Career Development as a Change Leader

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The Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC) assembled a roundtable of seasoned executives to dig into the topic of Career Development as a Change Leader.

In today's dynamic business landscape, the role of change leaders has become increasingly pivotal in driving organizational growth and adaptability. Assembled from a roundtable discussion with members of the Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC), this executive brief presents key resources and strategies for career development as a change leader. It addresses the evolving demands of this field and provides insights into overcoming common challenges faced by change leadership professionals.

Roundtable Participants

Led by **Nellie Wartoft**
CEO of Tigerhall & Chair of ECLC

Annette Mychael
People, Process and Change Lead
Group M

Haley Pitts
Manager, Change Management
Aldi

Mindy Vail
Former VP, Culture & Engagement
Papas Murphy's International

Key Questions Answered

❓ As industries and market needs evolve, how do you actively shape your role to ensure you're seen as an **essential leader**?

❓ What specific actions have you taken to **build your personal brand** in a way that strengthens your authority and effectiveness in leading organizational change?

❓ In what ways have you had to modify your **leadership style** to effectively guide your team through a significant change? How has this adaptation influenced your **career development**?

❓ Can you describe how you **communicate the value** of your change leadership skills to potential employers or stakeholders?

❓ What are the **main challenges** you encounter in your career as a change leader, and what strategies have you used to overcome them?

4 Key Resources for Career Development as a Change Leader

Obtaining Professional Accreditation

Completing a university **degree in change management** not only validates the fields of change management and change leadership but also equips professionals with foundational tools essential for success. Accreditation also enhances credibility and helps to open doors to key positions within corporations.

Participating in Conferences and Professional Organizations

Engagement with conferences and professional organizations specializing in change leadership, such as the ECLC, **fosters credibility and legitimacy** within this emerging field. Networking opportunities also enable professionals to broaden their knowledge base and bring valuable insights back to their organizations.

Becoming a Speaker in Change Leadership

By actively looking for speaking opportunities at conferences, webinars, or podcasts, change leaders enhance their professional credibility and influence, both within and outside of their organization. **Sharing expertise** also contributes to the growing thought leadership and field of change leadership.

Developing an Elevator Pitch

Crafting a concise elevator pitch on their position and scope of work enables change leaders to articulate their value proposition effectively, fostering understanding as well as support across departments. This type of clear communication enhances **collaboration across departments**, by being brought into key projects earlier on and promoting overall alignment with company-wide objectives.

5 Key Strategies to Demonstrate the Impact and Scope of Change Leaders

→ **Reaching out to Different Departments**

By proactively assisting in the progress of different departments' key objectives, change leaders position themselves as **valuable partners** in organizational success. Frequent engagement with different stakeholders, in different departments, fosters collaboration and underscores the broader impact of change initiatives.

→ **Clarifying Change Leadership Needs**

Effective collaboration with other departments hinges on understanding and addressing specific **departmental pain points** as well as objectives. Change leaders play a crucial role in eliciting and articulating these needs in actionable ways, fostering meaningful progress as well as key results.

→ **Creating a Network of Referrers**

Cultivating strong relationships with internal communication as well as marketing departments facilitates referrals to departments needing help with change initiatives, enhancing cross-departmental collaboration. Properly leveraging each department's **expertise and resources** across the organization is mutually beneficial for all involved.

→ **Breaking Down Silos**

Change leaders possess a bird's eye view of organizational dynamics and can bridge departmental silos, to promote collaboration and alignment. By fostering a culture of **transparency and shared goals**, they facilitate innovation and drive organizational agility as a whole.

→ **Leveraging Bite-sized Content**

Videos, one-pagers, and short-form content facilitates effective communication in an era of shortened attention spans and change fatigue. Change leaders understand that how a message is delivered can be just as important as the content of that very message. Platforms like Tigerhall offer new avenues of **disseminating crucial information** across organizations, in engaging ways.

3 Common Challenges Faced

Change Leadership as a Novel Field

As a relatively new department in many organizations, change leaders need to demonstrate the tangible value of their work through continuous education and alignment with organizational performance metrics. Proactive advocacy is imperative, as it solidifies the importance of change leadership in driving organizational success.

From Nice to Have to Need to Have

Educating stakeholders about the critical role of change leadership in navigating evolving market dynamics is essential for securing support and resources. By emphasizing the necessity of their function, change leaders can secure their status from optional to indispensable, thereby receiving ongoing resources within their organization.

Reporting and Accountability

Establishing clear accountability mechanisms and fostering relationships with key stakeholders are essential for measuring the impact of change initiatives. Employees that enact the changes aren't always direct reports of the change leadership department. That's where integrating with workplace metrics promotes ownership across departments and ensures overall alignment with organizational objectives.

3 Notable Quotes from the Roundtable

> " As change leaders, it's important to continually **educate important stakeholders of our value** and show the impact we've had as well as the impact we will have, so that they have better visibility into the full scope of our work.

Haley Pitts

Manager, Change Management, **Aldi**

> " It's important to determine with **different departments what will actually move the needle for them**. For instance, headcount is ultimately a number but what is the pain point behind it? Are people leaving and not being replaced fast enough? Is there an issue in retaining business intelligence? Beyond a number that goes up or down, let's look at what we're solving for.

Annette Mychael

People, Process and Change Lead, **Group M**

> " By actively looking for **speaking opportunities in your field**, you can establish your external influence as a professional while building internal credibility within your organization.

Mindy Vail

Former VP, Culture & Engagement, **Papas Murphy's International**

Conclusion

As organizations navigate complex challenges and embrace continual transformation, the role of change leaders emerges as indispensable. By leveraging key resources, strategies, and addressing common challenges, change leaders can chart a successful career path for themselves and their departments, driving sustainable growth and innovation.

The Executive Council for Leading Change

The Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC) is a global organization that brings executives together to redefine the landscape of organizational change and transformation. Our council's aim is to advance strategic leadership expertise in the realm of corporate change by connecting visionary leaders. It's a place where leaders responsible for significant change initiatives can collaborate, plan, and create practical solutions for intricate challenges in leading major shifts in large organizations.

In a world where change is constant, we recognize its crucial role in driving business success.

ECLC's mission is to create a community where leaders can excel in guiding their organizations through these dynamic times.

Interested in joining ECLC?

Learn the membership criteria and sign-up here

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