

Change Management: In Conversation with Dr. Dennis Cristol, Director, Training Engineering of CNFPT, Paris

INTERVIEW

SAMSMRITI – The SAMS Journal
ISSN No. 0976-304X

Vol. 11(2), July – December 2017
pp.39-45



Dr. Dennis Cristol, an expert in Change Management and presently the Director, Training Engineering of CNFPT (National Center of the French Territorial Civil Service). He is a member of the Scientific Committee of the Journal Savoirs, and an Associate Researcher at Paris Quest Team Apprenance. He has authored more than 17 books in the area of Training and Management. He is also the President of the Association "Cercle APE Learning Together".

Dr. Denis Cristol

Director, Training Engineering of CNFPT, Paris
Email: denis.cristol@cnfpt.fr



Prof. K C Mishra, an expert in Organisational Behaviour and Change. Presently, he is the Principal, Sambhram Academy of Management Studies, Bangalore. His area of research includes Behavioural dynamics, ethical practices in business and social life, best teaching practices. He has authored a book on Mutual Fund Industry published by Lambert Publications, Germany.

Prof. K C Mishra

Principal,
Sambhram Academy of Management Studies,
Bangalore, Karnataka
Email: mishrakc847@gmail.com

EXCERPTS OF THE INTERVIEW:

K C Mishra (KCM): What are the logical and compelling reasons for change in any organization?

Dr. Dennis Cristol (DC): Nature addresses signals, the world are changing; organizations and administrations understand the solutions necessary for the development and development to support the metamorphosis movements and to participate more respect for the ecosystems that shelter them. Citizens, customers, employees, shareholders are waiting for additional meaning, better services and more efficient use.

KCM: Does the torch bearer(s) of the change fully understand what the change is? If not fully, who can painstakingly explain the reasons to others?

DC: The actors of change and innovation are guided in their action by a deeper awareness of the phenomena that affect them. They want to transform themselves from the depths of

themselves and commit themselves unreservedly to achieve their goal. It is by the example of their vocation that they communicate to others their flame.

KCM: How can we build a powerful and transformative case for change looking at the genuineness of the facts in the organization?

DC : Preparing for change in an organization requires a succession of concrete, modest but rapidly visible and inspiring achievements. These first successes make it possible to identify and create a nucleus of actors of change.

Then, gradually, it is a matter of entering into an approach of organizational learning, creating networks of pioneers, exploring new avenues, organizing cross-functional projects, making managers want to invest on ideas who care about them and support those in their teams who aspire to go further.

KCM: How can we best govern the change and build change culture that accelerate initial launch and results?

DC: From the manager's point of view, it is possible to govern change by facilitating initiatives, encouraging them, and promoting the adoption of new and more effective alternatives. The role of the leader is to ensure that the imbalances provoked will not induce such resistances that nothing can move.

A culture of change is in place when the actors adopt it and pass it on to others. He always strives to raise the level of meaning; if it is at task level, it focuses attention on behaviors, if everybody is focused on behavior, he opens the debate on opinions, if the organization focuses its attention on opinions, the leader and if the organization are already very meaningful, then it is an opportunity to extend the value brought by the company to all its surroundings.

KCM: How can we best communicate why change is happening in a convincing manner to people?

DC: The only way to communicate about the benefits of change is through the exemplary actions of change promoters. Physical proximity with managers, the provision of solid content, the possibility of having space for "professional disputes" are key points. These spaces welcome useful debates to reconfigure ways of thinking.

KCM: How do we prepare a solid road map for any change?

DC: Change is systemic, rarely linear; a roadmap must be a shared agenda that aggregates the vision of everyone. Organizing seminars to build collective vision by all is a pledge that everyone is taken into consideration. It is also a way of experiencing the collective in a first collaborative gesture.

KCM: With the reasons for change, can we paint a picture of what success would look like for people and the organization; how to measure such success?

DC: Success is measured when everyone finishes their work day and not tired. Change can not be seen immediately. It is like a French pointillist painting at first we can only distinguish small points, and then the whole of the work is discernable without any hesitation.

KCM: How do you see the barriers and implications for successful implementation of any change in an organization?

DC: Fear of change is the main cause of blockage but this fear is within those who steer, govern or more modestly accompany change. It is many that others do not follow their ideas. When leaders learn to trust others, when they perceive that fear is in their gut before being in others, and then the expression "résistance to change" changes entirely meaning.

Leaders must learn to transcend their own fears and not spread it within their teams. They must make a personal development effort and connect to life. There are, therefore, several prerequisites for successfully implementing the change.

First, leaders can surround themselves with people different from themselves, distant from their opinions, values and cultures, and give them missions of transformation. These newcomers can propose cross-cutting, ambitious and stimulating projects.

In each of their actions they will give the example of change. They will speak as little as possible, will live it and make it live to pioneers on a daily basis. Then the leaders will create "organisational objects", debates, spaces or dialogue on the transformations of the trades.

Pioneers of the first hour will be invited to engage even more. They will take responsibility, will support new ways of doing things; finally managers will ensure that the general interest is kept in mind, that of customers, such as suppliers or employees.

KCM: How can we form a Steering Committee comprising of representatives from all domains to be affected by the change and involve them in its planning and implementation at the earliest stages?

DC: These are the projects from which the collectives recognize themselves and from which they engage. When a collective increases the power to act of isolated team members, when everyone sees that it can do more in team than alone, then naturally the good will aggregate; the motivated people make the Best Committee.

An effective method is to rely on the principles of sociocracy. To each decision circle is associated a member of the upper circle and a member of the lower circle in the hierarchy. According to a very specific protocol, decisions are made by consent which differs from consensus.

In the idea of consensus everyone has to agree on everything which is difficult. In the idea of consent a decision is made when everyone has removed from the wording of the

decision what annoyed him. For important decisions to decide by consent allows to mobilize everyone.

KCM: Who will feel threatened by this change and how will we deal with their concerns?

DC:: Those who are concerned about change are all those who do not make the situation for the purpose of guaranteeing the balances in place. Executives, employee representatives and experts all those who base their skills and their place on immobility will be questioned in their professional behaviors.

They will have to find new sources of recognition for their role to feel good about the transformations at work. It is all your identity that can be transformed. It takes time to project itself in an otherwise uncertain, risky, volatile world.

KCM: Who are potentially the supporters of this change and how can we leverage their support?

DC: All those who are passionate about their craft, anyone who loves novelty, all those who have ideas to make and all those looking to progress; all these will be welcome in the transformations in progress.

KCM: What are the resources readily available for the change and how do we utilize them to include and involve everyone that the change will affect?

DC: Change begins within oneself. The safety of promoters of change in their personal and professional lives is one of the greatest resources. External resources are also very important. Comprehensive inspiring networks participate in the changing organization can bring new ideas, a breath of fresh air.

KCM : How can we leverage employees' knowledge and empowerment?

DC: The realization of large projects requires great motivation. The collaborators go beyond when they learn something that reveals them to themselves and allows them to show their singular share or that of their team to the face of the world. There is nothing stronger than feeling that one realizes in several things that you never possess.

It involves collective learning, collective performance, a smooth adjustment to others and its environment. Director through the development of individual and collective knowledge is a way to achieve à triple objective of innovation, increase collective knowledge and empower everyone.

Organizations often want to control everything by standards. They fail to perceive what their employees are giving them which causes mutual frustration. The company is waiting

for the execution of a task which is never exactly executed as it wishes. Indeed, there is always a discrepancy between prescribed work and actual work.

The employee interprets work situations and brings a personal touch but this is rarely recognized. The effort of the company consists in better understanding the surplus value of the singular contributions.

It must learn to provide a sufficient framework of initiative while maintaining a standard of production. It is this balance that is difficult to find but when it does, it combines high performance and commitment. When singular ways of doing things are identified as being more efficient, the company can pool them.

It offers employees specific roles that will help them grow in their competence while transmitting new practices to the teams. The organization learns when it watches for success and makes it grow

KCM: How can we prepare a solid communication plan utilizing the ABC Model of Communication?

DC: Communication designed as a plan has applied is doomed to failure. There is no foolproof model; everyone loves to change but hates to be changed by others. Also taking the other as a target of his messages reduces him to being an object of communication. Who wants to be an object of communication?

Communicating truly about change is about empowering people to talk about what they are experiencing. Change is a narrative factory and a daily discussion set to promote. It is also a set of real actions around which everyone has the leisure to decide.

All actors must be able to express their opinions for the life that concerns them. The best communication plan is that of concrete examples of those who praise the virtues of change, because men learn by imitation and modelling.

They want to reproduce what has been good for them. They are sensitive to the experience they experience personally and which brings them a plus in relation to the previous situation. But the observations of others or the word of mouth are sometimes impossible.

It is, therefore, necessary to communicate by means of the actors involved in the project. Traditional communication plans are ineffective when there are too many uncertainties. They can even cause distrust; moreover, for certain situations, gentle communication through social networks outside the company can help to convey ideas about the need for transformations to be carried out.

External views from customers, suppliers, service providers, shareholders and the general public are sometimes particularly challenging to change internal dynamics.

KCM: What can we do to keep, during the process of change, the information flow frequent, timely and clear to all stakeholders and also listen to their concerns?

DC: The alternation of means of information between great events or human emotions can be expressed and information in the form of notes, circulars or internal newspapers allows combining the precision of written documents and the warmth of human contacts in close physical proximity. The rhythm is continuous to keep the various actors engaged.

KCM: How can we motivate and support people during this change?

DC: Change occurs most often in organizational interstices. In the margins, sometimes sheltered from the glances of the highest executives, there are particularly unpredictable changes. For a direction be on the lookout for the best ideas and make them visible to everyone.

KCM: How do we ensure that this change is fully embedded?

DC: Change is fully anchored when the person responsible for execution becomes its main advocates. The change is part of the soft: culture, atmosphere, human relations but also in the hard: organizational structures, budgets, even buildings.

KCM: How do we review the change and capture any lessons learned?

DC: Feedback is essential. It is also possible to create seminars for apprentices to celebrate the failures. This is possible when the maturity of the organization allows. This is possible when the right to error is in place. This is possible when leaders and project leaders have done a job on them and are able to accept a remark about their achievement. Learning about self mockery.

KCM: The globe at large has to understand and realize such change, can we ensure at least for ourselves?

DC: We must be the change agent we want for the world. This great phrase serves as a compass to the leaders. The latter are aware of the major issues; they have an essential role of vigilance for the world.

Today I am 50 years young and have a nice life, a good job, friends but can I really, consciously enjoy all this if others suffer? This is becoming more and more difficult. South Africa invented Ubuntu ; this social doctrine tells us that we can not be truly happy if others are unhappy around us.

Leaders should keep this philosophy in mind, they should ensure that their decisions contribute to a better life together. It is by developing as a human being that they can set an example for others.

They can prevent their actions from depleting men and land. The business must be thought of in the long term; not only in the acquisition of an immediate profit for some stakeholders.

KCM: Post successful implementation of the change, what have you to suggest to the Change Leader(s)?

DC: Leaders are less interested in changes to their processes and forms than to concrete achievements in their trades. Stay open to changes in business lines, state of the art, technological and digital potentialities.