RECOVERING FROM A STALLED CHANGE INITIATIVE:

A CASE OF CORRECTING IMPLEMENTATION MISTAKES

THESIS

Ellen L. Dorey, Captain, USAF

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR UNIVERSITY

AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

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Ellen L. Dorey, BS

Captain, USAF

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Ellen L. Dorey, BS

Captain, USAF

Approved:

/signed/	19 Feb 04
Daniel T. Holt, Maj, USAF (Chairman)	date
/signed/	19 Feb 04
Summer E. Bartczak, Lt Col, USAF (Member)	date
/signed/	19 Feb 04
Stephan P. Brady, Lt Col, USAF (Member)	date

AFIT/GEM/ENV/04M-08

Abstract

Amid an age of increasing technology, innovation, and global business competition, there is no question that the pace organizational changes are introduced will increase, as well. With this pace of change, organizational leaders might find themselves short on the time and resources necessary to properly create readiness by utilizing implementation strategies. Frequently, a change initiative that is not introduced properly will meet resistance within the organization. When strong resistance is encountered, the initiative is often abandoned and replaced with some other effort. However, in some situations, the initiative can not be abandoned and implementation must continue.

This research effort sought to identify the barriers leaders face as change initiatives stall by thematically analyzing responses from consultants in the organization development field. Then these barriers were reaffirmed by practitioners that experienced a stalled change initiative. Furthermore, strategies to overcome these barriers were identified by the consultants and then correlated to interview excerpts from the practitioners. The results indicate that the main barriers of stalled change initiatives include distrust, cynicism, and uncertain personal consequences. The suggested strategies to overcome these barriers included communication, creation of an open and inspirational environment, alignment of policies with the change, and reevaluation of the change effort.

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RECOVERING FROM A STALLED CHANGE INITIATIVE:
A CASE OF CORRECTING IMPLEMENTATION MISTAKES

I. Introduction and Literature Review

In many organizations, changes are initiated in order to gain some desirable improvement. Although many factors contribute to the speed and effectiveness with which these changes are adopted, creating an initial state of readiness has long been regarded as critical to obtaining success (Barthlem & Locke, 1981; Beckhard & Harris, 1987). Because of the criticality of readiness, it is not surprising that the literature is replete with articles prescribing strategies to create readiness or prevent, overcome, and mitigate resistance (e.g., Caruth, Middlebrook, & Rachel, 1995; Kotter, 1995). Armenakis, Harris, and Feild (1999) suggest a detailed model for creating readiness and institutionalizing change where a set of specific strategies are recommended to leaders for use early in the implementation process.

The recommended strategies are active participation, persuasive communication, diffusion practices, human resource management practices, rites and ceremonies, management of internal/external information, and formalization activities (Armenakis et al., 1999). Persuasive communication (e.g., Daly, 1995; Schweiger & Denisi, 1991); active participation (e.g., Colyle-Shapiro, 1999; Huang & Kappelman, 1996; Nutt, 1986; Parker, Chmiel & Wall, 1997; Wanberg & Banas, 2000); human resource management

practices (e.g., Huang & Kappelman, 1996; Tannenbaum & Dupree-Bruno, 1994); and rites and ceremonies (e.g., Brooks & Brown, 2002) have all been studied empirically. In sum, this literature suggests the adoption of change will be more successful when these strategies are used appropriately.

Unfortunately, leaders often initiate changes without using these strategies or taking the necessary steps to create readiness early in the change process. When this happens, strong resistance is often encountered. As a result, initiatives are often abandoned and replaced with some other effort, creating a cycle of *unsuccessful* change. In some situations, however, initiatives cannot be abandoned and implementation must continue past this strong resistance when the change is *stalled* (for a description of such a situation see Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Currently, decision makers lack empirically-based recommendations that can be used to smooth the progress of a stalled change initiative.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate the strategies available to leaders in instances where appropriate strategies to facilitate change early in the process were not used, but where implementation of organizational change must continue even when resistance is encountered (i.e., change stalls). In sum, this investigation will first identify the barriers leaders confront as they recognize that a change initiative that was expected to go smoothly does not. Secondly, the study will explore messages and strategies used by leaders to overcome these barriers and continue forward with the implementation. Rephrasing these ideas in terms of specific research questions, this study will answer, “What barriers do leaders confront during stalled change efforts?” and,

"What strategies should leaders use to overcome these barriers, so the organization can move forward with implementation?"

This study describes in detail the survey of one particular group of organizational change consultants and the examination of one particular case. Both of these samples were purposefully selected to elicit feedback from a wide range of participants with varying educational, functional, and organizational backgrounds. An open-ended questionnaire was distributed to organization development consultants from the International Registry of Organization Development Professionals. This questionnaire was designed to get this group's perspective on stalled change barriers and strategies to overcome these barriers across a broad base of experiences. To reaffirm the findings regarding the stalled change barriers, a particular case was examined concerning the introduction of a new military jet fuel additive, JP-8 +100, which stalled after implementation. The data for the case were collected through semi-structured interviews.

With this purpose in mind, the remainder of this chapter summarizes the literature pertinent to the implementation of organizational change. Various organizational change definitions will be summarized. Then, descriptive and prescriptive change process theories will be reviewed. Finally, a brief discussion of barriers to organizational change will be presented.

Organizational Change

Organizations continue to change to improve profits, quality, and effectiveness. These changes typically entail the implementation of specific initiatives. The literature has addressed the idea of organizational change and these specific initiatives in a variety of ways. For instance, the different types of initiatives are generally described as

technological, production and service, strategic and structural, or cultural. Others explain change with respect to the scope of the initiative, describing initiatives as incremental or radical. Also included in the literature are differing paces (e.g., incremental, dramatic), and differing drivers like reactive or anticipatory.

Generally, different types of organizational changes are characterized as technological changes, production and service changes, strategic and structural changes, or cultural changes (e.g., Daft, 2001; Yukl, 2002). Daft (2001) clearly explains each one. Technological changes are designed to enhance productivity within an organization by introducing new or different methods to accomplish tasks. An example of a technological change aimed at increasing production efficiency is Gefen and Riding's (2002) analysis of the introduction of a software system designed to manage customer complaints, orders, and deliveries. Production and service changes affect the *output* an organization uses to expand its market or customer base. This second type of change includes adding a new product line or making small changes to existing products, such as an automobile manufacturer introducing a new model vehicle. Strategic and structural changes affect the administrative realm of the organization: changes in reward systems, policies, accounting and budgeting systems, an organization's structure, or labor relations. DeNisi and Kluger (2000) studied one such change with their examination of multi-source or 360-degree appraisal systems where employees not only receive feedback on job performance from supervisors, but also from other individuals such as customers. Lastly, cultural changes are attempts to alter the values, beliefs, and conceptions of the members within the organization. A mindset shift to employee empowerment is a prime example.

Along with the type of change, leaders are encouraged to consider the scope of the change, determining whether change is incremental or radical (Daft, 2001). According to Daft (2001), incremental changes focus on one subsystem of the organization while all other parts of the organization remain constant. In contrast, radical changes affect the entire organization and are often referred to as strategic changes (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). An incremental change might be the use of a new machine in the production department; a radical change might be producing a brand new product.

Building on the model that conceptualized change as incremental or radical, Nadler and Tushman (1989) suggest a second dimension that relates to the factors that drive or trigger the change. Changes are either reactive, if the change is in response to an external event, or anticipatory, (also referred to as proactive; Miller & Friesen, 1982), if the change is in anticipation of external future events. Combining the two drivers with the two scopes creates four classes of change, as shown in Figure 1. These classes are tuning, adaptation, reorientation, and recreation (Nadler & Tushman, 1989).

Tuning changes are incremental changes made in anticipation of future events. Adaptations are reactive incremental changes, such as changes made to counter a new technology introduced by a competitor. Reorientations are radical changes where an organization has a substantial amount of time available for implementation. This extra time allowance could be due to anticipation of something in the industry or identification of internal quality concerns identified in the monthly analysis of metrics. Finally, recreations are radical, reactive changes caused by external events which may even threaten the existence of the organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1998).

	Incremental	Strategic
Anticipatory	*Tuning*	*Reorientation*
Reactive	*Adaptation*	*Recreation*

Figure 1. Types of Organizational Change (Nadler & Tushman, 1998, p. 196)

The term incremental change is also used by some researchers to describe the antithesis of dramatic change in regard to the pace of implementation. In this context, incremental refers to the slow and methodical introduction of changes whereas dramatic change reflects instances where changes are introduced rapidly and decisively (Miller & Friesen, 1982). These definitions are most commonly used in discussions about whether a dramatic change is more or less likely to be successful when compared to an incremental change. According to Miller and Friesen (1982), an incrementalist promotes the idea that a dramatic change is risky, politically inexpedient, and expensive. A supporter of dramatic change might advocate cost reduction benefits associated with minimizing the change implementation period.

Although change is characterized by the targeted elements within an organization (e.g., technological, cultural) and the differing scopes, paces, and drivers, all changes are directed toward improving the organization's performance. Thus, research has worked to identify how each characteristic change class most easily translates into organizational

improvements. In turn, researchers and practitioners have recognized that some improvements require changes that are broad in scope to be implemented quickly. Given this need, the literature has tried to outline processes that can be widely used by organizations to effectively enact change. Based on this, it is not surprising that significant effort has focused on the complex process that individuals and organizations go through as changes are made.

Change Process Theories

The literature on the change process can be divided into two major streams, those which provide descriptive models and those offering prescriptive models. Although the two streams are interrelated, the descriptive change models typically explain the stages that organizations and individuals move through as change unfolds. In contrast, the prescriptive models recommend more specific steps or mechanisms that can be used to gently guide individuals and organizations through the stages of descriptive models. A simplified model combining the two processes is presented in Figure 2. The prescriptions address the change messages and the change message delivery methods, which then ideally move an organization through the descriptive stages *readiness*, when organizational members are primed to accept the proposed change, *adoption*, when organizational members accept the change by modifying their behavior on a trial bias, and *institutionalization*, where the change has become part of the organization's culture.

Descriptive processes. Most trace the literature describing the change process back to Lewin (1947). Lewin suggested that an organization or individual moves through changes in three distinct phases -- unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. Unfreezing is defined as behavior that increases the individual's acceptance of a possible change.

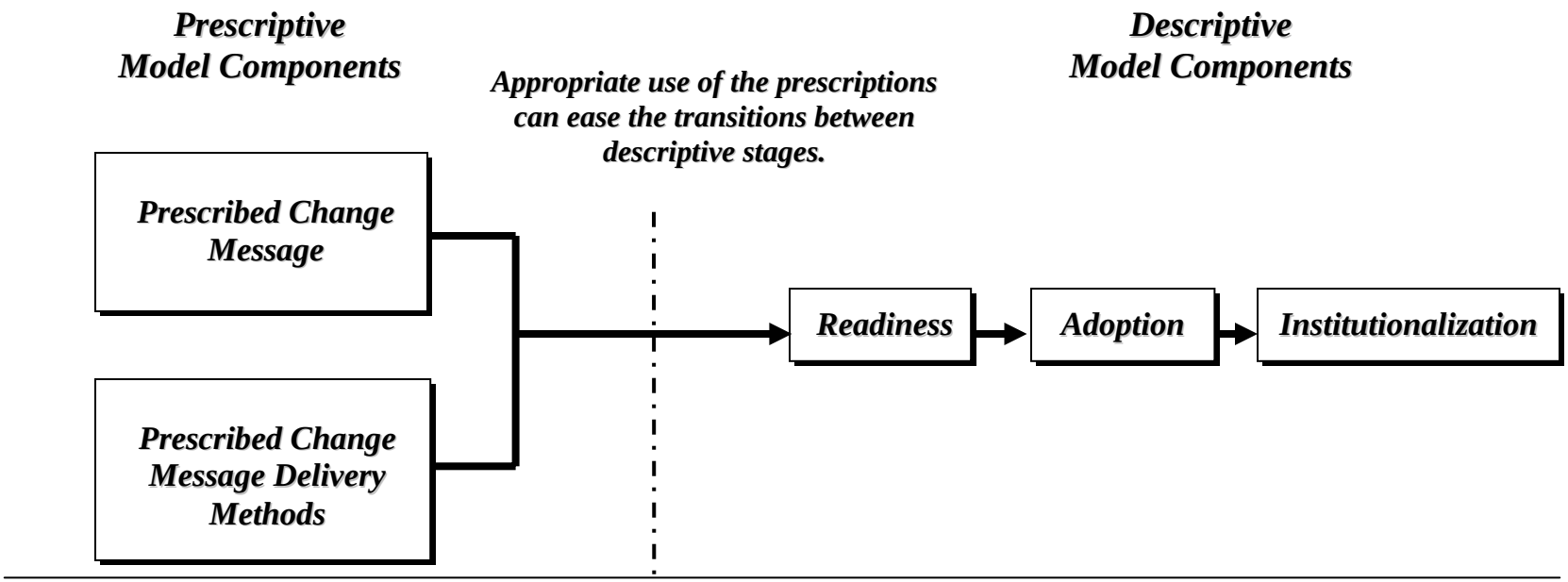


Figure 2. Literature Based Model of the Change Process

Table 1

Summary of Descriptive Literature

Source	Description		
	Stage 1	*Stage 2*	*Stage 3*
Lewin (1947)	Unfreezing	Moving	Refreezing
Prochaska & Di Clemente (1982)	Contemplation/ Determination	Action	Maintenance
Isabella (1990)	Anticipation	Confirmation	Culmination/Aftermath
George & Jones (2001)	Emotional Reaction	Direction of Attention	Schema Change
Jaffe et al. (1994)	Denial	Resistance	Exploration/Commitment
Armenakis et al. (1999)	Readiness	Adoption	Commitment/ Instutionalization

Moving is defined as altering the magnitude, direction, or number of forces resisting a change. Refreezing is then defined as stabilizing and maintaining the new social equilibrium between driving and resisting forces (Lewin, 1947).

Since Lewin's original theory (1947), researchers have offered models that emerged inductively through empirical work (e.g., Isabella, 1990) or emerged deductively through theoretical work (e.g., Armenakis et al., 1999). While the number of steps in the more contemporary models has varied, all tend to overlap with Lewin's original model. Table 1 presents some of the descriptions of the change process presented in the literature, highlighting how they overlap with Lewin's first model.

Prochaska and Di Clemente (1982) developed a five stage model that described the steps involved in making changes in one's personal life (e.g., smoking cessation, weight loss). First, a person *contemplates* making a change, followed by *determining* that they will indeed take *action*. After the action step there is a period of *maintenance* that

must follow so that a *relapse* does not occur. The relapse stage is included because the researchers' expertise is in psychotherapy and changes such as weight loss and smoking are seldom permanent. This suggests that individuals cycle through the process repeatedly moving through stages where they have setbacks.

While the Prochaska and Di Clemente's (1982) description of change is tailored for changes that are made willingly by an individual, many others have built descriptive models meant to describe changes initiated by external sources. In these models, instead of contemplation and determination, the early stages are to anticipate and confirm (Isabella, 1990), have an emotional reaction to discrepancies (George & Jones, 2001), deny (Jaffe, Scott, & Tobe, 1994), or create readiness (Armenakis et al., 1999). The researcher's choice of nomenclature indicates that something is happening to the individuals that they might not otherwise choose for themselves. In essence, this first step concerns preparation through either external or internal means.

The middle stage in each of the models is used to describe how individuals act once the change has been initiated (See column 2 in Table 1). In this step, individuals are often portrayed as temporarily trying out the new situation and then adjusting their views based on this trial period. This stage has been described as resisting (Jaffe et al., 1994), adopting (Armenakis et al., 1999), directing attention toward problem (George & Jones, 2001), or adjusting their view of the event in a culmination period (Isabella, 1990).

The final stage is where the initiators of the change hope it has become an integral part of the organization's culture. Noting the process may not be completely smooth; Jaffe et al. (1994) have included an exploration phase where individuals may teeter between commitment and exploration before fully committing to the new change.

Armenakis et al. (1999) differentiate between where an organizational member grudgingly commits to a change and institutionalization, where the change becomes part of the culture. Whereas, Isabella (1990) acknowledges the change may never be fully accepted, but there is a realization that the change is permanent and organizational members must learn to accept the change in a period labeled the "aftermath." As a concluding example, George and Jones (2001) describe the final stage in terms of a permanent change in the schemas, or perceptions, of organizational members.

Descriptive models help leaders by explaining what to expect when introducing a change initiative. However, the description of the change process is only part of the overall picture. The other part of the picture involves prescriptions that are provided to facilitate the movement through the stages.

Prescriptive processes. The literature is filled with prescriptions for leaders to use as guides to successfully implement change. Many of these prescriptions are directed toward the practitioner (e.g., Kotter, 1995; Caruth, Middlebrook, & Rachel, 1985). Other times the prescriptive models are directed toward the academic (e.g., Armenakis et al., 1999). Regardless of the target audience, there are many areas of overlap amongst the prescriptive literature. The prominent prescriptions are summarized in Table 2.

The most common prescriptions include two fundamental components: the message to be delivered to the members of the organization and the methods used to deliver that message. In terms of the message, most of the models emphasize the importance of stating the need for change (e.g, Caruth et al., 1985; Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997), creating a sense of urgency among the members (e.g., Kotter, 1995), and describing the desired end-state to members. Armenakis et al. (1999), for instance,

Table 2

Summary of Prescriptive Literature

Source	Message to Deliver					Methods to Deliver Message			
	Need for change	Appropriateness	Valence	Efficacy	Leadership Support	Communication	Participation	Rites & Ceremonies	HR Mgt Practices
Armenakis et al. (1999)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Caruth et al. (1985)	■		■		■	■			■
Stanislao & Stanislao (1983)	■		■	■	■	■	■		
Wanberg & Banas (2000)			■	■		■	■		
Clark & Cavanaugh (1997)	■			■		■	■		■
Kotter (1995)	■				■	■	■		■

Note. Components of the change message and methods to deliver message are based on the Armenakis et al. (1999) model for institutionalizing change because it appeared to be one of the most comprehensive models in the literature.

explicitly state that leaders must share the need for the change with members. Caruth et al. (1985) and Clark and Cavanaugh (1997) offer the same suggestion based on the old adage, "If it ain't broke don't fix it!" In essence, they suggest that if organizational members do not recognize a need for change (something broken) it will likely be rejected (there is no need for a fix). Likewise, the change (fix) will likely be rejected if it is not a suitable solution to the problem. Therefore, a message of appropriateness is also suggested (Armenakis et al., 1999).

Beyond the need for change, members must understand the change's benefits (i.e., valence; Wanberg & Banas, 2000) and their ability to be successful in the new environment (i.e., efficacy; Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983; Armenakis et al., 1999). Efficacy and valence go hand-in-hand. Efficacy ensures the organizational members believe it is possible to successfully implement the change (Armenakis et al., 1999). It addresses feelings of uncertainty or insecurity among organizational members because they might not understand how their job will change. For example, personnel who have been doing the same job for many years often occupy a comfort zone and may resist change (Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997). As the uncertainty is eliminated by communicating efficacy, members of the organizations will begin to evaluate the change and its potential benefits—this is valence. Addressing valence entails telling members of the organization why this change will benefit the individual (Armenakis et al., 1999).

Leadership support is also an essential message to convey to organizational members (Caruth et al., 1985). Without the leadership support, or support of a powerful guiding coalition, the organizational members may doubt the commitment of the organization itself (Kotter, 1995). Employees may also doubt whether the program will

be quickly eliminated, only to be replaced by another program in the following months (Armenakis et al., 1999).

As with the message itself, there is a considerable convergence among authors regarding the methods to deliver those messages. Most common are communication, participation, rites and ceremonies, and human resource management practices. When discussing communication, all types of recommendations are given to include: communicate persuasively (Caruth et al., 1985), communicate broadly and dramatically (Kotter, 1995); and communicate as tactfully, thoroughly, and completely as possible (Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983). The message of efficacy is often bolstered using training to teach new skills, thus coupling communication with participation (Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983).

Participation builds credibility between the leadership and the organizational members (Armenakis et al., 1999). Typically, participation is discussed within the context of including members in the decision-making process. Coch and French (1948) are the pioneers of researching the benefits of participative decision making. They found that through the use of participative decision making, organizational members often realize the need for the change and the change's potential benefits which, in turn, frequently reduces turnover rates and grievances filed with management (Coch & French, 1948). This prescription is described in the literature as soliciting opinions from employees (Caruth et al., 1985), and general staff participation (Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983). More recently, the empirical literature has reinforced these ideas where Wanberg and Banas (2000) found that participation in the change process lead to employees showing more openness to the initiated changes

Other less prescribed practices are the utilization of rites and ceremonies and human resource management practices. Rites and ceremonies include, for example, unifying two merging companies who, after the merge, will hold the largest volume of market share, by passing out buttons at a rally that say, “We’re #1!” (Armenakis et al., 1999). Likewise, human resource management practices, such as appraisals, can be used to reward those that support the change (e.g., Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997) or the new vision that has been created (e.g., Kotter, 1995).

Change Process Issues

In sum, the process models discussed present change in a linear fashion where the use of certain facilitation strategies to deliver recommended messages will move individuals through the stages of change. When this is done, presumably, implementation goes smoothly and the benefits the change is designed to attain are realized in a timely manner. Most researchers acknowledge that this theory does not entirely reflect reality, suggesting that change is a non-linear, complex process (Armenakis & Bediean, 1999). Beyond the complexities that inherently exist, organizational leaders often times begin the process well-intentioned, but due to constraints such as budget, resources, or time they are unable to follow the prescriptions and create readiness. Thus, change is often implemented with little more than a signature and does not proceed as hoped.

In reality, the change process might look more like the model given in Figure 3, where there is an abbreviated change message conveyed with limited use of the prescribed delivery methods. Readiness is essentially bypassed creating limited adoption, often forcing leaders to abandon the initiative. This starts a cycle of failed changes where

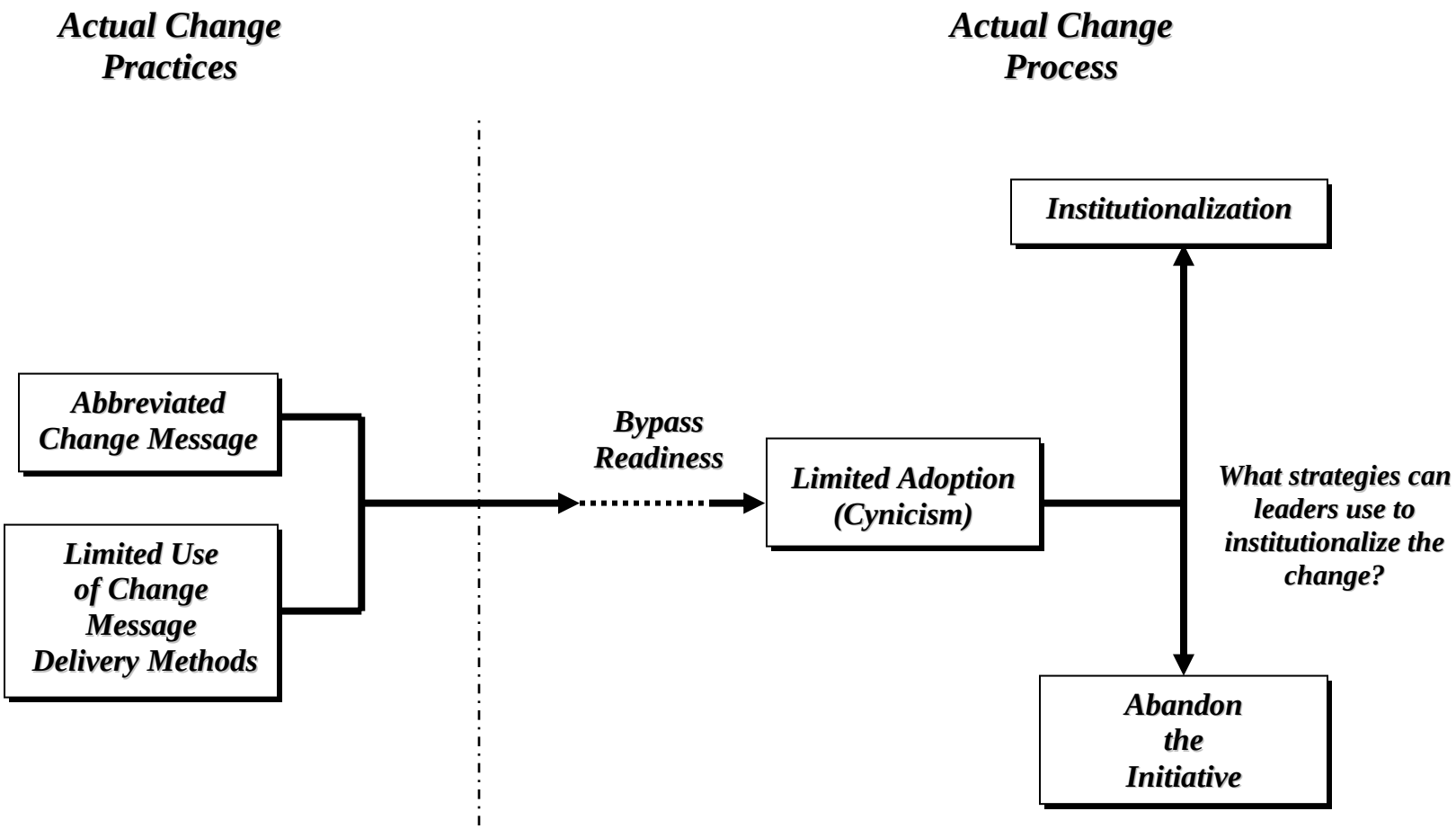


Figure 3. Proposed Model of the Change Process

the abandoned initiative is replaced by a newer effort. Many of these new initiatives are not preceded with readiness steps which leads these initiatives to the same fate. Because of this cycle, cynicism and resistance are frequently encountered. Cynicism is a mind-set that results from the involvement in a history of unsuccessful changes and entails a loss of faith in the change leaders (Reichers, Wanous, & Austin, 1997). Resistance is the embodiment of cynicism. Resistance can be acted out by putting up road blocks to the change such as slowing down the work pace or simply badmouthing the change to colleagues behind the managers' backs (Mercer, 2001). Because cynicism often leads to resistance, it is important to examine the conclusions of the empirical literature on this subject.

Research shows that management does have some control over the amount of cynicism within the organization. While cynicism is partly due to the negative predisposition of individuals, it is more attributable to organizational factors (Wanous, Reichers, & Austin, 2000). Even more importantly, 53 percent of the people classified as highly cynical in a study by Reichers, Wanous, and Austin (1997) said they were still willing to try to make the change. Therefore, cynicism does not necessarily lead to resistance.

Reichers et al. (1997) highlight two ways cynicism is cyclical in nature, mirroring the cycle that many failed changes go through. First, they argue that cynicism becomes self-fulfilling prophecy. Cynical employees do not believe the change will be successful and do not support the change. Subsequently, the change is unsuccessful and cynical employees have another case to substantiate their cynicism. Secondly, Reichers et al. (1997) suggest that the blame for failed changes is cyclical. Cynical employees tend to

blame managers or unions for failing change, while managers tend to blame the cynical opinions of the employees. Subsequently, managers do not adequately address the issues causing problems with the change implementation, so the change is unsuccessful and the cynical employees, again, have another case to substantiate their cynicism.

Although managers might prefer that every change is met with open arms, the identification of a cynical environment does not have to be considered a negative. Dean, Brandes, and Dharwadkar (1998) identify that cynics can be a voice of conscience within the organization. When organizational leaders listen to the cynics, they can evaluate whether management is really acting in the best interest of the organization or just assuming that they can get away with self-interested behavior.

Still, if a change is to be institutionalized, and the cycle is to be broken, cynicism needs to be eliminated. At first, one might argue that the same strategies recommended to create readiness should be employed. In fact, Reichers et al. (1997) have made prescriptions about how to manage cynicism. Many of the strategies they recommended mirror the prescriptions given by the change process theorists. They advocate participative decision making, human resource management practices, and communication, as well as publicizing successes and regaining the trust of the employees. Regaining trust can be accomplished by enhancing the credibility of the change agents through accepting responsibility of past mistakes and avoiding surprises to employees.

Investigating Stalled Change

While Reichers et al. (1997) did not test the extent to which their recommendations would be effective, a few cases of stalled change have been illustrated in the literature. Jaffe et al. (1994) examined a stalled change and then prescribed

strategies to continue implementation. The stalled change Jaffe et al. (1994) examined was the case of Seton Medical Center, near San Francisco, California. In order to keep the hospital open, the administration needed to cut cost and reduce the number of employees while also making some strategic and structural changes. Unfortunately, leaders did not have an adequate implementation strategy and the change was met with bitter resistance. The strategies recommended to remedy the situation included management's renewal of its commitment to moving ahead, establishing a vision of the change and the future of the organization, opening the flow of communication through the use of town meetings and "managing change" seminars for all levels, recreating participation by encouraging the creation of personal empowerment action plans, and finally, organizing a training phase where staff members learn the skills needed to conduct effective meetings, utilize problem solving techniques, and resolve conflict.

Doz and Prahalad (1981) discuss a stalled change concerning the management practices of Corning Glass. This change also entailed a strategic and structural change where control was shifted from company subsidiaries to the company's headquarters. Up until the late 1960's, the subsidiaries of Corning Glass were essentially autonomous. Then, for legal reasons, the company's headquarters needed a more uniform reporting system. The change stalled because there was little subsidiary manager involvement, no well-defined strategy for the change, and inconsistent use of the company's data management mechanisms. To remedy the situation, consultants suggested subsidiary manager involvement in creating "decision grids" that lead to an adequate strategy. Corning Glass also made structural changes to its accounting and budgeting systems to support the new workload on the headquarters.

Kim and Mauborgne (2003) also examined a stalled strategic and structural change case, as well, and what was done to successfully continue the change process. The case dealt with an elevator sales company, Elco. In the early 1990s Elco switched to "cell manufacturing" which is where performance appraisals and compensation are based on the performance of a work "cell" rather than on individual work. The only reasoning Elco gave their employees was that this change would provide "efficiency gains."

After the restructuring met resistance the plant manager announced the employees would also be in self-directed teams, leading to the abolishment of the supervisory role. Instead of excitement over the new vision, employees felt confused by what all of these changes meant to their everyday lives. Senior leadership felt frustrated because they did not know what they did wrong. In an effort to relieve the anxiety of the situation outside consultants were brought to remedy the situation. The tactics that eventually saved this Elco plant were based on the concept of fair process. Fair process suggests employees will commit to a decision made by management—even if they disagree with it—if they trust that the manager used a fair process to make the decision. Some of the strategies recommended are the admission of improper preparation by senior leadership, then complete honesty about the reasons for the necessary changes, answering all the concerns of the employees about the changes, and utilizing participative decision making for any further changes to the new system.

All of these selections examined single cases, so the extent to which researchers can generalize might be limited. However, there are some general lessons that can be gained from these cases. Throughout these cases, the importance of three reoccurring recommendations emerged: (1) the regaining of trust through open and honest two-way

communication; (2) the renewal of organizational commitment through the creation of a new vision; and (3) the use of participative decision making. Despite these insights and recommendations, there appears to be an opportunity to further our understanding of the appropriate messages and strategies that can be used to facilitate the adoption of stalled change initiatives.

Summary

There are many descriptions of the change process and prescriptions for successful implementation of change. While many descriptive models acknowledge resistance as a natural stage, the prescriptive models concentrate on strategies to be used before resistance barriers are met. While leaders often encounter resistance even when they introduce change properly, there is reason to believe that resistance is more resolute when change is introduced improperly. The work done to date only examines single cases and does not offer any empirically based recommendations as to what strategies are available to leaders when they must overcome their own errors in implementation. Based on this, I propose further work be conducted to offer leaders guidance so they can act appropriately when resistance and cynicism are encountered. To do this, consultants and practitioners will be asked to share their experiences, explaining the barriers that leaders face, and the strategies that are useful to smoothly implement change when efforts stall. Chapter 2 will describe the methods used to analyze these areas.

II. Method

This research was conducted using two types of data collection. A unique sample of change consultants was asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire. Second, consistent with the methods described by Yin (1994), practitioners involved in the introduction of a stalled change initiative were queried. Each practitioner was asked to describe his or her experience with a specific change incident. These descriptions were gathered through a series of semi-structured interviews. Both of these samples were purposefully selected. Diversity was emphasized because researchers have suggested that constant themes that emerge from heterogeneous samples tend to provide a more general and complete understanding of a phenomenon than constant themes that emerge from homogenous samples (e.g., Sutton, 1987).

Open-ended Questionnaires

An open-ended questionnaire was administered to organization development consultants and professionals from the International Registry of Organization Development Professionals. Members of this group were selected because they were expected to have considerable experience with organizational changes. Furthermore, since this organization is a subsidiary of The Organization Development Institute, a nonprofit educational association for Organization Development, it seemed the members would be interested in supporting educational endeavors such as this one.

Questionnaire Sample. All of the members that listed addresses within the United States in the International Registry of Organization Development Professionals and

Organization Development Handbook were invited to participate in this study (*N* = 296). Of the questionnaires sent, 25 were returned undelivered and 60 were returned with responses (22% response rate assuming all of the other questionnaires were delivered). Of the 60 responses, 49 were usable. There were a few different reasons members cited not being able to participate in the survey. A couple people cited being too busy while others cited limited knowledge on the subject of stalled change because they worked in an academic setting instead of a consulting setting.

Overall, all but four of the respondents that gave usable responses were consultants. A few participants indicated they were both external and internal consultants (*n* = 4), while 26.5% indicated they were internal consultants (*n* = 13), and 57% indicated they were external consultants (*n* = 28). The age of these participants ranged from 35-79 with an average of 53. The sample was 65% male (*n* = 32). All but one respondent indicated they had at least one Master's Degree, and 55% had a Doctorate Degree (*n* = 27).

Questionnaire Procedure. The questionnaire was originally sent out by official mail. Each packet of information contained a cover letter that explained the project, included a copy of the questionnaire, and had a postage paid business reply envelope (contents of the mailing are included in Appendix A in addition to information regarding business reply envelopes). Then, approximately three weeks after the original mailing e-mail messages were sent to all of the members. The e-mail included a brief description of the project and an electronic version of the questionnaire just in case the original questionnaire was either not delivered or misplaced by the member. Another reason for

sending the questionnaire electronically was to encourage participation by those members that found it more convenient to type their responses.

Questionnaire Development. Unlike semi-structured interviews, questionnaires present no opportunity to ask probing questions during the administration. Therefore, the questionnaire was first reviewed by a group of academics and then a group of experts in the organization development field. Both groups were asked to provide comments about the questionnaire's design and then revisions were made before it was administered to the study's sample. In this study, revisions to the open-ended questionnaire were made to (a) eliminate misunderstood questions, (b) reduce meaningless answers, (c) reduce response time, and (d) increase participation.

First, the questionnaire was sent via e-mail to academics familiar with organization development and change methods. These academics were from varying institutions to ensure differing frames of reference. Six out of the ten academics responded. Comments regarding the wording of the instructions, explanation, and the questions were considered and many were integrated into the draft. The biggest concern addressed in the comments was the point of reference from which the questions were being answered. This concern was integrated by ensuring the respondents understood that they were answering the questions by generalizing actions of the leaders within organizations.

After the comments by the academics were addressed and the changes were made, the questionnaire and a message explaining the project was sent via e-mail to the editors and contributors of the book the *Organization Development Practitioner (ODP)*. The experts were asked to send any questions or comments back via e-mail as well as fill out

the questionnaire for content. These three editors and six contributors were chosen because they are highly respected experts in the organization development field. Three out of the nine experts responded. Two responses were useable. One respondent asked questions and gave comments as to the questionnaire's wording and demographics section, while the other respondent filled out the survey without any questions. A few changes were made based on the comments. In the demographics section, a question was added about whether a consultant was an internal or external consultant. Additionally, a clarification was made that emphasized that participants should respond by generalizing the cases they have experienced.

Questionnaire Content. The open ended-questionnaire items were designed to solicit responses directly related to the research questions, as illustrated in Table 3. The questionnaire contained two main questions associated with this research effort, as well as a few other questions designed to collect data for other on-going efforts. One question asked participants to explain the concerns organizational members have when changes stall and the other question asked what steps the participant has taken, suggested or observed to overcome stalled change.

Semi-structured Interviews

Case Study Description. To further augment the literature review and to reaffirm the findings from the open-ended questionnaires, a case was examined. The case investigated was the introduction of a jet fuel additive called JP-8 +100 or "the +100 additive." An embedded case study design was used. Embedded case studies are used when a single case involves more than one unit of analysis (Yin, 1994). This case

Table 3

Research and Interview/Questionnaire Questions

Research Question	*Interview/Questionnaire Question*
1. What barriers are encountered during stalled change?	* From your perspective, what concerns do organizational members have when change efforts stall? Explain why these things seem important or significant to them?
	What reasons might people have had for objecting to the JP-8 +100 initiative?
	What were the barriers to success of JP-8 +100?
	What specific clues, if any, were there to suggest that the JP-8 +100 initiative would be successful or unsuccessful?
2. How might stalled change be overcome?	
a. Messages:	What information was being communicated when the change was being initiated? By senior managers? Mid-level managers? Lower-level employees? Was this information relevant?
	Do you recall any incidents or events that preceded this change? Can you describe those events?
	What would be the impact if your organization did not go ahead with this innovation?
	Who was motivated the most to make the changes? What was the driving force behind them?
b. Strategies:	*Explain the successful steps that you have taken, suggested, or observed to overcome resistance, apathy, or cynicism when change efforts have stalled.
	What specific actions—steps, events, techniques, methods—have helped make this change?
	In retrospect, is there anything that you feel should have been done differently?

*Question included in the open-ended questionnaire

included interviews with individuals from three geographically separate units that experienced the implementation and the stall of the additive.

The United States Air Force (USAF) developed and implemented the +100 additive to reduce engine problems in a number of fixed-winged (i.e., F-16, F-15, C-130) and rotary-winged aircraft that had increased when the Department of Defense (DoD) switched primary fuels from JP-4 to JP-8. The engine problems associated with JP-8 revolve around the temperature that the fuel breaks down (i.e., it breaks down at a lower temperature than its predecessor, JP-4). When the fuel breaks down, carbon builds up in the engine (called "coking") and maintenance must be done to remove that build up to ensure smooth engine operation. Because JP-8 led to additional carbon build up, increasingly frequent engine maintenance was required, affecting the availability of aircraft.

Development of the +100 additive occurred at the Wright Laboratory, Aero Propulsion and Power Directorate at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Ohio between the years 1989-1996 and was introduced to operational units shortly after. The additive was designed to reduce the coking and consequently reduce maintenance time and costs while increasing mission capability. In an initial engine test, JP-8 with the +100 additive actually cleaned the lightly coked components of one "dirty" engine by opening several small, previously plugged holes. In essence, the engine could function as designed and the overall engine performance improved (Directorate of Aerospace Fuels, 1996). During a more extensive 18-month operational test, the additive proved to be beneficial in many different ways. For example, unscheduled engine maintenance decreased by 11

percent and unscheduled fuel system maintenance was reduced by 70 percent (Directorate of Aerospace Fuels, 1996).

While the introduction of the additive was intended to produce a number of benefits, its introduction affected an enormous number of USAF and DoD organizations and members stationed at over 50 Air Force installations worldwide. In addition, it affected a number of processes that were used to accomplish the organizations' objectives—all of these were not always desirable. Organizations, for instance, were expected to have different grades of fuel available at all times (i.e., JP-8 without the additive, known as "straight-8" and JP-8 with the additive) so that those aircraft "not on the program" could be fueled. Because the additive contains a detergent rendering a fuel truck's water/fuel separator filter called "filter-separator coalescers" useless, it was necessary to keep separate trucks for each grade.

This initiative also affected personnel in many career fields including: aircraft maintenance (especially engine maintenance); Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL); Aerospace Ground Equipment (AGE); and pilots within the active USAF, Air National Guard (ANG), and Air Force Reserve (AFRES). The initiative affected each community differently. Most noticeable was the additional logistical burden caused by special handling procedures for the +100 additive. For example, the POL community saw an increase in workload because of the need to supply, dispense, and maintain records on two different grades of fuel. The aircraft maintainers saw a gradual reduction in the engine problems, but also saw an increase in paperwork and coordination with the POL community when they needed to manage fuel orders. Further complications included

fuel storage capacity and the requirement to stop using the +100 additive a certain amount of time before an aircraft deploys.

According to the JP-8 +100 Implementation Plan (Directorate of Aerospace Fuels, 1996), the implementation for fighter aircraft was projected to occur in three initial phases. The first phase in 1997 included 17 Air Force installations. The second phase in 1998 included 21 installations. And, the third phase in 1999 included 19 installations. Total implementation for these three phases cost approximately $4.7 million to include storage, additional refueling trucks, travel for the implementation team, training, and program management.

Unfortunately for Air Force leaders, the implementation of this additive did not go as smoothly as hoped. The implementation procedures that seemingly varied from base to base were accomplished with limited use of readiness techniques. The most noteworthy oversight was that an implementation directive was never signed by a senior ranking official (i.e., leadership support was absent). This oversight is the reason behind the current policy where it is up to each wing commander's discretion as to whether the base will keep using the fuel additive. Therefore, many wing commanders are simply choosing not to use the additive because the benefits are not substantial enough to justify the additional workload.

Interview Sample. Fourteen interviews were conducted with individuals that experienced the implementation and the stall of the fuel additive. A broad range of perspectives was ensured by interviewing members whose jobs, involvement, and current status with using JP-8 +100 varied. The interview sample included individuals from the POL, AGE, and maintenance communities working at three ANG units that were

purposefully selected. These units were selected because of their differing status in the use of the +100 additive. One unit was still using the additive. The second unit had ended its use of the additive and did not want to go back on the program. And the third unit had ended its use of the additive, but for aircraft performance reasons was considering going back on the program.

The sample of interviewees was generated using a network sampling technique. In its simplest form, a network sample is developed by asking each individual that is initially approached and interviewed to identify others that should also be approached for interviews. This practice is repeated until the interviewees begin to repeat those that should be interviewed. This procedure has proved useful in generating samples of individuals who it would be difficult, if not impossible, to access in a more conventional way. Johnson, Gerstein, Pach, Cerbone, and Brown (2002) used this technique to identify intravenous drug users and their injection partners in seven Washington DC communities. In an organizational setting, Tepper and his colleagues (1998) found this approach was an economical and efficient means to acquire a heterogeneous sample of full-time employees as they attempted to develop a general instrument to assess resistance tactics used by employees.

While this population was not comparable to the "underground' community of drug users, it did pose significant challenges requiring this technique. First, it was appropriate to use a network sample because significant time has passed since the initial implementation of the fuel additive program and the interviewees had knowledge of others that were involved with operations during that time frame. Second, name and contact information for ANG bases not easily found because of security reasons.

Additionally, a network sample proved useful within the tight knit ANG community because interviewees were helpful by not only providing contact information, but often calling other shops or bases, introducing the project, and asking for assistance.

The all male sample ranged in age from 29-57 and had an average age of 44 years old. All participants had a high school diploma. Three participants indicated they had an Associate's degree, four had a Bachelor's degree, and one had a Master's Degree.

Interview Procedure. Using a procedure similar to that reported in previous research (e.g., Isabella, 1990; Zand & Sorenson, 1975), the one-on-one interviews were semi-structured in that each interview covered the same general topics. The interview schedule, however, was not rigid and served as a guide, allowing the interviewer to probe areas of special interest freely (the interview schedule and questions are presented in Appendix B). The interview was designed to last no more than one hour; however, the actual interviews varied considerably in length based on the interviewees' interests and involvement in the implementation. At the start of each interview, participants signed an informed consent document, filled out a brief personal background form, and gave permission to have the interview tape-recorded.

Interview Content. A detailed set of 10 open-ended questions guided each interview. In essence, these interview questions were designed to elicit as much detail as possible about the participants' concerns, perceptions, and observations in connection with the fuel additive implementation. These questions originated from previous research (Holt, 2002; Laetz, 1993; Lewchanin, 1982), but some were slightly modified to reflect word preferences. For example, "Do you feel your organization will be "in trouble" if you do not go ahead with this innovation?" (Lewchanin, 1982) was modified to "What

would be the impact if your organization did not go ahead with this innovation?" Table 3 gives a listing of the two investigative research questions and related interview/questionnaire questions.

The interview opened with general questions about the implementation of the JP-8 +100 jet fuel additive. The participants were first asked to describe only the change and their role in the change effort. This question simply encouraged the participants to focus their thinking on the subject and time frame being investigated. For the same reason, the participants were then asked to describe any incidents or events that preceded the change.

The next questions were designed to explore the methods used to implement the change. First, the participants were asked about the physical actions that aided in the implementation of the change. For example, the participants were asked to describe any steps taken, events that occurred, or techniques or methods employed. Next, the participants were asked to discuss the flow of communication within the organization during this change.

The objective questions were followed with questions that asked the participants to speculate about the change. Such inquiry included questions regarding who was the most motivated to make the change, what the impact would be on the organization if the change was not implemented, and what reasons people might have had for objecting to the change. Also, to encourage the participant to think about the change in terms of being successful or unsuccessful a question was posed regarding any clues that may have indicated one way or the other.

The interview culminated with two opinion based questions. One of these questions asked the participants to directly identify the barriers to the success of this change. The other question allowed the participants to explain if there is anything they feel should have been done differently during this change implementation.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the open-ended questionnaires and the interviews were thematically analyzed. The data from the open-ended questionnaires was condensed by extracting verbatim phrases from the participants' responses. Each verbatim phrase represented that individual's complete thought regarding a topic as suggested by previous research (e.g., Isabella, 1990). Similarly, each interview tape recording was reviewed for content. From each tape recording, verbatim phrases were recorded.

After the phrases from the questionnaires were recorded, they were categorized by common themes or patterns. These themes were inductively developed. Furthermore, the themes were refined to ensure they are mutually exclusive and that all of the thoughts are captured to the greatest extent possible. Because it has been suggested that patterns should to be subjected to skepticism before they can be characterized as practical knowledge (Miles & Huberman, 1984), when the thematic coding of the data was finalized, it was confirmed by a facility member familiar with the purpose of the research. Any discrepancies in regards to the categorizations were resolved by discussion and informal reevaluation. The phrases from the interview tape recordings were then used to reaffirm the findings from the questionnaire responses.

Finally, validation of the thematic analysis was accomplished by an independent rater, a faculty member familiar with the purpose of the research. The rater was asked to

categorize a representative sample of phrases from the questionnaire responses according to the established themes. The result of this exercise was analyzed in terms of the percent agreement of the independent rater and the researcher's finalized categorizations.

III. Results

The thematic analysis of the collected data was accomplished in two phases. First, an analysis of the responses provided by the consultants was used to identify the barriers of stalled changes and strategies to overcome these barriers. Secondly, the interview tape recordings were analyzed to compare the consultant's experiences with those that experienced a stalled change.

Consultant Response Based Themes

Stalled Change Barriers. One primary purpose of this research was to identify the barriers that leaders encounter as changes stall. To identify these barriers, the consultants were asked to generalize the concerns organizational members have when a change initiative stalls and why these things seemed significant to those members. Eighty-six verbatim phrases were extracted from the consultants' responses. Each phrase was read for content and then categories were inductively developed. After this preliminary categorization period, three overarching themes emerged: distrust, cynicism, and uncertain personal consequences. A faculty member familiar with the research then validated a representative sample with 100% agreement. A further examination of each phrase led to subcategories within each theme. The definition of each theme and respective subcategories, as used in the context of this study, and an example response representing each are presented in Table 4.

First, distrust in leadership seemed to be a dominant theme. Trust has been defined by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) as "the willingness of a party to be

Table 4

Definitions and Example Responses of Barrier Themes

Barriers	*Definition*	*Example Response*
Distrust	Organizational members questioned reliance upon leadership with regard to specific elements like ability, benevolence, and integrity.	Lack of trust in leaders who are the drivers of change.
Lack of Ability	Organizational members' negative perception of leadership's capability, competency, and skill that gives the leaders influence over aspects of the organization.	Reinforces the belief that managers to do not understand the organization and how work happens.
Lack of Benevolence	Organizational members' negative perception of leadership's concern for the well-being of the employees, aside from profit motivation.	Organizational members feel executives don't care.
Lack of Integrity	Organizational members' negative perception that leadership does not follows a set of moral principles that agrees with the beliefs of the employee.	They hear what their supervisors say, but their actions are what communicate what they really feel.
Cynicism	Organizational members' mind-set that results from the involvement in a history of unsuccessful changes and entails a loss of faith in the change leaders.	N/A
Likelihood of Success	Organizational members' perception of the consequence the outcome of this change initiative has on the acceptance of future changes.	Question model/under lying assumptions with negative consequences for future of change initiatives.

Table 4 (continued)

Definitions and Example Responses of Barrier Themes

Barriers	*Definition*	*Example Response*
Cynicism (continued)		
Negative Disposition	Organization members' predisposition to doubt the success of change efforts because they are generally pessimistic.	Organizational members could perceive that "nothing will change" so why try or put forth the effort.
History	Organization members' experience that leads the employees to believe this current change initiative will not be permanent or successful because previous change initiatives were not permanent or successful (i.e., "program-of-the-month").	Their attitude is often, "just another project that's failed like all the rest."
Uncertain Personal Consequences		
Job Security	Organization members' concern about being forced to cease working with their current employer.	Threatens job security.
Professional Uncertainty	Organization members' concern about workload changes, current job process changes, manpower changes, and authority changes.	Will I have to learn new things or will I continue to perform current tasks?
General Personal Concern	N/A	Those that must change are concerned about how they will fare.

vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (p. 712). A close examination of the phrases that reflected distrust could be further divided using the framework presented by Mayer et al. (1995) as they described that perceptions of trustworthiness were developed through perceptions regarding leadership's ability, benevolence, and integrity. However, many of the thoughts reflected a general sentiment that was not specific about the type of distrust. For example, one response read, "Members begin to distrust their leaders when a change effort stalls. It seems important because they generalize the distrust to other initiatives or promises made by leaders."

The consultants suggested that the members tend to lose faith in the leaders' ability. That is, they feel leadership is not capable of successfully leading the organization through change. This was illustrated by responses such as, "This (stalled change) makes them question the ability of their leaders to do what is necessary—in this case, to lead change efforts." Lack of benevolence is an important issue that speaks to the organizational members' concern of whether they feel leadership truly cares about their well-being. As one consultant explained, "They feel no one else is looking out for their best interests." The concern about a lack of integrity addresses whether organizational members think leadership acts without good moral conduct throughout their business activities. For example, "Organizational members think secrets run the initiatives and the change agent has to deal with covert processes."

Second, a general feeling of cynicism emerged as an important barrier to stalled changes. The sentiments expressed in the phrases extracted aligned closely with Reichers

et al.'s (1997) discussion of the factors that contribute to the development of cynicism. Reichers et al. suggest cynicism often develops as employees pessimistically view the likelihood of change success and blame any failure on those responsible for the initiating the change. Reichers et al. go on to propose that an individual's predisposition to be cynical and a history of unsuccessful change initiatives further influence cynicism. These specific ideas were expressed in the responses; therefore phrases were further categorized as likelihood of change success, negative predisposition, and history.

The likelihood of change success of the current initiative addresses the organizational member's concern about the impact of the outcome of this change initiative on future change initiatives, such as, "What are the consequences of not changing?" Negative disposition refers to an organizational members' general pessimistic attitude, regardless of any specific change initiatives. Oftentimes, this negative disposition was manifested in a lackadaisical attitude expressed by responses such as, "No perceived need—current way is fine." Lastly, history refers to organizational members' tendency to compare the current change initiative to previous change initiatives, and if previous change initiatives have been unsuccessful or temporary, the organizational member is more likely to think this change will also be unsuccessful or temporary. For example, "Each time an effort stalls or is 'declared' complete, the next request for change is met with silent compliance and no commitment."

Finally, the uncertainty associated with change efforts seemed to be a barrier that was confronted. Two prominent areas of uncertainty emerged, namely, job security and professional insecurities. Job security concerns address "whether organizational members would continue to have jobs" or if they would be forced to sever ties with the

current employer. Professional insecurities addressed various concerns not related to job loss, but instead related to the work environment including workload, job processes, authority, and manpower. Responses in this category posed questions like, "What new processes would be forced on them (and for which they would be held accountable). A third, more general, theme reflected one's comprehensive concern about personal consequences that were not specific to the type of uncertain consequence. For example, "Concerns range from fear of failure of an initiative that they are a part of to genuine concern for needed change not happening."

Strategies to Overcome Barriers. This study hoped to identify the strategies that could effectively address the barriers encountered as changes stall. One question in the open-ended questionnaire addressed this issue specifically by asking the consultants to, "Explain the successful steps that you have taken, suggested, or observed to overcome resistance, apathy, or cynicism when change efforts have stalled." In all, 117 verbatim phrases were extracted from the responses to this question. As was done with the phrases from the first question, each was read for content and then categories were inductively developed.

A preliminary examination of these statements provided more than a simple list of strategies. Instead, the consultants suggested (a) *what* strategies should be used or *what* should be done, (b) *who* the strategies should be directed towards, and (c) *how* the strategies should be implemented. An action that *should be done* following the realization that a change stalled was to "be prepared to modify the approach." In identifying *who*, the consultants made recommendations like "Focus on your staunchly cynical employee first." Lastly, responses such as, "Attempted to involve affected

members of the organization in developing solutions to the problems they perceive" emphasize the use of participation in *how the strategies should be implemented.* After classifying the tone of the statements (i.e., what, who, or how), each was reexamined in order to identify more specific recommendations.

Four specific strategies were suggested and a faculty member familiar with the research then validated a representative sample with 100% agreement. Each of the strategies that emerged from the data and an example response from each are presented in Table 5. Three of the four of these strategies are commonly found in the literature prescribing the proper approach to implementing change (see Chapter 1) including communicate (e.g., Wanberg & Banas, 2000), create an open and inspirational environment (e.g., Huy, 1999), and align organizational policies with the change (e.g., Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997). The fourth strategy, not recommended in the prescriptive literature, was the reevaluation of the change effort. This makes sense because the prescriptive literature was directed toward the creation of readiness before the change effort has been implemented.

Consistent with the prescriptive literature (e.g., Armenakis et al., 1999), communication strategies should attempt to explain the need, benefit, past successes, and leadership support. For example, one response suggested, "Bringing the plan/message to the grass roots level." The first category within communication recommends communicating the need of the change (i.e., discrepancy; Armenakis et al., 1999). For example, "Engage the informal organization and *explain why* this is good for the organization [Emphasis added]." Second, leaders were encouraged to communicate the

Table 5

Definitions and Example Responses of "What" Sub-Themes

Strategies *What strategies should be used?*	*Definitions*	*Example Responses*
Communicate		
Need	Communication emphasizing why this change effort is necessary for the success or survive of the organization.	Clearly communicate the desired state, the present state, the gap, and the consequences of making or not making the change.
Benefit	Communication emphasizing the value of this change effort to individual employees or to the organization as a whole.	Continue to make clear the benefits.
Past Successes	Communication emphasizing either previous successful change efforts or intermediate triumphs within this change effort.	Taking and completing small actions helps with lessening cynicism.
Leadership Support	Leadership must emphasize their support of the employees making the change effort and of the change effort itself.	(Ask) a particular leader to communicate why this effort was important to him and the business, and that he wanted to see it succeed and wanted others to support it.
Create an Open/Inspirational Environment		Discourage "us/them" thinking…focus on "we."
Listening	Leadership must pay attention to the concerns of the employees before addressing any of these concerns.	Be open to feedback--listen to concerns.
Empathy/Benevolence	Leadership must show concern for employees' feelings and the effect this change effort will have on their lives.	Provide reassurance for fair treatment.

Table 5 (continued)

Definitions and Example Responses of "What" Sub-Themes

Strategies *What strategies should be used?*	*Definitions*	*Example Responses*
Create an Open/Inspirational Environment (continued)		
Honesty	Leadership must be open and forthright with the information about the change.	Talk with them even when the news is bad; keep employees in the loop.
Align Policies with Change	Leadership must establish positive and negative consequences that encourage employees to support the change effort.	Change reward system to align with behavior changes that were supportive of the change effort.
Reevaluate Change Effort	Leadership must reexamine the implementation process as well as the original intent of the change effort and current need.	(Go) back to business objectives for the change. Why are we doing it in the first place? How can doing this make us more successful on our goals?

benefits of the change and to "assist others in understanding the benefits to change and moving forward" (i.e., valence; Armenakis et al., 1999). Next, the consultants emphasized the value of "celebrat(ing) small victories." The responses supporting this category suggest focusing on either past successes of the previous change efforts or intermediate triumphs of this change effort (e.g., Kotter, 1995; Huy, 1999). Lastly, the fourth category recommends communicating leadership's support of both the employees making the change effort and the stalled change effort itself (e.g., Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983).

The strategy that recommended the creation of an open and inspirational environment fell was further divided into three key leadership actions. These included listening, empathy/benevolence, and honesty. These categories were closely related. One participant indicated that "*listening* to both comments and feelings" of the employees gives the leadership a better understanding of employees' sentiments and concerns. Through listening, the second category, *empathy/benevolence*, might be achieved (i.e., leadership can utilize the new insight gained from listening to "acknowledge mutual importance of conflicting interests within an organization"). The leadership can then use empathy and benevolence to *honestly* address the employees' concerns and "provide all appropriate information, both pro and con on the subject."

The next strategy supported the alignment of organizational policies with employee support of the change effort such that positive consequences were tied to support and negative consequences were tied to rejection. Specifically, the responses suggested employee pay or reward systems should be aligned with change support, as well as providing negative consequences such as ultimately "eliminat(ing) those that will

not accept the change." This strategy emphasizes that the leadership is committed to making this change part of the organization's culture. This idea of policy realignment is analogous to utilizing human resource management practices that has been prescribed in the literature (e.g., Armenakis, 1999; Kotter, 1995).

Finally, the consultants pointed out that it was important to acknowledge that all stalled change efforts should not be pursued. Essentially, the consultants suggested that leadership should be realistic and recognize that the change may have stalled for a reason. This idea was embraced by suggesting repeatedly that a stall might be the time to step back, reevaluate, and think. Generally, these responses advised that leaders should examine whether the change initiative still supports the vision and strategy of the organization, such as, "Do a visioning reality check—Is the vision truly compelling?" Similarly, questions must be answered such as what are reasons for the stall and does leadership really support this effort and if not, why continue?

The participants indicated *who* the strategies should be directed towards. These fell into three groups: leadership, all employees, and cynics. Strategies should be directed at leadership, formal and informal, because leadership's attitudes and actions are often reflected in the attitudes and actions of the organization's general populace. The intent of directing the strategies toward all employees is that the supporters of the change are kept informed and active in the change process which will hopefully sway the cynics. Additionally, to enhance any influence the supporters have the responses suggest targeting the cynics directly. Confronting the cynics helps leaders develop an open environment, reevaluate the change effort from a different perspective, and examine which policy alignment changes will benefit the change's progress.

Table 6

"How" Methods and Example Responses

Strategies *How should strategies be utilized?*	*Example Responses*
Face-to-Face Interaction	Utilize focus groups to talk/address cynicism--balance group of cynics and positive change champions.
Impersonal Information Channels	Use anonymous letters to get the real reasons for resistance, apathy, and cynicism.
Empowerment	Empower those that can help with the change, so that they have ownership in the process.
Participation	Involve all stakeholders at every stage of the change process.

Finally, the consultants offered *how* the strategies should be implemented (See Table 6 for a summary of the methods and example response). In all, the recommended four methods to include face-to-face interaction, impersonal information channels, empowerment, and general participation. Face-to-face interactions ranged from small forums such as focus groups to large forums like town-hall meetings. In addition, teaching was encouraged with suggestions for change seminars where leaders or consultants interface with the employees. Impersonal information channels included anonymous letters from employees, and e-mails or bulletins from leaders. Empowerment included seeking out the informal leaders and lower level managers and encouraging them to utilize their ideas and resources to gain support for the change initiative. Lastly, general participation included involving as many organizational members as possible to decide on a plan for smoothing the progress of the change effort.

Practitioner Interview Reaffirmations (Case Study)

Stalled Change Barriers. To reaffirm the barriers identified by the consultants, a group of practitioners that had experienced a stalled change were interviewed. Analysis of the interviews occurred after the barriers were identified. A tape recording of each interview was reviewed for content that fit within the established barriers and the identification of new barriers. In total, 84 verbatim phrases were extracted from the from the interview tapes.

The interviews with the practitioners were consistent with the barriers suggested by the consultants. An example response from an interview participant that was consistent with each barrier is shown in Table 7. All but one of the barriers was commonly referred to by the practitioners. This confirmed the issues captured through the analysis of the consultants' responses. The barrier that was not confirmed by the practitioners was job security. A possible reason these practitioners did not mention job security will be discussed later in this section.

Distrust surfaced as a dominant barrier throughout the interviews. In terms of distrusting leadership's *ability*, the practitioners suggested that from their viewpoint, it did not seem that the program had been adequately planned. One interviewee stated, "A lot of things seemed to be considered as afterthoughts." Consistent with this idea, concerns about decision making ability emerged throughout the interviews. This probably occurred because in the military environment, where this change took place, on a day to day basis, orders are passed down, and military personnel "salute smartly." Comments like, "It was almost like someone out there knew problems were brewing, but no one wanted to talk about it or really make a decision about it," reflected the

Table 7

Example Practitioner Responses Reaffirming Barriers

Barriers	*Example Practitioner Response*
Distrust	
Lack of Ability	We just thought it was something that someone had done research on and had come up with and I guess we were expecting more of a miracle solution to basically do away with the coking all together and it didn't.
Lack of Benevolence	Our boss told us +100 was here to stay, so get used to it.
Lack of Integrity	It didn't do what they said it would do and somewhere along the line, it got to be a joke that some retired colonel got on this program, figured he was going to make this +100, sold this package to the Air Force, and made a zillion, trillion dollars off of it.
Cynicism	
Likelihood of Success	If some direction comes down, which it has, that says, "If you want to shut it off you can make that decision." That is a barrier because there is always going to be someone who wants to do something different without looking at the results.
Negative Disposition	No one on this base wanted it; at least I didn't see it.
History	I would say that they should have tested it. Of course this is the Air Force, how many things to they buy and do…you gotta ask yourself, "Why did they do that?"
Uncertain Personal Consequences	
Job Security	Job security...Management bone-head decisions usually end up with job security for the lower shops.
Professional Uncertainty	People were resistant because it was different, something else that you have to do…we can't just go about our normal everyday business.
General Personal Concern	I read the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) and thought, "Oh wow that is pretty toxic material here."

practitioner's desire for direction. Further concern emerged regarding the level of the decision making authority as to whether units will use the +100 additive. One interviewee stated, "It is a program Air Force wide, we have the same jets Air Force wide…It should be at a higher level that says, 'Yes we are on or no we are not.' It was a poor decision to put it down to wing level because my wing commander doesn't know nothing about it. He doesn't know what is going on…"

In contrast to direction, *benevolence* reflected the practitioners concerns about whether leadership was looking out for their best interests. A concern of about lack of benevolence was particularly obvious when the issue of occupational health was discussed. A representative response was, "Of, course the paperwork that we read from the Air Force said that the additive was safe to use, but then when we read the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) it sort of raised some eyebrows."

Even the *integrity* of the leadership was questioned. Oftentimes statements were made jokingly about leadership owning stock in the company that produces the additive such as, "Personally I think there were some people that owned stock in the Betz-Dearborn Corporation that thought it was a great program." Other times, the practitioners expressed that they felt mislead by leadership and expressed it by statements like, "We were told that the entire Air Force was converting to +100 and that everywhere we go we'll have to be on +100, so it made sense that we go ahead and convert."

Cynicism did not emerge as a dominantly as distrust. However, the responses did support the concept that cynicism should have been a leadership concern. The practitioners suggested that the *likelihood of success* of this change will have an impact on future changes. For example, "Just at my level, I would probably say that, they didn't

give it a good enough chance to see the long term benefits, I am not even sure if they use it anymore anywhere. I think they invested a bunch of money and time into it and then one day came down and said now we aren't going to use it anymore...maybe there wasn't any difference I don't know."

Most of the practitioners did not express a general *negative disposition*. Although one person expressed his relief of not using it anymore through the statement, "I don't know, I am just happy that it is gone." Others emphasized they felt no different before using the +100 additive or after its use ended at their base, and instead stated, "It was just something that we used. We did what the Air Force asked us to do." Throughout the interviews it did seem that many people had seen changes come and go, reinforcing that *history* is indeed a barrier. One response indicated, "Like any other change it met resistance and we were like, ugh, just something else we got to do…We heard some things from other bases and there was some grumbling, but we always just take that with a grain because it was a new change and people are always resistant to change."

The barrier *uncertain personal consequences* was also not as dominant, but still emerged as a concern. As mentioned earlier in this section *job security* was only mentioned once. As reported in Table 7, one interviewee stated that "Management bone-head decisions usually end up with job security for the lower shops." Otherwise this barrier was not mentioned at all. This could be attributed to the military environment where job security is not much of an issue. Whether the military downsizes personnel is rarely, if ever, attributed to technological advances and more often attributed to the political situation at the time.

Professional uncertainties did emerge because this change was labor intensive. Changes in workload were expressed through comments like, “Logistically it can be a pain in the butt,” and expressed by another individual, “The truck issue, *that* was sort of a pain” (See the Method for a description of this issue). *General personal concern* overlapped with benevolence in the fact that much of the personal concern was related to safety issues, such as, “It was scary stuff. I just didn't care too much to work with it.”

Strategies to Overcome Barriers. The practitioners did not suggest all of the strategies that had been suggested by the consultants. This was not entirely unexpected. Specifically, the case that was chosen was still stalled, so the practitioners could not confirm the effectiveness of various strategies to overcome stalled change whereas the consultants were sharing their collective experiences across many stalled initiatives. However, some excerpts from the interview responses did reaffirm that some of the strategies suggested might produce positive results. For example, the need for leadership support to be communicated emerged throughout the interviews, such as, “If everybody was on +100 I don't think anyone would gripe. Why not all the same fuel? Why can't the government direct one fuel for all military operations?” The need for empathy and benevolence was expressed in statements like, “We would have like more cooperation with the base, instead of you will do this.” Furthermore, the most emphatically expressed sentiment supports the idea that maybe this initiative needs to be revaluated and *if* it is decidedly important to leaders then policy needs to align with making the change. For example, “This is one of those programs that *if* they really want to see it happen, it needs to happen across the board because then if everything is operating like that then you don't

have that operational burden. Everybody is just on it. If portions of the fleet are on it, it raises all sorts of questions. It should be mandated that everyone is on it."

Summary of Results

This study identified barriers that leaders face when changes stall. The barriers were identified by a group of organization development consultants and then reaffirmed by practitioners that are experiencing the stalling of a change initiative. Primarily, there are concerns of distrust, cynicism, and uncertain consequences. By looking deeper into these issues distrust was further analyzed as the organizational members' perceptions of leaderships' lack of ability, benevolence, and integrity. Cynicism was further considered as concerning the likelihood of success of this change, or the effect the outcome this current change will have on future changes, a general negative disposition, and the effect history of stalled or failed change has on the progress of the current change. Furthermore, uncertain personal consequences were divided into issues related to job security, profession uncertainties (e.g., workload, manpower), and general personal concern.

The second research question investigated the strategies to overcome these barriers. Again, questionnaire responses from consultants provided the basis for the results. Strategies were divided into shred outs of *what, who, and how.* The strategies suggesting what should be done included communicate, create an open and inspirational environment, align policies with the change, and reevaluate the change effort. Interviews with practitioners supported some of these strategies. The next section will discuss this study's implications, limitations, and suggest future research.

IV. Discussion

Amid an age of increasing technology, innovation, and global business competition, there is no question that the pace organizational changes are introduced will increase, as well. With this pace of change, organizational leaders might find themselves short on the time and resources necessary to properly create readiness by utilizing implementation strategies. Sometimes, even though readiness has not been created, the change initiative can be accepted into the organization's culture and be institutionalized. Other times, a change initiative that is not introduced properly can meet resistance within the organization. In these cases, leaders find themselves involved in a stalled change and must take action if they want to see the change initiative institutionalized as part of the organization's culture.

At the on-set of a change, leaders might turn to the strategies that are suggested to create readiness. The literature proposes several messages and message delivery methods to create readiness before a change initiative is implemented. These messages include stating the need for the change (e.g., Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997), the appropriateness of the change (e.g., Armenakis et al., 1999), the valence of the change (e.g., Wanberg & Banas, 2000), the efficacy of the change (e.g., Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983), and the leadership's support of the change (e.g., Caruth et al., 1985). Methods to deliver these messages include communication (e.g., Stanislao & Stanislao, 1983), participation (e.g., Coch & French, 1948), rites and ceremonies (e.g., Armenakis et al., 1999), and human resource management practices (e.g., Clark & Cavanaugh, 1997).

Even though there are empirical studies to suggest that many of these methods are effective in creating readiness (e.g., Schweiger & Denisi, 1991; Colyle-Shapiro, 1999), there have not been empirical studies to suggest that these methods would be effective in smoothing the progress of a stalled change initiative. One purpose of this study was to investigate what strategies are available to leaders in instances where appropriate strategies to facilitate change early in the process were not used, but where implementation of organizational change must continue even when resistance is encountered. This investigation was done by compiling and analyzing strategies suggested by organization development consultants from the International Registry of Organization Development Professionals.

Indeed, the consultants' responses did support three of the four recommended change message delivery methods (communication, participation, and human resource management practices) and three of the five predominant messages found in the literature (need, benefits/valence, and leadership support). The consultants' responses were further subdivided as they described *what* to do, *who* should be involved, and *how* they should be involved. Communication emerged as a dominant theme suggesting *what* should be done. The messages that the consultants recommended communicating were the need for the change, the benefits of the change (i.e., valence), past successes, and leadership support. It was also recommended that leaders create an open and inspirational environment. This suggests leaders should listen, use empathy and benevolence, and honesty. Additionally, it was suggested that leaders reevaluate the change effort.

However, before strategizing the action that leaders should take during a stalled change, it is important to identify what barriers leaders face during such a situation.

Barriers were identified in this study by first compiling and analyzing insights from organization development consultants and then reaffirming those insights with thoughts from practitioners experiencing a stalled change. The barriers identified and then reaffirmed include distrust, cynicism, and uncertain personal consequences.

Distrust emerged as a dominant theme and was defined using the framework that identifies the three factors of trustworthiness established by Mayer et al. (1995). These three factors are ability, benevolence, and integrity. The themes that emerged in this study suggest lack of ability, lack of benevolence, and lack of integrity are all barriers in stalled change. Lack of ability addresses the organizational members' negative perception of the leadership's capability, competency, and skill that gives the leaders influence over aspects of the organization. Lack of benevolence addresses organizational members' negative perception of leadership's concern for the well-being of the employees, aside from profit motivation. And lack of integrity addresses organizational members' negative perception that leadership does not follow a set of moral principles that agrees with the beliefs of the employee.

Another theme that emerged as a barrier was cynicism. Cynicism was divided into three parts closely related to a discussion by Reichers et al. (1997) on the factors that contribute to the development of cynicism: likelihood of success, negative disposition, and history. The likelihood of success addresses organizational members' perception of the consequence the outcome of this change initiative has on the acceptance of future changes. Negative disposition refers to an organizational members' general pessimistic attitude, regardless of any specific change initiatives. History refers to organizational members' tendency to compare the current change initiative to previous change

initiatives, and if previous change initiatives have been unsuccessful or temporary, the organizational member is more likely to think this change will also be unsuccessful or temporary.

Lastly, the uncertainty of dealing with a change emerged as a barrier. This uncertainty entailed dealing with personal consequences, such as job security. Also, other professional insecurities, such as increase in workload or a decrease in manpower emerged within this barrier. Furthermore, a general personal concern barrier was identified, as well.

Implications

The process of recovering from stalled change is complicated and each stalled change will have different intricacies. The process is not as simple as "checking a box" next to the list of strategies suggested in this study, nor was this study intended to be used as such a list. This study uncovered much bigger issues that must be addressed. The biggest issue uncovered was the importance of trust. Trust of organizational leadership affects the outcome of change initiatives in two ways. First, if the organizational members initially trust leadership, and therefore support the change initiative, but then the implementation of the initiative does not go as smoothly as planned or deliver what was promised, trust may be broken. Secondly, preliminary trust of leadership may influence the initial commitment level of organizational members as change is implemented.

There could be many reasons for initial distrust. Organizational members could doubt one or all three factors of trustworthiness through observation of the leader, personal interaction with the leader, or other personal bias. Because trust is time

dependent (Jones & George, 1998), another reason that could attribute to distrust is just the lack of time spent with the leader or observing the leader. A person does not usually meet someone and immediately find them trustworthy. Consequently, in an organizational setting, a leader can not expect organizational members to immediately trust their ability, intentions, or integrity. Based on Reichers et al. (1997), it could also be said that cynicism is time dependent, as well. Time is particularly a factor with respect to organizational members' attitudes after repeatedly experiencing stalled or failed change (i.e., history).

A further implication of this study is that many of the strategies recommended for use to create readiness seem to be applicable during stalled change, as well. Subsequently, due to the ease of doing so, leaders may find it comforting that effectively communicating messages of need and support to organizational members may aid in smoothing the progress of stalled initiatives. Further, strategies such as leaders using honesty might help regain organizational members' trust. In sum, it seems if leaders treat the organizational members with the same respect they themselves would expect (i.e., create an honest, empathetic environment where organizational members know why decisions are made) stalled changes might run more smoothly. This has also been noted in the literature as fair process (e.g., Kim & Mauborgne, 2003).

Limitations

As with all studies, this effort had several limitations that warrant mention. First, responses were obtained from the consultants using open-ended questionnaires. This method has several limitations due to the inability of researchers to ask probing

questions. Second, the questionnaire relies heavily on the participants' ability to recall past experiences.

According to Armenakis, Mossholder, and Harris (1990), approximately 70% of organizational consultants use diagnostic models. In other words, consultants observe the organization and analyze situations according to the way they have been trained. Thus, the consultants might be limited to see what they have been trained to see and may misdiagnose situations accordingly. It should be noted that many of the responses received in this study were similar to the "readiness" literature, which may or may not be the best strategies to follow during stalled change. Hence, the use of diagnostic models introduces bias.

In this case, the consultants may have used an availability heuristic. An availability heuristic is implemented by consultants when they have partial remembrance of the organizational situations they have examined, so they begin their diagnosis by comparing the current case to the most recent cases and others that are easily recalled (Armenakis et al., 1990). The open-ended questionnaire asked the consultants to generalize the barriers and strategies to overcome stalled changes based on all their previous experience, however, if an availability heuristic was used the responses from the consultants would have only been based on a limited number of recent or memorable cases.

A second limitation concerns the level of aggregation of the responses to the open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire asked the consultants to generalize based on past experiences with stalled change. Then, recommended findings of this study were made based upon those generalizations. However, there was not an examination of

situational cues nor did this study focus on the context that the strategies to overcome stalled change should be used. So, there are undoubtedly stalled changes where implementation of the recommendations is not appropriate.

There are a couple noteworthy limitations associated with the case study that was examined. Similar to the open-ended questionnaire, recall was an issue. Implementation of the JP-8 +100 additive occurred in the mid-to-late nineties. Since then, a significant amount of time has passed. In many instances, the participants seemed to have difficulties recalling the specific events that lead up to the implementation. More salient to this research, many seemed to have problems remembering specific messages that were conveyed as the change was first introduced.

The suitability of this case could have been better for reaffirming the consultants' responses to the second research question. The second research question investigated the strategies leaders could use to overcome stalled change. While this change does fit the model presented in Figure 3 (the proposed model of the change process), it would have been more valuable to examine a case that stalled, unstalled, and then continued successfully to institutionalization. Had a "recovered" case been studied, the strategies suggested by the consultants could have been reaffirmed. Because this case is in the middle of the stall, but has not yet recovered, it was not possible to reaffirm the strategies the consultants suggested. Instead, it was only possible to speculate what strategies might be applicable to this case by comparing the suggested strategies from the consultants and the concerns expressed by the practitioners in the interviews.

Future Research

As suggested, it would be interesting to investigate a case that had recovered from a stalled change to reaffirm the strategies suggested by the consultants. An initiative that stalled and recovered is more challenging to find than initiatives that are currently stalled. It seems organizations are more available and vocal when experiencing a stalled change and looking for assistance in the recovery process than when organizations have overcome a stalled change and just want to continue with other business activities.

Distrust and cynicism were the dominant themes that emerged as barriers to change. As was noted in the implications section of this chapter, trust and cynicism are time dependent. Likewise in a change setting, leaders must be able to develop trust and overcome cynicism quickly to ensure a smooth implementation process. Also, during a stalled change, leaders might have to redevelop trust that diminished as changes stall. This research suggests the need for an investigation on how feelings of cynicism are quickly reduced, how trust is developed quickly, or how trust can be reestablished once organizational members start to question their trust of leaders. These investigations would further enhance recommendations to leaders about the strategies to use when change efforts stall.

A strategy recommended by the consultants that warrants more research is communication. The consultants suggested that leaders should communicate messages based on need of the change, benefits of the change, past successes, and their support of the change. Further research could be done to investigate which of these messages is most likely to be received by organizational members. Likewise, the best method of sending a message so it is perceived as believable should be examined.

Summary

This research provides a tool for leaders and practitioners to use as they attempt to recover from stalled change. Barriers to overcoming stalled change were identified by consultants and then reaffirmed by practitioners. Furthermore, strategies to overcome these barriers were then identified by the consultants and correlated to interview excerpts from the practitioners. This research suggests distrust, cynicism, and uncertain personal consequences are the dominant barriers that leaders must overcome during stalled change. To overcome these barriers it was suggested that leaders need to communicate, create an open and inspirational environment, align policies with the change, and reevaluate the change effort. This study is just a small step towards understanding how to correct implementation mistakes of stalled change, but hopefully it adds to the current literature by utilizing insight from many experienced organization development consultants and then validating this insight by with the thoughts and feelings of practitioners that experienced a stalled change.

Appendix A: Contents of Questionnaire Mailing

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)

20 October 2003

Capt Ellen L. Dorey
AFIT/ENV
2950 Hobson Way
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-7765

Dear Dr. Jones,

I am a Master's student at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) in Dayton, Ohio. As part of my thesis effort, I'm researching strategies available to smooth the implementation of stalled change initiatives. As a member of the military, I have observed the Department of Defense (DoD) initiate many changes within the last couple of years. Oftentimes, the implementation of these initiatives was not preceded by steps to create a state of organizational readiness. Subsequently, if resistance was encountered, the initiatives were frequently abandoned and replaced with some other effort, creating a cynical state that seems to make the next initiative far more difficult to implement. I feel the DoD is not alone with stalled change challenges. Therefore, my research goal is to help all leaders deal with stalled changes.

To meet this objective, I am trying to learn from those that have considerable experience with organizational change. Seeing you as a member of the International Registry of Organizational Development Professionals made me believe that I could greatly benefit from your considerable experiences. I would appreciate it if you took a few minutes to share your experiences with me on the open-ended questionnaire (see attached).

I truly appreciate your help. Please use the self addressed, postage paid envelope to mail it back to me. Because I invited a very select group of people to participate, all of the responses are important. Also, please indicate if you would like to receive a copy of the compiled results.

Sincerely,

ELLEN L. DOREY, Capt, USAF
AFIT Student

Attachments:
1. Questionnaire
2. Reply Envelope

Air Force Institute of Technology

Organizational Change Study

Major Daniel T. Holt & Captain Ellen L. Dorey
AFIT/ENV
Building 640
2950 Hobson Way
Wright Patterson AFB, OH 45433
daniel.holt@afit.edu
ellen.dorey@afit.edu
(937) 431-0554 (voice)
(937) 431-0554 (fax)

Integrity - Service - Excellence

QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF STRATEGIES LEADERS SHOULD USE WHEN CHANGE EFFORTS STALL

PURPOSE

Creating an initial state of readiness has long been regarded as critical first step in the adoption of organizational change. In fact, the literature has been replete with articles attempting to prescribe strategies to create readiness for change or prevent, overcome, and mitigate resistance to change. Unfortunately, leaders often initiate change without using these strategies or taking the necessary steps to create readiness or prevent resistance. When strong resistance is encountered the initiative is often abandoned and replaced with some other effort. However, in some situations, the initiative can not be abandoned and implementation must continue. Yet, little information is available to guide leaders in such a situation at this phase of change.

The purpose of this study is to identify strategies that leaders should use in instances where readiness was not created and the change effort stalled, but where implementation of change must continue even when resistance is encountered.

TASK

IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE YOU WILL BE ASKED TO RECALL AND DESCRIBE EXPERIENCES WHEN YOUR SERVICES WERE REQUESTED TO HELP FACILITATE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES THAT STALLED.

Please consider your experiences with changes that involved a number of divisions or sections of organizations where the changes occurred and where you personally had to expend a considerable effort.

Since you will be sharing thoughts based on your own experiences, there are no "correct" answers to the questions. It is important that you give honest and frank responses.

You will notice that a few examples are given to guide you in answering the questions. However, we need your own information and your own opinions in your own words, about your personal experiences implementing changes.

Please be as specific as possible in all of your answers. Initially, spell out all of the acronyms that you use in your responses. If at any time you need more space, feel free to use the backs of the sheets. If you still require more space, attach additional sheets of paper. Please **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME** on the questionnaire.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY AND GIVE AS MANY DETAILS AS POSSIBLE.

DETAILS ARE CRITICAL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

EXAMPLES FOR SECTION I AND SECTION II

In the next two sections, you will be asked a number of open-ended questions in reference to some experiences you have had. It is very important that you give detailed descriptions in your responses. We are interested in what your thoughts are as well as why you have developed these thoughts.

EXAMPLES of **UNCLEAR RESPONSES**
are provided here to help you understand what information is needed.

QUESTION	Explain the successful steps that you have taken, suggested, or observed to overcome resistance, apathy, or cynicism when change efforts have stalled.
UNCLEAR RESPONSE	"Leaders communicated change-related information."
COMMENT	Although this answer does explain what was done at the time, it does not explain **how** the information was communicated or describe **what specific** message was passed on to the members. Did the leaders go out and meet with sections or individual? What did they tell members to overcome the apathy or resistance?

QUESTION	How were the hostile questions answered? How effective were the responses?
UNCLEAR RESPONSE	We gave the organizational member who asked the question more information and that effectively addressed the issue.
COMMENT	Although this answer does explain how a question was answered, it does not explain **what information** was given or **how the person** responded to the information. Did you provide technical information that addressed the individual's concerns? Did the individual appear to understand the issue more clearly and accept leadership's ideas? Or, did the response elicit more questions?

SECTION I - STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME STALLED CHANGE EFFORTS

DIRECTIONS. Please answer all of the questions in this section by considering **YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH STALLED CHANGE EFFORTS**. In particular, focus on the time when you FIRST got involved with the organizational change effort.

STALLED CHANGE EFFORT

A change initiative where leaders failed to take steps to prepare the organization and its members for change; but, even when resistance is encountered, the change must be implemented.

1. From your perspective, what concerns do organizational members have when change efforts stall? Explain why these things seem important or significant to them?

2. Explain the successful steps that you have taken, suggested, or observed to overcome resistance, apathy, or cynicism when change efforts have stalled.

3. In your own words, what concerns should be addressed to create readiness for change? How should these concerns be addressed?

SECTION II - HOSTILE QUESTIONS

DIRECTIONS. We would also like to learn how leaders should handle questions they encounter during times of change. In this section, we would like you to list any hostile questions you or organizational leaders have encountered as you have tried to facilitate large-scale changes in organizations.

HOSTILE QUESTION

A question or statement posed by an organizational member that requests information from a change agent or organizational leaders that is CONFRONTATIONAL and may have NO DESIRABLE RESPONSE or LEAVES A NEGATIVE IMPRESSION

For instance: "Why are you making my job harder with this change?"

1. What HOSTILE questions you and the organizational leaders encounter?

2. How were the questions answered? How effective were the responses? What response would you suggest, if different from the answer you gave or witnessed?

SECTION III - PERSONAL BACKGROUND

DIRECTIONS. This final section contains items regarding your personal characteristics. These items are very important so that we can describe those that participated. Respond to each item by WRITING IN THE INFORMATION requested or CHECKING THE BOX ☑ that best describes you.

1. Describe your primary career field or profession (e.g., consultant, personnel management, etc.)? _____

2. If you are a consultant, are you an internal or external consultant?

Internal **External**

3. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have attained.

Some High School
High School Diploma
Associate's degree
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree
Doctorate degree
Other (please specify)
_____

4. What is your age? _____ years

5. What is your gender?

Male **Female**

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

If you are interested in a copy of the results from this study, please provide your name, mailing address, and e-mail address on a business card, index card, or separate sheet of paper that can be removed from your questionnaire.
Please DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME on the questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation!

Questionnaire Mailing Tips

Envelope for Mailing Contents

1. Return address on the top left of the larger mailing must appear as follows:

AFIT/ENV
2950 HOBSON WAY
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OH 45433-7765
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

*Note: All capital letters, no punctuation, and it must include the line stating official business

2. Recipient label must appear in the following format:

DR JOHN JONES
123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN CA 12345

*Note: All capital letters and no punctuation

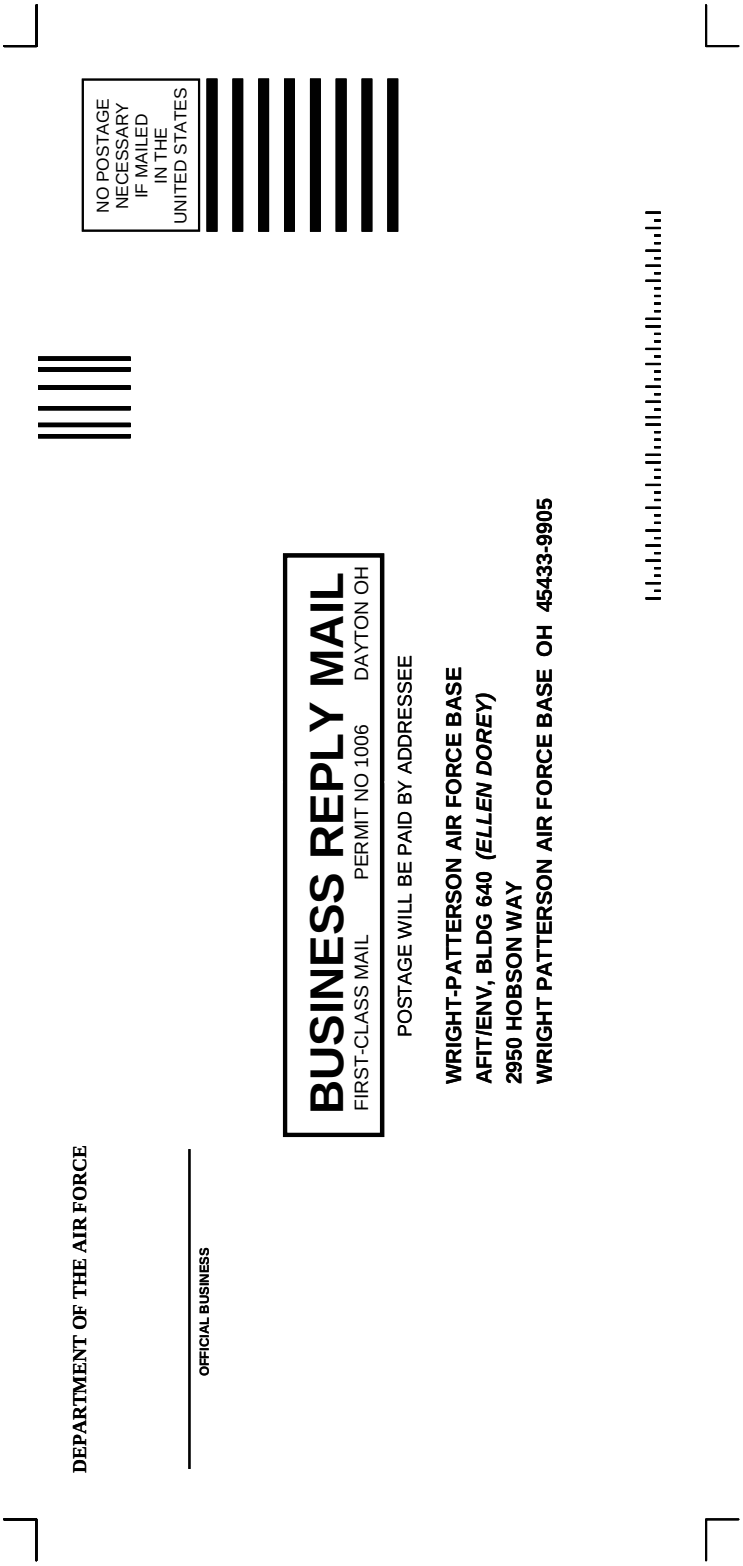
Business Reply Envelope: Development and Approval

1. A "camera copy" must be produced. A camera copy is simply a laser printed copy of the business reply envelope (see next page for example). It can be printed on 8 ½ by 11 or legal size paper. This copy is then used by a professional printer to mass produce the envelopes, so the outlined size must be the exact size of the envelopes. Because the United States Postal Service (USPS) has strict guidelines on the spacing of the envelope contents it is important to have them printed professionally (see step 3). An electronic version and camera copy of this envelope was obtained from Mr. Gregory Smith, AFIT/SCBY, located in building 642 in Area B. It is important to note that the last four digits of the zip codes differ between the return address and the business reply envelope.

2. This camera copy must then be approved by the 88CG/SCCM, Information Management Office. This office is located in building 767 in Area B. The personnel that have the authority to approve the business reply envelopes are Ms. Sheree Coon and Ms. Linda Snow. Once they sign off on your camera copy you may proceed to step 3.

3. Bring the camera copy to a professional printer or fill out the appropriate paperwork for Defense Automated Printing Service (DAPS) printing.

Camera Copy of Business Reply Envelope (Reduced in Size)



Appendix B: Interview Schedule and Questions

INTRODUCTION

This interview is designed for you to give me frank and candid information with regards to your personal experience with the JP-8 +100 fuel additive. Thus, as an interviewer, I am simply trying to learn this change. Any situations related to the implementation of this change you choose to describe will be exactly what I am interested in learning.

After this interview, the information you provide will be compiled with the information from other interviews. These interviews will be analyzed for common themes. Then based on these common themes, I will hopefully be able to make recommendations to organizational leaders on strategies that can be used to smooth the progress of this change. For example, the results might be used by organizational leaders to guide how organizational resources (such as, time or funds) might be focused to facilitate the adoption of this change.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information I collect through this interview will be a part of my master's thesis that helps fulfill the requirements for a degree in Engineering Management at the Air Force Institute of Technology. Any information you share will be combined with that of others and reported in aggregate. Therefore, anything that I collect through this interview is **confidential**. At no time will any other person in the Air Force or Department of Defense have access to any identifiable information other than myself. Any quotations that are used in my final paper will be altered in a way to conceal your identity.

Still, in order to make my job a little easier and to capture every thing you say, I would like to ask your permission to record this conversation. If at anytime, you would like to stop recording for any reason, please let me know. If you are interested, I would be glad to forward a copy of this interview to you after it is transcribed.

If this is okay with you please read, sign, and date this consent form. Additionally, there is a brief personal background form to fill out which is important so that I can describe those that participated.

INTERVIEW FORMAT

After saying that, I still want to stress that the interview is largely unstructured. So, if there is anything that you would like to discuss further just let me know. Do you have any questions before we start?

INTERVIEW ITEMS

Now, from your personal experience, I would like you to think about the implementation of JP-8 +100. Think of your role in this change effort. Also, try to recall the activities that surrounded the change effort and of your impressions of its facilitation.

<< Pause a moment >>

While keeping the JP-8 +100 initiative in mind, let's get started.

<< Turn on microphone and start tape player >>

Now, please fully describe the JP-8 +100 implementation effort. In your own words, what was the change and what was your role in the change?

Specifically, do you recall any incidents or events that preceded this change? Can you describe those events?

What specific actions—steps, events, techniques, methods—have <u>helped</u> make this change?

What information was being communicated when JP-8 +100 was being implemented? By senior managers? Mid-level managers? Lower-level employees? Was this information relevant? (Probe for specific message components).

Who was the most motivated to make this changes? What was the driving force behind this motivation?

What specific clues, if any, were there to suggest that the JP-8 +100 initiative would be successful or unsuccessful?

What would be the impact if your organization did not go ahead with this innovation?

What reasons might people have had for objecting to the JP-8 +100 initiative?

What were the barriers to the success of JP-8 +100?

In retrospect, is there anything that you feel should have been done differently?

Lastly, is there anyone you suggest I interview for my research project?
Please graph a timeline or sequence of events which illustrates how you perceive the implementation of JP-8 +100 proceeded (do not worry about exact dates).

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Air Force Institute of Technology
Graduate School of Engineering and Management (AFIT/EN)
2950 Hobson Way, Building 641
WPAFB OH 45433-7765

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Det 3 WRALC
Attn: Major Andrew Pittman
2430 C Street
WPAFB OH 45433-7632
DSN: 785-8026
e-mail: Andrew.Pittman@wpafb.af.mil

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14. ABSTRACT

Amid an age of increasing technology, innovation, and global business competition, there is no question that the pace organizational changes are introduced will increase, as well. With this pace of change, organizational leaders might find themselves short on the time and resources necessary to properly create readiness by utilizing implementation strategies. Frequently, a change initiative that is not introduced properly will meet resistance within the organization. When strong resistance is encountered, the initiative is often abandoned and replaced with some other effort. However, in some situations, the initiative can not be abandoned and implementation must continue.

This research effort sought to identify the barriers leaders face as change initiatives stall by thematically analyzing responses from consultants in the organization development field. Then these barriers were reaffirmed by practitioners that experienced a stalled change initiative. Furthermore, strategies to overcome these barriers were identified by the consultants and then correlated to interview excerpts from the practitioners. The results indicate that the main barriers of stalled change initiatives include distrust, cynicism, and uncertain personal consequences. The suggested strategies to overcome these barriers included communication, creation of an open and inspirational environment, alignment of policies with the change, and reevaluation of the change effort.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

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U	**U**	**U**	**UU**	87	**19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER** *(Include area code)* (937) 255-3636, ext 4800; e-mail: Daniel.Holt@afit.edu

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