D.I.C.E (Duration, Integrity, Commitment & Effort) Framework for Change

“Plus ca change, plus c’est la meme chose.”
Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr

“The more things change, the more they stay the same.”
Transforming Organizations

- Difficult
- Leaders who communicate the vision, and “walk the talk” to make change efforts succeed praised
- The importance of changing organizational culture and staff attitudes sanctified
- The tensions between top-down transformation efforts and participatory approaches to change teased
- Exhorted organizations to appeal to the “hearts and minds”

Yet 2 out of 3 transformation efforts failed!
Change Management

• Tough
• Little agreement on what factors most influence transformation initiatives
Recent focus on Soft Issues for Managing Change

- Culture, Leadership, Motivation, Communication
- Important elements for success
- Necessary but not sufficient
Less focus on the not-so-fashionable **Hard Factors** for Managing Change
Hard Factors

- Bear three distinct characteristics
  1. Can be measured directly or indirectly
  2. Can easily communicate their importance, both within and outside the organizations
  3. Organizations are capable of influencing them easily
Change Initiatives

- Fail if hard factors are neglected
- They must be given attention first, before the soft issues are handled
Consistent correlation between the outcomes (success or failure) of change and the four hard factors
The Four Factors that determine the outcome of any transformation initiative

| D | The **duration** of the time the change programme is completed if it has a short life span; of not short, the amount of time between reviews of milestones |
| I | The project team’s performance **integrity**; i.e., ability to complete the initiative on time; Depends on members’ skills and traits relative to the project’s requirements |
| C | The **commitment** to change that top management (C1) and staff (C2) effected by the change displays |
| E | The **effort** over and above the usual work that the change initiative demands of staff |
D.I.C.E. Factors: Loading in favour of change success

1. Project duration
2. Performance integrity
3. Commitment of all staff
4. Efforts to cope with change
The Four Key Factors
Continuum of success or failures

A long drawn-out project, executed by an inexpert, unenthusiastic and disjointed teams, without any top-level sponsors and targeted at a function that dislikes change and has to do a lot of work.

Most change initiatives occupy the middle ground.

A short project, led by a skilled, motivated and cohesive team, championed by the top management team, implemented in a department receptive to change.
Duration

• Organizations worry about the time it will take to implement change
• They assume that the longer the initiative, the more likely it is to fail
• In fact, a long project reviewed frequently is more likely to succeed than a shorter project that is not reviewed frequently
• The time between reviews is more critical for success than the project’s life span
Project Reviews

- At least bi-monthly
- Probability that change initiatives will fail rises exponentially when the time between them exceed eight weeks
- Depends on how long management feel that project can carry on without going off track
- For complex projects fortnightly
- For more straightforward projects every six to eight weeks
Scheduling Milestones

• To review execution of projects, identify gaps and spot new risks
• Should describe major actions or achievements rather than day-to-day activities
• Enable management and project sponsors to confirm that progress has been made
• Encompass a number of tasks that teams must complete
• If a particular milestone cannot be reached in time, the project team must understand why, take corrective actions and learn from experiences
“Learning Milestone”

• Senior management and the project team evaluate performance on all dimensions that have a bearing on success and failure
• Determine if the achievement of the milestone has a desired effect on organization
• Discuss problems the team faced in reaching the milestone
• Address weaknesses by altering processes, pushing for more or different resources or suggest new directions
Integrity

• The extent to which organizations can rely on its members to execute change projects successfully
• The quality of the change team, cohesive and well-led
• Teams with the right portfolios of skills, knowledge and social networks must be established
• Team leaders (1) must have problem-solving skills, (2) are results-oriented, (3) methodological in their approaches, but tolerate ambiguity, (4) organizational savvy, (5) willing to accept responsibility for decisions, (6) highly motivated but don’t crave limelight
Commitment

- **C₁**: Commitment from the most influential managers – “No amount of top-level support is too much”; Talking up a change initiative at least three more times than you need to
- **C₂**: Commitment from staff – reach out to staff and turn them into champions of change
Effort

• Change initiatives do involve extra work, on top of ongoing day-to-day responsibilities
• Ideally workload should not increase more than 10%
• Organizations may consider taking away some of the regular work of staff who will play key roles in the change project
Creating the Framework
D.I.C.E. Scoring System

• Based on the variables that affect the four factors
• Combine to arrive at a project score
Calculating D.I.C.E. Scores

- Organizations can determine if their change programmes will succeed by calculating scores for each of the 4 factors of the D.I.C.E. framework – duration, integrity, commitment and effort.
- Each factor is graded on a scale from 1 to 4 (using fractions if necessary);
- The lower the score the better it is;
- A score of 1 suggests that the factor is highly likely to contribute to the change success, and a score of 4 means that it is highly unlikely to contribute to success;
- See the following questions and scoring guidelines.
Duration [D]

• **Question:** Do formal project reviews occur regularly?; If the project takes more than 2 months to complete, what is the average time between reviews?

• **Score:** 1= if time between project reviews < 2 months;
  2= between 2 and 4 months;
  3= between 4 and 8 months;
  4= more than 8 months
Integrity of Performance [I]

• **Question:** Is the team leader capable; How strong are team members’ skills and motivation? Do they have sufficient time to spend on the change initiative?

• **Score:** 1= if the team is led by a highly capable leader respected by peers, if members have the skills and motivation to complete the project on time and if the organization has assigned 50% of the team members’ time to the project;
  
  2 or 3 = if the team’s capabilities are somewhere in between;
  
  4 = if the team is lacking on all these dimensions
Senior Management Commitment $[C_1]$  

- **Question:** Do senior executives regularly communicate the reason for change and the importance of its success?; Is the message convincing?; Is the message consistent, both across the top management team and over time?; Has top management devoted enough resources to the change programme?
- **Score:** 1 = if senior management has, through actions and words, clearly communicate the need for change;  
  2 or 3 = if senior executives appear to be neutral;  
  4 = senior management reluctant to support change
Low-Level Commitment \([C_2]\)

- **Question:** Do staff most affected by change understand the reason for it and believe it is worthwhile? Are they enthusiastic and supportive or worried and obstructive?
- **Score:**
  - 1 = if staff are eager to take on the change initiative;
  - 2 = if they are just willing;
  - 3 or 4 = if they are reluctant or strongly reluctant
Effort [E]

• **Question**: What is the percentage of increased effort that staff must make to implement the change effort?; Does the incremental effort come on top of a heavy work load?; Have people strongly resisted the increased demands on them?

• **Score**: 1= if project requires < 10% extra work;
  2= if 10% to 20% extra work;
  3= if 20% to 40% extra work;
  4= > 40% extra work
D.I.C.E. Score = D + (2xI) + (2xC₁) + C₂ + E

• Overall scores range from 7 to 28
• Between 7 and 14 = project likely to succeed; the “Win” zone;
• > 14 and < 17 = Risks are rising; the “Worry” zone
• > 17 = extremely risky, the “Woe” zone; >17 and <19 = high risks; >19 = unlikely to succeed
D.I.C.E. Scoring System

- Assessments are subjective but provides organizations with an objective framework for making the decisions
- Ensures that senior management evaluates projects and make trade-offs more consistently across projects
- An organization can compare its D.I.C.E. score when a is project kicked off with the scores of previous projects as well as their outcomes to check if the project will be successful
The Three Zones

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Win: any project with a score in that range is likely to succeed</th>
<th>Worry: the project’s outcome is hard to predict</th>
<th>Woe: the project is totally unpredictable or fated for mediocrity or failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Green]</td>
<td>![Yellow]</td>
<td>![Red]</td>
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D.I.C.E. Scores

\[
\text{Calculate}
\]

\[
\text{DICE SCORE} = D + 2I + 2C_1 + C_2 + E
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Plot
D.I.C.E. Framework

• Enables organizations to track the progress of projects over time or before and after changes have been made to the project structure
• Senior management can assess the success of a project or a set of projects
• Provides a clearer picture of the project’s strengths and weaknesses
Applying the D.I.C.E. Framework
Application

• Simple, but senior management often look for complex answers
• In three ways
  1. Track projects
  2. Manage portfolios of projects
  3. Force conversations
1. Track Projects

- Spreadsheet-based versions of the tool can be used to calculate the D.I.C.E. scores and compare them with past scores
- Senior management use D.I.C.E. assessments as early warning indicators that change initiatives are in trouble
- More attention can be given to underperforming projects
2. Manage portfolios of projects

- Organizations can identify problem projects in portfolios, focus execution expertise and senior management attention, where it is most needed, and defuse political issues.
- Projects can be prioritized before implementation.
3. Force conversation

- When different managers calculate D.I.C.E. scores for the same project, the results can vary widely
- These differences are particularly important for the dialogue they trigger
- D.I.C.E. framework provides a common language for discussion
- Particularly useful for large-scale transformations that cut across organizational units, functions and locations
Conclusion
Middle Managers

- Perceived as those usually who resist change
- Do so because they do not have sufficient input in shaping the changes
- Lack tools, the language and the forums to express legitimate concerns about the design and implementation of change
- Prepared to support change efforts even if it means additional work and uncertainty and put their jobs at risk
D.I.C.E. Framework

- A standard, quantitative and simple framework
- A common language for change
- Organizations can tap into the insight and experience of their staff, including the middle management
- Enables frank conversations at all levels within the organization
- Helps people do the right things