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**N/SS/SMP/SPM/S-4  
The Management of Change  
Seminar 24  
14 June 1999**

**RESEARCH ESSAY**

**RESPONDING TO CHANGE IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE AND  
THE CANADIAN FORCES**

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**National Security Studies Course 1**

**Canadian Forces College**

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There is no more delicate matter to take in hand, no more dangerous to conduct, nor more doubtful in its success, than to be a leader in the introduction of changes. For he who innovates will have for enemies all those who are well off under the old order of things, and only lukewarm supporters in those who might be better off under the new.

Niccolo Machiavelli <sup>1</sup>

## **Introduction**

It could be said that history is nothing else but a description of change.

Civilizations have come and gone along with empires and dynasties that have vanished leaving but a few lines in the history books. Nonetheless, as the world enters the third millennium AD, the rate of change seems to be overwhelming. Lately, a new cyber-economy has emerged that is changing the way people live, are educated, work, or get their entertainment while the underlying information technology is revolutionizing the way governmental, business or military affairs are being conducted. Consequently, most people are now saying that change is now more difficult to cope with than ever before.

Based on the recent experiences of many organizations, adapting to change appears to be one of the most difficult tasks to undertake. For example, at the individual level, Dave Ulrich reveals that only five percent of Weight Watchers clients reach their target weight and that only one-half of one percent of them will maintain it forever. At the organizational level, he reports that in the business world, only 25 percent of all

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<sup>1</sup> Micheal L. Tushman & Charles A. O'Reilly III, *Winning Through Innovations- A Practical Guide to Leading Organizational Change and Renewal*, Boston, Harvard Business School Press (1997) 36.

reengineering efforts are judged successful.<sup>2</sup> At the political level, the Soviet Union's empire that came crashing down with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 will soon join the fading memories of the British and French empires of the early 20th century.

The Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Forces (CF) have also experienced significant changes during the 1990's. First, there has been an increase in the tempo and a shift in the types of operations.<sup>3</sup> The CF were involved in major operational missions in the Persian Gulf, the Balkans, and Central Africa and participated in large domestic operations of support to the civil authority during the Saguenay and Manitoba floods and the Ice Storm in Eastern Ontario and Quebec. Second, the introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 has resulted in a number of significant "internal" changes such as the opening of most occupations to women as well as the acceptance of gays and lesbians in the CF. Third, a significant reduction in Canadian defence expenditures culminated in a major downsizing of both the military and civilian workforces. Finally, the crisis in leadership highlighted by the Somalia Affair triggered a number of new initiatives that are being implemented throughout DND and the CF.<sup>4</sup>

The thesis of this paper is that DND and the CF must make change management an integral aspect of everyday leadership and management. As such, a key element of the

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strategic vision would include an objective to master change by adopting a culture that could foster change. In such a culture, people would become capable of dealing with and responding to change and introducing and managing it effectively when and where required. This would imply an integrated approach to balancing technological, political, cultural, and social change. Within such a culture, change mastery would become a key human resource driver that would direct the Human Resources System (HRS) to seek, develop, train, educate and reward people with imagination, innovation (innovativeness!), creativity, adaptability, and responsiveness.<sup>5</sup> By embracing change as an organizational way of life, the synergy between technology, culture, and people should be enhanced and organizational effectiveness improved.

### **The Importance of Adaptability**

At the strategic level, the official mission statement of DND and the CF is *to defend Canada and Canadian interests and values while contributing to international peace and security*. From this mission statement, the three Services have developed their own operational level mission statements that state: *...generate and maintain combat capable multipurpose (maritime, land or air) to meet Canada's defence objectives*.<sup>6</sup> Implicit in these mission statements is a desire for each Service to be flexible, adaptable and responsive to change in whatever forms it might appear.

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<sup>5</sup> Prem Benimadhu, Seminar Presentation titled Adding Value: Human Resource Management, To the National Security Studies Course, Department of National Defence, January 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, *Defence Planning Guidance-1999*.

It is not the purpose of this paper to demonstrate how well DND and the CF have or have not adapted to change in the past. Nonetheless, it has been reported that DND and the (CF) are in the process of implementing over 300 recommendations from various official studies or inquiries.<sup>7</sup> The fact that most of the recommendations being implemented were the result of “independent reviews” or initiatives within separate organizations might indicate the past inability or unwillingness of DND and the CF to respond to and embrace change and to have an overall change management strategy.<sup>8</sup> Even where they might have willingly embraced change, it could well have been poorly integrated into coherent and executable plans. Although there are preliminary indications that the recommendations are in the process of being implemented successfully, it is still too early to determine whether the changes being introduced will actually achieve the results that are expected in the longer term.<sup>9</sup>

Based on past experiences, it is important to note that unless DND and the CF are more successful than in the past in implementing change, they could see additional change imposed on them as unsuccessful changes inevitably lead to more changes. It could also be argued that the pace of change in the CF is not going to slow down in the near future unless DND and the CF can improve their ability to respond to change. In order to do so, there is an urgent need to become proactive in change management.

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<sup>7</sup> *DPG-1999*.

<sup>8</sup> Since the beginning of the 90's, NDHQ initiated at least the following four major change initiatives: functional review (NDHQ wide), Op Excelerate (ADM(Mat)), Op Renaissance (ADM(Per)), and the mother of all reengineering, Management Command and Control Reengineering (MCCR) (NDHQ wide).

<sup>9</sup> MND's Committee submits report on change, *Maple Leaf*, vol. 1, no. 14, 1 December 1998, page 2.

Dave Ulrich pointed out that in the future, the difference between winning and losing organizations would not be dependent on the pace of change, but rather on the ability to respond to the pace of change. He emphasized that the winning organizations will not be surprised at the unanticipated change they face; they will have developed the ability to adapt, learn and respond to change. He noted that on the other hand, the losing organizations would spend time trying to control and react to change rather than responding to it quickly.<sup>10</sup> While it is evident that DND and the CF, like every other organization, would want to be a successful organization in the future, it is still not clear whether they are developing the ability to adapt, learn, and respond or are only trying to control change.

It is now apparent that both DND and the CF are well aware of the importance of managing change. Defence Strategy 2020 has been drafted to provide a twenty-year vision that identifies both the challenges being faced and the opportunities emerging for DND and the CF as they proactively adapt to change in a rapidly evolving and complex world. The strategy being proposed recognizes the importance of managing change when it states:

Long term analysis is needed to effectively adjust to change in a structured and planned manner. The investments and changes required today developing the defence capabilities to defend Canada's interests and values tomorrow require a long-term vision

This is particularly true in light of rapid technological change and the continuing evolution of the international system. The Revolution in Military and Business Affairs (RMA and RBA, respectively) may be harbingers of necessary military change.<sup>11</sup>

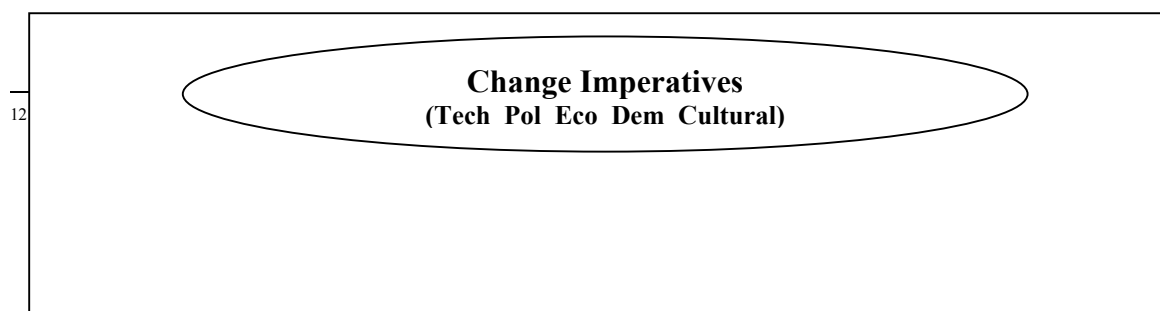
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<sup>10</sup> Dave Ulrich, *Human Resource Champions*, page 151.

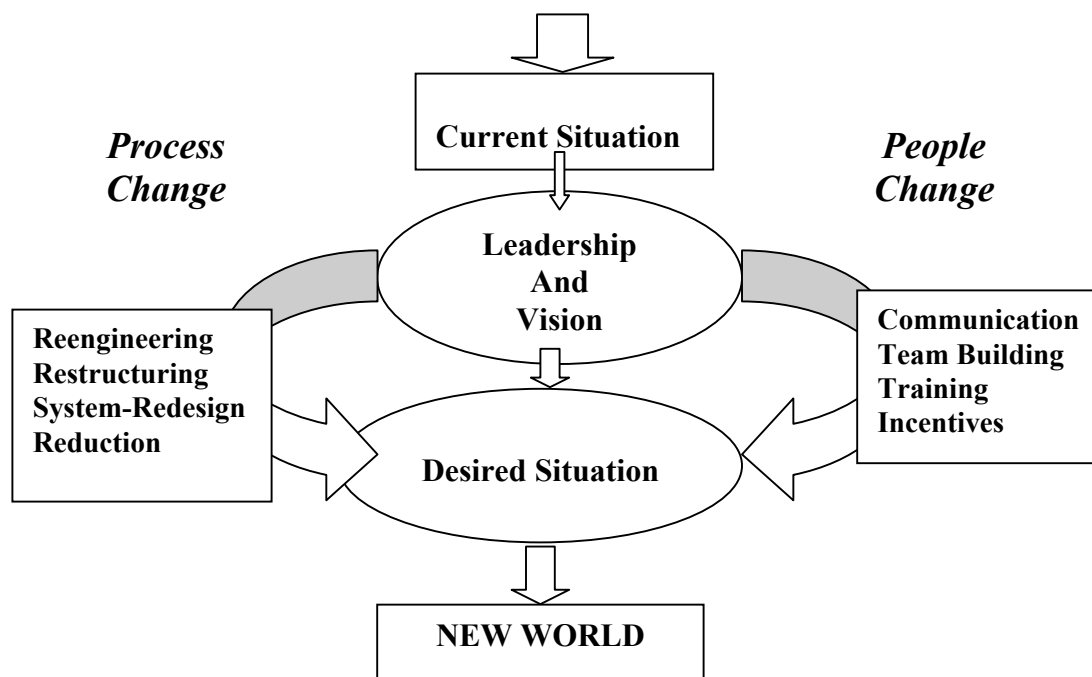
<sup>11</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, *Shaping the Future of the Canadian Forces: Defence Strategy 2020*, Draft version 6, (dated 24 March 1999) 1.

Not only recognizing the need for change, the strategy also identifies current and emerging trends in four critical arenas: geo-political, military, socio-economic, and organizational. The strategy notes the resource limitations of DND and the CF in that they can not afford multiple radical shifts across the spectrum of capability.<sup>12</sup> Pursuing the approach of trying to control and limit change too far could lead to potential trouble in the future. It follows that a coherent and integrated change management approach is needed.

While this is quite logical and appears almost as a statement of the obvious, there is also the subtle issue of determining how to deal with the multiple components of change. Figure 1 provides a basic framework for change showing two major components: process change on one side and people change on the other side. This framework shows that both processes are essential for success, are key drivers in developing the change strategy, and that one can not concentrate on one strategy first at the expense of the other strategy (i.e. both strategies must be given equal considerations). While not all process changes need to be selected depending on the circumstances and the current fad or expertise available, the people changes must include all of the key activities. Past experience has demonstrated that this is most difficult to accomplish and that more often than not one element is missing resulting in derailing or slowing down of the change effort.







**Figure 1-Framework for Change<sup>13</sup>**

As DND and the CF focus to achieve excellence, there must be a full recognition that the people are the CF and that it is the people who will deliver excellence. Another way to look at this is to state that organizational issues ultimately translate into people related issues. Furthermore, as pointed out by Prem Benimadhu, if the organizational learning must be greater than the rate of change, the organization must develop a greater ability to implement change successfully through the people process.<sup>14</sup> Organizational learning can only be achieved through people. Thus, the ability to implement change successfully depends on having people who can learn and understand what type of change is required,

<sup>13</sup> Basic Framework Model provided by Mr Ian Jackson, Op Renaissance-NDHQ, HR Group, May 1995.

why change is necessary and how it should be implemented as well as when and how to get started.

### **Change Imperatives**

Change is all encompassing, but from an organizational point of view five major types of external change drivers are prevalent: technological, political, economic, demographic, and cultural. Internal change drivers normally mirror the external ones, although somewhat in a delayed fashion. In addition, the organization has direct control over its structure and human resources in order to respond to the external change drivers and introduce them within the enterprise if the processes enable or support change instead of slowing it down (e.g. civilian classification or staffing processes in DND). The common thread from all of these types of change drivers is the human element as these change imperatives ultimately depend on the expertise, adaptability and responsiveness of the people and people processes that define the organization.

DND and the CF have recently become well aware of the importance of external change imperatives in preparing for the future. Strategic Vision 2020 declares that:

To succeed in the emerging battlespace of the 21st century, and to ensure the CF possess the flexibility it needs to adapt to ongoing changes in technology and the international system, Defence must become more innovative. Defence must also be more strategically focused, dynamic and engaged with Canadians.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Prem Benimadhu, Seminar Presentation titled *Adding Value: Human Resource Management*, to the National Security Studies Course, Department of National Defence, January 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, *Shaping the Future of the Canadian Forces: Defence Strategy 2020*, Draft version 6, dated 24 March 1999.

As such, if DND and the CF have already recognized that technological and (international) political changes will have an impact on the organization. Flexibility and innovation are both identified as key characteristics the organization wishes to acquire to succeed on the battlefield of the future. Furthermore, if DND and the CF are truly engaged with Canadian, they should be able to track and understand the emerging Canadian reality. Nonetheless, there is a need to acknowledge the economic, demographic, and social changes that are going to happen over the next twenty to thirty years as adaptability to these types of change could be even more critical to survival of the organization itself. A short discussion about some of the issues related to each of these change imperatives from a military point of view will help make this clearer.

### **Technological Change**

Entire books have been written about the subject of technological change in a military context. Most of these have argued about the importance of technology to ensure supremacy on the battlefield. But they have also been written from an historical perspective where hindsight is far better. For the purpose of this paper, the evolution of air forces from the early days of aircraft as observer platforms for directing artillery fire to the fighter jet, bomber, and transport aircraft of today can serve as an appropriate example. The introduction of this technological change resulted in a new organizational structure, doctrine, equipment and capabilities. New skills were required and a new culture evolved within and between the Services. Nonetheless, this evolution was a long and complicated process with much acrimony and infighting between the Services.

While people's resistance to change might offer a partial explanation for this slow progress, it cannot be seen as the sole reason as one would think that after having faced so many changes, the military would be most adept in managing change. If the evolution of the Air Force is any indication, this would not appear to be the case.

This is particularly troubling, as there is every indication that technology will continue to be a significant driver of change. The introduction of precision guided missiles and bombs, spaced based systems and computers everywhere on the battlefield has contributed to what is now being referred to as the Revolution in Military Affairs. Everyone is concerned about being surprised on the battlefield by a new "killer weapon" that would render their armed forces obsolete. In the meantime, the CF does not have the resources, time and energy to repeat the long and convoluted experience that the introduction of the aircraft brought about. There is an urgent need to be more adaptable to technological change.

A key element in dealing with technological changes is to have access to the people with the technical skills necessary to understand the new technology. An even more important aspect of having technically competent people is the ability to challenge them in finding new ways of applying the existing or emerging technology on the battlefield. Considering the ever increasing rate of technological change, there is a need to craft the right human resource plan to determine whether the Department should retrain the existing workforce or seek the required skills by "outsourcing" to industry. This issue will remain an on-going challenge, as the people with high technical skills are

already in short supply and they are being pursued aggressively by both government and industry. The military could be at a disadvantage, as they currently seek people with “military skills”. DND and the CF should think hard about the skill sets they are looking for in the people they will need for the future. The truth might be that soft skills such as adaptability, flexibility, innovativeness, and leadership to name but a few will become far more important than is currently the case. The same might be said about technical skills.

### **Political change**

Political change comes about in many forms, from the election of new governments in democratic countries to take over by dictators in autocratic ones, from the introduction of new laws and treaties to the different legal interpretation of old ones. An example of political change has been the addition of new partners to the NATO Alliance. The emergence of a new world (dis)order caused by the unacceptable human rights practices such as the ethnic cleansing being exercised in the Balkans has forced the Alliance to engage in intensive air operations outside of its normal area of operations. Such a situation was unpredictable and almost unthinkable less than five years ago.

It is obvious that in a democratic society, there is not much that the military can do in dealing with political change. Nonetheless, there is an important link that must exist between the military and their political masters, especially since the former are responsible to ensure the adequate funding of the latter. The CF must still ensure that the politicians are well aware of the capabilities and limitations inherent in the use of military

force. Thus, they must remind the politicians that capabilities can not be acquired or changed overnight and that once committed, a force needs to be sustained. This points to a requirement for the senior leaders to have better strategic analysis skills. Given that political change can bring about major changes through the legislative process very quickly, such skills should allow the senior leaders to continuously monitor and analyze correctly the impact of new laws to ensure that DND and the CF understand the ramification of these laws on their operational responsibilities. This is one area where the traditions and culture of the organization must adapt to change rather than try to fight it.

### **Economic Change**

Economic change is normally driven by introduction of new technologies in the marketplace. It is also related to the emergence of a new market place called the global economy. However, this increased globalization has increased the vulnerability of many local economies since a crisis in one country can have significant impact around the world. When the Asian economy started to sputter last year, the famous Asian flu caused the price of Canadian commodities and natural resources to plummet. This in turn impacted the political system as a number of provincial governments were forced to readjust their revenue and expense projections accordingly. Even the Canadian dollar took a nosedive forcing the Bank of Canada to intervene. The fall in the value of the Canadian dollar in turn affected DND where Major Crown projects had to get additional

funds to cover the increasing costs of foreign products being procured. This is a good example of the interrelationship that exists between the different change imperatives.

Another major aspect of economic change deals with compensation of the workforce. More than ever, DND and the CF have to compete in the marketplace for recruiting and retaining qualified and competent personnel. Recent changes in HR policies and practices have increased the mobility of the workforce mainly in a negative direction (i.e. incentives to leave instead of remaining with DND). Even the effort to introduce a retention incentive for the pilots and doctors generated more negative reactions than most people expected. There is a need for a consistent and “affirmative” but flexible compensation policy for the workforce of the Department.

### **Demographic Change**

Demographic change refers to the ethnic composition, gender and age distribution, as well as population locations of the workforce. It is best illustrated by the first cohort of the post-war baby boomer generation that is now starting to exit the labour force. The impact is already being felt on the Canada Pension Plan as well as the Canada Health Programme, forcing the political and economic system to react to the demands of an aging population.

From a military aspect, the new demographics of the country will affect the way recruitment will be conducted as the CF compete more aggressively from a shrinking and

much different pool of people than in the past. Demographic change also brings along change in social mores and values especially when the demographic change is driven by immigration from societies that have different language, cultural or religious beliefs. Therefore, a number of adjustments might be required to accommodate the “new face” of the CF if the CF is to mirror the Canadian society it is supposed to represent.

The current trends indicate that the changes in demographics will only exacerbate the challenge DND and the CF face in trying to compete for the recruitment and retention of the best people. Given that every industry is proposing to adopt the same strategy in this regard, there is a requirement to define exactly how DND and the CF will achieve and sustain such a strategy.<sup>16</sup> While it makes good sense to propose to recruit the best and the brightest, ultimately, there are not enough of them to satisfy the demand. Whether DND and the CF need a specific HR skill set internally or can rely on industry to provide the “services” just-in-time will soon become a key strategic decision.

### **Cultural Change**

Given its complexity, cultural change is normally a subject best left to anthropologists and sociologists. For this paper, only a few major aspects will be highlighted, the first one being cultural change of the society while the other one being organizational cultural change. Cultural change reflects the changing values of a society and is normally of two types: revolutionary or evolutionary. Most people have argued that revolutionary cultural change normally fail and that cultural change happens over a

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<sup>16</sup> Jerome A. Koncel, We Must recruit and Retain the best and the brightest, *Paper Industry Management Association's Magazine - Papermaker*, Mount Prospect, vol. 80, issue 6, (June 1998) 88.



long period.<sup>17</sup> A typical example of this type of change is the slow evolution of Canadian values fostering greater tolerance and willingness to compromise. On the other hand, organizational cultural change is concerned about changing what are considered the most fundamental aspects of an organization. It is considered the most difficult and challenging type of change to implement and is normally only attempted when the very survival of the organization might be at stake.

In the case of DND and the CF, the events of the early 1990's have brought about such a climate. Although many of the organizational cultural changes were triggered by economic and political changes (e.g. budgetary reductions, introduction of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms), it did not follow that the implementation of the new culture was without its challenges. The introduction of Sexual Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP) and ethic training were but the easiest part of trying to change the organizational culture. The development of appropriate policies and guidelines coupled with constant vigilance and strong leadership has shaken most of the old male warrior and egocentric culture to recognize the new Canadian reality. Nonetheless, there are a few people willing to argue that such change has been bad and that the organization has lost its essential military values. Only time will tell which of these views will prevail.

### **Dealing with Change**

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<sup>17</sup> James O'Toole, *Leading Change-Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishing, (9.2P)page-72-731.

Taken individually, each type of change described above could be said to move at its own rate. Where this gets more complicated is when one change imperative starts driving or influencing the other ones. Thus, technological, political, demographic or cultural change taken individually is one thing but when they start to combine, it can create a potent mix of complexity.

The tendency of the military has been to focus on technological and political changes and to either ignore, downplay or even resist the other types of change. In the case of the CF, it could be said that the other types of change were the ones that have had a significant impact. The social and legal changes that brought about the imposition of gender integration are but one example. Military society tends by its very nature to be very conservative and thus resistant to adopt change especially in the social area. Thus, the tendency has been to look at change within a silo, with limited efforts at dealing with the cross-impact in the other parts of the organization. For instance, the rate of technological change might be high, and the complexity of technological change is getting higher, leading to what some have described as hyper-change. Still, few people have studied the cross-impact of technological change on social or cultural change and look at the multiple dimensions of change. A lot has been written about the high failure rate of introducing change with the blame being laid squarely on the shoulders of the worker by what is called resistance to change. People's resistance to change is really a result rather than a cause of the failure in introducing technological change.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Eric B. Dent, Susan Galloway-Goldberg, Challenging "resistance to change" in *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, Arlington, March 1999, pages 25-4.

Over the years, organizations have developed different strategies to deal with change. Most of them are based on human behavioural research that has established the strong correlation between effective change and open communication. The following strategies have been deemed most effective: consultation, education and information, love and nurturing, facilitation, negotiation, and cooperation and rewarding. Other strategies have been identified as having a much more negative and destructive impact. Included in these approaches are manipulation and deception, coercion, competition, and hoodwinking.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that perception plays an important role in the implementation of these strategies. For example, the employees could perceive what might appear as a reward for cooperation with the leader as manipulation, while negotiation could be seen as coercion. Therefore, open communication and attentive listening are key to successful implementation.<sup>20</sup> This also highlights the importance of having superb people skills while managing change.

Peter Senge has reported on the misunderstandings that surround change when he wrote:

More broadly, current reality itself is, for many of us, the enemy. We fight against what is. We are not so much drawn to what we want to create as we are repelled by what we have, from our current reality. By this logic, the deeper the fear, the more we abhor what is, the more “motivated” we are to change. “Things must get bad enough, or people will not change in any fundamental way.”

This leads to the mistaken belief that fundamental change *requires a threat to survival*. This crisis theory of change is remarkably widespread. Yet, it is also a dangerous oversimplification. Often in workshops or presentations, I will ask, “how many of you believe people and organizations only change, fundamentally,

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<sup>19</sup> Richard L. Daft, Innovation and Change in *Organization Theory and Design 6<sup>th</sup> Edition*, Cincinnati, South-Western College Publishing, (1998) 284-329.

<sup>20</sup> Price Pritchett & Ron Pound, Crank Up the Communication Effort in *High-Velocity Culture Change-A handbook for Managers*, Pritchett and Associates, Inc., Dallas (1994) 20.

when there is a crisis?” Reliably, 75 to 95 percent of the hands go up. Then I ask people to consider a life where everything is exactly the way they would like—there is absolutely no problems of any sort in work, personally, professionally, in their relationship, or their community. Then I ask, “What is the first thing you would seek if you had a life of absolutely no problems?” The answer, overwhelmingly, is “change—to create something new.” So human beings are more complex than we often assume. We both fear and seek change. Or, as one seasoned organizational change consultant once put it, “People don’t resist change. They resist being changed.”<sup>21</sup>

Nonetheless, the issue of resistance to change is a complex one that require careful consideration as it has been blamed for most failures in implementing change. The most often cited reasons for resistance to change include:

- Fear of the Unknown
- Loss of Competence
- Lack of Clarity of Consequences
- Threat to Values
- Degree of Trust in Sponsors
- ‘Not Real’ Syndrome
- Past History with Change
- Lack of Information
- May Really be Worse Off<sup>22</sup>

A significant number of organizations have ended up in crisis because change was not managed effectively. In an organizational context, understanding resistance to change could be considered one of the fundamental aspects of mastering change. The model of change developed by Richard Becharad highlights the importance of tackling this issue. He declared that successful change occurs when:

$$\mathbf{D \times V \times F > R}$$

The product of **D**issatisfaction with the current state, multiplied by a shared **V**ision of a preferred future and a **F**irst steps roadmap for achieving the vision are greater than the

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<sup>21</sup> Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline-The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Doubleday, First Currency Paperback Edition, New York, (1994), pages 154-155.

existing **Resistance** to change within the system in which change is required. Based on this model, successful approaches to change must address each of the four elements.

Such an approach needs to be in place each and every time that the organization seeks to implement change.<sup>23</sup>

### **Toward Mastering Change**

In spite of the number of books that have been written on the subject, change is still very much misunderstood. William Bridges made this point clear when he noted:

It isn't the changes that do you in; it is the transition. Change is not the same as transition. Change is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. Transition is different. The starting point for transition is not the outcome but the ending that you will have to make to leave the old situation behind. Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal...Unless transition occurs, change will not work...There can be any number of changes, but unless there are transitions, nothing will be different when the dust clears.<sup>24</sup>

The reality seems to be that most organizations have been looking for a single silver bullet as a solution to their problems. More often than not, they have focused on change in a silo, neglecting the importance of leadership and management skills. They must recognize that in fact mastering change would encompass the following:

- **Recognize leadership as the key element**
- Combine top-down and bottom-up direction
- Involve the fundamental stakeholders including line managers and employees
- Address multiple realities
- Require the resolution of conflict
- Address the deep aspects of the organization
- Match in complexity whatever it is changing

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<sup>22</sup> Price Pritchett & Ron Pound, *Overcoming Resistance to Change in The Employee Handbook for Organizational Change, Second Edition*, Pritchett and Associates, Inc., Dallas (1994) 4-5.

<sup>23</sup> Extracted from reference provided by Mr Ian Jackson, Op Renaissance-NDHQ, HR Group, May 1995

<sup>24</sup> William Bridges, *Managing Transitions- Making the Most of Change*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Copyright 1991, Tenth printing, (April 1994): 3-4.

- Pay attention to and involve the environment
- Involve learning and understanding; and
- Go beyond behavioural methods.<sup>25</sup>

It must be stressed that leading change is without a doubt the most critical aspect of mastering change. However, leading change should not be confused with chasing every new fad that might appear in the marketplace. Recently, one company involved in renewal completed a list of the initiatives they had tried since the mid-1980s. It included 22 different types of initiatives. A quick check of the list revealed that DND had attempted at least 12 of these same initiatives at one time or another (i.e. BPR, Continuous Improvement, Consolidation, Downsizing, Empowerment to name a few).<sup>26</sup> A few additional “fad approaches” that had been tried in DND were not on that list (i.e., Functional Review, Alternate Services Delivery, and Business Planning). Given the complexity of change, seeking the current flavour of the year to solve deep-rooted problems is not the most effective approach.

The pressure to change and improve is overwhelming. Dave Ulrich insists that managers, employees, and organizations must learn to change faster and more comfortably. He calls on the HR professional to become the champions for change. He also indicates that they need to define an organizational model for change, to disseminate that model throughout the organization, and to sponsor its ongoing application.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, there isn't a single model that can be considered as the leading approach and the literature and academia appear to be all over the map in advancing a credible

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<sup>25</sup> Extracted from reference provided by Mr Ian Jackson, Op Renaissance-NDHQ, HR Group, May 1995

<sup>26</sup> Dave Ulrich, *Human Resource Champions*, page 7

<sup>27</sup> Dave Ulrich, *Human resource Champion*, page 11

theory of change management. In addition to the model developed by Bechard, the basic tenets of a few additional theories are discussed below to illustrate the lack of consistency.

Beer, Eisenstat, and Spector have argued that most change programs do not work because they are guided by a theory that is fundamentally flawed. These two flaws are that promulgating company-wide programs-mission statements, “corporate culture” programs, training courses, quality circles, and new pay-for-performance systems- will transform organizations, and that employees’ behaviour is changed by altering a company’s formal structure and systems. They indicate that their research proved exactly the opposite to be true. They proceed to propose their own “six-steps to effective change” based on the concept of “task alignment”. This process is shown in table 1.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Process</i>
<b>1</b>	Mobilise commitment to change through joint diagnosis of business problems. <b>(Analysis)</b>
<b>2</b>	Develop a shared vision of how to organize and manage for competitiveness. <b>(Vision)</b>
<b>3</b>	Foster consensus for the new vision, competence to enact it, and cohesion to move it along. <b>(Communication &amp; learning)</b>
<b>4</b>	Spread revitalisation to all departments without pushing it from the top. <b>(Win-Win)</b>
<b>5</b>	Institutionalise revitalisation through formal policies, systems, and

	structures. <b>(Clear roles &amp; responsibilities)</b>
<b>6</b>	Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the revitalisation process. <b>(Learning)</b>

**Table 1: Six-Step Change Process**

One must keep in mind that the steps described are not linear. The authors emphasise that timing is everything in change management and explain that the process must be applied over and over again in many plants, branches, departments, and divisions in order to change an entire corporation. They identified three key roles for top management in leading change:

- Create a market for change,
- Use successfully revitalized units as organizational models for the entire company, and
- Develop career paths that encourage leadership development.

This particular model shows that the change process can not be seen as a quick fix and that long term commitment from senior management is essential for ultimate success.<sup>28</sup>

Pascale, Millemann, and Gioja based their theory on transforming attitudes and behaviour. They found out that more often than not, the burden of change rests on a few people and that there is what they called an “800-pound gorilla” culture that impairs performance and stifles change. They went on to say:

The trouble is, there are as many different definitions of culture as there are articles on change management, and none of them give us much help in telling us how, or even what, to fix.

During their research, they identified three factors that produce sustained revitalization:



- Incorporating the employees fully in the process
- Leading from a different place; and
- Instilling mental disciplines

Their research was particularly interesting as they studied the US Army as an example of a successful organization in managing and adapting to change. They highlighted the seven disciplines embedded in the After Action Review process used extensively at the US Army National Training Centers. These disciplines are:

- Build an intricate understanding of the business. **(Analysis)**
- Encourage uncompromising straight talk. **(Communication)**
- Manage from the future. **(Vision)**
- Harness setbacks. **(Learning)**
- Promote inventive accountability. **(Clear roles & responsibilities)**
- Understand the quid pro quo; **(Win-Win)** and
- Create relentless discomfort with the status quo. **(Momentum)**

Their final comment was that the task of managing change is never complete. They refer to adopting a practice one company called “painting the bridge”.<sup>29</sup>

The models above were presented for illustrative purposes only although they both appear to offer a sensible approach to change management. In reviewing the different models, key elements for managing change start to emerge. In addition to leadership, they include communication and people skills, a clear vision, learning, defined roles and responsibilities, use of win-win approaches and the need to create and maintain momentum. As such, change management must be integrated totally with the management system of the organization.

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<sup>28</sup> Michael Beer, Russell A. Eisenstat, & Bert Spector, *Why Change Programs Don't Produce Change*, Harvard Business Review, November-December 1990, 158-166.

Change management is a complex and evolving discipline that requires further study along with a more critical analysis both from academia and from practitioners to weed out fads and simplistic approaches. An example of this type of critical analysis is an article by Eric Dent and Susan Galloway-Goldberg where they try to expose the fallacy behind the resistance to change being responsible for the failure of many change initiatives. Although controversial, their article makes a powerful argument to develop a new model for dealing with resistance to change. Their efforts might lead the way in better theoretical and practical research on change process and management.<sup>30</sup>

### **Change is a People Issue**

Regardless of the change model or process being used, ultimately change is about people. The organization will need people who can lead the process, know how to implement change, and are capable of changing themselves. Therefore, the Human Resource Department of the organization becomes a key strategic partner in recruiting, developing, training and retaining the right people within an HR system required to move the organization forward.

Many Chief Executive Officers feel that they can not renew their company without revitalizing their people.<sup>31</sup> This indicates that Human Resource Departments

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<sup>29</sup> Richard Pascale, Mark Millemann, and Linda Giojo, *Changing The Way We Change*, Harvard Business Review, November-December 1997, pages 127-139.

<sup>30</sup> Eric B. Dent, Susan Galloway-Goldberg, Challenging “resistance to change” in *The Journal of Applied behavioral Science*, Arlington, March 1999, pages 25-41.

<sup>31</sup> Prem Benimadhu, Seminar Presentation titled *Adding Value: Human Resource Management*, to the National Security Studies Course, Department of National Defence, January 1999.

have a key role to play in helping their organizations in their transformation. As Dave Ulrich mentioned, the managers and HR professionals should constantly seek the (human resource) capabilities necessary for success. He suggests that they need to routinely ask themselves and each other the following questions:

- What capabilities currently exist within the firm?
- What capabilities will be required for the future success of the firm?
- How can we align capabilities with business strategies?
- How can we design HR practices to create the needed capabilities? and
- How can we measure the accomplishment of the needed capabilities?

While he recognizes that the answers to the above questions might not be easily forthcoming, they should help the HR professional to design programs that are going to be more suited to the needs of the organization.<sup>32</sup>

DND and the CF are well aware of the importance of dealing with change. In the latest review of the Integrated Defence Management System, the strategic planners have identified the implementation of a corporate change management process. The process appears to be an open system that integrates the vision, strategy, and business plan with the actual implementation of change. The new process looks at the current outputs and uses the Performance Management System to identify the change required to achieve the goals and objectives of the Department. The proposed change is then validated and submitted for approval, resulting in either a revised goal or a change plan and reengineering process. However, going back to the basic framework presented at figure 1, this approach might be too process oriented and not focused enough on the “people change” strategy. This could be a visibility issue, as it appears that the people process,

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<sup>32</sup> Dave Ulrich, *Human resource Champion*, page 11.

policies and practices are not necessarily aligned to support this new change management process.

This is not to say that the people change strategy has been totally ignored in the Department. The HR Group has been working very hard to develop a strategic approach to personnel in the last year. The DSHRA submission to DMC was an excellent effort to gather all of the known strategic HR issues on the agenda of the senior executives of the Department.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, what is currently lacking is the link to the process strategy and to the vision of the Department. This is probably understandable given that the strategic vision was only approved in the last few months. But given that the key to mastering change is through the people process, there is an urgent need to make sure the two are realigned as soon as possible.

## **Conclusion**

This paper wanted to demonstrate that change management must become an integral part of the DND and the CF management system. Within a culture that fosters change and where people are able to respond to change and introduce and manage it effectively, it is essential that an added focus be placed on the people process. This should provide the strategic guidance necessary to answer the type of questions raised by Dave Ulrich and allow the HRD of the Department to seek the people with the skills required to making the organization successful.

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<sup>33</sup> Department of national Defence, *Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Strategic HR Issues*, Directorate Strategic Human Resources Analysis (DSHRA), Submission to Defence Management Committee (DMC), NDHQ, 1998.

This paper has argued that the rate of change will continue to increase and that DND and the CF must develop the capability to respond to change in order to be more successful. Whether facing technological, political, economic or demographic change imperatives, the key element in responding to change will remain the people of the organization. The HR function will become even more critical in the future as DND and the CF compete to recruit and retain the right people they need to fulfil their missions

The paper discussed the basic tenets of a few models that appear to offer sensible approach to change management. In reviewing the different models, key elements for managing change were identified. In addition to leadership, they include communication and people skills, a clear vision, learning, defined roles and responsibilities, use of win-win approaches and the need to create and maintain momentum. This discussion led to the deduction that change management must be integrated totally with the management system of the organization.

Nonetheless, change management remains a complex and difficult subject that requires in-depth study and understanding. The literature and academia have only scratched the surface and there are too many fads and ill-conceived approaches being tried in such a critical field. DND and the CF must gain the appropriate understanding of the change process and seek the right people to lead and implement change. This is why responding to change is so important to DND and the CF.

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