4 Tips for Successful Organizational Change

The following are four best practices for organizations to maximize their success during changing times.

1 Assess readiness

Assessing organizational and employee readiness for change requires a keen understanding of the workforce's knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors. This will help inform strategic workforce planning decisions and enable HR leaders to anticipate potential obstacles to a successful implementation.

Question to consider: What aspects of our culture will help support the change or what will hinder it?

2 Lay the groundwork

At the core of any successful change initiative is a strong partnership between HR and senior leadership. Working together, this coalition can identify and prepare the change management resources to establish and communicate a clear vision, manage culture shift, conduct strategic workforce planning and reduce interpersonal conflict. When this stage of the change process is well executed, it yields a robust roadmap all stakeholders can understand and follow.

Question to consider: Is our communication strategy aligned with our employees' behaviors and needs?

3 Implement and adapt

Evaluate the level of connection each employee has with the organization and job, including fit in the workplace, richness of personal connections, and what a person would have to give up if they left. The more embedded the employee, the more likely they will stay.

Question to consider: How will success at each stage be measured and leveraged?

4 Sustain momentum

Many of the steps highlighted in the planning and implementation stages – understanding your workforce, reducing resistance and communicating effectively – should be mirrored in sustaining a change. HR professionals are tasked with helping the change initiative become a corporate norm, so it is seen as part of the culture and business model, rather than a fad. To achieve this, HR must keep other change agents invigorated and continue to partner with leadership to reinforce the new agenda and prevent old habits from reemerging.

Question to consider: Which additional employees can we leverage as change agents?