ADKAR® Elements

Awareness Job Aid

A Awareness – Of the Need for Change

Change begins with understanding why

- What is the nature of the change?
- Why is the change needed?
- What is the risk of not changing?

Who are the key players

- Primary sponsor
- Sponsor coalition members
- People managers

How to build strength

- ADKAR Blueprint
- Sponsor Plan
- People Manager Plan
- Communications Plan

When to measure the strength of the ADKAR element

- After communicating the key messages 5 to 7 times
- Continue to measure to ensure a high level of Awareness is maintained throughout the project lifecycle

> "I understand the nature of the change and why this change is needed."

A Proven Practices for building Awareness

Proven Practices	Activities

1. Build a compelling case for the change	• Devlop a set of key messages that explain:
	  • The business drivers or opportunities that led to the need for change
	  • How the change aligns with and supports the organization's vision and strategy
	  • Why the change is needed now
	  • The risks of not changing
	  • The organizational benefits of the change
	  • The benefits of the change for external stakeholders
	  • The people dependency of the return on investment (ROI) for the change
	• Document the case for change using the 4 P's Model: Project, Purpose, Particulars, People
	• Review the case for change with the primary sponsor, senior leaders of the impacted groups, project manager and other key stakeholders and confirm they are aligned and agree with the content

2. Prepare, equip and support the primary sponsor and sponsor coalition members to lead the change at the organizational level	• Confirm that the primary sponsor is positioned at the right level of the organization
	• Educate the primary sponsor on the three key roles (ABCs) they need to perform to ensure the success of the change:
	  • Actively and visibly participate throughout the project
	  • Build a coalition of sponsorship with peers and managers
	  • Communicate directly with employees
	• Primary sponsor builds a sponsor coalition to lead the change across all the impacted groups
	• Ensure the primary sponsor and sponsor coalition members are aligned to a common definition of success for the change

Proven Practices	Activities
	• Gain the commitment of the primary sponsor and sponsor coalition members to prepare people managers to lead the change with their teams • Primary sponsor repeatedly communicates the key messages for building Awareness directly to people across the organization • Sponsor coalition members reinforce the key messages for building Awareness by communicating face-to-face with people in their respective areas of responsibility • Primary sponsor and sponsor coalition members focus on people managers as employees first, and build their Awareness and influence their Desire for the change, so that they are committed to leading the change with their teams

3. Prepare, equip and support people managers to lead the change with their teams	• Provide training, resources and follow-up support to enable people managers to fulfill their five key roles (CLARC) in leading the change with their teams:
	  • **Communicator** – communicate actively and openly
	  • **Advocate** – champion the change
	  • **Liaison** – engage and liaise with the project team
	  • **Resistance manager** – identify and manage resistance
	  • **Coach** – support employees through change
	
	• People managers translate the key communication messages into personal messages that explain what the change will mean for their team members
	
	• People managers repeatedly communicate the personal messages through face-to-face conversations with their teams to promote dialogue and confirm understanding of the need for the change
	
	• People managers supplement group conversations with individual conversations to ensure that they hear all perspectives

4. Develop and ensure the delivery of effective communications throughout the project lifecycle	• Identify and segment the impacted groups based on the need to customize the key messages for different audiences • Customize the key messages, as required, for each impacted group and determine the preferred senders

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Proven Practices	Activities
	• Include relevant information about customer satisfaction levels and expectations, market conditions, competitive threats, company performance, and changing business priorities
	• Determine the most effective packaging, timing and communication channels for sharing the messages

	• Use preferred senders to repeatedly deliver face-to-face communication of the key messages to the impacted groups:
	
	  • Primary sponsor and sponsor coalition members deliver organizational messages about the change
	  • People managers deliver personal messages about the change

	• Compile and maintain a list of frequently asked questions and prepare and distribute answers to the preferred senders
	• Time the delivery of communication messages to support and align with the ADKAR milestones established for the project lifecycle
	• Use two-way communication channels, such as small group meetings, to provide opportunities for people to ask questions and provide input to the change process
	• Surface rumors that are undermining the key messages and support the preferred senders to address the rumors
5. Measure the effectiveness of both the communications content and how it is delivered, and adapt actions	• Conduct post-communication surveys and/or focus groups to assess the effectiveness of the communication messages and the communication mediums used and take adaptive actions
	• Conduct focus groups and/or individual interviews to assess the effectiveness of the primary sponsor, sponsor coalition members and people managers in delivering the key messages and responding to issues and adapt actions as necessary

A Common Root Causes of Barrier Points at Awareness

Root Causes	Activities to Resolve

1. Case for change has not been developed or is not compelling	• Review and apply the following activities to develop a compelling case for change or to determine what revisions are required to the existing case for change
	
	• Develop a set of key messages that explain:
	  • The business drivers or opportunities that led to the need for change
	  • How the change aligns with and supports the organization's vision and strategy
	  • Why the change is needed now
	  • The risks of not changing
	  • The organizational benefits of the change
	  • The benefits of the change for external stakeholders
	  • The people dependency of the return on investment (ROI) for the change
	
	• Document the case for change using the 4 P's Model: Project, Purpose, Particulars, People
	
	• Review the case for change with the primary sponsor, senior leaders of the impacted groups, project manager and other key stakeholders and confirm they are aligned and agree with the content

2. Key messages for building Awareness do not resonate with particular groups	• Conduct focus groups and/or interviews to determine why the key messages for building Awareness do not resonate with the particular groups • Revise the key messages to address the identified gaps • Review the revised key messages with the appropriate key stakeholders and confirm that they agree with the content • Test the revised key messages with members of the affected groups to ensure they have a positive impact on building Awareness

Proven Practices	Activities to Resolve
	• Include the revised key messages in all future communications to the affected groups
3. Preferred senders are not used to communicate Awareness building messages	• Educate the primary sponsor, sponsor coalition members and people managers on the value of using preferred senders to communicate Awareness building messages • Support the primary sponsor to establish the expectation that preferred senders communicate the Awareness building messages • Prepare, equip and support the preferred senders to effectively communicate Awareness building messages • Monitor the communication activities conducted by your primary sponsor, sponsor coalition members and people managers to ensure that the expectation is being met • Report any significant variances to your primary sponsor or the appropriate sponsor coalition member, with a request that they reinforce the expectation.

4. Preferred senders are not willing to communicate Awareness building messages	• Identify and confirm the barrier point to fulfilling the communication role for sponsors and people managers
	
	• Engage each group or individual in identifying appropriate actions to mitigate or eliminate the barrier
	
	• Example actions for building people manager Desire to communicate include:
	  • Share the research finding that teams want to hear about the personal impacts of a change from their people manager
	  • Ensure that people managers receive change communications in advance of their teams, so they can anticipate and be prepared to address issues and answer questions

5. Preferred senders lack credibility with one or more impacted groups, which limits their influence	• Conduct interviews and/or focus groups with members of the groups to determine why the preferred senders lack credibility • Determine if and how the credibility issue(s) can be addressed within the timeframe available to build Awareness of the need for the change

Proven Practices	Activities to Resolve
	• Supplement communications from the existing preferred senders with communications from key influencers or subject matter experts that have credibility with the impacted groups
6. Misinformation or rumors are undermining the effectiveness of the Awareness building messages	• Identify rumors that are undermining the key messages (e.g., by establishing a confidential forum that people can use to share rumors they are hearing) • Acknowledge the rumors in communications messages and have the appropriate preferred senders address them as quickly as possible

7. Impacted groups or individuals have a high comfort level with the current state	• Acknowledge the high comfort level with the current state and empathize with the anxiety people are feeling and the challenges they are anticipating with the change
	
	• Share credible external information that challenges the viability of maintaining the status quo
	
	• Show the individual benefits of the change in a real and tangible way
	
	• Use a trusted peer, who understands the need for the change, as an influencer to shift the perspective of individuals with a barrier point at Awareness
	
	• Identify the specific aspects of the current state that provide the highest comfort and use the information to make the:
	   • Future state more appealing and easier to adopt
	   • Current state less comfortable and more difficult to maintain
	
	• Make a personal appeal to the impacted groups or individuals

8. Contestability of the reasons, urgency and risk	• Seek to understand the reasons for the contestability, which could include:
	   • Belief that the justification for the change is not valid
	   • Lack of credibility of the sender of the Awareness building messages
	   • Misinformation which conflicts with the key messages
	   • Differences in beliefs and perspectives (how the individual views the world)

Proven Practices

Activities to Resolve

- Ensure that the key messages used to build Awareness of the need for the change:
  - Provide clear, fact-based justification for the change
  - Address the urgency of the change
  - Explain why it is not possible to maintain the status quo and the risks of not changing
- Use preferred senders to communicate Awareness building messages
- Use trusted peers, who understand the need for the change, as influencers to shift the perspective of individuals who are contesting the need for the change