

Fact Sheet

Managing Change



The World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) produces some great material. “Recruiting and Retaining Adult Members – Volunteers in Scouting Toolkit 2” is one of those documents. Within that document are several Factsheets and this one entitled “Managing Change” has been extracted from the source document because of its direct relevance to Scouts Queensland.

The concepts contained within are very good.

**Daryl Scott
Chief Commissioner**

March 2020



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

Factsheet 01: Managing Change

« It's not because things are difficult that we don't try, it's because we don't try that things are difficult. » Seneca

For successful change...

Another approach to manage the change is available in the "Strategic Planning Toolkit"» (WOSM, 2004).

Success in developing people requires the outcome of several activities that have themselves succeeded.

An organization taking on the challenge of developing people needs to be aware that it's going to be following new paths, that it will probably alter some of its' practices, it will certainly have to try new things. In short, it is going to risk making "changes".

These so-called organisational changes should have two goals:

1. Improving the organization's capacity to adapt to future changes in its environment.

This means aligning itself better with changes in society, communicating the values of Scouting better, an improved strategy for recruiting, supporting and retaining Adult Volunteers, etc.

2. Supporting behavioural changes amongst all Adult Volunteers.

Here, too, the aim is to focus the attention of individual Adult Volunteers on being effective with the things they do and the interaction they have with other members. We have to realise that this second aim is vital. The success or failure of an organization lies with its members. Structural or technical changes can only have a limited effect on the effectiveness of an organization.

On the face of it, there is no argument about the need to make changes to take account of the drop in our numbers. Unfortunately many of our Adult Volunteers are resistant to change, this is normal for most organizations. Such resistance can be explicit (resignation) or implicit (demoralisation) and its effects can be obvious or subtle. Often they combine, which increases their effect.



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6



Figure 1: Resistance by individual

Why do we resist change?

We offer the following response model based on five possible causes, there can obviously be others (Figure 1).

Selective attention and memory

We tend only to select the things that conform to our view of the world. We only read or listen to what matches our preconceptions and we even erase from our memory anything that could cause us to adopt new attitudes. We water down the content of a communication if it does not fit our way of thinking. All trainers recognise this mechanism as they often hear "This is an excellent method but, unfortunately, it doesn't suit my activity". In other words, any transformation that could suddenly disturb our perception will probably be rejected.

Habit

To meet the demands of our daily environment we all develop a series of responses that appear comfortable and comforting to us. These we could call our habits. Therefore, departing from these habits means risking the unknown. This is far from comforting and naturally uncomfortable. We will certainly avoid this source of discomfort unless we can immediately be shown the benefit of the new departure for us.



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

Dependence

Our social nature makes us “socially” dependent beings. Individual independence is supposed to be one of the goals of people’s upbringing and maturity, it manifests itself in the ability to decide and act freely. But even the most independent individuals are not totally independent of other people. At the same time, when dependence increases to the detriment of free choice, people will resist any change unless they are provided with a way to adopt and accept it themselves. Awareness of the social fabric (the position and relationships of dependence and power within an organization) can be valuable in overcoming certain types of opposition.

Fear of the unknown

Besides the discomfort mentioned above, change is a source of genuine anxiety for some people. Since change in itself naturally brings about uncertainty, it might cause consequences that are potentially unpleasant or worse. It would be foolish to ignore these irrational reactions in any strategy that, at times, may take on the aspect of a juggernaut (large moving object needing time to change direction).

Security and regression

When faced with today’s world that is for them, difficult, uncertain and even “hellish”, people sometimes head off in search of “a lost paradise” represented by a past that was “happy, reassuring, perfect, etc”.

Change sometimes doesn’t allow people to find the old habits and reference points that they would like to hang on to.

So, whatever the cause of resistance and whatever its source, the important thing is to understand that it exists and that it can have a real, negative impact on the introduction of change.

Wise leaders will try to identify the reasons for resistance to change and try to see how they can limit their effect and eliminate them where possible rather than pretend that they are only of limited importance. Otherwise they will have to devote enormous effort into getting acceptance of the changes they are proposing.



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

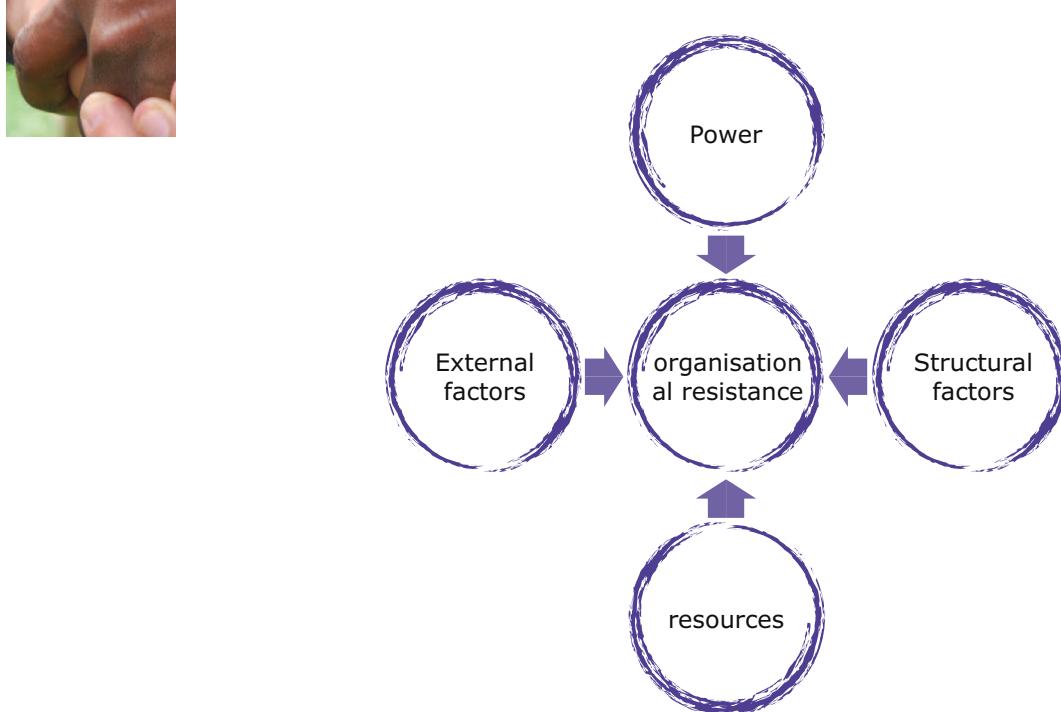


Figure 2: Organisational Resistance

Why do organizations resist?

Such resistance is quite natural because an organization tends to create its own equilibrium, through its procedures and rules, its decision-making methods, its operations, its communications and its relationships with, and reactions to its environment. Such a system obeys the laws of homeostasis, that is, when it undergoes slight change it tends to return to its original state after a time. When a proposed change is too great, the organization will resist the change in order to "defend" itself against the turbulence.

There are four components of the organization that will be most sensitive to change and will cause significant opposition (Figure 2).

Power

Any time a change could;
alter the balance of power
or reduce spheres of influence,
or the resources a person, team or departments possesses,

it may be seen as a threat.

Structural factors

The organisational type or model involved may act as a brake on the change. For example a highly structured, hierarchical organization will probably have greater difficulty introducing change. Change is viewed as disturbing the status quo.



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

Resources

Even when the above factors are absent and there is a real desire for change, the organization may lack resources (human, financial, technical or just time) and this forces it to postpone or give up the idea of change.

External factors

An organization develops in an environment of partners, competitors, institutions, regulations and rules. The organization is forced to take account of constraints and agreements with its external environment in designing its change. If external pressure is too great, the organization will opt to give up on the change.

Enabling change in a National Scout Organization

One of the methods often used in Scouting to analyse a multi-factored situation is called Force Field Analysis. This method was developed by Kurt Lewin. Some further information on this method is available in the "Volunteers in Scouting Toolkit" (WOSM, 2006). It suggests that any situation can be described in terms of the forces which act on it. Some are helping and some are resisting (Figure 3).

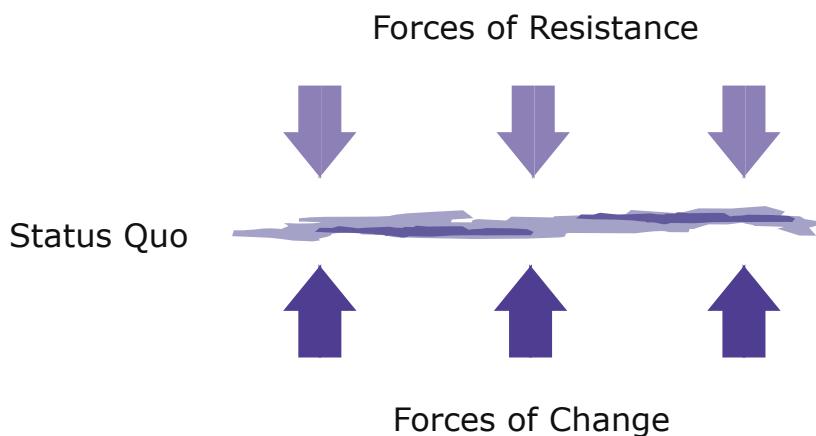


Figure 3: Force Field Analysis

To produce a change the model suggests we can:

- Support and encourage a force which is working in favour
- Reduce or limit a force which is working against
- Alter a force which is working against and cause it to work in favour



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

He proposes a three phase process for this as illustrated in the diagram below:

This is illustrated in the diagram below:

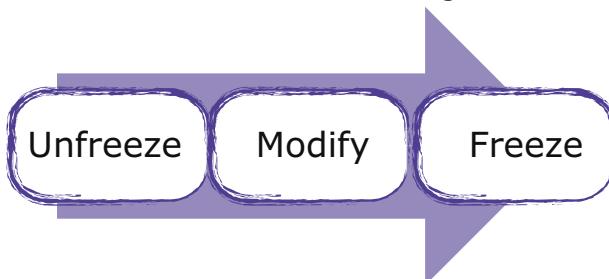


Figure 4: Lewin's process of change

Unfreeze

In this phase we try to reduce the forces which try to keep behaviours as they are in the organization. One of the methods often used to "unfreeze" an organization is to provide evidence of the gaps between desirable behaviours and real behaviours.

Modify

During this phase we introduce changes to procedures and structures with a view to achieving a change of behaviour by the members of the organization.

Refreeze

During the final phase a new equilibrium is achieved. It is often necessary to call on the culture, norms, policies and organisational structures to reinforce the new state of the organization.

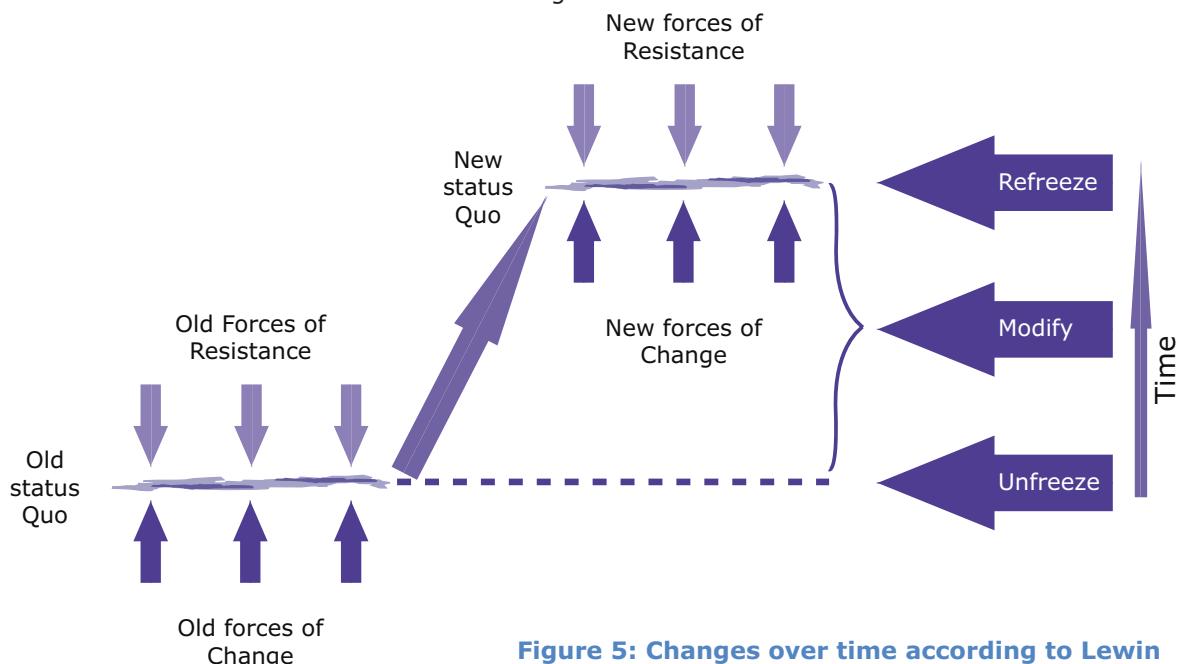


Figure 5: Changes over time according to Lewin



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

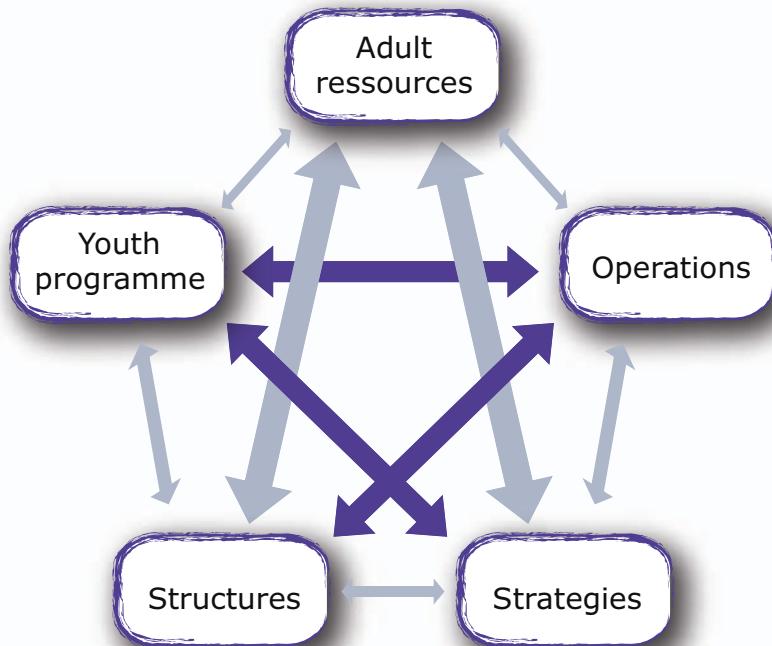


Figure 6: An organisation's system

Organising change in a National Scout Organization

Change may impact overall strategy, structures, operations, Adult Volunteers and youth programme (Figure 6).

These different components make up a mutually dependent system:

When you change one variable, the others may well be affected too.

To illustrate this systematic effect with an example:

If an organization decides to conduct a communications campaign aimed at young people from an ethnic minority, it will need to review its educational programme, redefine the profile of its Adult Volunteers and their training, and adapt its operations and its strategy.

So the leaders of any NSOs who are embarking on transformation need to analyse their overall system carefully, consider the “favourable and unfavourable” forces and determine the likely consequences of such forces.

There are many tools that can help leaders in this critical phase of organisational change by analysing the possible impact of changes according to one or more variables.



Volunteers in Scouting

Toolkit2

factsheet

6

A matrix bringing together the system variables and the proposed actions/transformations could help show the relationship between one or more factors. It could also clarify the nature and importance of these relationships. See Worksheet 03 for a sample matrix.

This work is not just intended to help a team of leaders clearly identify the actions to take or to anticipate the difficulties of implementation. It is also an excellent way to involve people, encouraging the majority to adopt the project, express their opinions, their agreements and disagreements and, as a result, remove the main barriers to change.

Supporting documentation:

Worksheet 03: Matrix to help you analyse factors

