Chapter 4 Implementation and Change Management

4.1 The Difficulties in Implementing Change

This subchapter deals with the management of implementation of changes at an NOC, or more generally speaking, the management of change in organisations. Change can be based on a new strategy, or it can be not strategic at all. There is a really large body of literature on this topic, in terms of both quantity and variety of approaches, and this is an indication of the importance of the topic for the success of organisations. However, no change approach has established itself as the best, or even one factor as the most important, in implementation or change management. Planned change in organisations can be difficult because it often does not completely achieve its goals. It also leads to unintended consequences (Merton, 1936) and collateral damages, to a certain extent. The gap between the planned goal of change and what is actually achieved can be very large, and in the worst-case scenario, the change never occurs. Books on strategy often cite a lack of implementation as the cause for the failure of strategies (Koromzay, 2021, 76). Some managers admit that, although the new strategy was launched and new structures (e.g., how the NOC deals with member organisations) were introduced, people unconsciously fell back into the old behaviour patterns after a short period of time. Others report that new strategies failed due to resistance from parts of their organisation. These unintended consequences of implementation attempts are also called resistance to change. Change is, therefore, difficult to achieve, and implementation or change management deals with this problem in attaining the goal, which is an effective achievement of the desired conditions. Adapting to the ever-faster changing environment (see subchapter 3.3) can be seen as one of the most important prerequisites for lasting success for organisations, in general, and for NOCs, in particular.

In the following subchapter, firstly, it shall become clear when change is a problem, and when it is not. Subsequently, a phase-oriented approach for the implementation of change or change management is presented.

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4.2 The Different Kinds of Change

Not every change or conversion plan is the same; therefore, the difficulty of change does not occur in the same way for each case. For a better understanding and for better management, it is necessary to be clear about the kind of desired change that is required. There are many different approaches and research results, some of which will be briefly explained here. For managers, it is important to identify which plans can be easily implemented, and which will cause trouble.

4.2.1 Unplanned Change vs. Planned Change

Change is a universal phenomenon; however, not every change is the result of intentional behaviour or even an elaborate plan. Change management is always connoted with the planned change, while unplanned change eludes conscious planning and, thus, any form of management. Nevertheless, it is an important factor for organisations, and many structures in organisations were not planned, but rather were a result of institutionalisation processes. This means that someone started to do something in a certain way, then they repeated it, and by the third cycle, it had already become so entrenched that they no longer even bothered to consider the best way to do it (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Modern management science does not blindly aim to repeat these habits, but would rather subject them to tests of effectiveness and efficiency (Clegg et al., 2012, 26).

4.2.2 Small Change vs. Big Change

How big is the change? The problem of change grows with the magnitude of change. Small things are rather easy and quick to implement and, in that case, an NOC does not need large-scale implementation management. Small changes (also called incremental changes) are aimed at solving problems with small, systematic steps that provoke change over time. By using an incremental change procedure, an NOC can reduce risk, and focus on aiming to improve the system they already have in place, rather than starting from scratch and creating a new system (Schroedel, 2019).

However, a "big change" (Taffinder, 1998) is, generally, considered to be a very fundamental restructuring of an NOC. In for-profit organisations, this often involves a change in the business area – for example, Nokia

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sold off its rubber boot production facility, and switched to producing TV-sets and mobile telephones. For NOCs or NFs, converging the abandonment of the old core product (its sport) into other fields is rather absurd (Schütte, 2021, 179f). Even if an NOC looks for new goals, e.g., youth attraction, digitalisation, or sustainability, it will not give up its core, the support and successful participation in the Olympic Games. But, in these organisations, there can also be very significant changes in both the field of activities, and the way work is undertaken.

Illustration: Turkish NOC (TOC) Uses Incremental Change

Following the implementation of its 2012-2016 Strategic Plan, which produced good results in many areas, including a new athletes' commission, stronger cooperation with athletes, clean sport initiatives, women in sport activities, as well as development, restructuring, and general organisational efficiency enhancement of the TOC structures and office, TOC is currently developing a new strategic initiative – not a plan with a set end-date, but rather a road map – a rolling strategy that will be monitored and adjusted annually.

4.2.3 Self-induced Change vs. Coercive Change

Who starts the change? There is a big difference between, whether a change is wanted and started by oneself, or is imposed by a third party. Even though the definition of non-profit organisations assumes complete autonomy, in reality this differs. Although NOCs are autonomous organisations of the state and of the IOC, de facto strong dependencies do exist. NOCs have to change, especially when their umbrella organisation (the IOC) issues new rules in its Olympic Charter, in order to be compliant. But, also changed laws on accounting and state assertion are good examples of coercive change in organisations (see subchapter 1.3). This type of change is also considered a cause of the great similarity (isomorphism), that organisations in the same field often exhibit (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Coercive change is inevitable, whereby, one is forced to implement it with no alternative. Although the implementation power of this method is maximum, the collateral damage and the unintended consequences also tend to grow to a maximum.

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Case Study: Italian Government Forces CONI to Change

The Italian government decided to restructure its sport supporting system (CONI) that, beforehand, was in charge of the coordination of high-performance sports, but in losing this task, the majority of its resources and staff also vanished. In brief, CONI was put in a pressure situation to shrink in size (more details are in Chapter 2).

A separate Government-controlled organisation was set-up to distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. This body, an Italian Government sports agency called "Sport e Salute" – or Sport and Health – has reduced CONI's role to only handling preparation for the Olympic Games.

The IOC raised an issue with the impact of the Italian Parliament approving plans to set up a Government-controlled organisation, which would distribute funds to the country's national governing bodies. The preservation of CONI's autonomy, a basic foundation of the Olympic Charter, is the key issue at stake for the IOC. An IOC letter expressly noted Article 27.9 of the Olympic Charter: "The IOC Executive Committee can take the most appropriate decisions for the protection of the Olympic Movement in the country of an NOC, including the suspension or withdrawal of the recognition of such NOC if the constitution, the law or other rules in the nation are in question."

The letter also reflected the NOC's autonomous responsibility in the determination and control of the rules of sport, the definition of the structure and the governance of their organisations. CONI were reminded that NOC's should "resist pressures of any kind, including, but not limited to, political, legal, religious or economic pressures that could prevent them from fulfilling the Olympic Charter".

The Italian Sports Minister, Vincenzo Spadafora (5 September 2019 until 13 February 2021), wrote to the IOC, insisting that CONI would still have "autonomy", should the law be passed. However, it was feared that Italy would face a flag and national anthem ban for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics due to a controversial sports law that was introduced, which undermined CONI's position as governing body of sports in the country. The Italian Government's Cabinet approved a decree that safeguarded CONI, whereby the decision eliminated any doubt, and resolves the problem of CONI's independence.

Refer to subchapter 1.3, and the autonomy of sport illustration, for further background.

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Questions to think about:
1. Can the government of your country do the same to your NOC?
2. What could be the reason why your government may take away resources and obligations from you?
3. How can you set up a better relation to your government to lobby for your good work (see also the public affairs guidelines of the RINGS Project)?
4. What can be done to prevent an entity from "being changed", instead of driving forward your own active change?

Sources: O'Kane, P. (2019).

Self-induced change, which is voluntary and based on a plan, emanates from members or the board of the organisation. Although the fact of undertaking a self-induced change reduces the chance of implementation, the organisation must be aware of collateral damage and unintended consequences (see case study above). Other factors play an important role here, especially leadership.

4.2.4 Autocratic vs. Democratic Leadership

In similarity with the field of change management science, there is a multitude of leadership theories and studies in existence, but none of the theories has been prioritised. What adds to the complexity, is the fact that culture facilitates one style or the other (see subchapter 2.5.1). Here, we take a look at the classic distinction between authoritarian and participative leadership styles, based on Lewin (1939):

– **Autocratic style:** the leader expects obedience from his/her employees, and always the leader decides what to do, which in a way, is leading without hearing the voices of the employees.
– **Democratic style:** the decision-making process involves the employees even though the leader still plays an important role in the process, as a moderator, and the leader is still in charge and takes the responsibility which, in a way is leading while listening to the voices of the employees.

In fact, both styles are seldom found in their pure form. As a rule, mixed types of these two poles are found, even if leaders are often closer to one pole than the other. For further considerations, however, the use of these two poles is very useful, because both represent ideal types (Bhatti et al., 2012). The more the style of a leader leans towards one pole, the more the

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advantages and disadvantages of the style appear. Lewin's approach is still valid, as the basic ideas can be found in all later approaches (e.g., "Theory X" and "Theory Y" by McGregor, 1967; or transactional to transformational leadership by Bass, 1990).

Both styles have their advantages and disadvantages, especially when it comes to successful change management. The authoritarian style implicitly assumes that the manager has a more or less perfect plan, that only needs to be enforced, and with that plan, it is assumed that the decisions are perfect, in principle, because the assumption of all, is that the manager certainly knows everything. However, in this case, we can draw a parallel between the employees, and young children who need to be educated, and are pressured to perform what is necessary to achieve that goal. The more interchangeable (and easily replaced) the employees are in this process, the more successful this leadership approach is. This is especially the case if the employees' activities are simple, and not based on expert knowledge. However, we recall here, that in some cultures an authoritarian leadership style is more appreciated, than in others. The typical change management of this style is the "thrown grenade" approach (Kirsch et al., 1979), in that, out of nowhere the order to change comes down like a "thrown grenade" from the top echelon of the organisation, and the employees have no choice but to follow orders. Such methods have the advantage of being very fast in deciding and issuing the command. But, the employees were not asked what they would want, or what they would think is good practice, hence, the disadvantage is in the problematic implementation. This results in the profound demotivation of the employees, who can often feel blindsided, do not understand the reason for the change, and often have better but unheard ideas. The change can fail due to the lack of commitment of the employees, as well as the more or less open attempts to stop it or sabotage it (Resistance to Change) (Kirsch et al., 1979). The authoritarian style of leadership is based on power, and this can legally lay with the superior through the employment contract, which is also referred to as legal power or domination (Herrschaft in German) (Weber, 1972) (see subchapter 3.3.2). However, it can also be based on illegal means of power, i.e., means that are not covered by the employment contract, e.g., blackmail. The takeaway here, is that illegal means of power always lead to behavioural resistance.

Illustration: Resistance to Change - Slovak Olympic Committee

After starting in 2012, in 2016 there was a first attempt to transform the NOC into an umbrella sports organisation. A lot of effort was put

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into projecting the structure of the Sport Movement in this change. It was based on good practice examples from other NOCs, namely, the benchmark was the DOSB.
However, the plan did not work, as the members did not vote in favour of this transformation.
Then, also in 2016, Anton Siekel was elected as the new president, the chosen successor over the former president of 17 years, Frantisek Chmelar, and the vision of Siekel was to transform the NOC into an organisation that unifies all sports and athletes. With this goal, all efforts since November 2016 were aimed at strengthening the position of the Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee (SOSC) in the Sports Movement and towards public authorities. The SOSC became more involved in the working groups at various ministries, and the dialogue between government representatives and the SOSC representatives has become more active.
In the time leading up to the annual General Assembly, that was to vote on new statutes aiming at transforming the NOC into an umbrella sports organisation (December 2018), active dialogue with the members of the Sports Movement (SOSC members as well as the sports confederation members) was led. During the meetings, the new statutes were discussed and all of the questions from the Sport Movement were answered and relevant remarks were included in the new document. The proposed change of statues and the changes within the organisation of the Sport Movement following the transformation, were not as dramatic as was planned in 2012, and the new statues granting the SOSC position of umbrella sport organisation were finally approved by the members of the General Assembly.
The SOSC believes that this transformation was successful as a result of the time that was invested in discussions with all relevant stakeholders, and also the change that occurred was more subtle, as opposed to the change that had been planned in 2012. The most important matter is that the SOSC became an umbrella sport organisation, and now the process of slow centralisation and change will continue. The SOSC, after becoming the umbrella Sport Organisation, also took over the whole role of the former Slovak Sport Confederation, which in 2019 ceased to exist.
Sources: Information on preparation if the umbrella sport organisation in 2012 – July 2012 https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/na-43-vz-sov-sa-viac-nez-o-oh-v-londyne-hovorilo-o-transformacii-slovenskeho-olympijskeho; New Statues proposed for the creation of the umbrella sport organisation not approved November 2012

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https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/frantisek-chmelar-bol-znovu-zvoleny-za-prezidenta-sov-protikandidata-jana-filca-zdolal-5321; New Statues approved and the NOC transformed into umbrella sport organisation with the new name Slovak Olympic and Sports Committee – December 2018
https://www.olympic.sk/clanok/slovensky-olympijsky-vybor-sa-transformoval-na-stresnu-organizaciu-slovenskeho-sportu-s

The democratic leadership approach is the antithesis of this, and involves employees in the decision-making process, whereby, they are explicitly asked what they would wish for. Implicitly, the approach assumes that managers do not know everything, and that employees who spend 40 hours a week dealing with their tasks have detailed knowledge that their bosses do not possess. Japanese management often works with quality circles, whereby, workers and administrators are asked in regular group meetings ("circles") how the work can be improved (Fürstenberg, 1981). The approach involves leadership with eye-level relationships, and employees are not treated disrespectfully, but rather they are appreciated as experts. Hierarchy, however, is usually preserved, and only in very self-directing groups do radical approaches disappear, as noted by Drucker (1993). The change management of the participative approach is based on consensus, the extent to which it is used is also related to culture (see subchapter 2.5), and establishing it is lengthy and difficult (especially when important interests might be hurt). Here, too, Japanese management, which relies heavily on consensus, has developed Ringi Sho, a process of making decisions and approvals in a systematic way. Here, the idea is usually born at the top, but then moves down the hierarchical levels of the organisation from top to bottom and, if necessary, back up again from the bottom to the top. All involved parties must put their stamp on the migrating document, and only when everyone agrees can the project be implemented (Fürstenberg, 1981, 72ff). The advantage of such a method is that no resistance to change occurs after the adoption of an idea and, therefore, it can be implemented very quickly, but it takes a long time to establish a consensus.

Most systems that deal with organisational change favour the participatory approach. This has something to do with the fact that those systems were constructed for cases, in which the organisations are to manage a major change. In this case, however, the commitment of the employees involved is crucial for success. Further, the reality of the NOCs, and especially due to the fact that NOCs are expertise organisations, the participatory approach makes more sense, in general.

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4.2.5 Reasonable vs. Incomprehensible Change

Participative management tends to make major change successful. This is due not only to self-commitment through consent, but also to the fact that participation in the content of the change, automatically makes it comprehensible. This subchapter is about making the content side of change processes clear. People will likely only follow plans that they perceive to be rational (i.e., making sense regarding content), and the only exception is change that is demanded by charismatic leadership; in which case, people will follow the charismatic leader no matter where he or she leads them. This is true as long as the charisma holds; otherwise, anything that cannot be understood will lead to doubt, rejection, disregard, or even sabotage. Hence, it is so important to communicate in a clear and transparent way (see subchapter 4.4.5).

4.2.6 Chance vs. Pressure Situation

What is the motivation to change? Schütte (2008) developed a typology, with which to understand why NPOs adopt structures (e.g., a paid management in an NPO), and why they do not. A puzzling example, is that organisations which are similar in almost all internal and external characteristics, sometimes hire paid sports managers, and other times they do not. This is the same with NOCs that are in very similar settings, but one NOC implements a new structure and the other does not, which makes a big difference for implementing a new structure, regarding whether it is an opportunity or a pressure situation (Schütte, 2008, 178ff). It is noteworthy that, in most cases, there is no total coercive situation where there is no objective chance not to change, because change is still within the autonomy of the NOC.

A **chance situation** is characterised by the fact that some kind of reward beckons, as a result of the change, and it is, therefore, associated with a positive sanction, but without change, there is no threat of a disadvantage. For example, an NOC may establish a scientific commission that can provide academic advice on all strategic decisions, which provides the chance (opportunity) to make better decisions (positive sanction), but if it does not establish a board, then it has no disadvantage or must fear penalties (negative sanction).

The **pressure situation**, on the other hand, demands change, otherwise there is a threat of punishment, i.e., negative sanctions. For example, if an

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IF changes the clothing standards for its sport, the NOCs have no choice but to adapt their clothing or they will be sanctioned. This can range from a fine to exclusion from competitions. The point is that, in a pressure situation there is a greater degree of chance (opportunity) to change, and that is also why a crisis is often imperative, as a trigger for big changes to occur (refer to subchapter 4.4.2).

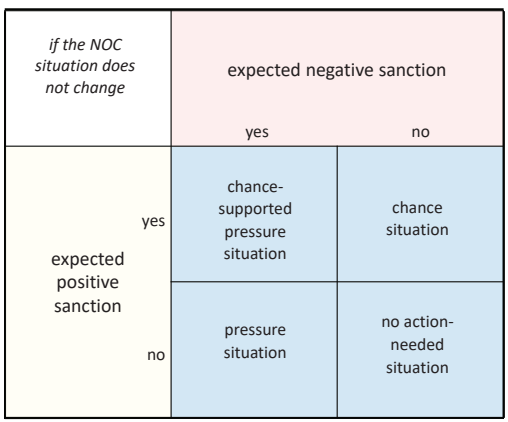

Fig. 32: Chance - Pressure - Typology of Change

Source: Adopted from Schütte (2008, 180)

4.3 Why does Change Fail?

Above, we looked at the planned change from the perspective of an acting organisation. In fact, the organisation is only a construct; that is, an idea that real people have in common and, thus, an organisation exists only in their minds. Organisations cannot act, only people can do so in the name of a particular organisation. It is clear that bad plans must fail, but why is it that good plans can also fail? The answer to this question can be found in human behaviour. Normally, a plan is evaluated by its rationality, but it is often realised that there are many different perspectives on rationality.

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4.3.1 System vs. Partial Rationality

What is rational for an NOC as a whole, does not have to be rational for one part of an NOC, because each one of the separate parts (departments of NOCs or simply people) of that NOC can have completely different interests, from any other part. The reason for resistance to change can, therefore, often be identified as the result of violated interests. Plans for change often affect the distribution of power, the prestige of departments and people, or the distribution of resources within an organisation, and people will defend their interests and try to bring down the transformation plan or change, if it is in their own interests. From this perspective, planned change is a struggle over power and interests (Hage & Aiken, 1970).

Fact: Behaviour of Departments Regarding a Budget Cut

In many NOCs, goals are set for both elite sports (Olympic medals) and grassroots sports (sports for all). As a rule, there are departments within the NOC for this purpose. If there is a budget cut, there will be a distribution fight between the departments. As a rule, one department will often only consider its own interests, and ignore the overall success of the NOC.

The more a person feels that they are right, the more that person will fight for his/her interests, and the less likely it will be that the change of the NOC will be successful. Persons feel a greater degree of being right, when the regulations of their interests are older and more well established. In fact, organisations quite often exhibit structures that Veblen (2005) calls "vested interest". In this case, the satisfaction of interests is so well established, that any change is seen as a form of great injustice, and leads to the corresponding harsh reactions when those interests are disturbed. For example, if the president of the NOC is in office for a very long time, then this would likely hinder any chance of having a severe change (during that period in office).

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Recommendation: Belgium NOC Implemented Term Limits

In 2017, the Belgian NOC (BOIC) introduced a limitation in the number of mandates for board members. The current mandate is four years and there is the possibility of only three renewals, which means that the maximum period is 16 years. This includes all board positions. In addition to this limitation, the NOC has asked all board members to provide information on their relevant mandates. This overview has been published on the website of the NOC, thus providing a good and transparent overview of the different mandates as well as the current mandates within the NOC. (https://teambelgium.be/nl/pagina/over-het-boic#organen and https://teambelgium.be/fr/page/a-propos-du-coib#organes (you can access the information by clicking of the name of each board member).

4.3.2 Habits are Hard to Break

The fight for one's own claims to power, prestige and resources, even against the rational requirements of the system, is ultimately based on a partial and also personal rationality and, as such, habits would seem to be irrational from the perspectives of others. Hence, in the early stages of power, a particular habit would be in the interests of the acting person, but after the situation/environment changes, the habit can seem irrational to others. Remarkably, people can prefer to keep to their old behavioural patterns, and this fact must be taken into account when you want to change your NOC, especially when the change in the organisational needs will also generate a change in the behavioural patterns of the people involved.

Illustration: Stick to the Old Pattern

A good example of falling back into old behavioural patterns, is the development of computer keyboards. Looking at your computer keyboard, you would probably think that the letters are organised in the best pattern to enable you to write quickly, but that is not the case, due to the strong ingrained habits of users. You will now be asking yourself "Why is that so?". The answer is that, when the typewriter was invented and patented in the 1800s, one could not type very fast, otherwise the mechanical keys would not return very quickly, or they would get jammed against each other, as they were returning to their original start position. Therefore, the letters on the keyboard were positioned in such a way that would likely prevent the keys from sticking, but that design

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made typing difficult (the QWERTY keyboard style was invented in the 1870s). The typewriters improved and a return spring pulled the keys back more quickly when typing, and a faster typing speed evolved. At that moment, inventors could arrange the letters on the keyboard in an optimal way to write fast. In fact, such keyboards came on the market, but were not bought, because people had become accustomed to the old suboptimal keyboard design of the original typewriter invention (Rogers, 2010). The takeaway, is that it is most difficult for humans to forget the old behaviours, even if the new behaviours would be more pragmatic.

In sports, a good example of the above, is the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and its governance reform, which was not happening, as all members stuck to old patterns. The IOC suspended recognition of the IBF (formerly AIBA, Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur) in May 2020, following long-standing concerns regarding finance, governance, ethics, refereeing, and judging. An IOC monitoring group has continued to report back to the organisation, since no progress was made by the IBF. IOC President Thomas Bach admitted that the Executive Committee remained concerned with the lack of progress made by the IBF over the reform process. He said: "We have received the report of the monitoring group […] I can summarise that we are very worried about the lack of progress with regard to the governance reforms of AIBA […] There is talk of Presidential elections, but we do not see any progress about these governance reforms which are very important." (Pavitt, 2020). The fact is that the IBF was only approved to be in the programme for Paris 2024 in April, 2022, and is still not on the short list for approval to enter the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, as it continues to keep to its old behavioural patterns.

Sources: Rogers (2010); Pavitt (2020)

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Workshop: Analysis and Change of Habits

How do you identify habits that disrupt the change process? This workshop is a process that is rather more suited to the heads of departments.

1. Write down all necessary behavioural changes you expect to occur
   Example: requests from NFs to the NOC have so far been treated in the same way as requests from citizens to public authorities. That is, the NOC staff treat others in a very distant way, expecting the applicants to do everything in the correct way, and those staff are certainly not aiming to be proactive by providing support. Hence, the quality of service to NFs has to be improved, and right away. Therefore, applications from NFs should be welcomed and supported.
2. Introducing the required behavioural change
   Typically, when the change process needs a different behaviour, and when it is well explained, staff will adapt to that new behaviour and, indeed, it will change, but only after a short period of time, after which step 3 will be needed.
3. Conscious observation after three weeks
   In fact, when a behavioural change is required, the new behaviour persists for about two weeks until it may fall back into the old ways.
4. If the behaviour does not remain embedded as required, actions against the poor "habits" are necessary.
   Since we can assume that the employees do not exhibit the old behaviour out of bad intentions, no form of punishment should be used, but rather, there should be workshops or even rewards when better behaviour is manifested. It is important to explain the necessity of the new behaviour, which should occur at regular intervals.
   In the cases where a change of behaviour is not reached, special training sessions can be initiated in the form of a continuing education event, e.g., role playing scenarios would be suitable here. In particular, the benefits of the new behaviour can be demonstrated by familiarising employees with the role they should take. Role play can give deep insights, because people are forced to change their personal perspectives, and they learn how the situation feels and appears from the perspectives of others.

4.3.3 Stability vs. Flexibility – a Dream Revisited

The most often mentioned bad side of bureaucracy is its lack of flexibility. Weber invented the theory of bureaucracy, and also named the problems

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of it, calling inflexibility an "iron cage" (Weber, 1972, 569f). Noting that not only do people have habits, but also their actions are affixed to rules that do not provide any space for flexibility, which Türk (1976) called a pathology of the organisation.

The dream of the flexible organisation is old, but extremely topical. The changes in the NOC environment have accelerated; thus, the flexible organisation is increasingly becoming an ideal (see subchapter 1.4), which is currently reflected in the popularity of the so-called agile management.

Fact: Agile Management

Agile (project) management is an iterative approach (several incremental steps) to delivering a project until the goal is reached, and such approaches are used to promote velocity and adaptability, but agile management is not recommended for all projects. The clear benefit of iteration is that you can adjust the situation as you go along, and you do not need to adhere to linear pre-project planning. Additionally, you can release benefits throughout the process, rather than solely at the end of a project (Gloger & Margetich, 2018).

The concept of agile management originally stems from software development, which is not only a long and complex business field, but also it suffers extremely from the changing wishes of the clients during the development process. The old-fashioned bureaucratic project planning style, where the goal was fixed but time and resources were kept flexible was, simply, too inflexible.

With agile management, the goal becomes more flexible, but time and money often remain fixed. There are also fixed rhythms (e.g., two weeks are set out for the project completion), and within these time units, with fixed budgets, the focus is then on fast but realistic work results. In this way, new customer wishes can be incorporated into a two week cycle (Hofert, 2016, 7); thus, agile management is flexible, despite it being fixed in its rhythms and budgets. Work is undertaken in team structures (with a maximum of transparency as the target), which distribute their tasks independently, and also determine the path to the goal. Each team member is informed, at all times, about the goal, and the way to achieve it.

In software development, agile management has been very successful, and has also found its way into other areas of application. In the meantime, agile management has become a management fashion, hence and unfortunately, the original idea of agile management has become blurred. Many

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organisations call themselves agile, but actually do not use agile concepts (Schütte, 2021, 196ff). It is ironic, that flexible management only works best, because it has rigid rules (Schütte, 2021, 198).

Case Study: Agile Management at the DOSB

In 2019, the board of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) explained to its members about the new agile management as follows: "We are on the way to making the DOSB more agile than before. We started in the High-Performance Sport Division (GBL) based on the recommendations of Kienbaum Consulting as a result of the "task efficiency analysis" of GBL that we conducted in 2018. Among other things, agile working increases internal efficiency, enables a flexible and quick response to complex requests, makes better use of the potential and expertise of the employees, optimises the service for our members, and fundamentally contributes to improved communication and cooperation between all stakeholders involved. In order to prepare and further accompany the process, we have set up a steering group which, with the support of an external consultant, developed the image of the future organisational structure in the GBL".

As part of this, the departmental structure was dissolved on 1st April 2019, and then transferred to a more dynamic, network-like structure of competence groups and, in addition, a significantly more agile style of working was introduced.

Source: DOSB (2019)

Case Study Questions:

1. Consider the structure of your NOC. Where would it make sense to have more flexible department structures?
2. Identify in your NOC the project areas where the goal should not be bound to a rigid project plan, but rather should have more flexibility applied.

Another line of development comes from modern psychology, where Lewin (1890-1947) worked on behaviour change and developed a so-called "organisational development". In one experiment, Lewin wanted the group members to change their behaviour, hence, he formed two groups. The first group was to be convinced by external lectures, while the second group would internally discuss topics among themselves. In fact, the discussion group was far more willing to convert to the internal method, while the members of the external lecture group were apprehensive. Thus, active participation generated greater motivation to change, because each

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group member had promised to change their own behaviour, in front of the other group members (Nerdinger, 2011, 150ff; Schreyögg, 2000, 489ff). In other words, in the experiment the first external lecture group did not work as an ensemble, but rather as individuals. Every external lecture group individual kept to themselves, and made their decisions alone. In contrast, within the internal group, the members felt as though they were really a part of a group during their discussions, thus forming what can be termed as a real group. Further, although everyone in the external lecture group continued to decide for themselves alone, the group did act as a social control tool. It is clearly more difficult for group members to decide differently than the majority of the group (Schütte, 2021, 145). Lewin recognised the special importance of group formation in change processes, whereby, groups are more willing to change and are more flexible than individuals. These results should be considered when planning a major change in an NOC.

The study anticipated the golden rules for organisational change, that were commonly adopted later:

- active participation, involvement, and full information;
- the social group as an important medium for change;
- change process in groups causes less anxiety and is completed faster, on average;
- cooperation promotes readiness to change, because there is a greater willingness to take risks in groups (the so-called "risk shift", Schneider, 1975, 227).

Lewin also discovered that change processes occur in a cyclical way, and after a change has occurred, those involved and affected by it, would then need a period of calm (stabilisation phase), before the next change could happen (Schreyögg, 2000, 489ff).

Even though the ideas of Lewin were well perceived, and also his methods triggered a fad in management science, such as "Organisational Development", the results were sobering in the long run. In reality, things are not as simple, because the cooperation of people in organisations presupposes many things, and is also conflict-prone (French & Bell, 1994).

The ideology of "Organisational Development" survived, and was taken up by management teachers and organisation researchers, who addressed the dynamics of the learning organisation. In other words, an organisation, unlike many others, that can manage to adapt to constantly changing requirements is, in an imaginary sense, an organisation that learned how to learn, and in the appropriate way (Agyris & Schön, 1999). However, since organisations are not living beings, they cannot ultimately learn, and

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only their carriers (the people who work in them) are capable of learning. Therefore, the concept of Senge (2011) goes back to the skills and the structure of cooperation between the employees, and his approach is based primarily on employee development, but the problem with this approach is that it ignores the conflicts over power, resources, and prestige within the organisation.

In fact, we can cast doubt over the tenet, that organisations are permanently in a state of change, and Lewin had already discussed, for good reasons, a process that has the unfreezing, the changing, and the refreezing (see above). Humans would generally wish to have stability in the rules that guide them, and they would only wish to process and tolerate a certain degree of change. American futurologist, Alvin Toffler (1928-2016), described this fact very well in the 1970s in his book titled "Future Shock" (Toffler, 1970). Indeed, the classical study of the French sociologist, Durkheim (1969), explained why too much change can potentially create problems. Durkheim found that, in times of rapid change, people can lose their ideas pertaining to any rules that must be followed, because nothing would seem to be stable, including the rules; a state he termed "Anomie" (breakdown of guidance). At least, both strict ruling, and the ignorance of rulings following too much change, can lead to problems, and there has to be an equilibrium of both: Change that is somewhat anchored by stability.

Fact: Too Much Pressure to Change

In 2022, NOCs and IFs faced extremely many challenges and pressures to adopt, take care of, or even change. In almost all departments of organisations, new and often emerging challenges occured. Not all changes provided opportunities for sports organisations, because most of them were just costly and only need to be considered to avoid threats. To name just a few here, challenges included safeguarding athletes, breakaway leagues (privately organised), doping, match fixing, gender equality, racism, refugees, pandemics (see more challenges in subchapter 1.4)

Peters and Waterman (1982) identified the importance of organisational cultures as a success factor (see subchapter 2.5.3). However, organisational cultures can be influenced and, therefore, the president and the NOC board should work on the culture of their NOC. But they should be aware, that this is only possible to a limited extent, and their connection with the success of an organisation is very complex. Pettigrew et al. (1992) were able to demonstrate that organisational cultures have a strong influence on an organisation's ability to change. Studies on change in sports organisations

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found similar results (e.g., Horch & Schütte, 2003; Schütte, 2008; Nagel, 2006; Thiel et al., 2006).

Peters and Waterman (1982) state that particularly strong organisational cultures are advantageous. In this context, the stronger a culture is,

– the deeper rooted that culture will be among the members (degree of anchoring),
– the more widespread the culture will be - i.e., no strong subcultures are developed (degree of diffusion), and
– the stronger will be the development of the conciseness and the scope of the culture (Schreyögg, 2000, 451ff).

The advantage of a strong organisational culture, is the provision of opportunities for all members to share a vision, to see themselves as a team and, therefore, to cooperate; rather than working in opposition among themselves. There are no departmental egoisms, because when members refer to "we", they are actually referring to the identity of the entire organisation, rather than just to the working group itself; hence, a common use of language develops. For example, the word "immediately" will then have the same meaning for all group members. This can make organisations extremely strong in implementation, and also capable of change. However, all this only applies to change that does not affect the identity of the organisation and its culture. In addition, strong cultures also lead to strong assumptions about the world. This can be an absolute strength for an NOC, in terms of morality, e.g., incorruptibility. On the other hand, it can also become an absolute weakness. A good example is the Olympic torch relay, which became an iconic event of the Olympic Games. But in times when there is a pandemic, it no longer fits, because its very merit of bringing the Games to the people becomes a disadvantage, in this case. When the Games were in their naissance, the Games programme was flexible, and each Olympic organiser incorporated sports that were pleasing (flexibility). Then, in 1912, the programme was standardised (rigidity) (Molzberger, 2010), and it became ever larger. While it was possible to expand it, changing whatever already exists is quite a problem, and this is another good example of the negative side of a strong culture.

The phenomenon also exists in the heightened form of the "sacred cow". In Western culture, all elements of a culture are referred to as the sacred cow; hence, those elements are under a special reservation of change. Everything can be discussed and changed, except for sacred cows, which are discussed as a problem, with respect to change, as they are literally untouchable (Hanrahan et al., 2015), and it is there that the term clearly has a negative connotation. However, sacred cows are also functional. For

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example, the core area of NOCs is the Olympic Idea, and changes that might touch on this, are extremely difficult to develop, and they have little chance of implementation. This, once more, shows that flexibility and stability are quite equal in how good they are.

4.3.4 The Role of Time

Time plays an important role in organisational change, but there are caveats: organisations do not change via a simple command, because change is not a matter of one point of transformation, but is rather a complex process, and what may seem right at one point in time may be harmful at another. Therefore, there are many models of change, cutting the change process into phases. Lewin (1939) developed the aforementioned most simplistic of phase models imaginable: Unfreeze - Change - Freeze. The phase model of Hage & Aiken (1974; see also Hage, 1980) emphasises the process character of innovations in organisations, and it distinguishes between four typical phases:

1. Evaluation phase: the time of initial considerations and planning.
2. Initiation phase: the time of concrete planning and resource procurement. It is characterised by high ideals and visions.
3. Implementation phase: the time to realise the plans. It is accompanied by open conflicts and a reduction of demands and expectations.
4. Routinisation phase: the time when change slowly becomes the norm.

Hage and Aiken obtained their model through empirical observation. In particular, it shows a switch in leadership. Whereas in the initiation phase, leadership is more participative, in the implementation phase it changes to an authoritarian style, and includes certain tricks and deceptions, notwithstanding the open use of non-legitimised power.

These explanations bring clarity to whatever usually might go wrong: a switch in leadership style is unavoidable, but it should never be that harsh; in the initiation phase, one should not promise too much, so as to aim at preventing disappointment, but one must clearly address why a change is needed; the urgency must become obvious to everyone, and it has to be sufficient to motivate any change; and, in the implementation phase, we can potentially damage change when using illegal power, thus destroying trust and hindering any return of participative management.

To our knowledge, the best developed model, which contains the four steps noted above, was developed by Schreyögg (2000). Successful change

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processes are characterised by participation, which requires the willingness of the NOC board to share, or even give up, essential parts of their power.

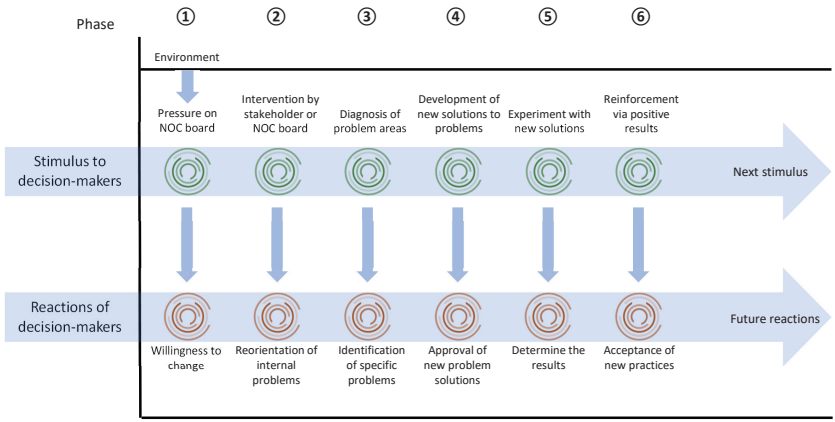

Fig. 33: Phases of Change Process

Source: Modified from Steinmann and Schreyögg (1997, 446)

Figure 33 illustrates the order of phases in the NOC's change process. This is only an overview, and the entire change process will be explained in subchapter 4.4.

Recommendation: Management Behaviour in the Change Process

Different (management) behaviour is needed in different phases of change. Moreover, one should distinguish between empirical observation (how people should actually act) from management concepts (how people should act in order to be successful). One can learn a lot from empirical observations of what goes wrong in a change, in order to make that change better. Therefore, each change process will train you to make your NOC stronger in your next change.

4.4 Steps for Successful Change Management

Many approaches for successful change management do exist. Here, we present a model that we have developed, which merges various established approaches (Hage & Aiken, 1974; Hage, 1980; Kotter, 1997; Kotter, 2012;

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Rogers, 2010; Pettigrew et al., 1992). This merge was also used for sport organisations by Horch and Schütte (2003), but it is now extended to fit Olympic Sport Organisations. Subchapter 4.4.1 explains phase 5 (red Ring) "Change and Monitor", which is the implementation of a strategic plan, or any other change initiative. In the following, seven steps are introduced.

4.4.1 Step 1: Be Aware of the Situation and Plan the Change

It is fundamental to accept that to achieve goals, the NOC should not simply start change and act blindly, but must first analyse the situation, and then plan the change.

It is important to make clear why the NOC wants to change, and how much energy the change is worth. If the initiators, who are often the NOC president, board members or senior management, actually do not want the change, then how can they successfully convince the staff to accept the change? Even if the change does not seem worth much to the staff, they will certainly not fight against implementing something that takes many resources. There are three obvious scenarios:

Scenario 1: The change is seen as urgently necessary, and the measures taken are absolutely correct. These are good preconditions, and one can directly start planning for the next steps.

Scenario 2: The change is not seen as necessary, but rather it is seen as useful and, accordingly, the measures are seen as absolutely correct. These are still good preconditions and one can start directly with the planning for the next steps. One should consider, however, that such changes, which will use only opportunities are by far more difficult to convert than if a kind of compulsion from the environment is present. Here, change must be driven forward with much energy and prudence.

Scenario 3: The change is forced upon you from either the outside or the inside (coercive change), and the measures are seen as a step backwards, or even as a personal insult. These are very bad conditions and, basically, there are three ways to react in such situations: Leave it, Love it, or Change it (Lazarus, 1991):

- ***Leave it***: You leave the change ("Exit Option" by Hirschman, 1970), but since it is a coercive change, this will not remain without consequences. For example, if the cause of the change is strong enough (e.g., the IOC), there will be consequences (e.g., for the NOC). Then the NOC board members may either leave, or not get re-elected. Ultimate-

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ly, the NOC may lose sponsors, trust, and governmental support, thus leading to finally averting the change.
- ***Love it:*** You accept the change and decide to deal with the situation, in such a way that you keep your NOC going, and see the positive aspects in the change. If you succeed in doing this sincerely and consistently, i.e., without lying to yourself, then you can switch to scenario 1 or scenario 2, and you can start planning the next steps.
- ***Change it:*** You do not accept the change, and you then aim to avert it completely, or in parts ("Voice Option" by Hirschman, 1970). As we are in the scenario of coercive change, this always means a fight. Here, the strength and willingness of the change operator to compromise, will be just as important as the possibilities and arguments which the other side will bring to the table. No matter what, in the end, someone, somewhere, will lose.

You cannot promote change if you are not intellectually and emotionally behind that wish for change. Since the emotional factors can hinder the rational factors, the most important step is to deal with your negative feelings. Gordon (1977) uses Carl Rogers' methods of talk therapy, to deal with emotional blockages in leadership situations. The blockades are often dissolved when they are spoken about, and released. Both the situation and the feeling which are triggered must be named. This can be done among colleagues, at the NOC board meeting, or via trained coaches. Only when you emotionally cope with the situation can you find your way to deal with the unwanted aspects of that situation. If you manage to take the situation for granted, you can try to get the best out of the change. Basically, you have to manage to get into the *Love it* mode. Then, you can start to plan and tackle the next steps.

4.4.2 Step 2: Establish a Sense of Urgency

Change needs energy. The strongest source of energy for change is a crisis (refer to Chapter 6). The greater the threat is, the easier it will be for change to occur (Kotter, 1997; Pettigrew et al., 1992). In any crisis situation, continuing the plan you currently have, is not an always a good alternative, because it is likely leading to a disaster. The Covid-19 pandemic is a good example: In most sport organisations, including NOCs, there has been a longstanding resistance to new forms of work (such as working from home), and new technologies (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.), for

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which the pandemic led to a tremendously fast adoption in both areas (see more in subchapter 6.3.2).

Threats can be long-term, such as the constant change of society and the loss of the belief in Olympic Values. That threatens all NOCs, with devastating consequences, but it only provides little energy for change, since it seems that we can still react tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. In addition, its signs are initially barely visible and, therefore, difficult to imagine, and the threat remains on an abstract level. But threats can also come over us as a shock, with the inevitability of reacting immediately, but such situations actually do generate a tremendous amount of energy with which to change things. A good example of this, is that the knowledge of the long-term threat of indulging in corrupt practices does not make an NOC official change his/her behaviour, but the NOC can always decide to stop the behaviour of the guilty parties, tomorrow or the day after, despite the threat remaining present in an abstract form. Only when the police are arresting officials (e.g., FIFA scandal or officials at Rio Olympic Games 2016), and impacting pressure, does it become concrete and thus change is brought to bear, at least to initiate mechanisms to fight corruption. The takeaway is that, only if the crisis is named, and is concretely presented to everyone, enough energy can be raised to initiate change. Further, the energy that is needed for any change to occur, is only generated when the crisis is perceived and, therefore, the organisational change or the start of a project is urgently needed.

Therefore, Kotter (1997, 55ff) demands the establishment of a "sense of urgency", which also points out how important the aspect of communication is in the process of change (see subchapter 4.4.5). This requirement is easy to meet if there is a concrete, and clearly visible crisis, but difficult to meet if it remains abstract and endures in that form over the long-term. Then, one will aim to develop concrete dramatic crisis scenarios, that are based on small signs, but such attempts can become ethically problematic. That could imply that when such explained danger is a lie, which has been used to initiate change. Change argumentation based on lies has many examples, in particular in social media, where nowadays alternative realities are seen, or conspiracy theories are promoted (even at the highest political levels).

Note that if a crisis really exists, it can be used to successfully initiate change, but if there is no real crisis, then this powerhouse of change cannot be used, which is also the reason why reforms that are not based on crisis situations, but rather on opportunity situations, need a lot more energy to be properly implemented (Schütte, 2008).

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4.4.3 Step 3: Building a Coalition to Conduce the Change

The idea of NOC presidents who can influence and control everything with one command is persistent, but false, because if this were true, there would be no need for change management. But the failure in many of the change processes, does make it clear that this is not the case. Even if only one person wants to change his or her own behaviour, such as giving up corruptive behaviour, they are influenced by other members/staff. For example, it would be particularly difficult to quit corruption (taking advantage of situations), if all colleagues continued to use their position for personal benefits, and it would be easier if they were all strictly compliant with anti-corruption policies. In sport organisations, an acute problem of change is based on requiring others to also change.

A big change in an NOC, will always create groups that will gain power, resources, or prestige, and other groups that will lose these attributes. Therefore, there are almost always as many opponents as there are advocates for change. This often results in a battle for the opinions of those who are not affected; thus, winning them over as allies beforehand has a great advantage. In fact, because NOCs are non-profit organisations, they are particularly affected by such effects, since they have democratic decision-making structures, which means that many are involved in decisions regarding change, but they are impacting from the outside (e.g., NOC member federations). It is the majority groups who decide, rather than solely the president, the NOC board, or the executive managers. This illustrates why big changes are not a one-man show and why allies are needed and, above all, this is all about key people. Rogers (2010) showed that it is important to be the first to adopt an innovation. He also noted that, to be successful, you will need many influential opinion leaders who are supporting the change, and the more outsiders there are, who are the first adopters of the change, the less likely it will be that it will work successfully. For example, if a new dress code is introduced in an NOC, and people with high prestige (charismatic or legal power) implement it immediately, the chances of successful overall implementation will be high. If, on the other hand, only staff with lower prestige wear the new clothes, then the chances of success will be low. How to win alliances is similar to what was explained in subchapter 3.3., regarding how to find "common issues".

A major change in an NOC has many consequences. For example, implementing a new department can bring new stakeholders in, which means that, if an NOC starts working on "environment and sport", then

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environmental protection groups will become more important. But then, it may become more difficult to work with a sponsor from a mineral oil or petroleum exploration company, for example. Therefore, it is worthwhile to constantly update the stakeholder analysis (subchapter 3.3).

In addition to actual allies, it is useful to recruit change experts (so-called change agents) and receive the appropriate training. Such experts are usually external consultants, which is an advantage, because they are not hindered in their work by your internal interests, and they will surely have a fresh perspective on the NOC. In addition, their assessments are considered to be neutral expert knowledge and can, therefore, be less questionable than with internal assessments, which are seen as part of a coalition. However, as external experts, they will actually lack insider knowledge, especially concerning the specifics of the organisational culture. Therefore, it can also make sense to recruit internal people as change agents. Sometimes, it is also possible to balance the advantages and disadvantages of external and internal staff, by recruiting a team from both.

Fact Box: Change Agent

A change agent is a person who supports transforming the NOC (or assisting in major projects) by putting the onus on organisational development, improvement, and effectiveness. A change agent can be from within the NOC, or hired from outside, to help the NOC in implementing changes for adapting to the changing environment (such as athletes' voices, or governmental changes). An internal change agent has the necessary knowledge (such as an NOC executive or director), and an external change agent has the liberty to bring in different perspectives, and challenge the existing NOC structure (or project structure).

Best Practice: Essential points to be considered as a change agent

1. **Identify your allies:** Find those persons who support your project in your NOC. Make these so-called allies understand the dynamics of the change initiative, its importance, and its impact on the NOC staff or, generally, on the NOC's development. The best approach may be, if these staff members have a substantial standing in your NOC, and the power to influence others. If they start by advocating on your behalf, then half of your battle is already won. Moreover, staff have more confidence in their colleagues, than in a person who is entrusted with an NOC change initiative. When such a colleague speaks, no one is

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going to ignore them, but instead they will listen, and they will surely aim to understand why that colleague is in favour of the idea/project.

2. **Co-create the vision:** The change agent should have a vision, and it is essential that the change/project highlights that vision. You must also ensure that the NOC board appreciates your efforts. If necessary, co-create your vision with everyone, so that they feel that their contribution is essential to whatever the change agent is driving changes forward. When everyone has a share in the input, they will always aim to give their best, so that the output supports the change. Be consistent, clear, and precise in your communication of the vision, so that you can tackle any resistance which may obstruct the pathway to success.
3. **Get everyone on the same page:** Now is the time to get everyone else on board. Ask other employees to offer feedback, so that you can realise your shortcomings and make necessary changes, accordingly.
4. **Create a track record:** Create a change plan, because you have enough support, and you also have the required confidence of others in your vision. Pay attention to the fact that the change must have a good timing. Not everyone will wait months to see the effect that the change initiative has on others. Change needs successful execution, in order to build momentum among the staff and members, to mitigate any potential resistance.

Remember, change is not an easy process, nor is being an effective change agent an easy job. Change agents are persons who would likely have the least number of allies and friends at the onset, but the most successful change agents are those who overcome difficulties, and find ways and means to implement change initiatives, and make them worthwhile.

4.4.4 Step 4: Winning People's Hearts Inside and Outside the NOC

People can be convinced intellectually, but that does not mean that they will give energy and engagement to the change. Real commitment is only created when hearts are also won. However, this will occur through visions (defining a new destination), rather than through plans (designing the roadmap to reach that destination) (Schütte, 2021). Therefore, a special vision for change must be developed. This can be achieved in the same way as is in the context of strategy development (see subchapter 2.3).

The crucial factor here is that, the vision can serve many goals and interests at the same time. It is necessary that the vision does not only suit

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all essential stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3 for alignment of stakeholders), but also has an emotionalising and motivating effect on others. In commercial enterprises, this involves the clients, the shareholders, and the employees (Kotter, 1997, 106), and in NOCs with a focus on competitive sports, this changes in accordance with the following groups:

- Are the interests of the *IOC tangled*? Is the vision compatible with IOC's interests?
- Are the interests of the *members* of the NOC or *athletes* affected? Does the vision promise to improve their situation?
- Are the interests of the *sponsors and public authorities* addressed? Both would wish to present themselves through the promotion of sports, thus being noticed, and hoping for a positive image transfer through sporting success.
- Are the interests of the *elected board members* involved? They aim to win power, influence, or prestige, and they would wish to avoid any losses.
- Are the interests of *paid employees* touched upon? For them, too, it is a matter of power, influence, and prestige, but in addition, there are issues of working conditions (salary, offices, promotions, etc.).
- Are the *interests of the media* involved? Consider whether a press conference would be useful. Perhaps, interviews with individual journalists would be better, Alternatively, a press release may be adequate to inform and involve the media, as well as the public.

Satisfying all stakeholders equally is an extremely difficult act. This is also due to the fact that the improved influence of elected members comes at the expense of paid staff, and vice versa. However, certain losses are acceptable, if benefits are gained elsewhere. Thus, visions of NOCs in the field of high-performance sports can always be based on the prospect of greater sporting success. This is the "common issue" among all stakeholders. It becomes far more difficult when NOCs target other activities, such as Olympic education, or sport for all.

4.4.5 Step 5: Communicate the Change

The previous subchapter has shown that it is important to win hearts for a new vision. However, if new visions are to be created and implemented, they should be communicated, so that they are more likely to become reality. Thus, communication is essential in every process of management, but it is especially crucial in change management. It is an important tool in all phases of change processes. Your way of communication may pro-

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voke certain emotions, which often have a greater influence on people's opinions and decisions, rather than arguments. Beside this, despite the opportunity, that changes can always bring positive developments, and have great potential to improve a situation, most people do not like changes, and they may even resist them. Thus, what may rationally seem logical and right, does not necessarily always feel good, emotionally. Well-known habits and established routines provide feelings of safety and certainty. But, these feelings of familiarity can disappear or, even worse, the opposite emotions (irritation, insecurity, and uncertainty) may be created by changes. The situation may even seem threatening because we are unable to predict future events. Change processes are, therefore, usually associated with strong emotions in either direction and, in many situations of transformation, these are mainly negative emotions. That is why it is important to include the emotional dimension in change management, alongside the many objective and functional tools and strategies. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on the meaning of emotions, and demonstrates how communication helps to overcome negative emotions, and thus resistance, and reinforces positive emotions in change processes.

Emotional Phases of Change and How to Deal with them from a Communicative Perspective

Change curves are frequently used in the management literature, albeit always a little differently each time, to illustrate the emotional phases of change processes. Figure 34, shows one example of a change curve. Interestingly, change curves have their origins in a completely different discipline, that of Psychiatry. Originally, in the late 1960s the Swiss-American psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926-2004), developed her theory of emotional phases to depict the grieving process after the death of a loved person. However, in essence, change processes in organisations also usually mean saying goodbye to something familiar and beloved and can, therefore, be associated with grief and regret. Hence, the curve in Fig. 34 is intended to illustrate the various emotional phases within the change process. The model has often been used in different contexts, to make personal reactions to significant changes comprehensible. Perhaps, the most astonishing finding is that all people go through the same emotional phases, even if they are open to changes (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Fig. 34 shows that the process of dealing with change is related to various emotions, and depending on the emotional state of the person(s), their willingness to perform, their motivation, morale, and competence also fluctuate. Here,

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we briefly look at the different phases, and explore how communication can be used to minimise reactance and foster acceptance in your NOC.

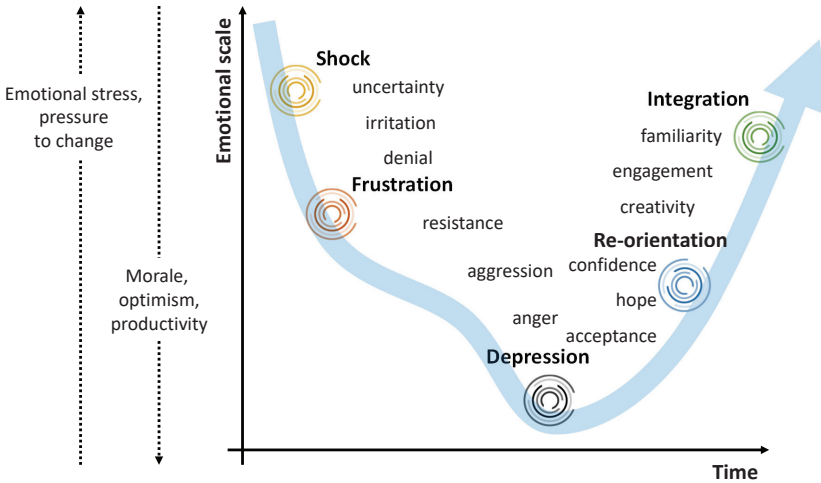

Fig. 34: Change Curve

Source: Adapted in accordance with the work of Müller-Stevens and Lechner (2005, 607)

As long as nothing changes in our lives, we can assume that we will generally stay in our comfort zone, within which, we are familiar with procedures, and we can assess our skills and competences well. If we now (involuntarily) have to leave our comfort zone, as is often the case within changes, this can create stress. We may feel shocked, irritated, and frightened, because we do not know exactly what is coming next. Consequently, this can lead to the denial of the new situation. We would wish to stay cocooned within the security of whatever we are accustomed to, and we would not necessarily wish to accept this new reality, which could trigger all of the negative emotions within us (Deutinger, 2017).

This phase of uncertainty and irritation can be successfully overcome by using clear words, by holding a vision, and by adopting explanations of how the pathway to the future will likely be. It should be clearly communicated why the change is necessary, and what the goals, visions, and missions are (see subchapter 2.3). Potential difficulties and impacts on stakeholders should also be addressed. It is often recommended that an authorised person, who has great responsibility in the process of change,

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should provide the information (which must be anything but the change agent itself). This can be achieved through information events, newsletters, intranet, etc. Aim at avoiding your personnel receive information from third parties or from the external sources, such as the mass media. This could cause a loss of trust, which would dramatically reduce employees' willingness to accept change. Thus, ensuring transparency through information is a major important point at the beginning of change processes, to prepare stakeholders in readiness for change (Lauer, 2019, 128 and 132).

The period after the "first shock" is usually characterised by frustration and anger, and it can be disillusioning. People begin to realise that the changes are now being implemented, and often they try to resist them. If there is no good argumentation (an urgent sense – see step 2, 4.4.2) for the change, they will argue against it, and also try to fight off the changes (Deutinger, 2017).

In this phase, it is about the exchange and dialogue with the people who are involved in the change. The change agent should build alliances, and aim to get all on board. Then, it is essential to find out the reasons for the resistance among the staff. This can be realised by conducting personal employee dialogue or workshops with methods like "world café" (a structured conversational process involving the sharing of knowledge), in which stakeholders actively participate and discuss crucial issues.

Workshop: Dialogue in a World Café

The World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. There are different formats which are available on the internet, and you should adapt the format of your choice to the situation, and the size of the group involved.

1. **Setting:** Create a comfortable NOC-related environment (such as a café), where there should be four/five chairs at each table (optimally).
2. **Welcome and Introduction:** The host begins with an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context (the organisational change or a project), and putting participants at ease (as they may be nervous and frustrated).
3. **Small-Group Rounds:** The process begins with the first of three or more twenty-minute rounds of conversation for small groups of four (with a maximum of five) people seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the "table host" for the next round, who welcomes the next group, and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.

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4. **Questions:** each round is prefaced with a question, that is specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Café. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they may build upon each other, to focus the conversation, or to guide its direction.
   Questions that can be regarded in those conversations can be:
   - What is particularly important for any involved stakeholders?
   - What interests, needs, or concerns do they have?
   - What alternatives do those who are involved see for themselves?
   - What do they think should be done to solve the problem, and to the satisfaction of all stakeholders? (Lauer 2019, 143).
5. **Harvest:** After the small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, and most often using graphic recordings at the front of the room.

Sources: http://www.theworldcafe.com; Lauer 2019, 143

In general, being an active part of the change, and having the possibility to bring in one's own thoughts and ideas, might reduce resistance, frustration, and anger. Thus, communication can be a catalyst of achieving the detection and reduction of resistance.

At some point, it becomes clear that it is hopeless to fight against the changes, when the mood is at rock bottom, because the motivation and energy are also dashed to the ground. This phase has been described as a "valley of tears", because it is the most emotionally difficult point in the change process (Deutinger, 2017).

Having reached this emotional low ebb, it would be useful, to look one last time at the past events, before finally moving on. There is always a positive energy in what has been achieved so far. This energy is useful for everything that comes next. An essential element of change communication here is to say a last "goodbye" to the old, and then say "hello" to the new. This can take the form of a ritual; for instance, a meeting of all employees (or include the most important), or even a farewell party, in which the achievements are honoured once again. By saying goodbye and letting go of the old in the past, doors are surely opened for the new in a potentially bright future (Deutinger, 2017, 60).

Now, it is time for a new beginning, and for a reorientation, because people accept the changed situation, their original scepticism turns into hope, and they aim to cope with the new situation, and become involved.

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People learn to find their way in the new situation and they aim to see that the effort has been worthwhile which will potentially create positive feelings (Deutinger, 2017).

The processes of change are now being implemented increasingly more. Therefore, it is important to let the staff participate in the process. Employees should have the opportunity to experiment and to develop new routines, in order to become familiar with the new situation, and to engage with it. The sooner they learn to cope with the new situation and processes, the sooner positive feelings will arise. It is important that the developments are reflected upon, and the steps for the next weeks or months are discussed. A working group could be formed for this purpose, for example. Additionally, reporting about the progress and successes, and sharing relevant information (e.g., via newsletter, information events, workshops) with the involved stakeholders, are crucial steps towards increasing the motivation among stakeholders, for the further course of the change process. Positive feedback and encouragement are important communication tools with which to strengthen commitment (Deutinger, 2017).

And then, "Voila!" - it is almost done. The greater the acceptance among individuals and also in the group, the better the change can be fully implemented, and then new processes and procedures can be integrated into everyday life (Deutinger, 2017). Also, in this last phase, information and exchange about processes, challenges, and successes are important. Furthermore, the achievements and the way to reach them should be comprehensively appreciated. By communicating that the goal has been achieved by everyone working together, this strengthens the solidarity and team spirit of an organisation.

How to Communicate Successfully

The section above was about what to communicate in each phase. What follows, is a closer look at some basic facts of communication, and rules an NOC should follow to effectively communicate with its stakeholders, to improve the change management or project process.

Communication Processes in a Nutshell

Figure 35 visualises what communication scholars call Lasswell's communication model (Lasswell, 1948). Already in 1948, Lasswell developed this model to describe central elements in communications, and their role on the effect of a message. It reads as follows: "Who says What, in Which channel, to Whom, and with What effect?". This very simplified representation of the effects of mass media is still often used today to illustrate

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communication processes. Here, we will apply the model to communication in change management to explain the most important issues in a simplified way.

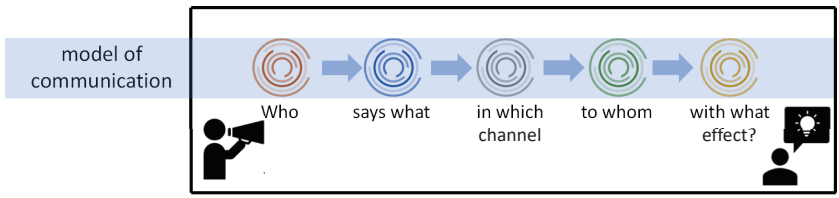

Fig. 35: Lasswell's Model of Communication

Source: Adopted and adapted from Lasswell (1948, 117)

"*Who?*" describes the communicator, that is, the person who communicates the information. Clear and understandable words from the decision makers (usually the NOC executive management) to everyone, are needed, and especially at the beginning of a change project, when the degree of uncertainty is at its greatest. It is recommended that communication be at the highest possible level and, preferably, the NOC president should deliver the message. This top-down communication approach, highlights the importance and seriousness of the change, that needs to be managed in the near future (the sense of urgency). Further, it represents strong leadership and appreciation for the employees. Alternatively, cascade communication (passing information from one level to another) is appropriate, in which the most important issues are first sent asymmetrically from the top of the NOC to everyone (e.g., via plenary meetings or other internal channels). Then, middle management can personally inform their teams about further details. This is especially important, both in and for teams or units, that are particularly affected by change (Hofert, 2018, 98; Deutinger, 2017, 82ff; Lauer, 2019). Smith (2017, 203-208) discusses the three Cs of effective communication (Credibility, Control, and Charisma), and notes that it depends largely on the audience's perception of the spokesperson regarding whether or not a message is accepted. Someone has a high degree of *credibility* if he/she havs a high status, is considered an expert, and is perceived as being honest and competent. Further, a spokesperson with the power to command or to *control* has a persuasive effect. This includes having the power to make decisions, the authority and scrutiny to explore and control the situation, and the ability to determine the

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consequences of the situation. Lastly, *charisma* could also be an important factor of an effective communicator. A speaker who expresses familiarity towards a person, who is admired for their achievements, or possibly has certain similarities with some other respected person, can generally be very convincing. This, in turn, goes hand in hand with trustworthiness and credibility.

"*What?*" refers to the message itself. Timely and simultaneous information of all involved persons demonstrates appreciation, and creates a better foundation to discuss possible problems in a constructive way. This can also prevent rumours from spreading before everyone is properly informed. This should be in the interests of full disclosure, especially in the initial phase of the change, where honest and clear words are important for transparency, to reduce resistance, or to discuss concerns together. It is important to explain clearly and succinctly why everything cannot simply continue as it is, what risks can occur, what needs to be done differently in the future, and what role stakeholders will play in this change. Further, it is equally important to communicate successes, and as quickly as possible, which will provide positive feedback, and also increase motivation among the staff (Deutinger, 2017, 57ff; Lauer, 2019, 130).

"*In which channel?*" refers to the means by which you convey the message. The personal conversation is the most important communication channel. On the one hand, this enables a dialogue and, thus, should generate spontaneous questioning and explanations, which could, in turn, prevent misunderstandings. In addition, the personal conversation creates trust, because it signals that time and patience are employed to explain the situation. However, personal interviews with all stakeholders might not always be possible (i.e., time- and work-related restrictions for both parties). In this case, the most important stakeholders should be prioritised and/or other channels, such as video messages or video conferences, could be used to choose a means of communication, that is comparable to personal conversations (Lauer, 2019, 130). However, there are many other useful channels, such as intranet, newsletter, etc.

"*To whom?*" includes our target group that we would wish to reach. Target group-oriented communication can be seen as a success factor. Let us briefly clarify what is meant by target group-oriented communication. Change processes are often very complex and affect many different stakeholders in different ways; therefore, different information is relevant for each stakeholder. That is why, in addition to identifying central stakeholders (see subchapter 3.3.2), it is equally important to consider who needs to receive information, and also what information should be provided.

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Further, since some stakeholders are more involved than others and/or have different positions (e.g., trainee, department head, athletes, the media), the choice of language style. or particular words and phrases. is also crucial. Depending on the target group, it may be necessary to properly convince the members, by using the appropriate technical vocabulary, or presenting complicated facts in a very simple way, so that they can be easily understood (Lauer, 2019, 129). For a target group-oriented or tailored communication, a *communication concept* would be helpful and, as such, is presented in an exemplary way in the next section.

"*With what effect?*": Ideally, communication creates an open-minded atmosphere which allows a constructive exchange with stakeholders. If you reach the target group with the adequate channel and with the relevant information, in an appropriate way, there is a good chance that you will quickly overcome the phase of resistance (see Fig. 34), and the changes will be accepted quickly. In the worst-case scenario, your information could fall on deaf ears, which would make the implementation of changes extremely difficult; except that, a well-engineered communications concept can prevent this.

Communication Concept

A communication concept defines which target groups are to be addressed, with which (media) channels, at what precise time, or in what window of time, and with what objectives, to reach the goals. Thus, a communication concept reflects central elements, with which we are already familiar, through Lasswell's model of communication. In simple terms, the communication concept represents the plan for the communicative actions.

The following questions, as recommended by Stolzenberg and Herberle (2013), could be addressed in a workshop with employees of your NOC, to identify key information about target groups or stakeholders, their needs and concerns, as well as the aims of communication, and appropriate channels with which to realise them (Stolzenberg & Herberle, 2013, 72-82).

Workshop: Communication of Important Issues to Relevant Stakeholders Based on a Communication Concept

Think of a current topic or issue affecting your NOC. Answer the following questions, that are important to initiate actual communication afterwards.

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Target groups
- Which stakeholders are affected by the change? (see subchapter 3.3.2)
- How much are they affected by the change? (e.g., very strongly vs. marginally, or not at all)
- How do they see the change? (e.g., opportunity vs. threat)
- What reaction should we expect? (e.g., support vs. resistance)
- How relevant are the stakeholders for the successful implementation of any change? (e.g., very important vs. not at all important)

Current issues and concerns
- Which issues are essential for the respective target group?
- Which open points need to be clarified urgently?
- What concerns do the respective target groups have, or what is perceived as disadvantageous and negative?
- What opportunities and advantages can arise for the respective target group, or what is perceived as positive?
- What should be achieved through communication with the target groups? What messages should be communicated to the target groups?

Communication channels / media
- Which communication channels are available? (e.g., face-to-face meetings, workshops, media such as newsletters, video-conferences, etc.)
- Are individual or personal meetings with the target groups possible or, alternatively, should there be a cascade communication to inform the target groups?
- Which means of communication is suitable for a specific need or situation?
- What disadvantages or limitations for communicating the message could a medium possibly have?
- What acceptance does a particular means of communication have with a target group?

Schedule
- When should what be communicated?
- Who should be informed, and when (in the first instance)?
- Which milestones are planned for the change project?
- At what intervals should information be provided?
- What is the best frequency for communication?

After a communication concept has been prepared, and the key questions have been answered (see workshop above), a communication plan can be written. That is, a (time) plan illustrating who is informed when, about

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what, and how. This ensures a structured approach, that takes all important stakeholders into account, and enables communication goals to be achieved as successfully as possible.

To make your message(s) more vivid: Imagine that due to a scandal (e.g., racist remarks against a coloured athlete) involving a Caucasian NOC sports director, her contract is to be terminated prematurely. The crucial point here is, "Who?" is informed, at "What time?", and through "Which channel?", so as to not damage the reputation of the NOC, or lose important partners (e.g., Olympic sponsors). It is never good – but it happens often – that the people concerned first learn of the information from the media, and not first-hand through personal conversations. Therefore, think carefully about the order in which you inform the relevant stakeholders about your plans. Often, there are many stakeholders involved, so it is very important to identify the target group that is strongly affected by the issue(s), as a first step. Further, especially in scandals quick action is essential to keep the situation under control (as best you can). The following example is highly simplified to give you a comprehensible idea of how it could be. As described in the previous sections, it is also important to consider who communicates the information. This depends on individual cases, as well as on the personnel structure of the organisation.

Tab. 8: Communication Plan of a Hypothetical Problem of an NOC

Target group/ stakeholder	Issues and concerns	Aims of communication	Communication Channel	Schedule
NOC Sport Director	Racist comments by the NOC Sport Director that cannot be tolerated and will damage the reputation of the NOC if she continues to work in her position	Contract termination	Face-to-face talk, personal meeting (e.g., NOC president)	One-time. The sport director is the first person to talk to and inform
Team / Athletes / Staff	Emotional reactions of those concerned, uncertainty about future conditions, new staffing, etc.	Transparency, discuss concerns	Meetings with the staff or alternatively top-down communication (e.g., CEO, head of department, coach, etc.)	One-time. Should be informed before external stakeholders are informed
Media	Critical questions from journalists, accusations, further investigative questions that put the association in a bad light	Protect the image and values of the NOC, control what information is released to the public. Demonstrate actions	Press conferences, personal interviews with journalists, press release (e.g., CEO, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After the internal stakeholders are informed
Public	Negative reactions from the public, lack of understanding from the public, fear of losing sponsorship contracts	Protect the image and values of the NOC	Press conferences, mass media, social media, press release (e.g. CEO, coach, PR-Manager/publicist)	One-time. After all other stakeholders are informed

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Discourse on miscommunication

It is not always guaranteed that the communicator's message will reach the recipient in the same way. It is not uncommon for misunderstandings to occur.The model of Schulz von Thun (2011), depicts that *every* message has four aspects, although the emphasis is on one aspect, and might be quite different from the emphasis on another message. A message of communication, therefore, is being sent (with one to four aspects), as well as it is being received (with one to four aspects) (Fig. 36). In other words, the sender could talk with the intention of using one side (out of four possible sides), and the receiver may listen to one – not necessarily the same – side (again, out of the four possibilities).

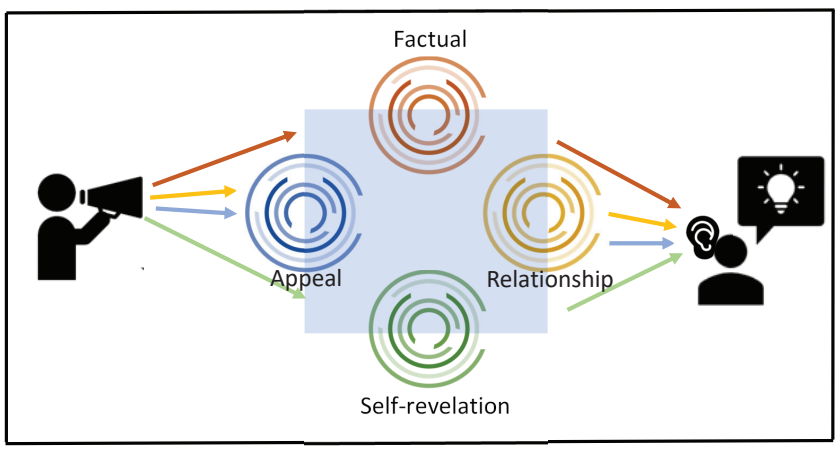

Fig. 36: Four-Sides Model of Communication

Source: Schulz von Thun (2011)

The model shows that the process of sending information has four sides and, in turn, the receiver looks at information from four sides (Schulz von Thun, 2011):

1. Factual information: Matter of fact information, that is objective (e.g., data, facts)
2. Appeal: Desire, advice, instructions, commands that the sender is seeking
3. Relationship: Information on the relationship between sender and receiver, how they get along, and what they think of each other (i.e., how one perceives the other)

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4. Self-revelation: Implicit information (conscious or intended) about the sender, e.g., his/her motives, values, emotions, likes/dislikes, social status through mannerisms, etc.

For example, the IOC puts a lot of effort into refugee teams, and even started a refugee foundation. The IOC sends the fact that such initiatives are started, certainly wanting to communicate the self-revelation regarding Olympic Values. Some members of the media, as receivers, may view the IOC messages as an appeal to start perceiving the IOC as only value driven, and would thus interpret the messages as sportswashing which means to improve a tarnished reputation.

This concept applies to all communication in or concerning projects, change management, or crises communications. It can be viewed as being interpersonal, but also as NOC communication. Even though one may think that this model is limited to the spoken or written word, we wish to emphasise here, that it goes beyond words, as it also applies to non-verbal communication.

Even non-verbal communication (gestures, attitudes, looks, body language, etc.) is communication. For example, if an NOC does not communicate a problem, then that is also information, in itself.

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Workshop: Better Communicator - Check-in & Check-back

So, how do you become a better communicator with your NOC teams, your direct reports, your board members, your stakeholders, and with the IOC? How do you quickly learn whether (or not) your communication is effective, and your message has come across as you intended?
Use the Check-in & Check-back approach. It leads to more effective communication, while being respectful towards you and your communication partner.
Check-in: Think

Sender ( ):

1. What is my **intention**?
2. Which information **DO** I want to send?

Receiver ( ) *(someone of your team may play the receiver)*:

1. Which ear am I **listening** through (left or right)?
2. What **information** might the NOC (or a person) be sending?
3. **How else** (in what other way) could I **understand** this message?

Check-back: Validate

Sender ( ):

1. Make the **intention** of the message **explicit** (and concise)! (e.g., "I'd like you to do something for my project")
2. **Ask** what your partner **heard** (and understood), of what you said, and what they **make of the conversation** (how they perceive the information) (e.g., after the brief chat, or within a meeting check-point of what people will do)

Receiver ( ) — Discuss with the Sender, whether or not you correctly understand the information:

1. "So, do you mean…?"
2. "So, do you want me/us to…?"
3. "I/we want to make sure we're on the same page, …"

Source: Schiffer, 2017

Intercultural Communication

Here, we extend subchapter 2.5.3, which provided a brief discussion of communication and culture, in regards to context, and add a brief digression on intercultural communication. The tools that were introduced previously are helpful to plan, design, and implement the communication in your NOC. However, your culture can influence the behaviour and patterns of thinking in your NOC. Hofstede (1983) describes six cultural dimensions, that can be used to characterise work-relevant values and attitudes of different countries. These are 1. High vs. Low Power Distance, 2. Individualism vs. Collectivism, 3. High vs. Low Uncertainty Avoidance, 4. Masculinity vs. Femininity, 5. Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation, and 6. Indulgence vs. Restraints.

We present an example of power distance, in more detail. Employees of a country with a low degree of power distance (e.g., Austria, Denmark),

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would expect to be involved in decisions, and they would also find it to be their normal behaviour to disagree with the supervisor. In contrast, employees of a country with a high degree of power distance (e.g., Russia) would expect the supervisor to give them clear instructions, and it would be highly unusual for them to speak out against the supervisor. As a result, the same way of communicating, even using the same words, is perceived very differently in different countries, in terms of the competence of the leadership (Meyer, 2014, 115ff). Thus, different expectations of leadership styles in different countries, underline the fact that successful communication always depends on the communication culture of the respective country (Towers & Peppler, 2017). Besides these dimensions, according to Hofstede, another important aspect concerns the use and the power of language, and the level of context. For instance, in northern European and in Anglo-Saxon countries, people prefer a direct and straightforward communication. Their way of speaking is often characterised by specific examples, and can be focused on individual goals. Thus, in countries such as Germany, Sweden, or the Netherlands, the initial word is the message, and few further contexts are needed (also called linear active communication; Lewis, 2006, 41f). In contrast, in Italy or Spain, for example, people usually communicate, not only with their words, but rather in an intensely personal and compassionate (and impassioned) manner. People share their experiences and personal backgrounds, and therefore, it is more about the relationships they have with each other (therefore, their communication is multi-active; Lewis, 2006, 41f). Hence, it is not just about the spoken word, because it is also about facial expressions, gestures, and the relationships among people. In other words, context beyond the words can also be important.

Recommendation: Culture and Communication

What do we learn from the cultural differences that are explained above? You should take these cultural characteristics into account, to make your communication perfectly tailored according to the requirement, and more successful. That is, for example, be aware of your choice of medium, that you will use for communicating. In multi-active cultures, for instance, video conferences seem to be more suitable than simple telephone calls or e-mails, for considering the communication culture. Furthermore, depending on the cultural background of your NOC or country, you should individually consider different strategies on how to address changes, deal with generated dynamics, and implement future developments.

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4.4.6 Step 6: The Organisation must Fit the Plan

Change in an organisation can fail, because the new structures do not fit to the old structures. In other words, if a new work unit or department has new tasks and, thus, may have to work harder and longer than before, the powers of the persons involved are insufficient when they are based on the old structures. There must be a newly calibrated fit of new duties, their power, and their available resources.

In this context, reference is often made to the possibilities and advantages of empowerment (e.g., Kotter, 1997, 141ff). This is the extension of the powers of staff for functional and motivational purposes. In times of change, more competencies are often needed. If these competencies are missing, then employees do not feel responsible for the change; indeed, empowerment is needed (Brökerling, 2007, 180ff). However, an NOC should also consider that change can also lead to "de-powerment". This is, when competencies are no longer needed; hence, staff can no longer control the working processes. This usually leads to demotivation of the staff, and resistance towards the intended change (Hage & Aiken, 1974).

It is easier to successfully implement a change, if you leave existing structures in place, and establish the new processes via a new work unit or department, or even establish them entirely in the external environment, as a new organisation. For example, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was involved in creating the International Testing Agency (ITA), which is now in charge of services that were organised beforehand by the WADA (but to a lower service level). Expanding existing services is always easier than cutting back or downsizing, because that would lead to distribution struggles.

However, often the easier variant, which is the expansion, cannot be realised for cost reasons. As a rule, it will be the problematic second variant with considerable cutbacks. This usually leads to a resistance to change and open conflicts, severe loss of motivation, etc. Crises can help break the resistance to change, as everyone realises that more problems will occur without the change. In sport, the replacement of a very important player in the semi-finals of a World Cup, due to too many yellow cards being shown in their disfavour, is accepted only to prevent worse potential scenarios (i.e., a disqualification for the finals). The main thread through all of the above, is similar to that in organisations, regarding cutbacks and significant changes.

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Illustration: Modern Pentathlon and its 5th Discipline

For many years, there was a discussion about the Modern Pentathlon dropping horse-riding as the 5th discipline. The Union International Pentathlon Moderne (UIPM) did not want to change, as the sport was invented by Pierre de Coubertin, and most athletes loved their sport; and it was also due to horse-riding in itself. The "crises" came in 2021 after the Tokyo Olympic Games, when the IOC increased pressure on the UIPM to no longer include the sport in the Olympic Programme, when horses remain in the sport. Thus, UIPM took the crises as a chance and the 5th discipline was exchanged for an obstacle run. This change needs upskilling of coaches, referees, etc., but it also caused de-powerment for all those concerned, who were in charge of horse-riding. The "crises" of being potentially taken out of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, certainly helped to overcome the resistance to change, as everyone quickly realised that more problems would certainly occur, without the necessary change being driven forward.

4.4.7 Step 7: Change in Organisation means Change in People's Behaviour

It is difficult for humans to change their well-established habits, but it will work if people feel the success that is involved in successful changes. Therefore, special attention must be paid to experiences of success in the course of change. Kotter (1997, 161ff) suggests to organise short-term successes (as a celebration), that should be planted and communicated in advance. It should be kept in mind, that deep transformations take time, and any step-by-step procedure towards success, is important for keeping and maintaining the motivation. The takeaway here, is that plans often have milestones (Heagney, 2016, 87), which can be celebrated when reached.

Illustration: Gender Equity at the Lithuanian NOC

In 2015, the Lithuanian NOC became aware of a lack of female members on the NOC Executive Board. An action plan on how to increase the number of women was written up, and driven forward by the NOC president. After seven years of constant work and consistent enforcement the NOC Executive Board is now (in 2022) composed of almost 40% women, and the current LNOC president and IOC member is Ms. Daina

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Gudzinevičiūtė. It was an intensive work by the "equality commission", which was specifically established for that purpose.
This illustration can be used as a recommendation for a fictive plan, with which to celebrate successive and successful implanting of noteworthy milestones.
Put up a dashboard, that shows the current gender distribution of your NOC board, staff, Olympic Team, etc.. Then, mark the respective ultimate goal as an equal distribution, between the actual mark and the final mark, where you can set consecutive milestones (e.g., for each 5% increase); and whenever a milestone is reached, there must definitely be a celebration to mark that particular success.

There is a useful maxim: "Practice what you preach!", which means that all attempts to change human behaviour may work poorly, if the key people/decision makers themselves do not overtly practice the behaviour that others would expect of them (Koromzay, 2021, 78). Benefit-seeking executives will not be able to convince other staff to not seek the potential benefits of those executives (by gift taking, or bonus payments, or bribery), because the new behaviour must be exemplified by the decision makers and leaders.

4.4.8 Step 8: Anchoring the Change Permanently

Change in an organisation, especially when accompanied by behavioural change, can be met by the danger of people falling back into old ways, that are based on former structures. Therefore, authors such as Kotter (1997) call for embedding change in the culture of the organisation, to ensure long-term change. This is difficult to implement. The problem is that you cannot simply control or even programme organisational culture (see Calström & Ekman, 2012). You set impulses, and then can only aim to influence those impulses. This is usually achieved through symbols and rituals.

Symbols give change an identity, and remind everyone of change. The IOC wants to transform itself to master the future. They have summarised 15 changes in the Roadmap for Agenda 2020+5. Change encompasses many issues and is ultimately quite complex. The title "Agenda 2020+5" itself sums up the complex transformation. The title is ultimately a symbol for the complex undertaking, which thus becomes manageable. Rituals are even more powerful. They combine the symbolic with a formalised

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action, which would then always be repeated according to precise rules. These repetitions carve the inner symbolism increasingly deeper into the consciousness. We know this from the rituals of the Olympic Games, such as the opening ceremony and the award ceremonies. Especially, the Olympic Oath continues to remind all athletes of the code of the Games. These principles can also be used to anchor the change of an NOC. Thus, the contents of the change can be summarised in a symbol, and supported by rituals. This can be undertaken by using a graphic symbol or an appropriate title. For example, if an NOC wants to put athletes, rather than their bureaucratic rules, at the centre of their activities, celebrating an Athletes' Day can serve as a firm and constant reminder of that intent.

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