Transforming organizational culture to support evidence-based management decision-making

EBLIP6: Valuing Knowledge & Expertise
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Agenda

• Introduction
• Evidence-Based Practice & Management Decision-Making
• Organizational Culture & Change
• Organizational Culture Assessment Findings
• Conclusion
• Questions
Regina Public Library

- Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada
- 9 branch locations
- 220 staff (30 librarians)
- Established in 1908
Traditional Decision-making Practices

• Conventional wisdom or gut feeling
• Casual benchmarking
• Anecdotal evidence
• Doing what (seems to have) worked in the past
• Following deeply held (yet unexamined) ideologies
• Best guess

Pfeffer & Sutton (2006)
Evidence-based practice at RPL

- Training in evidence-based practices
- Project Management (Lite) Framework
  - Measurable objectives to assess organizational learning & service affect (Practice-based evidence)
- New Assessment Librarian position
- Consistent messaging from senior management
- Service Plan Methodologies (Organizational Development & Service Change)
  - 6 focus groups
  - Staff advisory groups
  - Customer advisory panel
  - Employee field reporting
    - Place-making
    - Observational studies
  - Total market survey
  - User acceptance & Usability testing
  - Transactional studies (with GIS mapping)
  - Service operating data
EB Practice in Action: “3 C” Criteria

1. Concrete
   – Is the recommendation specific and actionable? Can the entire recommendation be implemented with a signature?

2. Credible
   – Is the research evidence-based? Has an appropriate review of the literature, our and other organizations’ experiences and evidence been gathered and analyzed?

3. Compelling
   – Have the implications been thought through? Does the advice balance all competing factors (including political) that make the decision difficult?
Evidence-based Practice: Service Change Examples

• **Collections**
  – Streamlined processing & materials handling
  – Change of purchasing profiles and practices

• **Non-Fiction**
  – Use of BISAC for arrangement of browsing collections in some locations
  – Complete elimination of Dewey at new neighbourhood branch

• **Storybook collections**
  – Move from author to thematic organization

• **Express Popular Picks Collections**
  – Alternate service model to holds

• **E-Audiobooks**
  – Move to province-wide consortial purchasing

• **New Hours of Operation**
  – Open an additional 49 hours a week with no additional resources

• **Preschool Programming Redesigned to Deliver Measurable Outcomes (Parent & Child)**

• **New Design Model for Community Spaces**
  – New Prince of Wales Branch: green building design; design efficiency for space planning; shelving and furnishings all on wheels
  – Young Adult Space at Albert Branch
  – Long term furniture purchasing agreements awarded for all public furnishings
Tensions & Gaps

1. New roles - managers
2. Quality and quantity of evidence
3. Knowing
4. Knowledge
5. Reflection
6. Urgent
7. Perceived symptoms
8. Confident action
9. Time delay in publishing evidence
10. Absence of comparative research design
11. “more similar than different”
12. Managing expectations

1. New roles - librarians
2. Insufficient and incomplete evidence
3. Doing
4. The “attitude of wisdom”
5. Recollection
6. Important
7. Essential problems
8. Constructive self doubt
9. Popular literature proliferates quickly
10. Reliance on case study
11. “more different than similar”
12. Managing capacity
Organizational Culture

• Associated with organizational effectiveness & performance (Berrio 2003)
• Built over many years & difficult to change (Nadler, Shaw, Walton, et al. 1995)
• Organizational Culture is an element within the HR system that either reinforces or conflicts with (Baron & Kreps 1999)
1. Organization’s strategy
2. External environment
3. Workforce
4. Technology of production
5. Organization of work
Organizational Culture Defined

...the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and norms that knit a community together. All of these interrelated psychological qualities reveal a group’s agreement, implicit or explicit on how to approach decisions and problems: “the way things are done around here”.

(Kilman, Saxton, and Sherpa 1986)
Organizational Culture Defined

Pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think, and feel in relation to these problems.

(Schein 1992)
Signals of Culture Dysfunction

- User-centered in word but not in actions
- Working for the community rather than with
- Staff time is perceived as without cost
- Free money can’t be turned down
- Commitment to thrift and frugality costs more than we can afford
- Mandate drift is a constant battle
- Rules, rules, rules rather than principles
- Absence of trust
Cameron & Quinn (2006)
Competing Values Framework

• Provides:
  – Theoretical framework for understanding culture
  – Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)
    - a validated instrument for diagnosing culture
  – Systematic strategy for changing culture

• Advantages:
  – Easy to apply and easy to understand
  – Graphic representation of dominant cultures
  – Identifies subcultures
  – Provides benchmark – comparable data
Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)

- Six categories
  - Dominant Organizational Characteristics
  - Leadership Style
  - **Management of Employees**
  - Organizational Glue
  - Strategic Emphases
  - **Criteria for Success**

- Current perceived & preferred future contexts
- Distribute 100 points to determine dominant and sub-dominant values
- Scoring is used to plot clusters & undertake gap analysis
- Discussion will reveal what it “will mean” & what it “will not mean”
Organizational Culture Change Process

1. Diagnose the existing culture
2. Diagnose the preferred culture
3. Undertake gap analysis
4. Define the vision of new culture
5. Define what and how will change
6. Create the tactical approach --- when and where to change.
Plot of 43 Public Sector Organizations

Cameron & Quinn (2006)
Results
RPL Director/CEO Map: **Current & Preferred**
RPL Admin Group Map: **Current** & **Preferred**
RPL Branch Heads Map: **Current & Preferred**

Flexibility and Discretion

- Clan
- Adhocracy

- Internal Focus and Integration
- External Focus and Differentiation

- Hierarchy
- Market

Stability and Control
Differences

**Market**
- CEO – *Increase*

**Clan**
- CEO – Remain Stable

**Adhocracy**
- CEO – *Slight Increase*

**Market**
- Admin Group – *Slight Increase*
- Branch Heads – *Decrease*

**Clan**
- Admin Group – *Slight Increase*
- Branch Heads - *Increase*

**Adhocracy**
- Branch Heads & Admin Group - *Increase*
Dimension: Criteria for Success

Internal Focus

• Clan: The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.

• Hierarchy: The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low-cost production are critical.

External Focus

• Adhocracy: The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.

• Market: The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.
# Dimension: Management of Employees

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<th>Internal Focus</th>
<th>External Focus</th>
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<td><strong>Clan:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adhocracy:</strong> The management style in the organization is characterized by</td>
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<td>individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.</td>
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<td><strong>Market:</strong> The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-</td>
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<td>driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.</td>
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Branch Heads:
Reduce Market; Increase Clan

Market Means

• Results oriented – not focused on people
• Transaction oriented and not people oriented
• Cut throat, sales, sales, sales, car salesman
• “Aggressive”
• Not interested in collaboration, team building, and being supportive in the work environment -- being these things is key to ensuring that we are successful in the market.

Clan does not mean

• That we are not interested in:
  – Setting goals and targets
  – Measuring and achieving results
  – Getting the most from our resources
  – Efficiency
  – Risk-taking
  – Increasing our market share
  – Keeping our core values
Conclusion

- Evidence-based management decision-making requires an active choice and commitment by senior management.
- Say, write and model the message repeatedly with clarity: what the change is & isn’t; why it is necessary; and what people should be doing *right now*.
- Like any transformational change, it will not succeed without a sense of dissatisfaction with the current state or a sense of urgency or a “burning platform”.
- It will require your overconfidence (with regular constructive private reflection (self-doubt) that will compel you to keep updating the plan).
- Prepare yourself to experience and embrace the inevitable mistakes, mess, discomfort, fear, ambiguity, uncertainty, learning, growth and joy that comes from this work.

(Pfeffer & Sutton 2006)
I welcome questions now or after...
References 1


References 2


References 3


References 4


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