A Brief History of Change Management

IT’S AN AMAZING STORY… THE BIRTH OF A PROFESSION
Jeanenne LaMarsh recently announced her retirement from her position as Executive Director of Consulting Services. Jeanenne founded LaMarsh & Associates, the predecessor to LaMarsh Global, and developed the innovative Managed Change™ Model and Methodology that has been used for effective change management by hundreds of organizations over the past decades.

She has been instrumental in the design of LaMarsh Global’s learning and certification programs to transfer change management capability into organizations. Her three books are classics and should be considered required reading for those working in the field of change management: Changing the Way We Change, Master Change–Maximize Success, and Change Better: Survive and Thrive During Change at Work and Throughout Life.
It’s an Amazing Story... The Birth of a Profession

Do you make your living as a change management professional? Are you passionate about the intellectual challenges inherent during times of change and the positive difference you make in the lives of employees and leaders of the organizations you serve?

Then celebrate the fact that you are at a place where the need to manage changes well now intersects with real recognition by organizations that leaders must also deliver the resources to meet that need.

It wasn’t always so.

Forty years ago, there was no change management. There were no structured, disciplined nor transferable methodologies that could be internalized and leveraged by organizations. And certainly, there were no change management professionals.

Organizations have always handled changes, but until a few years ago the few who did it well did it instinctually and often erratically. Unfortunately, most also did it from a frame of reference that did not take the fears, concerns and questions of the people impacted into consideration. Randy Kesterson, VP of Global Ops, Op Excellence/TQM, Sourcing at Doosan, tells a story in his book The Basics of Hoshin Kanri of a related experience he had early in his career. While trying to convince a senior manager of the need to take the fears, concerns and questions of those impacted into consideration before embarking on major changes, Randy tried to explain the use of a structured new concept called change management. With no hesitation, the senior leader held up his hand to signal Randy to stop talking. He said, “I already have a change management approach that has served me very well for over 30 years in business.” The manager then swung his foot up on the conference table, pointed to it, and said “11-E,” his shoe size, “if my people don’t want to do it, I kick them all in the butt.” That was his change management approach: the 11-E change management methodology.

Looking back on it, Randy’s story is comical, but it shows the great progress we as change management advocates have made. History shows a similar situation in the business process of managing inventory. Originally, there pretty much was no process. There was only “Joe” who knew where everything was in the warehouse or in the closet. “Go ask Joe. He’ll find it for you…” was a simple inventory control system. This thinking became increasingly unsatisfactory as a way of managing the whereabouts of important business materials. And when World War II started, the explosion of need for equipment and materials to be shipped to Europe and Asia was too great to continue to rely on Joe with only his memory and his instincts. This led to the development of a structured organizational process for gaining control over the logistics of tracking, re-ordering and shipping, which today is known as Inventory Control. Eventually, tools, processes and systems were developed. Today, there is a profession and a set of professionals that are critical to organizations of all sizes all over the world directly related to the concept.

Another key effect of WWII was the development of what came to be called Management Science. Companies large and small had existed for centuries prior to the efforts of ten men, including Robert McNamara, who pioneered the field. These revolutionaries put structure and process to increases in operations, finance and logistical information demanded by the size and scope of the war effort, and they basically created the Statistical Control profession.

And as the demands of the war resulted in the development of other new business disciplines, organizational innovation continued through the 1970’s and 1980’s with the need for companies to implement huge technical systems such as Manufacturing Resource Planning (MRP) and, subsequently Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). Combined with the decision by management to introduce multiple major changes simultaneously, these new fields sparked the recognition by leaders that the need to help employees cope with all the changes happening around them was becoming increasingly critical.

This thinking triggered an idea in 1985. At the time, LaMarsh & Associates, which evolved into LaMarsh Global, had begun training on efficient ways for organizations to implement these important changes. We learned that the employees often took well to the new required behaviors and new technology solutions, but there were failures long term too often. And participants in workshops on team building, decision making, project planning and performance management helped demonstrate understanding of concepts and abilities to apply the tools and techniques used in the workshop setting, but failed to sustain the new learning. Unfortunately many still failed to apply their newly acquired skills once they actually returned to the workplace.

This thinking led LaMarsh & Associates into the study of change and eventually change management. Our firm confirmed that training was really only one step in the process of changing behavior, and thus the organization. Our studies and analysis led to the development of a specific process and model for proactively managing crucial business changes. We named this deliberate approach to change management Managed Change™.
The early contributions to the foundational principles of Managed Change™ are based on a multitude of great thinkers in the areas of human behavior such as:

- **Aristotle**: the beginnings of categorization of human behavior
- **Jung**: foundational thinking about personality types
- **Lewin**: the founder of social psychology and force field analysis
- **Marvin Weisbord**: Six Box model
- And others.

As the model evolved, we realized that Managed Change™, with its accompanying tools and action steps, should be taught to organizations in a better way.

In 1989, just four years later, the first ever formal change management workshop was offered to aspiring change management practitioners, because we realized that training people within organizations, project teams, human resources and/or IT groups would become a key path to building change management expertise.

Over time, colleges and universities became aware of this valuable learning and began to offer courses and eventually degrees in change management. Recognition of its importance was growing, and the first seeds of establishing a true profession were planted when students could attain a Masters, and even a PhD, in change management from prestigious schools like DePaul, Cornell, Georgetown, Pepperdine, Northwestern, and Case Western Reserve. Even associations such as the Association of Change Management Professionals (ACMP) were formed to provide support and resources to those doing the work.

As a result of these successes in the classroom, LaMarsh & Associates Consultants, and others now skilled in the application of change management, were now being asked to partner with senior leaders and project teams to help guarantee successes with transformational changes happening in businesses around the world. It was good to see this partnership in governance become increasingly accepted as a key contributor to overall success.

The team learned that our role was best utilized when we as change management experts were placed in the organizational governance structure in the way depicted above in Figure One. You can see that the Change Management Team is vectored to the Project Team to design and implement a Change Plan for each Target group impacted and also has a dotted line responsibility to the various workstreams for the unique and specific change issues each might face.

As people began to use what they learned from certified learning programs, such as Managed Change™ Agent Certification and other degrees from universities, organizations began to create job titles and job descriptions internally for the working change management professionals in their organizations.

What’s next?

We are just now seeing the next step in the development of change management as a profession. As the value of our learning is being recognized over and over again and ROI in the development of change management...
expertise is realized, companies are investing in building change management as a differentiating core competency. These leaders know that simply training Change Agents and Sponsors is not enough. They know the end goal should be that all Sponsors, Change Agents and Targets constantly keep top of mind the benefits of change management.

Change management is a profession. Change Management Practitioners are a respected and valued part of many organizations, and the number of those organizations is growing. The men and women who share this profession can take pride in what they do: helping the organizations they serve AND the people in those organizations. A worthy profession.

DESIRED STATE OF A COMPANY WITH CHANGE MANAGEMENT AS A CORE COMPETENCY

**STRUCTURE**
- Clearly defined Sponsor and Change Agent roles and responsibilities
- Enterprise-wide consulting and competency development support
- Change management metrics integrated into business measurements
- A well-positioned, functional, and visible CMO/PMO infrastructure
- Knowledge repository and technology for change management best practices
- A common model & methodology for change management

**PROCESS**
- A common change management approach
- A robust, disciplined, easy-to-use work flow
- Action steps and tasks that are flexible, scalable, and adaptable
- Integrated into internal and external consulting processes and change initiatives
- Alignment with other change methodologies (e.g. Six Sigma, Project Management, Strategy)

**PEOPLE**
- The change process is understood
- Internal organizational change coaches, consultants, facilitators
- Skilled and capable management as sponsors and leaders of change
- Experienced change agents
- Active participation in change

**CULTURE**
- Engaged Employees
- Enterprise perspective
- Employees embrace change
- Risk without fear
- Change management is a work habit
- Belief in continual change and learning
- Behaviors that show tolerance of change
- Well managed change is a way of life

If your organization is at this important third stage of change management development, building an internal competency, the first step is to gain sponsorship from senior leadership. You need their commitment to a change in how change is managed in the organization.

The second step is to define the Desired State. You should use the example in previous column to guide your efforts. The next step, choosing the right change management model and methodology, is of critical importance. To help you, there is a list of critical elements that need to be a part of your model and methodology listed on the next page. Feel free to use the tool as is or add or replace criteria to fit your unique needs.

Then, assign a numeric scale (1-10 or 1-5), and distribute the Change Management Approach Selection Criteria Assessment to key people in the organization. Compile the data gathered so that you can use it in comparing various models and methodologies. Be sure to explore both those developed internally and those offered by vendors.

The Change Management Approach Selection Criteria Assessment tool will help your organization make an objective and thoughtful decision about the foundation of what will become the building blocks of your change management efforts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELECTION CRITERIA</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>EVIDENCE FOR NUMBER SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Integrates well into current processes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Integrating this change management approach supports our defined business goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This change management approach has enough detail to be implemented effectively and is easy to use.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The change management approach does not require ongoing consultant input.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The cost to implement this change management approach is affordable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>This change management approach provides a step-by-step roadmap on how to use the methodology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This change management approach accommodates the assessment of the work culture receiving the change (referring to different locations).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Integrating this change management approach supports our defined business goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>This change management approach accommodates the assessment of cross-cultural impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>This change management approach is effective for individual change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>This change management approach involves outsiders to add perspective to the leadership vision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>This change management approach accounts for delays before change initiatives gain acceptance and generate results.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>This change management approach alleviates anxiety and encourages participation in change by employing a thorough communication plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>This change management approach facilitates behavior change by aligning compensation systems with the strategic vision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>This change management approach identifies change resisters through careful performance monitoring.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>This change management approach sustains the change momentum through constant adjustments and the introduction of new challenges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>This change management approach prioritizes initiatives instead of trying to change everything at once.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>This change management approach engages top management to execute the change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 19                | Elements of this change management approach are measurable in terms of time and cost. | TIME: COST: