Shifting the Cultural Mindset of Your Organization

The Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC) assembled a roundtable of seasoned executives to dig into the topic of Shifting the Cultural Mindset of Your Organization

In today's dynamic business landscape, organizational change has become an inevitable aspect of staying competitive and adaptable; and the ability to effectively manage it has become paramount for sustained success. The Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC) convened recently to exchange insights, strategies, and best practices on implementing successful and meaningful organizational change, especially tackling a myriad of challenges – from low motivation among employees after layoffs to inconsistent messaging.

Roundtable Participants

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

Larisa Sheckler
COO/Head of Global Operations
Whisk (Samsung owned)

Barbara Roos
Head of Change,
Sales Transformation
Intel

Danielle Campbell
Senior Vice President,
Education & Enablement
Infor

Annette Mychael
Global Process & Change Lead
GroupM

Mary Beech
Chief Marketing &
Transformation Officer
Scholastic

Sarah Machin
VP, Global Head of Talent
Management
Chubb

Ankur Saxena
SVP & Head of Strategic
Operations & Talent Fulfillment
Digital Risk LLC

Key Questions Answered

? What do you do if the business requires change, but the **culture "is not there yet"**?

? How do you **shift the mindset of your organization** to be able to implement change?

? What's the **right balance** (if any) of driving top-down, "forced" change vs. enabling bottom-up, culturally-driven and organic change?

5 Key Strategies for Shifting the Cultural Mindset of an Organization:

The discussion at the roundtable brought to light several key strategies that can help organizations effectively manage change while fostering a resilient corporate culture.

Transparent Communication

Executives highlighted the significance of **transparent communication in driving cultural change**. This included candidly discussing challenges, sharing strategic insights, and involving employees in decision-making processes. For instance, Larisa emphasized the importance of treating employees like adults and providing them with honest information about organizational changes.

Empowered Leadership

The key factor in fostering cultural transformation means **equipping managers with the necessary skills and resources** to navigate change effectively. Mary shared her experience at Disney, where rigorous performance planning and role justification were pivotal in driving cultural change and ensuring clarity amid organizational shifts.

Active Employee Engagement

The conversation emphasized the importance of **active employee engagement in cultural change initiatives**. This involved soliciting feedback, involving employees in the change process, and fostering a sense of ownership. Danielle highlighted the importance of avoiding inconsistent communication, which greatly hinders cultural transformation efforts.

Continuous Learning and Development

Prioritizing continuous learning and development initiatives can foster a culture of growth and adaptability within the organization. **Providing employees with access to training programs, skill-building workshops, and mentorship opportunities** can empower them to embrace change and develop relevant skills in a rapidly evolving landscape. For example, implementing a mentorship program similar to those utilized by tech giants like Google and Microsoft can facilitate knowledge sharing and professional growth, ultimately driving cultural transformation through education.

Celebrating Success and Recognizing Progress

Recognizing and celebrating achievements, both big and small, can reinforce positive behaviors and attitudes conducive to cultural change. **Implementing reward systems, hosting recognition events, and publicly acknowledging individuals or teams for their contributions** can boost morale and motivate employees to actively participate in the change process. For instance, highlighting success stories of teams that have successfully adapted to change or achieved significant milestones can inspire others and create a sense of momentum towards cultural transformation.

3 Successful Approaches and Tactics:

The executives also shared successful approaches and tactics that contributed to effective change adoption:

Transparency and Accountability

The executives stressed the **value of transparency and accountability** in driving successful cultural change. This included holding leaders accountable for their actions, providing clear guidance, and establishing measurable goals. Larisa mentioned the effectiveness of transparent communication in her company, where managers were actively engaged in decision-making processes.

Managerial Engagement

Managerial engagement emerged as a crucial tactic for driving cultural change. Executives emphasized the importance of **involving managers in the change process**, providing them with support and resources, and ensuring alignment with organizational goals. Barbara highlighted the need for managerial buy-in to effectively cascade change initiatives throughout the organization.

Strategic Alignment

Achieving strategic alignment was identified as a key success factor in cultural transformation. This involved **aligning organizational goals with individual objectives**, fostering a shared vision, and ensuring consistency across departments. Mary highlighted Disney's approach of aligning performance planning with organizational strategy to drive cultural change effectively.

2 Common Challenges Faced

The discussion also touched on overcoming challenges like resistance to change and effectively ensuring change messages reach the target audience.

Resistance to Change

Executives discussed the challenge of overcoming resistance to change, particularly in environments where employees are accustomed to established norms and processes.

Larisa mentioned the **difficulty of navigating layoffs and the lingering fear of future layoffs**, which can undermine morale and productivity.

Inconsistent Messaging

Inconsistent messaging emerged as a common challenge in driving cultural change. This included mixed messages from leadership, ambiguity regarding organizational goals, and a lack of clarity around change initiatives.

Danielle highlighted the challenge of **navigating situations where there has been mixed messaging**, **where conflicting signals undermined cultural transformation efforts**.

Conclusion

The insights gleaned from the Executive Council for Leading Change (ECLC) roundtable underscore the significance of **proactive leadership, transparent communication, and inclusive decision-making** in driving cultural transformation.

By leveraging key strategies such as **leadership alignment, employee empowerment, continuous learning, and celebrating success, organizations** can foster a culture that embraces change and thrives in ever-changing environments.

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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