

Champ performers – the change agents in an organisation

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Abstract: To accomplish any plan or implement a process in an organisation, an expert is needed who can explain and execute the essential changes as well as effectively manage the teamwork. A champion who can perform this in an organisational setting is captain of the team. Professor (Dr.) Chaitanya Niphadkar has coined the word and refers to such (champion) employees as the “*Champ Performers (CPs)*”. This paper puts light on the idea and various facets of CPs and highlights their significance in an organisational setting.

INTRODUCTION

Change agents in an organization are individuals or groups who actively facilitate and drive change within an organization. These agents play a key role in managing and guiding transitions, helping an organization adapt to new systems, structures, technologies, or processes. Their main objective is to ensure that change is smoothly implemented, and they help overcome resistance to change.

Types of Change Agents:

1. **Internal Change Agents:** These are people who are part of the organization. They could be leaders, managers, or employees who have a deep understanding of the organizational culture and operations. They often serve as trusted individuals who can influence and guide others through change.
2. **External Change Agents:** These individuals or consultants come from outside the organization. They bring fresh perspectives, expertise, and may provide an unbiased view of the change process. They often help implement large-scale changes that require external expertise or specialized knowledge.

Characteristics of Effective Change Agents:

- **Strong Communication Skills:** They must be able to articulate the reasons for change and how it will benefit the organization.
- **Empathy and Emotional Intelligence:** Understanding and addressing the emotional and

psychological responses to change are key to gaining buy-in from others.

- **Leadership and Influence:** They need the ability to motivate and inspire others, aligning them with the vision of the change.
- **Problem-Solving Ability:** They should be able to troubleshoot challenges that arise during the change process.
- **Resilience:** Change is often met with resistance, and a good change agent remains steadfast in pushing the change forward.

Roles of Change Agents:

1. **Facilitators of Change:** Change agents guide the planning and implementation of changes. They can help map out the steps, resources, and timelines needed for successful transformation.
2. **Communicators:** They serve as the voice of the change, explaining why it is necessary and keeping everyone informed throughout the process.
3. **Advocates and Sponsors:** Change agents may also serve as champions for the change initiative, rallying others to support it.
4. **Supporters:** They provide emotional support and address concerns or fears that may arise among employees during the change process.
5. **Trainers:** In many cases, change agents may also take on the role of training others on new tools, systems, or processes introduced during the change.

Some of the basic challenges that change agents face are:

- **Resistance to Change:** Employees often resist change due to fear of the unknown, concerns about job security, or comfort with existing processes.
- **Lack of Resources:** Change initiatives often require significant resources, including time, money, and expertise. A change agent must

secure these resources or work within limitations.

- Maintaining Momentum: Change can lose momentum over time, and a good change agent must keep the organization focused on the end goal.

To Be a Successful Change Agent an individual needs to:

1. Build Trust: Establish credibility with others in the organization. If people trust you, they will be more likely to follow your lead during times of change.
2. Involve Stakeholders: Engage with employees at all levels to gather input, ensure buy-in, and identify any concerns that need to be addressed.
3. Develop a Clear Vision and Plan: Be clear about what changes are needed, why they are necessary, and how they will be implemented. A well-structured plan can help reduce uncertainty.
4. Monitor and Adapt: Continuously evaluate the progress of the change process and be ready to adjust your approach as needed.

To accomplish any plan or implement a process in an organisation, an expert is needed who can effectively manage a team or teams and create as well as implement the strategy, putting it to action by performing the necessary tasks. A champion who can perform this in an organisational setting is captain of the team. Professor (Dr.) Chaitanya Niphadkar has coined the word and refers to such (champion) employees as the “*Champ Performers (CPs)*”.

CPs are those employees that:

- a. Consciously seeks to contribute to underlying organizational purposes.
- b. Reinforces the compliance role of a HR function (both legally and ethically) along with added-value effectiveness.
- c. Challenges the way in which things are done, to find solutions that are better, cheaper or faster.
- d. Keeps in touch with organization's customers and clients through networking and thus understands the business better. Reacts to feedback and proactively develops or contributes to the development of service innovations which yield 'customer' advantage. (Thinking Performer, 2007: 2)

Some of the significant qualities of CPs are:

- They are innovative in actions.
- They don't accept things blindly instead understand the purpose (of why a particular activity is done), visualize the cause and its effect and then act in a way that meets the company goals (targets) and strategy thus making the customers and clients satisfied.
- They walk an extra mile, if necessary, to satisfy the customers (and clients) need.
- They are proactive and effective communicators.
- They circulate the essential information (updates) at all levels at the right time.
- They help to build and sustain the company's reputation with excellent performance.
- They are people who do 'smart work' than just 'hard work'.

Such champ performer qualities are encouraged among workforce and the Leadership Development Programme is designed for the same. Champ performers use 'learning' as the medium to develop and expand their vision; at the same time, they contribute in the strategy formation through coordinating with the management, also execute organization's developmental plans.

CPs are emotionally intelligent (EI): CPs emotional intelligence is the mix of personal abilities that makes them an effective leader. Pioneer Daniel Goleman (1998) captured the essence of EI by stressing the importance of these areas:

- a) Knowing your emotions and their effects.
- b) Being confident in your abilities and knowing their limits.

CPs are expert in the following tasks:

A) Self-management

This refers to knowing how to manage your emotions, how to keep disruptive impulses in check and stay poised and positive, even in difficult situations.

B) Social awareness

This refers to being sensitive and responsive to other people's feelings, needs and requirements. Reading the mood of a group.

C) Relationship management

This refers to an ability to influence others; in handling conflicts, develop, lead and working in group.

Some of the attributes of CP's are as follows:

1. They find solutions (and resolve challenges) instantly and appropriately.
2. They continuously keep in touch with organization's customers and clients through networking.
3. They, along with the senior team, understand the business better.
4. They take feedbacks seriously.
5. They contribute in the strategy making and execution along with the senior management; that aims to yield 'customer' advantage.
6. They believe in continuous learning.
7. They reflect the skills (learnt during training) to the workplace.
8. They consciously seek to meet the organization's mission and vision.
9. They believe in people management and teamwork.
10. They easily adapt to change and prepare themselves to face the changing scenario.

CONCLUSION

Change agents play a crucial role in ensuring that an organization is able to adapt to new circumstances, evolve, and achieve its long-term goals. Change Performers can act the 'change agent' in an organisation and be the catalyst in implementing the OB plans. If the skills and talents of CP's are utilized properly, they shall benefit an organisation in the following areas:

- Hiring great candidates.
- Building leadership.
- Defining expectations and goals clearly.
- Utilizing functional technology.
- Motivating your team.
- Creating a positive work culture.

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