



ZIMBABWE EZEKIEL GUTI UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF LAW, BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND ECONOMICS

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

EXAMINATION PAPER

COURSE CODE : MBA523

COURSE TITLE : CHANGE MANAGEMENT

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS :

DURATION : 3 Hours

LEVEL : 5.2

DATE : April 2024

30 JUL 2024

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

1. No cell phones are allowed in the examination venue.
2. Answer question number **one (1)** in Section A (Compulsory) and any other **three (3)** questions in Section B.
3. Begin each question on a new page.
4. The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets []

SECTION A (This question is compulsory)

Question 1

CHANGE MANAGEMENT FOR STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

In 2001, the SRS partnered with an outside consulting firm to evaluate the organisation's aging IT infrastructure and identify opportunities for improvement. The result was a five-year 'Strategic Technology Plan' that, when implemented, would enable the SRS to enhance customer service, reduce operating costs, and achieve long-term business objectives through improved technology. At that time, total staff consisted of forty-five people and they served more than 140 000 active and retired members. The updated technology was eagerly anticipated. The most critical aspect of the SRS's plan was the successful replacement of the organisation's then 30-year old pension administration system. Procurement began in 2009 and the project began in 2010. The requirements for the new system were ambitious and included:

- Integrating all existing and disparate IT systems to facilitate a seamless sharing of data and information;
- Tightening of internal security controls to protect data;
- Eliminating reliance and dependence upon single individual(s) for programming and internal system changes;
- Providing information electronically to, and from, local governmental entities and retirement boards and
- Implement web self-service to allow submissions of data to and from members and employers. A formal procurement process yielded proposals from several bidding firms.

After a thorough evaluation, the SRS selected Sagitec Solutions, LLC-a leading IT consulting firm serving the public pension industry-as the best option for modernizing their organisation's information technology. Sagitec possessed a strong track record of success, having implemented their Neospin pension administration software on time and within budget for multiple retirement agencies. In 2009, with widespread excitement and support across both organisations, SRS and Sagitec together launched the project. The project kicked off with strong momentum. Project participants were excited about the prospect of new software that would improve their ability to serve customers, respond to legislative and business rule

changes, and evolve their infrastructure as time went on. Initial Page 3 of 5 project planning had gone well. SRS employees were adjusting to their new roles. Everyone felt confident about the project's success. Yet it wasn't long before the organisation began to feel the effects of large-scale change. Staff showed signs of fatigue. Eagerness and excitement were replaced by a cloying sense of doubt and frustration.

Employees began asking themselves, Will this new system really provide us with the benefits as promised? Is it worth the extra effort? Strain bore heavily on all staff members: those pulling double duty working on the project while attending to their own day-to-day responsibilities, and those who absorbed the extra workload of coworkers increasingly preoccupied with the project. Subject matter experts struggled to prepare for design sessions. Whether due to miscommunication or a lack of it, the rumour mill began to churn, and messages like these began to circulate: What if I can't figure this stuff out? Will I still have a job when this new system is in place? The SRS' Senior Management team worried about the general morale in the office. Physical and budgetary constraints had forced an early decision not to increase staff for the project. The Executive Director feared he would not be able to keep up with daily operations, and a growing sense of frustration threatened the retention of capable staff members. The two programmers who had created SRS' legacy system were only able to participate on a part-time basis. The project goal the SRS had worked so hard to achieve seemed at risk. It was clear something had to be done. With roughly 40% of the project complete, SRS' executive leadership took action to mitigate any further risks related to the "human component" of their project.

Together with Sagitec, they implemented a Change Management (CM) strategy that would guide the SRS organisation to a successful conclusion. The first part of this CM strategy involved bringing in a certified Change Management Consultant to serve on the project. From the start, the consultant worked closely with Project Managers to develop an integrated strategy aimed at helping them reach milestones on time and on budget. Together, they mapped transition-related risks and produced a detailed plan that balanced the need for strong leadership, project management, and change management. What is often overlooked in a large transition effort is "the human component." Whenever you change existing structures or processes people naturally experience anxiety. Change Management is the process to manage people in order to achieve business results. Ultimately, change management exists to help transition a current state of business to a new state of business.

Source: Berth Hart Sagitec Director: Adapted from Home Client Case Studies Page 4 of 5
Required

- (a) Identify the driving forces for change in this case. [2 marks]
- (b) Resistance to change is a very common phenomenon that managers experience. Highlight possible reasons for resistance to change in the case. [4 marks]
- (c) Using evidence from the case, explain why it is important to focus on the “human component” in order to achieve successful change. [4 marks]
- (d) You have been hired as a Change Management Consultant for the SRS transition. Show how you would use any one of the models covered in the course to implement successful change to this organisation. Clearly show the merits of the selected model. [30 marks]

SECTION B Answer any 3 questions. Each question carries 20 marks

SECTION B

QUESTION 2 Discuss the change management principal challenges managers face in today’s increasingly competitive global environment. [20 marks]

QUESTION 3

Managers are primary change agents in most organisations. Assess how successful current Zimbabwean managers have been in fulfilling this role. [20 marks]

QUESTION 4

- (a) Assess the validity of the main criticisms of the Emergent Approach to change. [10 marks]
- (b) Discuss the implications of these criticisms for today’s managers. [10 marks]

QUESTION 5

An organisation can be changed by altering its culture, its structure, its people or some combination of these aspects. Critically review this statement in the context of Zimbabwe’s organisations. [20 marks]