

Education Blog: Institutional Technological Change Manager

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Abstract: - This article aims to describe an experience of technological change management, effected through an Institutional Education Blog, which was implemented in the *Unidad Educativa Bolivariana "Genarina Dugarte Contreras"* located in the rural community of *Pueblo Nuevo del Sur* in Mérida, Venezuela. This experience was a planned activity where all institutional community members participate actively, based upon a multidisciplinary team that manages the premise: change is continuous and fundamental for organizational transformation, and this was done for developing skills that allow operating effectively an educational institution today, which is becoming more challenging. In this work it is explained that there was resistance to change, the steps used for transforming the organization, and discusses the most common mistakes when it is wanted to manage changes and how they were treated. It also explains how to bring lasting success and what should be the balance that must be established and finally refers to the organizational learning achieved.

Keywords: edublog, e-Learning, transforming the organization.

1 Introduction

The main constant in human life is change, which is evident in every second, so this concept is very important for handling a positive organizational transformation. For making this possible, it has to be managed achieving the goals to be reached, negotiating for taking the right way for all parts involved; it is important to be well thought out and planned, considering the human talent and institutional impact [1].

It is important to mention that it was wanted to manage technological change in the *Unidad Educativa Bolivariana "Genarina Dugarte Contreras"*, because that institution is located in *Pueblo Nuevo del Sur*, State of Mérida, Venezuela, which is a rural farming community with hard access because the roads are in very bad condition, also have communication problems, plus most of the affiliated faculty and staff do not live in the town, having to take an average of one hour and thirty minutes to get to the workplace, thus is vital to integrate a media through which it becomes possible to communicate more easily. The Information and Communication

Technology (ICT) are suitable to enable a smooth and effective work, it is noteworthy that this is achieved at the same time Information Society and Knowledge integration, which will help all staff members of the organization not to be isolated from existing technologies.

It was raised as alternatives of communication the WIKI and EDUCATIVE BLOG, choosing to use the second, due to the staff skills needs of the Education Unit in technological areas. Hereby it was agreed to share educational materials and communicate corporate information, it is noteworthy that the process for achieving the goal became a key project and difficult for institutional adaptation, essentially because it is related to the competitiveness of a school frame using one of the tools provided by Web 2.0 and difficult because of the psychological barriers that had to be overcome [1].

The barriers of any kind have to be broken, because in this society, manage technological change is one of the greatest challenges facing organizations and individuals, therefore it is considered in recent time the need to execute a processing agent function,

running and coordinating the processes required to enable the Institutional Education Blog [8].

2 Educational Blog

The term blog is a product of the Web-log word coined by Jorn Barger in 1997, this web site provides instant publishing of entries or posts, also allows readers to give feedback to the author in the form of comments. Entries are organized chronologically beginning with the most recent, for it also receives the name of blog or Web log, which requires little or no knowledge of coding in Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML). There are plenty of free sites or applications that let you create and host blogs, among the most popular are: WordPress, LiveJournal, Xanga, Edublogs and Blogger, the latter was used to make the Blog of the institution, for its simplicity and ease of publication [7].

The Blog of the *Unidad Educativa Bolivariana "Genarina Dugarte Contreras"* has the following address: <http://uebolgenarinadugartecontreras.blogspot.com> and has the capability that all staff members of the Educational Institution has the ability to post, his thoughts, opinions, share experiences and educational materials (videos, presentations, documents, etc.), in addition to comments, this was done in order to make available to all members of the institutional community and thus they are able to actively participate in this initiative, which required much time and effort of all actors.

Considering the previously presented considerations, the transformation to use a Web 2.0 tool for an organization of any kind can not be imposed from above, but must be understood and accepted by all involved persons, in order to minimize resistance to change and impedes the implementation of these processes, we must never forget that this process always means a threat to individuals in their current status. In addition, an apparent paradox, this process is slow, but necessary to respond to unforeseen and urgent situations, such as not being isolated from the benefits available from existing technologies [8].

3 Resistance to change

Resistance to change often generates that several initiatives fall. In the institutional Blog, the main factor was the management of ICT, it is acknowledged that this is a natural and inevitable

reaction to the loss of control and variation of common environmental conditions and this definition includes the concept of pain, so it is elemental to identify the cause(s) to help strengthen the process of transformation. There are three types of resistance, open resistance, which is personal and helps to improve the process, this was found in the Education Unit, while the covert resistance is more difficult to remove because it is driven by another person and the last type of resistance is the irrational and policy which will never be eradicated [9].

For eliminating the resistance to change, it must be overcome the paradox that says: *when confidence is most needed is more difficult to get*, because if they have not confidence in the work to be done, it will become a big barrier, it should be provided autonomy to each person in order to get personal fulfillment from the fact that trust is based on predictability and capacity [4].

One aspect of vital importance to overcome is the resistance to transformation, is to show everyone involved the information without any kind of secret that actors seek to participate actively and thus obtain a genuine change that result in tangible benefits because even people who were resistant ended up participating, because the one who perseveres wins [9].

4 Transforming the organization

Kotter and Cohen [4] identified eight key steps for transforming the organization, which were adjusted to this particular case:

Step 1. Increase urgency: It is necessary to encourage the use of Web 2.0 tools for their current need in order to avoid isolation of the current changes.

Step 2. Creating a leadership team: It was created a group of teachers enough staff and prepared for driving change and they were working together from the beginning of this new experience.

Step 3. Get the right vision: the teams have produced a plan of action for developing the vision to build and manage an Educational Blog that will serve to communicate corporate information and share ideas and educational materials, there were established brainstorm and six thinking hats strategies as fundamental pillars for the effort of technological change.

Step 4. Communicate for producing the approval:

It was established a close communication between members of the institution, in order that each and every one of them begin to accept the idea of change, which was noticed through friendly behavior.

Step 5. Provide authority or responsibility for action:

They were issued to members of the Institution basic training to make entries and post comments on the blog, thus were given the ability to act based on the vision.

Step 6. To achieve small victories in the short term:

progress was made in the shown interest concerning the need to use the Blog as a powerful means of communication.

Step 7. Do not abandon:

Changes were gradually obtained, for example, it was found the third place in the Edublogs competition for the Free Congress Education 2010. Also it continues the constant publication of entries in the Blog.

Step 8. Make the changes prevail: Friendly and motivating messages are published as incentive that changes may prevail in time, so meetings are constantly held and it was created a Facebook group that serves to inform the development of institutional Blog or for disseminating other desired information.

5 Change management in an enterprise, institution or organization

There are different names on the change management, within which it can be mentioned total quality management, reengineering, optimal sizing, restructuring, cultural change and conversion. The basic goal of this concept is to make fundamental changes to develop skills that facilitate efficient operations, which is becoming more challenging every day [3].

At the present time, it is unquestionable that the change management is not an isolated definition that has emerged by magic, nor is it the only result of a simple hierarchical decision of the organization heads, then for the launch and implementation of a transformation process is necessary for companies, institutions or organizations comply with general requirements, such as a management style that fosters communication and dialogue with a certain hierarchy of different levels [8].

Many companies wanted to manage the institutional change, obtaining different results, some had positive

outcomes such as SONY which became the company most known for changing the image of poor quality that Japanese products had in the early fifties [4], negative results such as Eastern Airlines and other companies obtained an intermediate point with a general bias toward the bottom of the scale, according to an analysis of the last decade in a hundred companies, most remarkable is to learn the following two general lessons:

- In most successful cases the change process usually goes through many stages, which together require long time.
- Commit serious errors in any stage has a catastrophic effect, which reduces the speed and offset the improvements and effort that had been made [3].

5.1 Common errors when you want to manage change in a company

There are many common errors, but these are the eight most important according to Kotter and Cohen [4]:

5.1.1 Error 1. Not establishing the true importance and meaning of the urgent: to prevent this, motivation was used for transmission and communication of the impact of information technology and communication in society and in education.

5.2.2 Error 2. Not creating a sufficiently powerful direction coalition: It was created a multidisciplinary team consisting of a computer technician, a teacher who taught computer classes and two teachers who are currently students of the Master of Computer Education and Instructional Design program, which was done with the objective being successful in the plan.

5.2.3 Error 3. Lack of vision: To prevent this error, the transformation project was developed with a future image, relatively easily communicated to the members belonging to the institution, stating the necessary elements for developing the proposal.

5.2.4 Error 4. Communication level lower than required: It was spent considerable time and effort for preparing newsletters and exhibition workshops

for obtaining the support of all participants in the institutional community.

5.2.5 Error 5. Do not remove obstacles to the new vision: It was involved all members of the institution as the process progressed, then they were encouraged to try new methods, develop new ideas and to provide leadership, with the only restriction that actions are adapted to the parameters of the overall vision.

5.2.6 Error 6. Not systematically develop a plan for short-term results: It was shown the progress of the graphic interface of the Blog, also wrote in a contest which won third place.

5.2.7 Error 7. Thinking about Victory too soon: The Educational Blog of the *Unidad Educativa Bolivariana "Genarina Dugarte Contreras"* is in a continuous process of construction and administration, as it lacks three to five years to achieve real consolidation and deep in all participants Institutional community (including students).

5.2.8 Error 8. Not recognize the changes in the culture of the organization: this is why it's continuously spreading the importance of Education Blog for the Unit, because is part of the institution, using advertising billboards and social information network to show the importance of this tool and show how slogan is: *Without the Educational Blog, Genarina is incomplete.*

Finally, it's important to have a vision of the technological change process to reduce the proportion of errors. Making fewer mistakes usually makes the difference between success and failure [1].

6 How to enable long-term success?

To make a lasting success is important to have values and essential purposes that remain constant, while the strategies and practices must be adapted to a changing world [3].

Core values are important and durable statements of an organization, which have an intrinsic value and importance to its members, usually only takes three to five of them, for example Walt Disney has the following:

- No cynicism.

- Promote and disseminate the "American integrity values"
- Creativity, dreams and imagination.
- Obsessive attention to consistency and details.
- Conservation and Control of Disney magic [3].

For its part, the Educational Blog of the institution has as essential values:

- Permanent work
- Creativity and initiative
- Commitment to Education.

It is necessary that the organization has a essential purpose, the *main reason* of the organization; in other words, the soul of the company, for example Walt Disney aims to *make people happy* [3]. While the purpose of Institutional Education Blog is: *communicate information and share educational materials for a common benefit.*

A key aspect is setting BIG BOLD AND CRAZY goals (BBAC), based on a clearly articulated objective as an effective tool for stimulating progress and thus to obtain the commitment of everyone in the process because it is tangible, energizing, extraordinarily oriented achievement, so we wanted to make the transformation in a rural community of difficult access and communication problems. It is noteworthy that they should not to be confusion between core values and essential purposes and the latter with the BBAC [6].

To conclude, a key aspect of success is that the people involved trust the messages communicated, this is achieved through valid, precise, accurate and reliable means. Informal meetings were held and requested that questions be made in writing, answering all of them, even those with no logic (because as an agent of change must be responsive and patient at all times) and this it was achieved by increasing staff commitment to technological change [10].

7 Balance in Change Management

It is surprising that there are survivors of the conversion, in other words a change passed over them without they have passed through the change. It was amazing the change of thought when it was used

the Blog as managers of technological restructuring, because members of the Educational Institution began to think and do things differently, so it can be stated that management was conceived to be handled differently than learning for using a machine or cure of the body disorders; it was handled within the framework of enabling a connection and balance of all elements of the proposed conversion [6].

It is essential to manage change so as to maintain constant conversations among people who lead the project and the organizations in which they are expected to put into practice new strategies, then it is essential to create an organizational environment which may cause the changes, considering the emotional connections that are commonly removed from the workplace but are essential for successful transformation [1].

According to popular wisdom, when you begin to work with personal that accept the vision, automatically it will be followed an achievement and a change in their behaviors and attitudes that will bring transformation commitment to the organization and the spiral of success will continue in the time. It's possible that this has occurred in a institution, but is usual that not good effects occur, therefore we must involve all participants, for making possible the interest and winning attitude to the project, so that when announcing the program gets love, care and affection, ie, creating the new vision [3].

In the order of the previous ideas, it should be noted the existence of basic responsibilities among all participants which should safely assume these activities that are: setting the context for change and provide guidance, stimulate conversation, provide adequate resources to ensure consistency of messages, activities, policies and behaviors, provide opportunities for joint development, anticipate, identify and address personal problems, and develop the critical mass [1].

The REALITY is another matter, because there are employees who are unmotivated and skeptical of technological innovation, that is why the blog as a manager of restructuring was continuing a process of discussion with stakeholders of the institution, which was very difficult, especially with teachers who have been working there for more than fifteen years and the maintenance personnel, the former because they have rooted many beliefs and tricks, second by fear to use existing technologies, this produces a

resistance to change , which was attacked in a meticulous [6].

8 Conclusions

The Blog as manager of corporate technological change led to the understanding of the origin and organizational learning process, based on the principle that the planned restructuring is not complete [5].

Consequently, it is noteworthy organizational learning in the perspective of transformation. Dixon difference between two models, considering that organizations can change in two ways: following a planned or static model. This was adopted by the institution at the beginning, but in the course of the project it was adopted a continuous model, because some of the things that characterizes the latter, according to the author, is the ability of continuous organizational restructuring resulting from the learning capacity of the organization, this implies that the Education Unit became a high learning ability, since it changed and will be continuously changing and not through specific exchange episodes, which is what characterizes organizations that are in accordance with planned model [2].

Blog mainstreaming in the educational institution allowed managing technological changes, stimulating the creativity of those involved, to put into play the initiative and expertise in a climate different from this common and encourages decision-making autonomy and control. The task was not and will not be easy, however the use of various strategies will help facilitate the learning processes involved and the greater reward is that there is and there will be a significant transformation for all participants of this beautiful project [7].

It is essential to consider that managing technological change means balancing a continuous system that changes through time. The difficulty is how to do it and how everyone will share a view about how they should interact the components in order to all members of the institution will trust that this transformation will bring a real and functional restructuring [3].

Finally, the change management in an educational institution within the framework of the Information

and Communication Technologies should be possible, because we are currently in the Information and Knowledge Society, therefore it is learning the way for overcoming barriers. Learning how to learn and learning how to unlearn, and not having resistance to the changes needed to be adapted with the current dynamic, growing the project, with suggestions, trust, commitment with oneself, with the teaching, learning and education; do it with dedication and feeling, creativity and initiative, hard work, in conclusion make a joint effort and love which results in excellent results.

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