Change Management in Adult Educational Organizations: A Slovenian Case Study

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Successful implementing and managing of change is urgently necessary for each adult educational organization. During the process, leading of the staff is becoming a key condition and the most significant factor. Beside certain personal traits of the leader, change management demands also certain leadership knowledges, skills, versatilities and behaviour which may even border on changing the organizational culture. The paper finds the significance of certain values and of organizational climate and above all the significance of leadership style which a leader will adjust to the staff and to the circumstances. The author presents a multiple qualitative case study of managing change in three adult educational organizations. The paper finds that factors of successful leading of change exist which represent an adequate approach to leading the staff during the introduction of changes in educational organizations. Its originality/value is in providing information on the important relationship between culture, leadership styles and leader's behaviour as preconditions for successful implementing and managing of strategic change.

Key Words: change management, educational organization, leadership, process of changes, qualitative research
JEL *Classification:* I10, M10

Introduction

The only constant of the time we live in are the changes in all areas of our life and work. They are incited by a number of factors: technological advancement, changed expectations and needs of the clients, changed market conditions, changing of legislation, changed social values etc. (Paton and McCalman 2000); no organization – large or small, local or global – is immune to change (Kotter 1998b). Educational organization must follow the opportunities and avoid the threats which occur in the contemporary turbulent environment. The changing of legislation and regulation of education entails change implementation in a special manner 'from the top downwards.' An educational organization has little or no

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influence on such change. Its task is more or less to respond to change, as it has no choice but to operate in accordance with the rules. Much more interesting for the long term efficiency of an organization is the change that originates from the organization itself as a premeditated, planned activity caused by various reasons: fewer pupils and students, young or adults, the need to improve the quality in education or to introduce new formal or informal forms of education etc.

Several authors (Fullan 2001; Bukovec 2005; Coleman 1994; Drucker 1999; Kotter and Cohen 2003; Tracy 1999) claim that successful implementing and managing of change depends on the leadership style. The changes in organizations represent a major challenge to leaders, as the quality of leadership is proved in the course of implementing change. The central topic of this research was to study implementing change from the point of view of leadership in three adult educational organizations. As leadership is a highly complex phenomenon its exploring has been approached holistically and the leadership styles were put into the context of a situation and of the prevailing organizational culture. The radical/strategic change, which represents fundamental transformation of the steady manners of operation in an adult educational organization, was placed into the focus of interest.

Leading change in educational organizations is not really a frequent topic in the literature and, when it is, it deals more with the permanent improvement of work in schools (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach 1999; Davies 2002) and less with leading radical change, such as implementing completely new educational programmes or new activities. This aspect is very important for many Slovene adult educational organizations.

Management vs. Leadership

For further reference in this paper, the leadership and management will be considered as two different processes, as differentiated by Hersey and Blanchard (1993). According to these authors a narrower and a broader meaning are attributed to leadership. They maintain that 'management is thought of as a special kind of leadership in which the achievement of organizational goals is paramaount [...] Leadership occurs any time one attempts to influence the behaviour of individuals or group regardless of the reason.' Leadership is defined as one of the functions of management whereby a manager will apply all available resources including the human resources. The essence of leadership is in influencing them and in inter-action between a leader and staff. Several authors (Dubrin 2004;

Dessler 2001; Tavčar 2000b; Yukl 1998; Možina et al. 1996) define management as a process of planning, organizing, leading and supervising of the members of organization. Leading represents just one of the functions or tasks of a manager (Tavčar 2000a).

But all these numerous definitions have a common basis: leadership is *influencing the staff.* No matter how efficient the leader is he/she can not achieve results without people. The activities and tasks in organizations are getting more and more sophisticated and that is why people are of crucial importance. 'The leadership is not a person or a position, [...] it is a complex, paradoxical and moral relationship between people [...] which can cause harm between some groups, accompanied by benefits to others [...] and is based on trust, obligation, commitment and vision – nobody can be a leader without willing followers' is the definition of leadership by Rosenbach and Taylor (1998, 2–4, quote acc. to Storr 2004, 416).

One of the most difficult tasks is implementing and managing change, which requires the leaders to have certain personal traits of: being a risk taker and politically astute, having charisma and confidence, offering inspiration, and taking ownership of the initiative (Chrusciel 2008). Leaders are expected to: have versatility and skills, adjust of leadership style to the situation and the staff, and demonstrate efficient behavioural patterns.

CHALLENGES OF LEADING CHANGE

When distinguishing between management and leadership in accordance with the above definitions, a conclusion can be drawn that leadership as a 'softer' principle of management is a crucial factor in implementing change. Bukovec (2005) maintains that management suffices to control the gradual changes, and leadership is necessary when an organization seeks to implement radical/strategic change. Kotter (1998a) suggests eight critical stages to take into account when implementing radical change:

- Establish a sense of urgency: If people are not made aware of the importance of change, they will simply not cooperate in the process of changing.
- Form a powerful guiding coalition: This means, to assemble a group of dedicated individuals who will pledge their influence and knowledge to introduce change.

- Create a vision that will help direct the change effort.
- Communicate the vision and instilling enthusiasm into people to make them comprehend the significance and purpose of the change.
- Empower employees to undertake important tasks.
- Plan for and achieve short-term wins to reinforce momentum.
- Consolidate improvements and produce still more change.
- Institutionalize new approaches and ways of work – to make sure that the desired changes become part of the organizational culture.

Because of the complexity of the contemporary situations the leaders have to focus on five basic ingredients of efficient leadership (Fullan 2001):

- *Moral purpose:* a leader is to be directed by a moral purpose which is manifested in caring for and in endeavouring to improve the life of the staff, of clients and of society as a whole.
- *Understand the change process:* not understanding of the process of change only leads to failures; the good ideas only will not be sufficient. The leader must uderstand how to implement good ideas. Doing so, to control the troubles that may occur at the beginning of introducing changes, the leader must if necessary change the organizational culture.
- *Relationship building* is of crucial importance for successful introduction of changes. Without good relationships, things will deteriorate. Aiming to solve problems, an efficient leader will endeavour to cooperate with his/her staff.
- *Knowledge creation and sharing;* a leader shall stimulate the staff to engage in permanent learning and acquiring new knowledge. The employees are not supposed to keep their knowledge to themselves. They must share it for the benefit of a succesful solution of problems.
- *Coherence making:* is leaders' permanent task, since in the culture of changes which is accompanied by inequilibrium and instability, leading of staff is a most demanding job.

Leadership in an educational organization has its peculiarities. Teachers, advisors and organizers are comparatively well educated and expect a certain amount of autonomy in their work. The concept of distributed leadership has been much debated and heavily promoted within the school sector (Harris 2007). The core of school leadership practice

is direction setting (Jacobson et al. 2005). Scheerens (1998) emphasizes some forms of leadership in education and defines the main fields of activity of a leader in educational organization. A leader has to support all innovative efforts in an organization and to reward efficient work. A leader has: to understand the process of changing (Andrews, Cameron and Harris 2008), to determine the reasons for possible failure in implementing change and to be in control of strategies to cope with the resistances (Cook 2009). A leader (manager/headmaster) of an educational organization who endeavours to achieve the progress of all participants in education, promotes the professional development of teachers and other staff and is himself/herself willing to learn, becomes a catalyst of change.

Starting-Point of Qualitative Research

A qualitative and quantitative paradigm which emerged from two philosophical bases, phenomenology and positivism, is being discussed in the literature. Essentially, a positivist believes that the reality which is observed exists independently of the researcher (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe 2003). As opposed to positivism, there engaged the phenomenological approach, which is called social constructionism by the same authors. Here the researcher is not supposed only to collect facts and to find out the frequency of phenomena, but also to discover how people perceive the reality and what significance they attribute to it. Alvesson and Deetz (2000) maintain that it is easier to comprehend micropractices from daily life through qualitative – also called interpretative – research methods.

The primary goal of this type of research is an empirical description and deep understanding of a limited part of the existing social reality with the added ambition of stimulating moderate (modest) social changes. Leading is by its natural role a process – oriented permanent activity which is, for this very reason, easier to research with qualitative methods (Merriam 1998; Cassel and Symon 2005). The classical positivist approach, which deals with the social world as a world independent of individual perception of the researcher (Toš and Hafner-Fink 1998), is almost inadequate for research of leadership.

The process aspect of leadership requires predominantly open questions, where the answers are sought above all in personal discussions with people who know a great deal about the subject of the research. In qualitative research, the research material is compiled in the form of verbal

descriptions and also processed and analysed verbally without using the measuring procedures.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conceived as a multiple qualitative case study (Merriam 1998; Yin 1994). In the literature, the synonym collective case study has also been found (Silverman 2005; Stake 1995). In a multiple case study each individual case is contemplated as a single case and finally as a whole, and remains inside the same methodological framework (Yin 1994). General recognitions which fit to all cases are sought. A case study or a study of a small number of cases will be inevitable when the aim is an in-depth understanding of the situation. It is an intense, complete description and analysis of an individual unit, of a case, or of the whole, e. g. of: individual, event, group, or community (Merriam 1998). Basically it is an enquiry in a real life context, as opposed to the contrived context of experiment (Yin 1994).

The validity of qualitative research is designated by the term credibility which comprises the substantiation of the selection of procedure (Tratnik 2002), and by its trustworthiness. The validity of the present research is enhanced with the following: (1) triangulation; three educational organizations and inside them three different information sources (managers/headmasters, deputies and staff), (2) exact tapescripts of interviews, (3) accurate organizing of the material to obtain the records (documentation) of an individual case.

The research aims to determine an efficient approach towards managing change. What leadership approach is prevailing in the selected organizations and how does it affect the implementing and control of change? Which are the crucial factors of efficient leadership? The selected educational organizations differed in characteristics significant for the purpose of the research. A public and a private adult educational organization and an educational centre, or its unit for adult education, were included. The research comprised headmasters (managers), their deputies in all three educational institutions and seven professionals, three from each educational institution and one from an educational centre. Among the professionals, there were organizers of education and teachers in the educational programmes for adults. The selection of samples in phenomenological research is somewhat different from the selection in the positivist approach. Merriam (1998) maintains that selection of a non-probability intentional sample is based on the assumption that the in-

vestigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight into the phenomenon. That is why a sample needs to be selected so that it provides the most information. Because in those organizations which were willing to cooperate the selected sample was practical, and due to relevance of the included individuals, it was intentional. The data in the research were collected by semi-structured interview.

The basic questions for interviews were:

- Can you enumerate a few major/strategic changes that you have implemented in the past five years?
- Can you describe how the changes were implemented?
- How was the leading of staff conducted during the time of implementing change?
- How would you define the organizational culture in your organization?

Where appropriate, these questions were supplemented with additional questions during the interview to direct it, above all to the following: reasons and initiatives for changes, visions regarding the change, possible resistance and conflicts, communication and adoption of changes, organizational culture, values, relationships, climate and leadership styles. Additional topics or fields that were of interest, were noted in the form of a memorandum which induced me to ensure that the interviews in all three organizations were conducted in approximately the same way. This is what Yin (1994, 45) stands for and calls 'strategy of repetiton.' The analysis of the data was carried out according to the method suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) in the framework of general analytical procedure. The analysis using a multiple case study has a few peculiarities. Merriam (1998) speaks of two stages: the first is analysis of each individual case, i. e. within-case analysis, and the other is cross-case analysis. The latter 'strives to establish a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases even though they may differ in details' (Yin 1994, 112). The advantage of cross-case analysis lies in greater generalization and in-depth understanding and explanation.

There have been few researches in this field. The present study is the first in the country and should serve as a basis for further research. The study has some limitations. Each educational organization is a case of its own and that is why the generalization may present one of the limitations. When working with a sample of only three educational organiza-

tions, it is difficult to reach conclusions that can be readily generalized to other settings.

Results of the Research

The data were categorized in the following thematic sets or categories: (1) reasons for changing, (2) characteristics of the process of implementing change, (3) culture of educational organizations, and (4) factors of successful managing of change. A completed thought, word or sentence of the interviewed was a unit to be evaluated.

REASONS FOR CHANGES

All organizations involved had introduced changes at their own initiative. They were not forced by legislation or regulations adopted by schools authorities, but instead by their own concern to maintain competitivness. According to what they said, they managed to do so with new and up to date programmes (curricula) and better quality of teaching. One of the managers said:

> The technological changes with the clients were the reason why the programmes had to be changed. People who were educated on the basis of old curricula simply could not get employment as they lacked new knowledges and did not command the modern communication technology.

Another manager said:

> [. . .] we were forced into changes by the development of education of adults in Slovenia and by social, economical and political changes. Among other reasons were also the concern for the quality and reputation of the organization and [. . .] due to a decrease in the number of the students in their organization they had to look for a market niche to replace the 'drying programmes.'

Table 1 presents concisely the reasons for changes.

The major reasons for implementing changes in the public adult educational organization EO (1) were connected with quality and development and consequently with an increase in enrollment of students. The private adult educational organization EO (2) was seeking for reputation and image. The most important reasons for change in educational center EO (3) have been caused by the need to adjust to new educational programmes.

TABLE 1   Reasons for changes

EO (1)	• General social, economical and political changes • Decrease in the enrollment and thereby decrease in the scope of work of the staff • Searching the market niches • Concern about the quality and the desire to improve and to develop
EO (2)	• Acquiring reputation/maintaining the image in the environment • Searching for market niches in connection with the economic situation
EO (3)	• Technological changes with clients who enter the educational programmes • Adjusting of education to the needs of work (adequately educated people will be more employable)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING
CHANGE

The replies showed that the original initiative for implementing change originated from the managers, who then presented them to their close team. Two of the managers and three of the staff specifically pointed to the manager's efforts and his stimulating others to contribute their views and initiatives. The final success of implementing change depends largely on these initial steps, which include a thorough consideration of the necessity of implementing change and of the need to select the 'right' people above all people who possess expertise in the field touched by the change and to whom a change represents a certain challenge. As one of the directors said, he selects people 'in whose line a certain topic is,' and eventual the possible lethargy of individuals at the beginning he overcomes with 'somewhat more authoritative leadership.' Another manager coped with the initial aversion to change by involving the staff in systematic training to acquire the knowledge neccessary for implementing changes. To the question as to who on the staff had been included in the project team for change, he replied that 'above all those who have certain professional knowledge.' An additional criterion in selecting them was also their propensity for changes, i. e. 'they have a desire to make things better,' he said. But he did not entirely exclude those who were in opposition, as they too need 'to be convinced of necessity of changes' if these were to be successful.

The research showed that resistance is an inevitable evil which may lead to serious conflicts which probably each leader implementing change will have to face. It is interesting that in the two smaller organizations (public and private organizations), there were no serious aversions to-

wards change. The staff was aware of the seriousness of the situation and of the need for new programmes of higher quality which would be interesting for the prospective clients. As one of the managers said, 'his colleagues were highly understanding in accepting different and additional tasks,' among others also for fear of losing the job in case of a decreased number of students enrolled. A few more troubles turned up in the third organization. The reason for them was described by the manager in a few sentences:

> One of the most difficult things is to change a teacher. To move his centuries long-concentration on one subject was a major problem that needed to be tackled. Other hindrances were of technological nature such as introducing computers at work, improving and updating programmes for administrative and technical operating of the school, and finally organization of management itself.

The deputy said that inside the adult education department no resistances had been perceived as they were 'a small group which had been operating as such for over a decade.' Further he said that 'there were more difficulties with negotiating between the adult education department and the comparatively large group of employees engaged in regular education or in the education of young people.'

The organizer of adult education was even more specific in her replies. She said: 'Communication between the adult education department and the educational centre as a whole has always been difficult [. . .] things stuck already when the changes were in the stage of presentation to the whole staff.' Further she said that she 'literally had to work separately with each teacher' as they 'contemplated adult education as if it did not belong in the educational system,' she continued. Their manager also said that they tried to motivate people for the planned change at conferences and by means of workshops, which was not convincing enough – not even for sceptics, let alone the opponents. He had to use 'his authority' and had 'to address each individual by means of personal contact,' he added.

The responses indicated that there is no simple recipe for coping with resistances. The respondents had often underlined the significance of communication. The change needs to be presented to all employees, they need an explanation of what it means and what it will bring to them, the necessity of change needs to be pointed out and substantiated with

various arguments. One of the managers even claimed that 'the initial comprehensive information' is crucial.

CULTURE OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
AND THEIR VALUES

The responses showed that changes in educational organizations are strongly related to the prevailing culture, which is comprised of organizational structure, common values, leadership style and organizational climate. These 'soft approaches' seem particularly important for the teaching staff. One of the managers said: 'With an authoritative approach in the project or in the school no change can succeed.' An authority always suffocates the creativity, and without creativity there can be no introducing novelties and improvements. In spite of the fact that the employees in the educational organizations are directed by different values, and that these organizations are differentiated also by organizational structure, a common core, on which implementing change can be built, could be observed in the three organizations which were the subject of the research. This common core consists of democratic relationships, mutual respect and trust which serve for more efficient and successful implementing of change.

All respondents agreed that the organizational structure has a considerable, if not outright the largest impact on implementing change in their respective organizations. Further they agreed that a prevailing culture can impede or assist the endeavours for changing. One of the deputies defined the culture as 'knowledge, habits and values which the employees with longer work experience pass down to the younger colleagues.' She pointed out the importance of a respectful relationship, which seems to be significant for the welfare of all employees and thereby 'affects their creativity and good performance.' In her opinion, 'people always have to express loyalty to the organization' for which they work. Further she emphasized that expressing loyalty to the organization is demonstrated not only by carrying out the tasks, but also in other ways by showing pride in being employed in the organization and with enthusiasm for achieving the common goals.

The culture was rated as democratic and cooperative in all involved organizations. All professionals replied that they 'can express opinions' and that they are given due consideration.' Beside cooperation, the trust of the teachers and organizers in the management and vice versa is likewise important. Trust is a glue that amalgamates the staff and makes pos-

sible that success of cooperation. As one of the professionals said: 'You cannot do anything on your own. You must work jointly with a team of colleagues. Trust and the feeling that you can rely on them is very important here.'

Kindness, helpfulness and flexibility were a few of the values on which the participants laid stress. They said that they placed the participants of the education and taking care of them as the first of the daily tasks in the focus of the teaching process. One deputy of the headmaster said that they 'are not treated as mere numbers', but that in fact the staff really takes an interest in them. She also stressed: 'The important values that direct their work are expertise, accuracy, responsibility, respectful mutual relations and a positive climate. The latter is also a reason for the employees' loyalty to the organization for which they work.'

FACTORS OF SUCCESSFUL LEADING OF CHANGE

In the interviews, all the professionals in staff also reported that their 'directors adjust the leadership style to the situation and to the people.' Most of the time, they practice the participative and democratic but sometimes also the authoritative style. The research found that at the start of implementing change the managers had to apply a more authoritarian style to overcome staff resistance.

During the preparation for change, it is of supreme importance that a vision, i. e. a clear picture of future is created and presented in detail to the staff. One of the managers said: 'And when I finally have the whole picture in my mind I present it to my subordinates with much enthusiasm and energy.' During the discussion, the three organizers of education maintained that 'an early involvement of the persons to carry out the introduction of change is important for successful implementing of change and for achieving commitment of the staff to change.' Also the selection of the team is very important. One of the managers stressed: 'People with inadequate knowledge and those who are strongly opposed to the change may jeopardize the whole project or programme.'

During the implementation constant motivation and control of achieving the interim objectives are necessary. The motivation for work, also in cases when major obstacles or problems turn up which may demotivate the staff, can according to all three managers be achieved 'with their own enthusiasm and by setting a good example.' They said that they all 'involved the organizers of education and teachers and the coordinate team in individual activities.' One of the managers said:

TABLE 2   Factors for Successful Leadership

EO (1)	• Including people in the early stage of preparation and not only in the stage of implementation • 'Maintaining' motivation for change • Open communication • Participation of the organizers of education and teachers in decision making • Coordinating team and individual activities
EO (2)	• Presentation of a clear picture for the future • Open communication • Coordinating team and individual activities • 'Maintaining' motivation for change • participation of the organizers of education and teachers in decision making
EO (3)	• Including suitable people in a team • Open communication • Coordinating team and individual activities • 'Maintaining' motivation for change • Participation of the organizers of education and teachers in decision making • Consolidation of the introduced change • Motivating for creative solving of problems

> With some members of the team, I had to deal authorita-
> tively and with others I had to check their exaggerated enthu-
> siasm … I personally communicated with the colleagues and
> kept repeating to them how significant small steps are and the
> successes connected with them […] but when the new pro-
> gramme was introduced this was not the end, for the change
> needed to become a routine.

Table 2 presents factors for successful leadership in a particular educa-
tional organization. As we can see, the most important factors according
to respondents are: (1) open communication, (2) motivation for change
in all steps of implementation, (3) participation of employees in decision
making, and (4) coordinating of team and individual activities.

Managers and staff in the researched organization had different opin-
ions about how to introduce changes more efficiently. One of them
thought that everybody has to act in the direction of change or, as he
expressed it: 'We must all breathe with the idea because otherwise it will
fail.' Another one added: 'It is necessary to support creative people who
have ideas.' In the opinion of one professional, 'in schools more attention
should be paid to development and creative problem solving.' The re-
spondents emphasized the 'importance of motivation and the necessary
enthusiasm for changes that it requires.' According to them, the 'changes

are easier introduced by creative people who like to do something new.'
Also a climate which is in favour of development and novelties acceler-
ates introducing changes.

Achieving the final result is a long-term and demanding task for all
people involved. The comparative distance of the goal may have a demo-
tivating effect and that is why it is important to maintain the motivation
by pointing out 'small' victories.

The managers saw the key to successfully introducing the changes in
the mode of leadership which is sometimes more people oriented. This
was illustrated by the following statements:

> In my opinion it is necessary to get acquainted with the team
> with whom you work, listen to their opinions and only then
> take up the tasks regarding the changes.

> In change management/leadership some values will help – the
> first is respect for the colleagues, the second is loyalty to the
> collective. In my opinion, respect is the most far reaching, and
> honesty, fairness and kindness too.

> Efficient change management is affected by the openness and
> accessibility of the manager.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Practice

A manager/headmaster exercises a considerable influence on implement-
ing change. With his/her personal characteristics – trait, actions and
manner of leading of the staff – he/she may accelerate or decelerate the
pace of introducing the changes. With faithfulness to the vision and val-
ues of the educational organization, with openness to learning, with
strategic ponderation and by promoting cooperation among the staff,
he/she may efficiently introduce change. The leadership performance re-
quires adjustment of style to the staff and situation (Leithwood, Jantzi
and Steinbach 1999). We cannot expect the manager to be omnipotent,
yet it is clear, however, that his/her leadership is an important condition
in implementing change.

The research showed that managers of the organizations involved are
aware of the importance of the market in education and of adjusting
educational programmes to the ever more demanding requirements of
enterprises and individuals. Moreover, these managers are well aware of
their active role in the development of their own educational institution.
In working with people, or in merely being in contact with them, they

do not swear by 'hard' methods, e. g. dictating, enforcement, rivalry, and punishment. Instead they are in favour of the soft method of leading, i. e. stimulating, showing the challenges, motivating, rewarding, healthy competition and cooperation. Their two trump cards are openness, and to a certain extent the charisma which induce the staff to do the best for the common good. Strategic thinking is manifested in their initiative for changes.

According to some authors (Kotter 1998a; Kotter and Cohen 2003), the important thing is that the managers know how to instil enthusiasm into their colleagues who are sufficiently trained, competent, show interest and are in favour of changes. They cope with the resistances in different ways: by involving the professional staff at the very beginning, when the vision of change is being prepared, by substantiating and persuading about the necessity, even the inevitability of change, and by emphasizing the first successes the moment the change produces them. In this way the fainthearted will be convinced about what can be changed and what can not.

The adult educational organizations which were the subject of the research are marked with a specific organizational culture and structure by which the organizations are essentially differentiated. Cooperation, open and relaxed communication, mutual trust, expertise and placing the person, – the subject of education –, in the centre of the process of teaching, from the nucleus of common characteristics of organizational culture. This has led to successful implementation of the planned changes in the organizations which were researched.

The findings can be summed up as follows:

- Implementing changes in the researched educational organization is closely linked to the organizational cultures and prevailing values.
- Leading changes is connected with the leading of staff, where the headmaster/manager plays a decisive role.
- The headmaster/manager has to be familiar with the process of changing and with its stages.
- In implementing changes, the headmaster/manager has to consider the important factors of successful leading of changes.

The research findings confirm that implementing changes in educational organizations requires managers who, in addition to having management talents, also have a well developed leadership trait which in critical moments moves things from a standstill. This is possible by making

their staff enthusiastic, by stimulating them, by connecting with one another, by offering support and by giving them the necessary feeling that success is guaranteed in spite of interim difficulties.

Communication was considered very important. In the opinion of participants in the present study, it was practically always inadequate. In the individual steps of implementing change, work should be inspected and the stages discussed in detail. The professionals in the staff could have more influence in deciding on the change to be implemented. This would ensure that a change would be accepted as if it were their own idea and its implementation would be much easier.

A thorough consideration about the necessity of change would often prevent tension among the employees, and the sensibleness of simultaneous involvement in various projects which are demanding in terms of funding, personnel and equipment, would be determined at the beginning.

The leadership styles did not prove less appropriate at the time of implementing change. Adequate adjustment of various leadership styles: democratic, participative and authoritative and adjustment of leading to the groups and individuals proved to be an efficient leadership mode in uncertain times entailed by change. A generic leadership approach is not desirable, because it denies the impact of context (Werkman 2009). An authoritarian style of leading was suitable at the beginning of implementing change. With a somewhat more formal approach it was possible to overcome or to control the initial passiveness or minor resistances of the employees. The employees must accept the novelties and changes and consider them as their own. This will only happen if the staff participates in decision making which refers to changes. The staff needs to be involved as early as possible in the preparation of visions regarding the change. Only in this way will they stick to the initial inclination to changes and endeavour to implement them throughout the process of changing.

The four themes serve as a powerful framework to help headmasters/managers develop a leadership philosophy that enables a successful implementation of change in an adult educational organization. Although there is no single answer as to how to lead change in an educational organization, these guiding principles, developed from practices of successful adult educations, can serve as a framework for individuals who want to institute change management practices within their organizations.

The findings for these cases have important implications for the practice and preparation of change leaders/agents in educational organizations.

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