

IMPLEMENTING DISRUPTIVE CHANGE: MOBILIZING LEADERS

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Higher education provides unique challenges to implementing disruptive change as leaders often face highly distributed authority, misaligned leadership around a business case for action and the definition of success, and sponsors and work teams can lack authority to make decisions and implement changes across the entire organization.

Higher education provides unique challenges to implementing disruptive change.

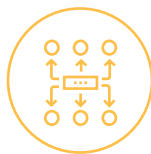
As leaders aim to elevate their institutions beyond the status quo, they need to focus on leading through change by:



aligning goals



aligning behaviors



aligning processes

Under this framework, mission-driven higher education institutions can become more effective at implementing disruptive change. One key element is to mobilize leaders within the organization who can act as catalysts and leaders for disruptive change.

How to Mobilize Leaders at Your Institution

To mobilize and align leaders an organization must define the business case for action and the requirements of implementation success at the outset of any implementation. This “Defining Implementation Success” process ensures two main things:

- I. A shared understanding of the intended implementation
- II. Everyone adopts an “implementation mindset”

Defining Success and Establishing Goals

The more thoroughly an organization can define initiative objectives, the better it can measure success, and the faster it can implement and sustain. A business case for action succinctly answers four questions:

- What is the change? Specifically, **what will and/or must change?**

- Why are we making this change? What's the **underlying and essential rationale**?
- What **consequences accrue to the organization** if you don't implement the change, or fail in your efforts to do so?
- What are the **major disruptions and key impacts** on our organization at large, our functions and work teams during and after implementation?

As you establish the business case for action, it's important to define success both subjectively and objectively. Most organizations rely on subjective definitions that make it difficult to clearly know when success has been achieved. Defining success should include answers to the following objective questions:

- What is the timeframe for implementation?
- What are the technical objectives of the change (e.g., tool installation, tool optimization)?
- What are the business objectives of the change (e.g., cash benefit goal, student enrollment rate)?
- What are the human objectives of the change (i.e., which specific behaviors are you looking for that vary for different groups)?

Conclusion: Mobilizing Leaders to Effect Disruptive Change

Higher education provides unique challenges to implementing disruptive change. Organizations often encounter highly distributed authority, misaligned leadership and sponsors and work teams that lack authority to affect organization-wide changes. To elevate institutions, leaders must take a leading through change approach and align goals, behaviors and processes. When organizations mobilize leaders, leaders can successfully implement and inspire disruptive change at an organization-wide level.



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