



RHQN NEWSLETTER

March 2010

Accelerating Change, Improving the Process

The past couple months, we have been talking about facilitating change; change that is the product of having done a root cause analysis (RCA) after an adverse clinical event, change that is the product of implementing a process improvement strategy, or change that is the product of adding a new service. How well we facilitate change and how well we do at accelerating the process is the result of:

- 1) a lot of personal investment and work,
- 2) a lot of strong team building,
- 3) a lot of commitment to change by the entire team, and
- 4) a lot of support from champions of the change.

In January, we talked about the various personal and corporate aspects of change management facilitation. They sounded like the advertising blurb for a movie. There were gremlins, prisoners, and romance. We learned that a good facilitator for change management is focused in two areas. The first was content knowledge. Success as a facilitator certainly requires a knowledge of the content and process to be improved or implemented. The second was managing that process and controlling group dynamics.

We learned that fundamental to being a good facilitator is being able to deal with your gremlins. The gremlins are personal. They are related to feelings of fear about competency and people skills. The more you think about your gremlins, the more your confidence is eroded. From our discussions, we learned not to spend more than ten minutes thinking about gremlins. As the saying goes, "flick the gremlins off your shoulder."

We found out that good change facilitators are good listeners, well organized, adept at picking up body language, able to ask questions that promote discussion, and involving participants. Some participants on a change management team may only be there because they were sent/ordered to attend. They were referred to as 'prisoners' and could be difficult to deal with. 'Prisoners' can be difficult because they are not personally invested in the change team's success.

Good facilitators were identified as innately curious leaders. Curiosity proved to be, and always will be, a foundational characteristic of success. Curiosity poses questions so that team members have to go looking and exploring. **Curiosity encourages and builds relationships.**

Curiosity generates exploring; exploring creates learning; and learning leads to growth and accelerating change.

This month, we learned how a skilled facilitator, the project champion, and project team members accelerate change by doing the following:

1. Creating a Common Need

In order to accelerate change, the need to change (dissatisfaction with the status quo) has to exceed its resistance. This need has to be instilled within the organization and widely shared.

2. Scoping the Change

The ability to relate and sell the scope of a proposed change is vested with an executive sponsor or champion who is visible and actively supports the change.

3. Shaping a Vision

The scope of change is linked to an organizational vision shaped in terms of desired behaviors. The vision of change paints a picture that appeals to both the 'head' and the 'heart.'

4. Developing Commitment

Key constituents provide a strong commitment to invest in the change, make it work, and demand and receive management attention. Mobilizing this commitment positions the team for downstream successes.

5. Changing the Organization

Changing organizations require that management practices (e.g. staffing, measures, rewards, communication, and organizational design) are used to complement and reinforce change. Acquiring the right talent, instilling competencies, tracking performance, and recognizing desired behavior greatly accelerates change.

6. Making the Change Last

Once change starts, it should flourish and learning should be transferred throughout the organization. Integrated change builds momentum for more change. To make changes last, there must be viable, tangible reinforcement of the change initiative.

One of the major keys to being a successful change facilitator, fostering a strong and cohesive team, and leading them to high quality and lasting change is "**determination.**" So, throw off the gremlins, win over the prisoners, and get ready to dance. Successful change management is like teaching a bear to dance. "**When you teach a bear to dance, you'd better be prepared to keep dancing until the bear wants to stop!**" Once you have demonstrated your success at change management, it gets easier and easier. You'll never want to stop doing 'the dance.'

So, I extend to you my open invitation to review the materials and listen to the January and March 2010 Members Conference Calls. They are a great way to bolster your competence, enrich your confidence, and sharpen your leadership skills in accelerating change. **You can do it!** If you have questions about change management facilitation, accelerating change, or need a consultation about the process, please feel free to contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director at randyb@wsha.org or (206) 577-1821.

Upcoming Member Conference Calls

Bev McCullough (RHQN QI Manager) and I have split the Members Conference Call topic list for 2010. We will be doing calls every month. If you have a topic suggestion, please call or e-mail Randy Benson (RHQN Executive Director) at randyb@wsha.org or at (206) 577-1821.

- April 13, 10:30 a.m. - **Clinical Best Practices and Lessons Learned**, facilitated by Bev McCullough, RHQN Quality Improvement Manager
- May 11, 10:30 a.m. - **“DOH Survey Update: What's New In the Environment of Care”** presented by Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director
- June 8, 10:30 a.m. - **Clinical Best Practices and Lessons Learned**, facilitated by Bev McCullough, RHQN Quality Improvement Manager
- July 13, 10:30 a.m. - **Developing and Strengthening Staff Competency: From Age Specific Competencies to Workplace Violence Training, How Are You Doing?** presented by Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director

If you have ideas, comments, questions, need additional resources or a consultation, contact Randy Benson, RHQN Executive Director, at (206) 577-1821 or randyb@wsha.org