PRACTICAL METHODS FOR SUCCESSFUL CHANGE ADOPTION

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2018 Project Management Symposium

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Macalester College

Saint Paul, Minnesota

- Founded in 1874
- Small Liberal Arts
- 2,073 enrolled students
- Within the city of St. Paul
- 216 Faculty / 373 Staff
- Distributed IT
- Alum - Kofi Annan, Walter Mondale, Danai Gurira

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POOR CHANGE MANAGEMENT CAN INCREASE THE RISK OF YOUR PROJECT FAILING

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Agenda

CHANGE DEFINED

What is change?

- Huge construction or IT project
- Change in process
- Small changes: a report format or the layout of a form

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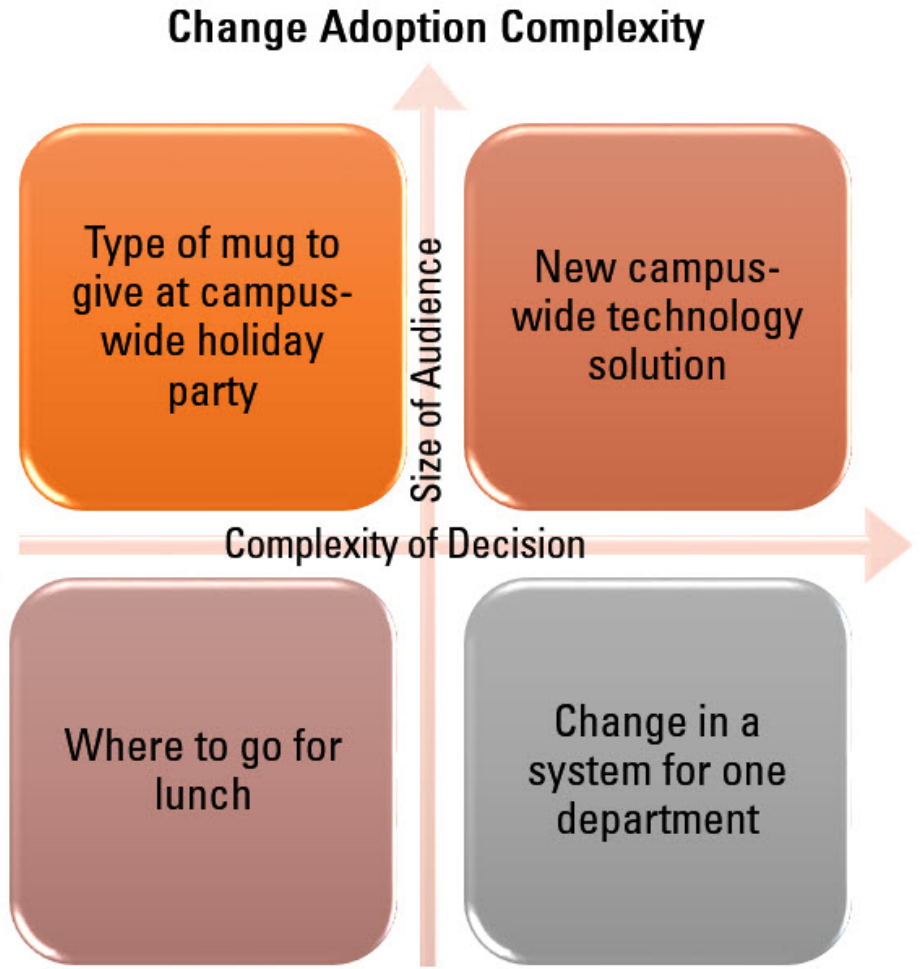


Why is Change Difficult?

- Loss of control
- Excess uncertainty
- Surprise, surprise!
- More work
- Ripple effects - impacting many
- Past resentments, failures

LISTEN

Listen to the users, it will be worth it

- Prepare questions / keep a list
- Be strategic in who you interview – supporters and *detractors*
- Don't jump to the answer, lead with more questions
- Users will appreciate being heard, even if you can't deliver on every feature

Multiple methods for requirements gathering

- In-person interviews for Stakeholders
- Group interviews/ listening session
- Individual survey for wider community

Beyond scope, requirements gathering can:

- Identify the supporters and the *detractors*
- Define risks:
  - If features are not implemented
  - If business process is not addressed
  - If an existing communication path is eliminated
  - Gaps in scope

Agenda

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communicate, Plan & Communicate more

- Communication Plan template
  - A plan for the entire project AND post project
  - Multiple communication methods
  - Review regularly with the team, adding throughout
  - Helps to set expectations – fewer surprises

When creating a communication plan, consider:

- Audience
- Timing
- Channels
- Stakeholders
- Document

Audience

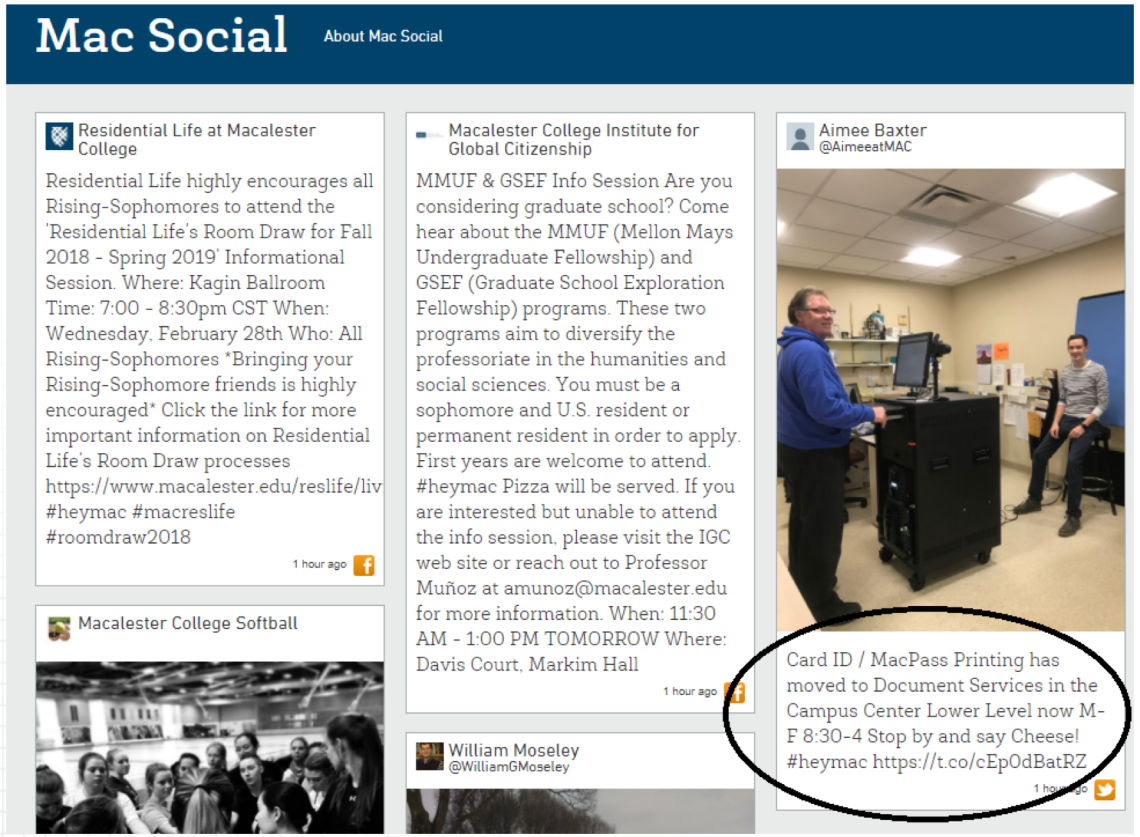
- Who is your audience?
- Consider all of the possible audiences your project/event may impact and make a list.

Timing

- Communications throughout a project or initiative:
  - before (here is what is coming)
  - during (here it is)
  - after (how did it go?)
- Think carefully about the timing of your communication – Too much lead-time?

Channels

- Use a variety of communication channels; no one group of people will respond to the same method. If it is a large initiative because people may not hear you the first time.
- How do you prefer to receive your communication? Does it depend on the message?
- Via email? In the electronic newspaper? Via phone? At a staff meeting? One-on-one meetings? Training sessions?



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Channels, continued

- Communicate in a method that your audience is comfortable understanding. when communicating a new process is. For example, a flowchart the best method or a narrative of the steps – or both?
- Keep your list of communication methods and keep it for next time; it will make it that much easier.

Stakeholders

- Ask for review your communications
- Ideally, involve stakeholders that are in different roles who will bring a fresh perspective.

Document

- Plan for a lessons learned review when the project is completed to reflect on what went well and what you would do differently next time.
- Document your findings so you can refer to the notes, and change any of your key documents that you rely on so they are ready to go for the next project.

TACTICS

Ambassadors

- Carefully selected
  - Best champions or loudest critics – NOT shy
- Invested in the change
- Help in requirements, testing and training
- Spreading the word / even if the project isn't perfect
- Other level of messengers

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Considering Using Live Data for Speedy Adoption

- Training end users with production system/live data:
  - Engaged users, as the data was their own
  - Encountered circumstances that may not have been in canned training
  - Uncovered technical issues in a compressed timeframe
  - Live data had the best scenarios

Why is Change Difficult, revisited…

- Loss of control / invite into the planning and solution
- Excess uncertainty/ create clear, simple steps and timelines
- Surprise, surprise!/ Plant seeds and hint of what is to come
- More work / acknowledge this effort and reward it
- Ripple effects - impacting many / consider and communicate with all parties however distant
- Past resentments, failures/ address them early, strategize for cooperation

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THOUGHTFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT CAN IMPROVE YOUR PROJECT'S ADOPTION

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Q & A

RESOURCES

- Project Management Institute. (2013). *A guide to the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK® guide)* – Fifth edition. Newtown Square, PA: Author.
- Harvard Business Review. (2012) Ten Reasons People Resist Change (2012) – Rosabeth Moss Kanter

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