Using real-time change data to drive your decision making

Key highlights from the annual Power of Data research report

Changefirst

This e-book is designed to give sponsors[1] an insight into how the use of structured change data successfully shapes change programs and reduces reliance on intuition.

It provides highlights from Changefirst's more detailed Change data report which will be published in full later this year.

For over 20 years, our substantial global change management database – one of the largest change management databases in the world, with over 700,000 data points – has helped organizations:

- Identify key change management risks and enablers

- Adjust change plans based on real-time data

- Provided leaders with essential people analytics for more informed and faster decision-making

- Helped change agents increase their productivity during rapid roll-outs

- Identify and enable best practice

As part of this process a global "army" of change agents are actively utilizing nine powerful and intuitive planning, diagnostic and tracking tools on our Roadmap Pro platform to support high quality change management planning and successful deployment. Our automated survey and data gathering capability makes it easy to access these data insights and risk information, which are crucial to making poor change implementation a thing of the past.

Two key questions at the heart of the report

1. Are organizations collecting and analysing the right data, to plan and deliver changes more effectively?

2. Can this data shape implementation decisions and make a real difference to change program performance?

[1]The term 'Sponsor' is used throughout. For the purposes of these report highlights the term is defined as a senior leader who is the initiator of a major change project or program.

This e-book references data from the Roadmap Pro platform

Across our entire database, as of March 2018:

- Close to **43,525 assessments** have been completed

Some key findings and recommendations from our research:

1. People continue to be overwhelmed by change programs in their organizations
2. Analysis of past projects often shows that commitment can be hard to build
3. Analysis of past projects also identifies the Top 5 change risks that contribute to low commitment
4. Regular tracking is vital in delivering change programs successfully
5. Commitment to change can be built – but it requires perseverance
6. How this data can be beneficial to your organization

What more than 45,000 people and almost 700,000 data points can tell you about successful change implementation

People are telling us they are overwhelmed by change programs in their organizations

The idea that people can be overwhelmed by the number, complexity and velocity of change programs is not a new one. However, our data strongly suggests that people continue to be overwhelmed by the sheer cumulative demand and speed of change. This is affirmed by the results from our Change Demand Assessment - where almost half - 48% - of people, across different industries, feel that their organization is overwhelmed by too much change and lack the focus to get business critical projects delivered in a sustainable way.
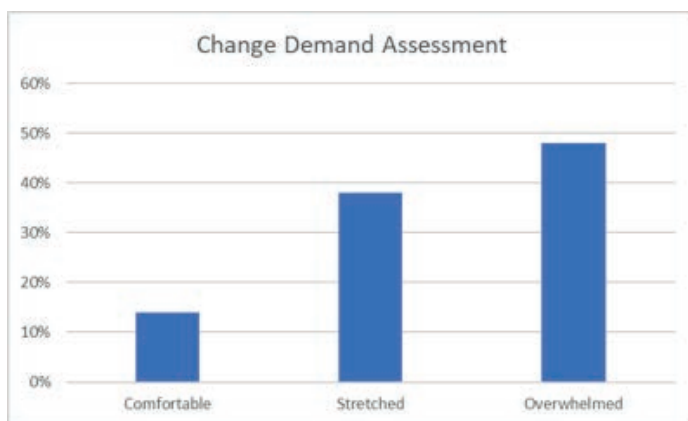
Source: Changefirst Change Demand Assessment 2018

Some practical recommendations

- It's important that leaders understand how employees tend to see the demand for change. Sponsors tend to see the demand for change as the programs they initiate. Employees, on the other hand, will see it as the total number of the changes they face in the workplace These changes might be initiated by sponsors, middle managers or their team leaders. This difference is key to understanding how to manage change across an organization

- The main consequence, of this, is that sponsors who want their organizations to successfully change need to be able to control the number and sequencing of changes through-out the organization rather than simply focusing on the changes they personally initiate

- It also points to the need for executives to understand the capabilities and capacity of the workforce to be able to assimilate the changes planned. If the demand for change exceeds the capacity of the organization at any point in time, then some or all the change agenda may fail to be implemented. The answer? Organizations either must reduce the number of changes or increase the capacity of the organization to deliver change

Change Demand Assessment (CDA)

The CDA is a strategic tool for identifying the cumulative impact of change on the organization. It is modelled on the 6 Drivers of Demand. The 6 Demand Drivers are assessed by a total of 20 questions, which relate to 20 specific risk dimensions.

The purpose of the CDA is to collect data, from people in an organization or part of the organization, to:

- estimate the cumulative level of impact from all changes

- measure the status of each of the Demand Drivers

- diagnose barriers to change implementation caused by overload

- facilitate action planning for balancing demand with available capacity

Analysis of past projects often shows that commitment can be hard to build and sustain

Data from almost 10,000 respondents to our Initiative Legacy Assessment tool tells us that while people commitment and user adoption are central to creating value from business changes, there is still a tendency - from early project scoping and planning - to under-estimate or overlook known people issues.

In practical terms, this risk data asks respondents to give their personal reaction to a major change that has been declared by sponsors as having 'being implemented'.
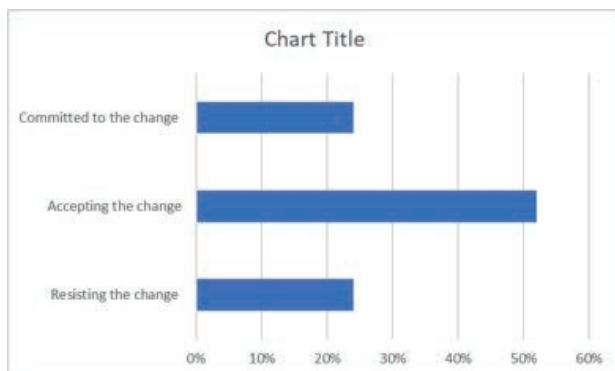
Interestingly, over the last two years the of number people resisting change has increased from 21% to 24%.

Some practical recommendations

- Organizations should always carry out an Initiative Legacy Assessment as part of the early planning of the project, preferably in the project design phase

- If Initiative Legacy Assessment data was used as a crucial part of early scoping on projects, baseline risk profiling, and even project 'Go-No' decisions organizations should consider initiating fewer change projects

- An early identification of risks should lead to a risk mitigation plan very early in the process

About the Initiative Legacy Assessment (ILA)

The ILA is a diagnostic survey tool modelled on the 6 Critical Success Factors (CSFs) for single initiatives. It takes a historical performance check against the 6 CSFs using a total of 20 questions, which relate to 20 specific risk dimensions. Respondents are asked to consider a "typical" change from past 24 months which impacted their work group directly.

The purpose of the ILA is to collect historical data, from those involved in the change initiative, to:

- help predict likely levels of commitment/resistance for initiatives

- measure the effectiveness of previous implementations with respect to the CSFs

- predict likely barriers to successful implementation of any initiative

- help facilitate corrective and enhancing action planning for a specific initiative

Analysis of past projects also identifies the **Top 5 change risks** contributing to low commitment

Our data points to five risks that should be addressed early in the planning process to improve the success rate of new change projects. See the full report for information on all the potential risks.

The top 5 legacy risks

No	Dimension	Risk Level	Question asked of respondents
1	Rewards	53	My efforts towards achieving past change initiatives were rewarded
2	Involvement	52	The level of involvement I had, in past initiatives, was too low
3	Informal Influence	48	Support from other influential people, in past initiatives, was missing
4	Personal Imperative	46	I would be able to continue working in the same way as before
5	Local role modelling	45	My managers behaviour did not model the requirements of past change initiatives

Some practical recommendations

- Instincts and experience are always valuable commodities in delivering change programs. However, this should be complemented by making actual change implementation legacy data a part of early risk assessment. When new initiatives are announced building a risk assessment based on this historical data will help to build trust, strengthen sponsors credibility and increase people's receptiveness.

- Use the Initiative Legacy Assessment as baseline data and then track the progress of change projects using the Initiative Risk Assessment. Make the review of the data the first item on the agenda when the Steering Team meets. See the next section for more information on tracking.

Regular tracking is vital in delivering change programs successfully

As change management plans are communicated, tested and deployed, new risks will emerge to threaten early commitment, and this makes measuring and tracking people change risks at different stages of a change project crucial to implementation success.

Regular tracking, at different stages of a project shows how people commit to change and user adoption levels shift. We have no experience that reaching 100% commitment is possible, but:

- establishing measurement tools and tracking processes
- and bringing transparency to new or re-occurring people risk dimensions
- will improve your change implementation performance

Some practical recommendations

We recommend tracking change at these stages. Sponsors can obviously request more data collection. So, treat this as a minimum requirement only. The data below shows the percentage of people, in the Changefirst database, responding to our Initiative Risk Assessment at each major project stage. It tells you about the need to create interest at the beginning of projects but also how - at the end of these projects - people respond less. This may indicate a number of concerns. For example, moving onto new projects before the current one is completed. In any event, efforts need to be re-doubled to engage with people adapting to change.

Number of respondents per project stage in percentage terms:

Change Announced	Start of Implementation	Middle Implementation	Near End of Implementation
21%	33%	32%	14%

Source: Changefirst Initiative Risk Assessment 2016 - 2018

The "tail-off" in responses could be for several reasons. For example:

- Project success was declared too soon
- People are becoming bored or losing interest in the project goals
- Sponsors are not being persistent enough in pursuing the program goals

Commitment to change can be built – but it requires perseverance

We know from our **Initiative Legacy Assessment** survey data that:

- **24% of people** were still resisting the change
- **52% of people** had accepted the change
- **24% of people** were committed to the change

Yet, nearing the end of implementation, average data from this Initiative Risk Assessment shows the following:

Stage of change program	Resistance	Acceptance	Commitment
Change is announced	15%	51%	34%
Early implementation	14%	58%	28%
Mid-way through implementation	12%	47%	41%
End of implementation	14%	25%	61%

The data shows that throughout the process resistance levels stay reasonably unchanged. Very importantly though, acceptance to change is decreasing and commitment increasing over time.

Caveat: It should be noted at this stage that most organizations who use this survey are also using a structured change methodology, probably our People-Centred Implementation methodology (PCI®) – with associated tools, and planning processes. Change agents are using the powerful analytics capability on the Roadmap Pro platform to gather, analyse and share data with key stakeholders.

Key risk dimensions

Some practical recommendations

- Sponsors should spend more time working with people who are Accepting the change and help them transition to Commitment.

- The data shows that persevering with small improvements in reducing risk contribute to substantial shifts from Acceptance and towards Commitment. Sponsors must encourage managers and teams to keep working on these risk areas because the pay-off can be massive:

No	Dimension	Question asked of respondents
1	Solution Visibility	The key things that must be done, to deliver this change, have been described to me
2	Future State	Messages about the intended outcomes of the change are consistent and clear
3	Imperative	The organization could afford to ignore this change initiative
4	Sponsor Behaviour	Leaders are displaying their commitment through their active involvement in the initiative
5	Local Manager Support	My manager is providing help and encouragement to me during this change initiative

The data shows two areas where organizations could be more successful:

- Risk areas 1 to 3 point to the need to keep repeating the key messages continuously during the change. Find different and more engaging ways to do this but be very consistent in the content of the messaging.

- Keep focusing on sponsor and managers behaviour as it is such a big determinant of building commitment. In particular, ensure that the change is being role modelled.

Initiative Risk Assessment (IRA)

The IRA is the key tool for planning and tracking risk in single change initiatives. It is modelled on the 6 Critical Success Factors (CSFs) for single initiatives. The 6 CSFs are assessed by a total of 20 questions, which relate to 20 specific risk dimensions.

The purpose of the IRA is to collect data, from those involved in the change initiative, to:

The purpose of the IRA is to collect historical data, from those involved in the change initiative, to:

- track levels of commitment to a specific initiative

- measure the success of the actions designed to support the CSFs

- diagnose barriers to successful implementation

- facilitate corrective and enhancing action planning for the initiative

Introducing Roadmap Pro

If your plan is to put data at the heart of your organizational change strategy then talk to us about Roadmap Pro - our revolutionary digital change platform Roadmap Pro which enables you to deliver more change, more effectively with a single, secure change management platform that:

- Enables you to take an agile, highly scalable and consistent approach to implementing effective change quickly and easily across your organization and geos

- Puts data at the heart of your change implementation strategy with the tools and analytics capability to plan, track and assess your projects and change initiatives

- All in an easy to use but highly cost effective solution that is available 24/5/365

To find our more visit our website or contact us for a demo.

About Changefirst

Since 1995, we have been enabling private and public sector organisations globally with the skills, tools and process know-how to become more Change capable. To enable them to plan and execute sustainable Change – and to do so quickly and cost-effectively. In a people-centred way.

Our research-based, proprietary methods and tools, together with an innovative use of digital technology allows us to scale and get capability to where it is most needed. Either 'off-the-shelf' or with quick configuration for a closer fit.

We are the home of:

- **PCI® (People-Centred Implementation)** - recognised as one of three Change Management methodologies most used globally by practitioners, leaders and their teams.

- **Roadmap Pro®** - a leading digital Change Management toolkit . The first, best-of-breed digital application to provide on-demand learning, a suite of assessment tools and project planning capability. All in one place and available 24/7 in the Cloud.

- **PAI™ (Personal Adaptability Inventory)** - our psychometric and development system providing a structured way to build resilient, adaptable leaders and teams. To ensure they can survive and even thrive during disruption.

Who we work with

FTSE 500 companies, medium-sized Consultancy Firms and Technology Companies are all benefiting from our methodology and digital platform. Enabling them to build productivity into their teams and drive-up user adoption of technologies, structures and processes.

Global delivery, local expertise

We **deliver our solutions globally** across **EMEA, the Americas and ASIA-PAC** through a network of selected strategic partnerships. This includes Change Synergy (AU/NZ), Dextera (South America), Transformation Life Solutions (Caribbean) and a special association with the Pan-African Leadership Institute (Africa).

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