



1. Executive Summary

For almost everything, time is a factor of consideration, it is the also the reason that drives environmental change. These are changes that may compel an organization to react and make changes. Every organization has a certain degree of impact level from the environment. It is the nature of the industry or business that would suggest the volatility of the environment changes in respect to the organization. It is by understanding the environment and its impact on the organization, which will determine the management change practices.

Although environments play a part in organizational change, it has two kinds of influence, namely stable or rapid. Stable environment is as such where the organization's change expectancy is low predictable and changes are usually implemented gradually. As for a rapid changing environment, the organization would likely to be constantly evolving and changing to position itself.

In each of the different environments, the organization has to able to process and integrate the changes in ways of their own. This is the basic of the whole assignment.

This assignment will study one organization in each of the environments. We will discuss in depth on each organizational background, culture, practices and understand how it fits into the environment. And it is from there, we will be able to better recognize and find out more how environmental changes affects the organization and the managing practices.

2. Stable Environment

Organization: Singapore Polytechnic (SP)

Industry: Education

Started in 1954, Singapore Polytechnic was the first polytechnic to be established in Singapore. Since then, it has provided education and training for over 130,000 students to lead and complement Singapore's industrials and beyond. Today, the polytechnic offers up of 62 diplomas and post-diplomas. (Singapore Polytechnic)

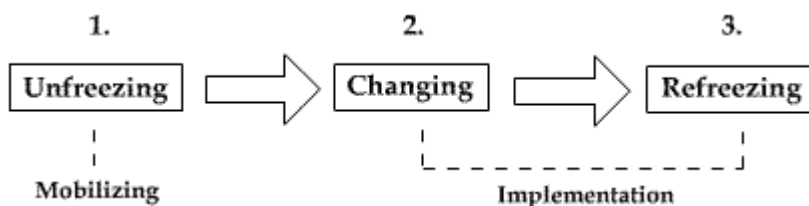
Singapore Polytechnic's external environment is considered of a relatively stable, where environmental forces are predictable and measured. Typical polytechnic environmental forces can derive from government polices, raising expectations or technological advancement. Hence the polytechnic can respond and address the forces by integrating newer technology, introduce popular diplomas and altering of curriculum contents.

Unlike rapid environments, the organization practices to adapt to these changes are generally introduced gradually with sufficient time and resources to manage them.

2.1 Management Practices

As the SP gets into the process to introduce a change, its practice can be approached by Lewin's Freeze Phases Model, Figure 2.1.1 (Robbin and Coulter; 1999, p.384)

Figure 2.1.1 **Lewin's Freeze Phases Model**





2.2 Unfreezing

Unfreezing is the process used by the management to mobilize the organization to recognize the need for change. All change start with some form of dissatisfaction and SP management recognize its dissatisfaction by studying the data collected.

Data

Part of the SP management practices is to continuous gather information from the related environment. They collect data from many sources. One such example is by encouraging students, alumnus, industries personnel and teaching staff to participate in feedbacks and surveys. All the data are collected and analyzed, providing a valid indicator for the polytechnic to assess its relevance of diploma and demand in the market. This provides a complete picture for the management to derive if there is a gap in standard or a problem to necessitate a change in the polytechnic.

Informing

After identifying the problem, the management proceeds unfreezing the organization by informing and explaining to the polytechnic staff about the problem to the changes required. There are various resistors that might hinder change and management must be proactive to address them. One valid resistor is lecturers who do not support the changes and question the need for it. SP management handles these resistors by actively communicating to the staff to learn their reluctance and at the same time actively inviting their participation and input. Instead of just dictating changes, the polytechnic management would arrange an open dialogue for the lecturers to come together to discuss the best possible resolve in interest for everyone and the change.

Planning

With a good understanding of the process, the polytechnic has reached near the end of refreezing. By then, its staff would have understood the need for change and could

possibly work through the process and contribute ideas and strategies to address the problem. This planning portion is where the SP comes together to establish in details, the change implementation and objective, thus completing the refreezing phrase.

Figure 2.1.1 **Unfreezing Steps**

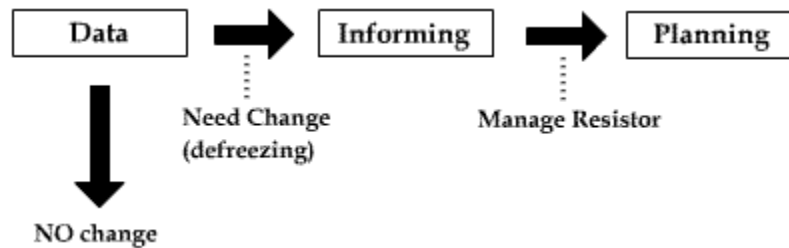


Figure 2.1.1 depicts the Unfreezing steps before the Changing Phase. After the data is analyzed and there is a need for change, the management will inform the organization about the problem and that change is required. Next, management will have to handle resistor if any, before the organization can proceed to plan the steps for the change.

2.3 Changing

Changing is the transitory stage for implementing the changes. After unfreezing, the organization is mobilized and ready for change. With a plan established, the management will implement the change incrementally. SP employs its staff with every intention to cultivate a closely bonded team and community. Instead of getting rid of obsolete staff and create uncertainties, the management would re-allocation resources, provide training or hiring new staff.

Training and development would help the staff adapt to the changes with better ease. SP conducts workshops and training programs for them in respond to the relevance as required for the change. Introducing new subject, change of lesson contents and new technology are difficulties which the lecturers might face. With the training in place, the lecturers can upgrade and transit comfortably to handle the changes.



Even with the training in place, it do not directly equate to the success of the transition. Monitoring will be required with regular check with the lecturers to assess the progress. Training for the change is not a one sided affair and the monitoring plays an important role by maintaining constant communications with the staff.

With the desired training and development completed, its staff is ready to apply the change. SP will proceed to implement the changes, such as introducing newly updated programs or curriculum to solve the dissatisfaction, standard gaps and achieve its objective. The organization has now completed the change as intended.

2.4 Refreezing

After the changes have taken shape, with its staff embracing the new ways of operation, the organization is ready the last process, to refreeze. The refreeze is final stage which supports the staff and organization to consolidate and instill the changes. In SP, the restructuring of programs and curriculum will oblige the lecturers to integrate the changes subconsciously. It will assist to sustain the change and return the organization to a sense of stability, with the change is successfully refreezed.



3. Rapid Changing Environment

Organization: Google, Inc

Industry: Information Technology

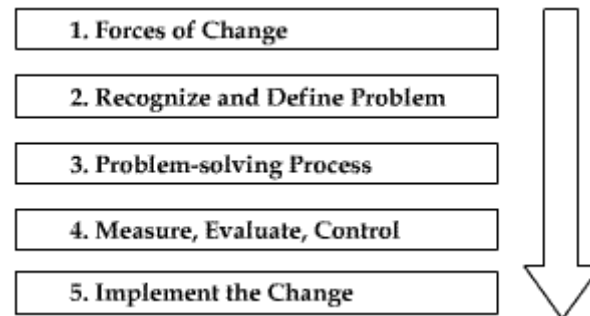
Google, Inc. offers advertising and Internet search solutions. Google is widely recognized as the "world's best search engine". The site, which ranks results based on a proprietary algorithm, offers search results in more than 35 languages and attracts an audience of more than 380 million people worldwide. The company generates revenue through ads that are targeted by keywords, serving corporate clients, including advertisers, content publishers and site managers with cost-effective advertising and a wide range of revenue generating search services. (Google.com)

Since its humble beginning, Google has grown tremendously by constantly reinventing itself, eventually outpacing competitors to an organization that is almost synonymous to the internet. In its highly volatile industry, rapid changing environment poses many possibilities or threats to the organization. Google however, embraces changes by priming itself to constantly innovate. Improving its search dynamics, acquiring inventive companies and engineering new products are examples to enhance its position in every façade of the internet potential. Google has changed the face of the IT culture and quite rightly established itself as an epitome of an ever-evolving organization within a rapidly changing environment.

3.1 Management Practices

The Google organization resides in a highly demanding environment poised for continuous changes. To continue its success, Google inculcates within its organization a livewire culture to introduce changes. Google participation in the process can be charted by the Continuous Change Process Model, illustrated in Figure 3.1.1 (Griffin & Moorhead; 2006)

Figure 3.1.1 Continuous Change Process Model



3.2 Forces of Change

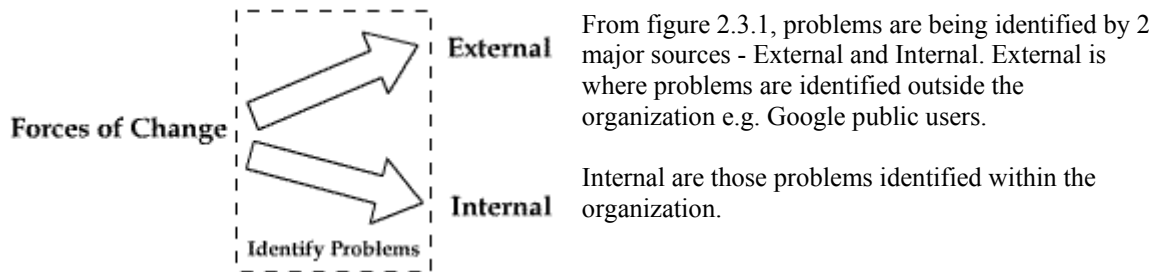
Google core business is rightly defined as search technology. Hence, Google’s mission statement and objective is to organize world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. As quoted by Google co-founder (Larry Page; n.d.) ‘a perfect search engine would understand exactly what you mean and give back exactly what you want.’

Google’s forces of change are driven by their commitment to achieve the objective. To be able to do so they would have to constantly make changes from innovation, research and development. Google’s forces of change are changes which could enhance and further realize their objective. Google are constantly evolving to push the boundaries of existing technology, recognizing potential possibilities.

3.3 Recognizing and Defining the Problem

Recognizing and defining the problem is the process in which the organization first encounters the problem. In a rapidly changing environment, Google is proactive to recognize these problems from other sources.

Figure 3.3.1 **How does Google identify problems**



Google employs a very open system, relying on many channels for obtaining possible inputs and feedbacks interconnected with the environment. With it, Google creates a platform to recognize problems from many sources. Externally, Google welcomes their user's experiences as feedbacks or ideas to enhance or provide better solutions. These are inputs for which Google's engineers can decide to take necessary courses of action.

Management style is Google is about openness, flatness and transparency with minimal bureaucracy. This limited hierarchical promotes equality among all co-workers and empowerment in their job. Internally, instead of leaving problem recognition just the top management, Google runs a dynamic culture where employees encourage from every level of the organization to interact and contribute, creating constant flow of ideas and identifying problems

3.4 Problem Solving

Problem Solving is considered the process for which how the organization decides to tackle the change. Google considers problem solving similarly to a new project. Projects are provided with guidelines and directions to find the best solution for the problem. Projects are normally done in working teams of 3-5 people called "Googlet". Within these teams, engineers will work together come up with ideas and solutions to achieve the project.

Figure 3.4.1 Google's Problem Solving Structure

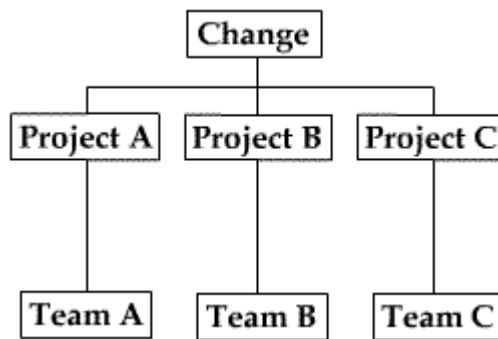


Fig 3.4.1 depicts how changes are reassigned as projects for teams to complete. Problems are identified and posed as projects which are passed down and managed by the teams, meaning fast, effective allocation to manage each problems.

Its organizational structure is such that teams are problems solvers. Within these teams, knowledge and creativity are commodities available to solve the problems. Google encourages the kind of experimentation that, even if it ends in failure. (Warren Bennis; 2004)

Google further understands the core competencies of their engineers and teams. They avoid subdividing the projects into different sections like researching and engineering, wanting the whole project to be engaged of the team. The management views that the less complicated is the structure used for each projects; gives its engineers in the team a free hand to work. The team orientated projects promotes faster and effective results. Their ability to solve the problems is one possible reason why Google is considered the forerunner of technological improvement.

To keep tracks on all ongoing projects, Google introduced a public project database used as a reporting system of each projects within the organization. The database creates public data for the organization, and people outside the team will be able to provide feedbacks and commentaries on the projects of each team. Even though the projects are exclusively done by the teams, these communications promotes and accelerate exchange of ideas within and between levels and teams. (Dan Farber; 2005)

Figure 3.4.2

Google's Problem Solving Flow

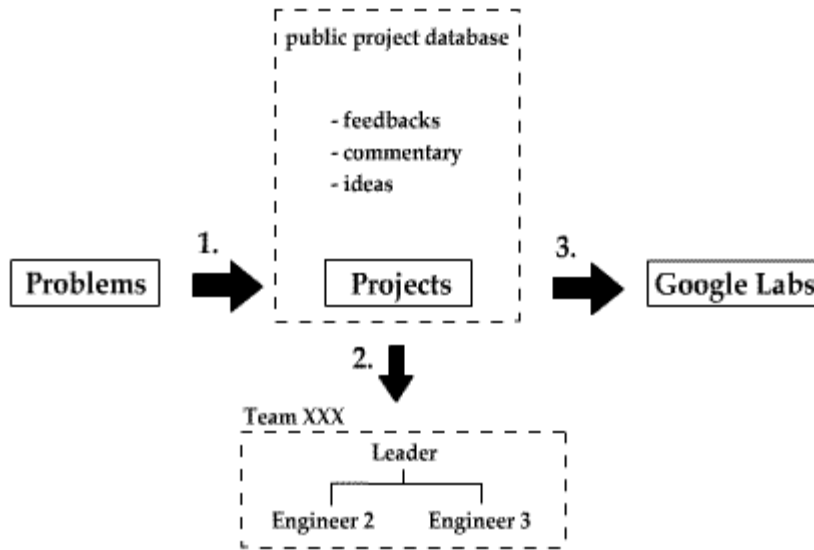


Figure 2.6.1

After the problem is identified, they are assigned as projects to be put in charged by a team.

The projects are updated in the public project database available in the organization, where anyone can view leave notes on the project to the team

After the completion of the projects, where they will posted up to Google Labs for experimentation

3.5 Implementation of Change and Measure, Evaluate, Control

After deciding the solution to solve the problem, the next stage is of the process is to implement the change. The organization keenness for teams to manage themselves, yet involving the entire organization to exchange ideas makes the projects at part of everyone. By removing hierarchies and complicated structure, allows the teams to develop projects and implement it into the market quickly. This reflects on the dynamics of Google's culture. That even changes and solutions are never stagnant but constantly moving and evolving.

The last process is to determine the effectiveness after the project is completed. One evaluation indicator for their projects is the dynamics of Google Labs. As part of Google continuous innovation, after the projects are completed, they are released at an early stage to the general users for further development opportunity. By posting projects on Google Labs; a directory of future products undergoing experimentation, users are encouraged to



evaluate and leave suggestions or ideas. These inflows of inputs will give an assessment and feasibility of each project in the real environment.

This measure is somewhat like a test for each project before they are considered full fledged and released to the general users. This openness provides valid judgments from them, and the organization can do a follow up and control effectively, so to make necessary changes or congratulate as a job well done.

4. Conclusion

From this assignment, we can understand the difference of change process for each of the organization with different environment. Its clear to that the rapid environment has shaped Google's into a fast-flowing dynamic organization, with a culture and mindset to innovate, reinvent and made far and wide changes without much barrier. In the case, of Singapore Polytechnic, changes are conducted slower, and the workers are reluctant toward changes, unless sufficient support if provided by the organization.

Though we specially categorized organization's environment in a range of stable or rapid, there is no definite answer if one organization's environment is definitely stable or rapid. The reality would normally pose mixture both and the dynamics of environment can simply turn a formally stable environment into a rapid one.

The new global economy is a one that is continuously changing with an environment that is dense, complex, and unpredictable. Organizations must have the ability to be flexible and adapt to the constant changes in environments.



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