

Change Theory Nursing Management

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Lewin's Change Theory Description

The Kurt Lewin theory of management proposes three stages to the implementation of a change process. The three stages include unfreezing, change and refreezing. The model has a comprehensive approach to change management as it proposes ways of entrenching the change into the culture of the organization thereby eliminating any possible resistance to a proposed change.

The first stage is the unfreezing phase of change management. The stage is an elaborate process of encouraging the employees to let go of the conventional ways of doing business in an organization. The process gets the employees ready for the change (Borkowski, 2016). The phase requires the use of appropriate physical and psychological stimuli to prepare the employees both psychologically and strategically for the planned change. The processed employed in the phase should make the employees feel that the change is both necessary and urgent. Successful management of the stage results in highly motivated employees who anticipate the change process.

The transition or change stage is arguably the most difficult process. The stage involves the systemic changing of the feelings, thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of people. The stage requires adequate time to enable the employees to learn the intricate features of the new policy or technology (Swansburg, 2006). It also requires adequate support systems for the employees to understand the new developments. The final stage of the model is refreezing. The phase establishes the policies arising from the change as the new culture. the stage requires the formulation of effective policies to safeguard the change.

Application of the model

Lewin's theory is practical in implementing a change process in nursing. The model provides practical strategies for introducing and entrenching new policies in the management of a health facility. An example of a quality change management project is the introduction of an integrated Information System (IS). The system improves both quality and efficiency of service delivery by enhancing communication among practitioners and improving record keeping. Introducing an information system in a hospital that had a physical record keeping culture is a laborious process that may encounter significant resistance.

First, the unfreezing stage would require heightening of the forces that drive change in the behavior of the employees (Tiffany & Lutjens, 2008). The stage would require training of the employees to demonstrate the significance of the technology. The phase of change introduction would require a series of seminars and workshops to demonstrate the significance of the new technology and the urgency in its adoption. It would also require creating new positions to help absorb employees who would possibly lose their jobs due to the implementation of the change.

The change stage encompasses the restructuring of the organization to accommodate the change. The phase would include installing the information system a process that would require the creation of workstations, a centralized database, and the security features. A workstation would consist of a desktop computer and a telephone among other equipment used in communication within the facility. The employees would require adequate time to learn about the new technology by integrating it into their daily operations. The final stage which is the refreezing stage will encompass the formulation and implementation of policies that commit the employees of the health

facility to the information system. The hospital would ban the use of papers and other types of physical record. Similarly, the management would implement stringent security policies to limit unauthorized access to, enhance accountability and improve the safety and integrity of the information system and its database.

Benefits of the theory

The primary benefit of the Lewin's change management theory is its simple nature. The model has three simple phases that are equally easy to implement especially by managers who understand their organizations (Loveridge & Cummings, 2006). The stages have equally simple methods of implementation to guide managers in the process of implementing stage. Furthermore, the stages are well defined thus enabling a manager to realize the successful implementation of a stage thereby allowing the beginning of a subsequent phase. The simplistic nature of the model makes it a favorite in nursing. The stages enable managers to plan for the change by considering the features of each phase.

Secondly, the model addresses the difficulties managers anticipate when implementing change. It concentrates on addressing the difficulty that arises from opposition by addressing them. Resistance to change often arises from lack of knowledge and fear. The model introduces effective ways of equipping the employees with useful skills necessary in the new system. It also addresses the fears by advising appropriate psychological and physical stimuli to motivate the employees in an organization thus safeguarding the change initiative.

Personal role as a nurse

As a nurse executive, I would have a pivotal role in the implementation of a change process using Lewin's model. First, I would take an active role

in the training of other nurses to equip them with the skills necessary to transact in the new dispensation. I would organize a series of seminars and workshop to explain the intricate elements of the change. I would also demonstrate positivity to shape the attitudes and feelings of the nurses towards the change. I would also train the nurses on the change and help them overcome the difficulties, especially at the preliminary stages. Finally, I would inform the policies the hospital adopts to help entrench the change in the organizational culture of the health facility.

References

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