Beyond Management of Change

SIX STEPS TO EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

By Wyatt Bradbury and Geoff Goodman

Change is a constant in any organization. It is a reality of business, and the pace of change seemingly only increases with time. The impacts of change are far reaching throughout any organization and when unchecked and unmanaged, they present a potential source of significant harm.

Management of change (MOC) and change management are two distinct concepts that together can transform how safety professionals address change in organizations when utilized to their fullest potential in conjunction. MOC is how physical hazards (e.g., safety, quality, security) are identified and controlled throughout the change process to maintain or reduce overall risk. Change management considers the human element of change and is the process by which individuals participate and consult in the change.

How Consensus Standards Address Change

MOC is a key tool that safety professionals have at their disposal to help organizations address and control organizational change. The premise for MOC is written into ISO 45001:2018 in section 8.1.3, Management of Change, as well as ANSI/ASSP Z10-2019 in section 8.5, Design Review and Management of Change.

ISO 45001 expects that the organization establish a process for how implementation of planned temporary or permanent changes will occur. Changes that must be evaluated include product, service or process changes within the working environment, work organization or workforce. Additionally, changes to legal and other requirements, awareness of hazards and risks, and technological development must be assessed. The section closes with a statement addressing unintended changes.

ANSI/ASSP Z10 takes a slightly different approach. Section 8.5 of this standard focuses on design and redesign and mentions MOC in the context of risk reduction. The section prescribes a process including identification of tasks and hazards, recognition of human factors considerations, review of regulations, scoping of the project and engagement of the worker. It concludes by discussing considerations for life cycle phases and process verification.

While both of these standards provide important considerations, certain gaps must be considered. If an organization follows only one of the standards, it misses out on the specific guidance that the other provides. ISO 45001 fails to explore the nuances of prevention through design and the design life cycle process expanded upon by ANSI/ASSP Z10. Meanwhile, ANSI/ASSP Z10 fails to adequately consider the more common forms of change including how an organizational or conditional change (often not considered as part of the design life cycle or for impacts to design) in the same way that ISO 45001 does. And while collectively they provide a strong technical baseline, there is still very limited language present in ANSI Z10 (and none in the standard text of ISO 45001) that relates to the most important part of any system: the human. This is where a more comprehensive understanding of change management as opposed to MOC or design review could close the remaining gaps.

Change management involves applying a structured process and tools to lead the people side of change to achieve a desired outcome.

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The Human Element of Change

Organizational changes fail for various reasons. Organizations may fail to make a compelling case that drives employee buy-in. There may be a failure to celebrate milestones of progress or address issues of resistance proactively as they arise, both of which require employee involvement. Ingrained cultural systems and learning may be forgotten as changes are made, and the focus may be so much on getting a specific result that the organization fails to consider what comes next. When the new management system software or new, safer tool is installed, that is an inflection point, not a stopping point.

Change management involves applying a structured process and tools to lead the people side of change to achieve a desired outcome. It often works alongside the technical or product evaluation in a parallel way. Change management addresses the human perspective, including motivation, fear of the unknown, changing job roles and building new skills. These changes must be managed through a focused effort encompassing best practices and careful examination of the factors and context of these changes. Change management goes well beyond the safety, security, and potentially quality aspects of the change itself and comprehensively evaluates the socio impacts and opportunities of the changes within the complex socio-technical system.

Sources of individual resistance to change include selective information processing, fear of the unknown, economic or budgetary concerns, habit and

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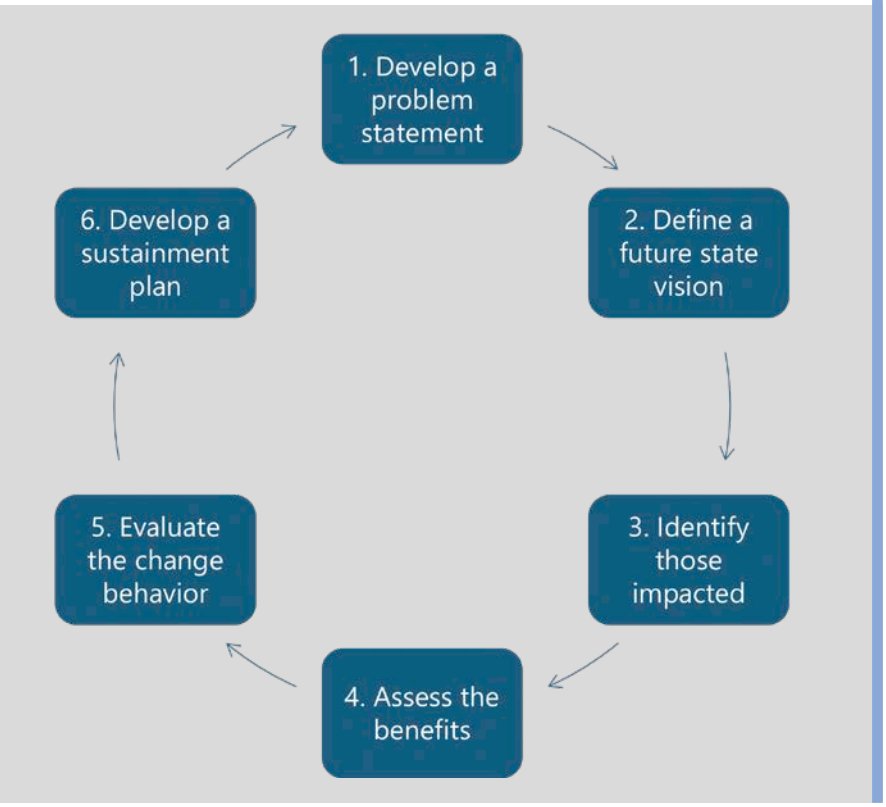
- **Clarify the problem.** Develop a clear, data-informed problem statement that defines the current state, urgency for change and desired improvements.
- **Envision the future.** Create a detailed future state vision with measurable goals and milestones to guide progress and communication.
- **Map the impact.** Identify all stakeholders affected by the change, analyze how they are impacted, and tailor engagement and training accordingly.
- **Highlight the benefits.** Communicate "what's in it for me" to each group to build buy-in, reduce resistance and sustain motivation.
- **Support behavior shifts.** Assess and address the behavior changes needed through communication, skill-building and training.
- **Plan for sustainment.** Establish systems, metrics and reinforcement strategies to embed the change, track results and apply lessons learned.

FIGURE 1
SIX-STEP CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS



security. In some cases, safety professionals are asking employees to alter the work that they have done for an extended period and that is likely successful in their eyes. If employees are not given input into the future state, safety professionals are missing out on employee learning as well as the opportunity to bring them along and address some of these issues along the way.

Change management helps employees feel prepared, equipped and supported. Without change management, employees may feel surprised or besieged by the change, which can lead to stakeholder resistance, low organizational inertia, low adoption and failed usage. In the best case, projects without change management can have extended timelines and additional project costs due to efforts after the fact to support implementation. In the worst case, project failure can result. None of these elements are clearly considered in the ISO 45001:2018 or ANSI/ASSP Z10-2019 standards.

A process must be developed that more holistically considers safety and human impacts systemically so that all elements of change can be considered. Technical implementations, typically the traditional MOC process, run parallel to change management, which encompasses people and process implementations (Prosci, 2025). Change is not just about the technical and product implementation that focuses on design, development and delivery. A change management process that empowers people at the center of the change, focusing on engagement, adaptation and use, leads to ultimate success and implementation.

Change Management Process

Implementation of change management is most effective when it follows the six-step process detailed in Figure 1. The process illustrated likely feels familiar to many safety professionals, as it bears similarity to the plan-do-check-act model. Change management's ultimate end goal is sustainment of the change and continual improvement throughout the organization. Figure 2 incorporates an overlay that illustrates how the plan-do-check-act model concepts and those of change management overlap.

1. Develop a Problem Statement

Develop a problem statement to help understand the context of the change, the problem or problems that this change aims to solve, the current state, the urgency of why the change must happen now, and any associated metrics and financial data further describing the situation. The current state describes the pain points and their impact and implications for performance, the organization and the stakeholder journey. In addition, the problem statement can serve as a communication tool to build consensus and the proper set of expectations.

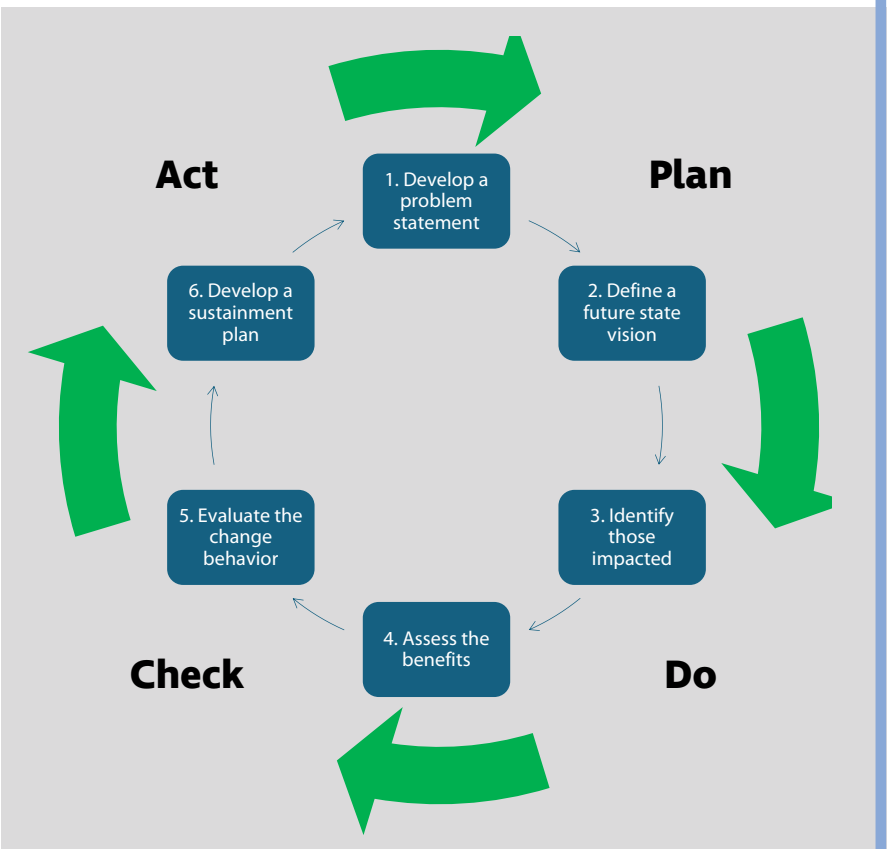
2. Define a Future State Vision

Design a future state vision that describes the desired outcomes, new processes, or new technologies that will be used and how these changes are expected to improve performance using the metrics identified in step one. The vision informs the road map and work required to implement the change. The vision should be able to be broken into milestones and short-, intermediate- and long-term goals that can be assessed and measured.

3. Identify Those Impacted

Identify who is impacted by the changes and how they are affected. This step is crucial as it forms the basis of communication,

FIGURE 2
SIX-STEP CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS COMPARED WITH PDCA MODEL



engagement and training plans. The impacts described should identify stakeholders by executive or organizational level, business unit, function and geography. In addition, descriptions of power, influence and interest in the change should be included to build a complete view of the dynamics at play. At this juncture, do not forget to consider the field impacts of the change and ensure that the analysis represents a comprehensive evaluation of the organization. Consider using section 5.4 of both ISO 45001:2018 and ANSI/ASSP Z10-2019 to help inform ways to engage the full spectrum of employees and guide them on what they should be engaged in.

4. Assess the Benefits

Describe the benefits of the change to each stakeholder group or persona. This critical step answers the "what's in it for me" question that invariably arises when people process a change that has individual impacts. It is helpful as new stakeholders are added to the scope, as they may not be privy to the initial analysis. Lastly, this step identifies possible sources and patterns of resistance, giving the project team sufficient time to understand and manage the resistance.

5. Evaluate Behavior Changes

Determine whether behavior changes are required to effect the change. This is a key component of further understanding the stakeholders and what they need to change within their job role. New process designs, relationships and working methods can inform these behaviors. This is where communication, engagement, and training plans play a role in helping the stakeholder acquire the skills and understand their new roles and relationships.

6. Develop a Sustainment Plan

Build a sustainment plan to institutionalize the changes and make them a new standard for performing and managing the required roles. This step is a hand-off from the project environment to the operating environment. Sustainment plans include the new management processes, performance metrics, communication and training plans, and description of how the employee is supported on an ongoing basis. Also consider lessons learned, including those of the process itself, that can be used to inform how to more effectively work through the six steps in subsequent change initiatives. Find ways to share these lessons learned with others so that they can utilize the six-step change management process most effectively and ensure that the end change is spread to those who may be outside of any initial scope for the change.

How to Bring Individuals Into the Change Process

Organizational change is made up of many individual changes. Focusing on the individual is essential and embedded throughout the six core steps. The ADKAR model developed by Prosci (n.d.) is a helpful framework to ensure that all stakeholders are adequately considered as part of the change evaluation and more directly breaks down how to specifically consider and involve stakeholders and employees. The ADKAR acronym is defined as:

A: Awareness of the need to change. Stakeholders must be aware of the reasons behind the change. They must know what is driving the organization, where it is going, and its future state to understand their role and how it is affected.

D: Desire to participate and support the change. Communication and engagement plans are key efforts to drive employee support for change. Desire also stems from employees' adequate awareness of the change and its context as well as understanding how the change benefits them.

K: Knowledge of how to change. Employees and stakeholders need a clear road map of what the change looks like in their roles. Knowledge of how to change is coupled with step 5 of the six-step change management process, which assesses behavioral needs before and after the change.

A: Ability to implement new skills and behaviors. This stems from several considerations, including the capacity to adopt the change, its psychological safety, and the comprehensive competency program surrounding it.

R: Reinforcement to sustain the change. Reinforcement is directly related to step 6 of the six-step change management process, where the changes are institutionalized and embedded and lessons learned are considered. The reinforcement considerations must evaluate

lessons learned and the sustainment of the changes throughout the organization.

Supporting the individual throughout the change journey using ADKAR is directly related to the six-step change management process, which describes the factors from all applicable perspectives. Communications, training and support processes are more effective if the individual perspective is included in the design and deployment as informed and generated from employee and stakeholder communication and engagement throughout the change life cycle.

Conclusion

MOC and change management have overlapping scopes but differ in approach and focus. They complement each other, with one focusing on the physical world and the other on the organizational and individual journey. Combined, they increase the chance of adoption and lasting success. As safety professionals drive a multitude of change initiatives across their organizations, it is imperative to ensure that all tools are being used. Combining the standards language of ISO 45001 and ANSI/ASSP Z10 along with the considerations of the six-step change management process and the human-centric focus of ADKAR, safety professionals can drive meaningful improvement across complex organizations. **PSJ**

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