)

A related issue deals with the implications of the change. What will it mean to employees, customers, and even stockholders? The ripple effects of a change are often subtle and not obvious to change initiators. For instance, a change of job responsibilities could impact a company's car-pooling plan. This may seem minor but it could be a potential employee concern.

Ultimately, the contextual analysis is an attempt to anticipate possible resistance points. We use the following questions to guide the discussion of the contextual issues[1]:

? **Is the change congruent with the culture?** Changes seen as an extension of the culture are more likely to be embraced. Those that are not congruent will create more resistance. For instance, even the term "reengineering" may induce resistance because employees see it as a radical departure from the "way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). But if the planners use another label--one more in line with the culture--resistance might be minimized.

? **Is the change seen as non-complex and manageable?** More complex changes are often resisted. Even if the changes are perceived as complex, there are ways to break the task down and make it appear more manageable. These tactics include the use of planning charts, outlines of key project phases, and scaled-down models of new products or processes.

? **Is the change seen as advantageous over past practices?** This is often the trickiest issue to overcome because employees may feel that any change is an indictment of their past work practices. We helped introduce a major structural change of reporting relationships in a manufacturing plant that created more accountability. One of the consistent refrains was: "We made the numbers in the past, we're achieving our goals now, why do we need to change?" Ironically, the very managers who said this were those who had consistently complained about the general lack of accountability at the plant. Their lament was basically,

"if it ain't broke, why fix it?" Even the verbally skilled have a difficult time effectively communicating what often appear as contradictory messages:

1. In the past, the previous system work effectively.
2. Yet, now the situation has changed and new practices are needed.

However, this may be the exact message that needs to be relayed to employees.

? **Are the benefits readily observable?** Change for change sake is rarely welcomed. There is often a need to present the conceptual benefits of a change as well as the practical ones. This may involve a physical demonstration of the benefits. One telemarketing firm provided a mock-up of the new scanning technology that was going to be introduced to its customers.

? **Will key relationships be adversely impacted?** One of the least discussed resistance points involves the impact of the change on social relationships. Changing the physical layout of an office may alter the interpersonal relationships. Those employees who routinely see one another for casual conversations may not have such opportunities with a new office plan. Organisations that are moving to "virtual offices" often find this issue impinging on the ultimate success of the venture.

? **Is management prepared for employee reactions to change?** There is a typical pattern of reactions to major change. The first stage of reaction is *denial* that the change will really occur. The second stage is *anger* over the "whys" of the change: "why is this happening to me?" *Bargaining*, the third stage, is when employees may attempt to make various exchanges to forestall the impending change. The fourth stage, depression, is when employees begin to accept the inevitable. The final stage, *acceptance*, is when employees honestly and wholeheartedly endorse the change. Change initiators not familiar with these reactions may be dismayed by employee responses. Consequently, change initiators may respond in inappropriate ways such as becoming overly defensive during the anger stage or ridiculing employees during bargaining. Therefore, it is usually advisable to educate change initiators about this pattern and the proper types of responses (Clampitt, 1991).

A strategy will begin to emerge as these questions are discussed. In some cases, a "no" response to any of the above questions can be turned to a "yes" by a small alteration to the change, as in the case of renaming a "reengineering" project. In other cases, the plan can not be altered. Therefore, more aggressive plans

might need to be initiated to address the concerns. For instance, organisations that are heavily reliant on telecommuting may create quarterly retreats for those employees "residing" in their virtual offices.

<p align="center">**Audience Analysis**</p>

What is persuasive to one person may not be persuasive to another. This is the fundamental principle of audience analysis. The objective at this point is to isolate key groups of employees that may be directly and indirectly impacted by the change. This may prove more difficult than it appears at first glance. For instance, many downsizing efforts have failed to reach long-term productivity goals because organisations have not planned the communication to the "survivors", those employees left after the cutback. These employees often have deep fears about their future that, in turn, decrease their effectiveness.

Determining the key groups of employees that will be affected will vary with the type of change. There are a lot of ways to slice the pie. When an organisation alters a benefits package, age may be the key variable. With a job redesign issue, the critical variable will most likely be job classification. A flex-time proposal might impact employees with children differently than those without children.

After the key groups have been isolated, four critical questions need to be answered:

? **How will each group be impacted by the change?** Usually a change will not have the same impact on every group. Indeed, one of the great challenges in championing major political change is how to effectively target different groups. Mass media makes it exceedingly difficult to distinguish between general needs and special ones. Yet, in organisations, the different concerns of various groups can more readily be addressed.

? **What are the groups' most likely points of resistance?** Answers to this question flow directly from the one above. One tactic is to ask employees to identify their concerns. Typically they will discuss generic issues like economic loss, inconveniences and work load shifts. But they are often hesitant to bring up the other concerns that are more emotional in nature such as a perceived loss of status, social disruptions, anxiety over the unknown or insecurities about, "can I really do this new job?". Or these concerns may surface in a dysfunctional way in the form of vicious rumors. Change initiators can not assume that employees will be able to identify and articulate all of their own concerns. Wise planners take this into account.

? **What are the communication preferences of each group?** Different groups may prefer their information in different forms or through different channels. Electronic mail may be a

proper delivery system for younger employees but older employees may not feel as comfortable with that channel. Likewise, statistics might prove a proper way to make an argument for employees in the finance department but those in the marketing department might be more persuaded by stories or critical incidents.

? **Who are the "lions"?** The lions rule the tropical as well as organisational jungles. Influence is unequally distributed in an organisation. And it is not necessarily tied to job titles. Often the viability of change will rest on the reactions of key opinion leaders. Therefore, it may be important to look at the individual persuasive preferences of those key individuals that will, in turn, influence others. This may include creating a list of the lions in each group and developing tactics to exert influence on those individuals.

The net result of this thinking process is two-fold: First, a communication strategy designed for all employees starts to emerge. Second, the unique communication strategies for special groups begins to surface.

Strategic Design

The contextual and audience analysis naturally leads to the development of a strategy. Three key principles should underlie the strategic plan.

First, persuading employees is a process. This means that one e-mail message or cleverly designed brochure will not be enough. It takes time and many communicative acts to get employees to "buy-in" to change. This is usually a rather helter-skelter and messy enterprise. We discussed that employees have a fairly routine set of reactions to change starting with denial and ending with acceptance. What makes this all the more messy is that different employees and groups may be experiencing those emotions at various times during the change process. Thus, change initiators must be highly flexible in approaching the various groups.

Second, spend communication resources wisely. In order for change to be sustained, all three of these questions must be answered affirmatively[2]:

? Is there a need for the change?
? Is this change the remedy for the concern?
? Have significant disadvantages to the plan been resolved?

Since audiences have limited attention spans, choices need to be made about what issues to emphasize. If their needs are not met fairly quickly, the campaign could stall at the denial stage. For instance, if most employees are already convinced that a new office building is needed, it makes little sense to provide detailed analysis of the rationale for the construction. Instead, the focus of the strategy should be on how the remedy meets the corporate needs while avoiding any major downside. On the other hand, a company attempting to make a significant change in its health care benefit when employees do not need or want to change has a different focus. In this case, the strategy involves three distinct phases in which employees are first alerted to the staggering financial burden of the existing plan on the company.

Finally, allocate resources according to the audience analysis. Common concerns of all the groups impacted by the change typically imply the key motivational rallying point. To this point, we have discussed a lot of what may seem to be defensive measures. But it is important to think about the fundamental rationale or rally cry that will ultimate sustain the change. For one plant, we chose the acronym CFA (Coordinator Focused Accountability) as our banner to support a job redefinition plan. The choice of this acronym was strategic on two counts. First, this company had a strong culture built around the value of CFQ (Customer Focused Quality). Secondly, the term "coordinator" referred to the employees who actually initiated and championed the change. This was strategic in that it contrasted sharply with a previous plan that was proposed and implemented by top management.

Based all these principles, we develop specific communicative objectives that apply to all the employees as well as unique ones for specific groups.

<div align="center">**Tactics**</div>

The tactics are the "how-to's", the operational plans that emerge from the strategy. There are five areas to consider in developing tactics. Some standard rules of thumb in developing each tactic are highlighted below.

Channels

Typically it is better to use multiple channels because it increases the probability employees will hear about the change. One university announced most of it changes via electronic mail. Officials were befuddled as to why there was "uneven" buy-in by the faculty. They failed to account for the fact that only about half the faculty had terminals in their offices. Likewise, "rich" channels are usually better for nonroutine communication. Rich channels, such as face-to-face meetings, allow for rapid feedback and quick adaptation to employee concerns. It is very difficult to ascertain whether employees are still in the denial stage if the change is announced via corporate memorandum.

Message

Professional communicators use many principles in constructing messages but two are particularly useful at this juncture. First, try to link messages to the audience's pre-existing thinking routines. For example, when we communicated to employees about the need for a change in health care plans, we compared the situation to a family expense crisis because this was something to which they could easily relate. We oriented our communication around the following theme: "As a parent, what would you do if your children were in the habit of buying their clothing from an expensive department store if they could get similar clothing less expensively?" This proved particular persuasive because our audience analysis revealed that most of the employees had teenagers and their leisure activities were oriented around family matters.

Second, always discuss the upside and downside of the change. There is a tendency to over-sell the change by stressing the positives. However, in the long run, a reasonable discussion of the downside proves useful. Why? Because it provides areas for employee input and they may be in the perfect position to solve some of the potential problems. Moreover, sharing concerns can create a climate of trust. Miller and Monge's (1985) noteworthy field study of an office layout change provides further empirical support of the importance of sharing both kinds of information.

Safety Valves

No matter how persuasively the change has been advocated, employees will usually have some doubts. There will probably be some dissent regarding parts of the plan. Change initiators need to "harvest the dissent" which involves proactively soliciting worker concerns about the change in a supportive environment. If management does not harvest the dissent, others will. In one dairy plant, the plant manager announced major policy changes on bulletin boards and in plant-wide meetings. He was perplexed that "nothing I say ever gets done". The reason why was that he never harvested the dissent. He would not entertain any significant questions to the new policy. This was a perfect opportunity for a few malcontent union workers to harvest the dissent themselves, in a non-constructive manner, and stymie change efforts.

Therefore, it is important to include safety valves for employees to express their concerns. The key principle is to legitimize their concerns, no matter how far fetched they may be. A simple but powerful technique is to merely ask employees to voice their concerns and record them on a flip chart in a nonevaluative fashion. Only after all the issues have been recorded are any of the problems debated or discussed. Moreover, the list can be transformed into a series of Questions/Answers that can be distributed to all employees within 24 hours. Change initiators, inspired by their visions, often resist this

seemingly sloppy enterprise because it appears to tarnish their conception. Yet, the focus of change is not to garner kudos but to get employees to quickly accept the new vision.

Timing

This is the tactical issue which has been least studied. The stages of employee reactions can provide a rough guide to timing. A frequent timing mistake is to make announcements to employees without building in time to actively harvest the dissent. One small manufacturing plant announced a major cutback of employee bonuses on a Friday afternoon. The only rationale they provided was that "the plant wasn't making its numbers, although we expect it to turn around". On Monday, rumors about the plant closing and layoffs ran rampant. The CEO said it took two years for all the rumors to die down. One critical problem with his approach was that there was not a forum to harvest dissent. What made matters worse was that on Saturday and Sunday the employees commiserated with neighbors, fellow workers and family members. These were precisely the wrong people because they had no knowledge of the actual situation. This was fertile ground for rumors.

Who

Who communicates something may be as important as what they say. Therefore, change initiators need to carefully select who will announce and sponsor changes. In a medical clinic, we asked all the physicians to be involved in the announcement of an organisational change. They were not all equally skilled presenters. However, demonstrating solidarity among the physicians was more important than oratorical performances. Yet, we were able to arrange for the physician with the greatest charisma to kick off the presentation. A physician who was very precise and detail-oriented explained the actual process and stages of the change. Once again, change initiators may be such enthusiastic supporters that they fail to realize that they may not be in the best position to announce the endeavor. Clearly, the background analyses discussed above should inform these decisions.

Monitor

During times of change, one can learn a lot about an organisation. For instance, change initiators can determine who the real leaders are. They may more fully understand critical underlying organisational issues that may lie dormant in calmer times. This all adds to a deeper understanding of the organisational culture. As they monitor the change, they can gather other ideas to continuously improve the communication strategy the next time.

Case Study

We have used the iceberg as a tool to develop strategic plans for communicating changes ranging from new health care plans to culture shifts. Basically the tool helps structure the thought process of change

initiators around the long-term objective of garnering employee support as quickly as possible. The key is to focus the major part of the discussion around the analyses and strategy. The purpose of this section is to discuss how we applied this methodology in a specific situation.

Background

We were asked to develop a communication plan to smoothly implement the reengineering of a paper machine[3]. Even though engineering studies had been conducted for over six months, we were invited into the process just two weeks before "D-day". Ideally, communication strategies should have been developed at the outset of the project. Listed below are the pertinent facts of the case:

? There were 1,000 employees working around the clock at this paper plant. There were 20 major pieces of machinery in the operation. This was the first machine to be "reengineered", but if this trial worked, others would follow.

? The basic change involved the following: If a crew member noticed a defect at any time in the production of the paper, he/she should shut down that machine and immediately correct the problem. In the past, small defects were passed on to the "doctors" (repair guys) at the end of the run. They then fixed the problem.

? With the reengineering, the "doctor" position was eliminated. The change meant the most to those in the middle of the process who were in charge of rewinding the paper. Under the new system, they had to be more vigilant in noticing defects.

? In the past, employees on this machine have spearheaded experimental projects at the plant. However, a job satisfaction survey revealed they were among the most dissatisfied in the plant. The plant manager, while an effective communicator, took a fairly "laissez-faire" approach to the situation. He supported the experiment, but let the production engineer and department head plan the entire change.

? The local economy was strong with little unemployment. Working for this plant was considered a "plum" job because compensation was comparatively high. Employees knew that the company was very successful financially and continued to grow.

Contextual analysis

We had a distinct advantage in understanding the culture and context of the change. We had conducted a major climate survey for the organisation as well as numerous follow-up projects. Therefore the contextual analysis was not difficult.

A team comprised of the project engineer, department head, and shift supervisors developed the communication strategy. To provide them with a background for dealing with the change, they were all asked to read an article about communicating change.

The first issue we noticed was that the term "reengineering" was not congruent with the culture. In fact, a few local businesses had used "reengineering" as a justification for recent layoffs. Therefore, we made a strategic decision to always refer to the project as CI^2, which stood for "Continuous Improvement squared". The implication was that we were taking "continuous improvement", a concept well known by the workers, to a higher level. The basic notion of CI^2 was fairly noncomplex and manageable but the benefits and advantages over past practices were less clear. Thus, we needed to clearly demonstrate the advantages and the benefits.

Audience Analysis

Table 2 is a partial summary of the audience analysis. We felt that one key concern of all the groups was overcoming a general level of dissatisfaction that was related to some misperceptions. More specifically, a strategic objective emerged in which management reasserted the leadership role of the crews on this machine. We exploited the fact that, in the past, the crews had led most of the experimental projects. The fact that these employees worked with their hands all day long was carefully figured into the strategy. We did not want to just provide an engineer's justification--we wanted to provide evidence that the workers could actually touch. This would also go a long way toward establishing tangible benefits.

Strategic Design

Five key strategic objectives emerged from several days of discussion about the context and audience analysis:

- ? Reassert the crew's leadership role
- ? Fully describe the change
- ? Provide adequate rationale
- ? Demonstrate flexibility in the implementation
- ? Legitimize concerns and fears

These were our objectives *for all the groups.* However, we also developed some objectives *for specific groups.* For instance, rewinders might perceive a loss of job status if they had to crawl around the machines. We wanted to address that potential concern, along with others, for each group.

Tactics

Two crew meetings were scheduled to announce the change. The agenda for the first crew meeting, on a Monday, was the following:

?   What is the background of CI^2?

?   What is CI^2?

?   Why are we doing CI^2?

?   What are the potential problems?

?   How do we get started?

The department head, who was very motivating, started the meeting by providing background on the process. The second agenda item was based on a physical demonstration of the process. Workers, selected from the audience, were asked to simulate current coating, rewinding, and doctoring processes on a roll of paper toweling. Then the engineer asked the assembled crews where the potential problems could occur. Finally, with a new roll of toweling spread across the assembly room, the engineer with the aid of the workers, demonstrated the new procedure. This proved to be an important step for a workforce that was naturally skeptical of "theories". The presentation ended with a discussion of the rationale and special problems. The crews raised some general questions that were recorded on a flip chart. However, the crews were asked to think about the proposal and come back the next day "loaded and ready to shoot" (an apt metaphor for the numerous hunters in the group).

On Tuesday, the entire meeting was dedicated to recording employee concerns on flip charts which were then taped on the walls. In fact, by the end of the day, it looked like the room had been re-wallpapered. No matter how inane the objection, it was recorded somewhere. Some employees openly questioned why a profitable company needed to make even more money. Others were concerned about the doctor position. (Their job was eliminated in this area, but they were reassigned to other units in the plant.) By the end of the day, it was clear that there were about 20 key issues that needed to be addressed. These concerns were dealt with by the planning team at the end of the meeting. Finally, the team wrote up the entire list of key concerns and provided written answers to each of the questions. These were distributed the next day on e-mail and on bulletin boards. In essence, this entire meeting was designed to harvest the dissent. It was also the meeting that the planning team feared the most.

Results

While the team's fears were understandable, they ultimately proved unfounded. There were some tense moments in the second meeting but, in the end, it moved beyond griping into some real problem solving. Members of the planning team reported gleefully that they could see the crews move through the stages of reaction from denial to acceptance in the course of two days. When CI^2 actually took place a week later, it was among the smoothest transitions in the plant's history. One engineer who was originally skeptical about the merits of "communication planning", jubilantly reported that he wished he would have known about this process 20 years ago: "It would have saved me a lot of sleepless nights". Importantly, the expected decrease in production lasted about half the time anticipated. Essentially the experiment worked. Other machines are now being reengineered with this communication strategy built into the process.

One mistake was made. A small but important group of employees who occasionally worked on the machine were not included in these meetings. These employees were most resistant to the change and were not included in the original audience analysis.

Conclusion

Major changes like this one typically involve a temporary loss of productivity. As seen in Figure 3, there are two dimensions that a communication plan seeks to minimize: the depth of the drop (A) and the duration of the drop (B). Based on this case and others, we believe that the communication plan is an integral part of that process. Employees are usually uncomfortable with the uncertainty produced by major changes. Often managers try to drive uncertainty out of a new endeavor by adhering to rigid procedures and limiting the information flow. This may work for robots but rarely does for people. Our approach is based on a premise of *focused flexibility*. Employees need to be *focused* on the specific change but they need to be *flexible* enough to adapt to future changes. This requires that employees have a deeper understanding of the context in which all changes are initiated. It means that they must become comfortable with the uncertainty inherent in the marketplace, research laboratory , and governmental chambers. Creating the climate for focused flexibility may be one of the greatest communication challenges facing organizations. Mastering this dilemma will not only sustain current change initiatives, but also insure the future viability of the organisation.

Table 1
Thinking Routine for Strategic Communication Plan

Contextual Analysis

1. Is the change congruent with the culture?

2. Is the change perceived as noncomplex and manageable?

3. Is the change perceived as advantageous over past practices?

4. Are the benefits of the change readily observable?

5. Will the change adversely impact key relationships?

6. Is management prepared for employee reactions to change?

Audience Analysis

1. What are the major groups of employees that will be impacted by the change?

2. How will each group be impacted?

3. What are their most likely points of resistance?

4. What are the communication preferences of each group?

5. Who are the "lions" in each group?

Strategy

1. What is the unifying vision?

2. What are the major communicative objectives for all the groups?

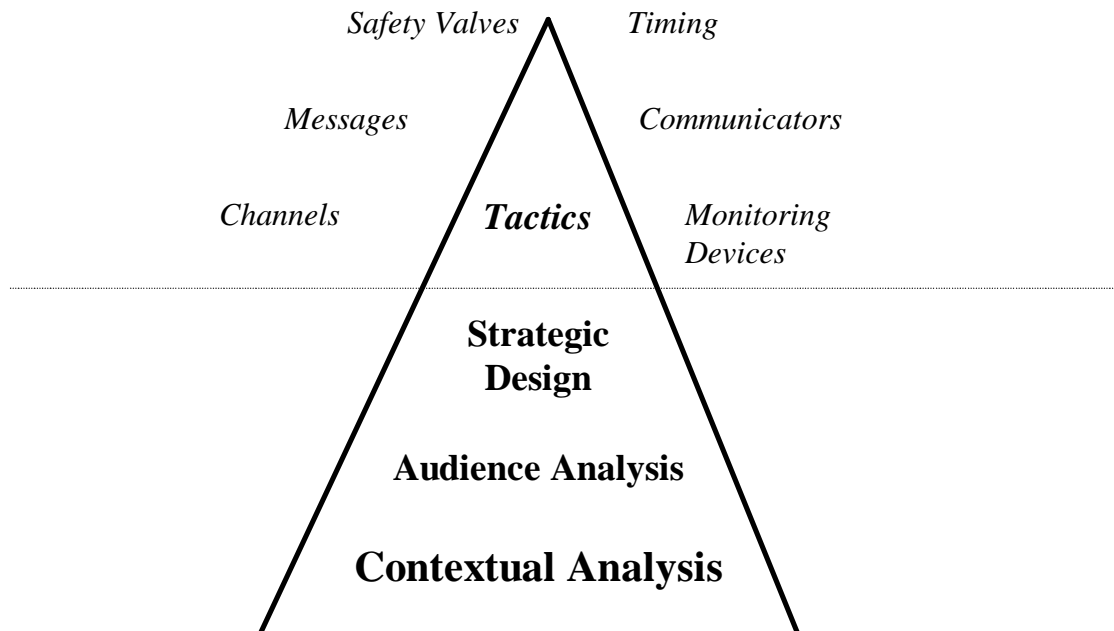3. What are the unique objectives for specific groups or lions?

Tactics

1. What channels should be used?

2. What are the key messages?

3. What should be the timing of the various communications?

4. What are the "safety valves"?

5. How should the process by monitored?

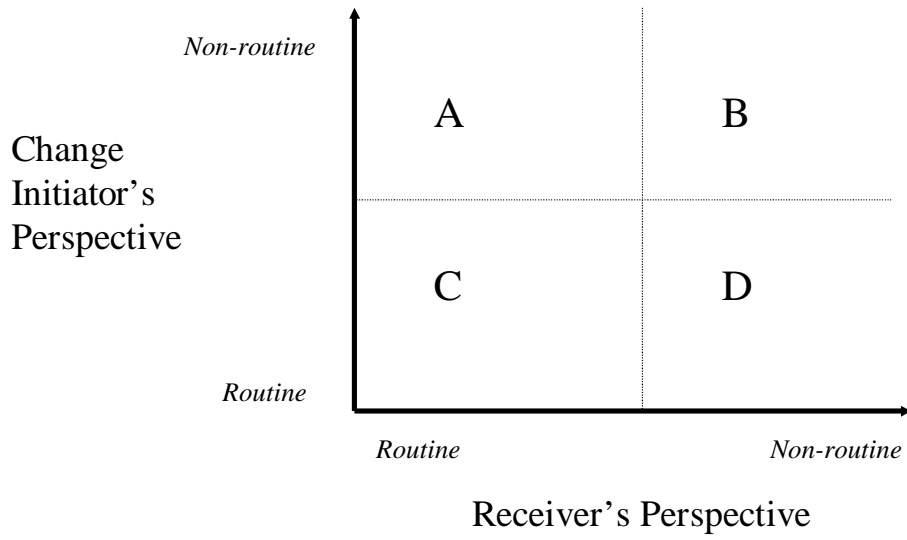6. Who should be in charge of creating the critical messages?

Table 2
Audience Analysis for Case Study

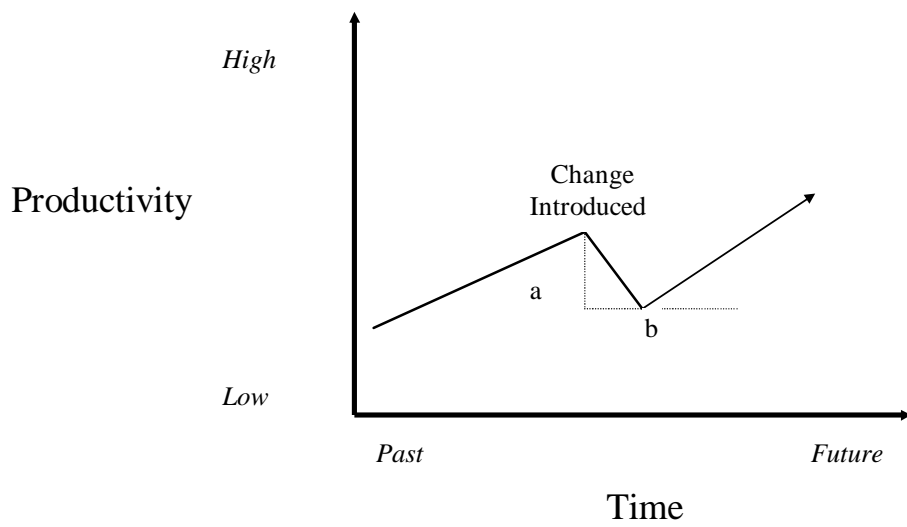| Audience	Potential Resistance Points		Message Preferences		Channel Preferences	
Union Committee	?	Potential job loss Wage protection	? ?	Provide theoretical rationale Show proof that workers are treated equally	? ?	Regular union/mgt. meeting Meeting minutes
Coaters (1st job on line)	? ?	Idea is crazy (never done before) Their suppliers may provide them poor raw materials	? ? ?	Demonstrate actual (not theoretical)benefits Use stories of success Avoid using numbers	? ?	Visually based demonstrations Face-to-face meetings
Rewinders (2nd job on line--wind paper)	? ? ?	Status loss Others cause them problems More responsibility	? ? ? ?	Demonstrate actual (not theoretical) benefits Use stories of success Avoid using numbers Show respect	?	Same as above
Doctors (last on line--fix problems)	? ?	Job loss Status loss	?	Same as above	?	Same as above
Crews of other machines	? ?	Fear of plant layoffs More responsibility	?	Same as above	? ?	Electronic mail Supervisor briefings

Figure 1
Strategic Planning "Iceberg"

Safety Valves   Timing

Messages   Communicators

Channels   *Tactics*   Monitoring Devices

Strategic Design

Audience Analysis

Contextual Analysis

Figure 2
Classifying Change

Change Initiator's Perspective

Non-routine

A   B

C   D

Routine

Routine   *Non-routine*

Receiver's Perspective

Figure 3
Impact of Change on Productivity

Productivity

High

Change Introduced

a

b

Low

Past   *Future*

Time

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Notes

Note 1 - Some of these questions were adapted from Rogers' (1983) work on hastening the adoption rate for innovations.

Note 2 - Debaters will recognize these as the key stock issues known as need, remedy and disadvantage.

Note 3 - We have made some minor modifications to the case in order to protect the identity of the company.

About the Authors

Dr. Phillip Clampitt received his Ph.D. in organizational communication from the University of Kansas. He has published in various journals, including*: Journal of Business Communication, Management Communication Quarterly, Journal of Broadcasting,* and *Communication World*. He is a full professor at UW-Green Bay in the Information Sciences Program. His most recent book, *Communicating for Managerial Effectiveness* (8th printing) is based on the research from past communication assessments. He is the founder of *meta***comm** a firm specializing in improving internal communication practices.

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