

We're Going First! Discovering Opportunities for Growth Midst Structured Chaos - Joan Schuitema, Northeastern Illinois University

The final presentation of the day was given by Joan Schuitema. Using her tools to focus on morale during this time of change, she presented the audience with three goals for her presentation:

- People factor
- Structure chaos
- Support growth and morale

People factor: This is the key to success during change. It focuses on the individual and what happens inside a person when an organization goes through change and it is often ignored.

- Organizational change: This is task-oriented, linear, everyone moves toward a shared goal so that everyone is on the same shared path. It is one direction, a near straight line. This model is different from personal change models because organizations change differently than people; therefore, there is conflict because they are not in sync.
- Personal change: This is seldom linear because it goes back and forth. Schuitema used the Prochaska model and explained that the most common thing about a personal change model is that an individual can contemplate thinking about change and can go back and forth between preparation and planning for change.

Schuitema stated that people do not resist change, they resist transitions. Change itself is talked about in terms of “things.” People are not things and people are transition. She moved on to discuss the reasons why people resist transition.

- First reason is due to a lack of communication. If people do not know something, they make up what they do not know. They do not think the change will make their job easier and resist the change because of the “don’t know” factor. Communicate as much as possible to dispel any made up thoughts.
- Second reason is that people are not able to because they have not been trained. They do not have the proper skills to work in the new environment. CARLI provides the resources that can help with training. Use them.
- Third reason is that people are not willing to change. Schuitema advises that you should not presume they do not want to change. There could be other factors that are causing this resistance. They could be afraid to look stupid because they may feel that they do not have the proper skills. They may have a fear of change because they have not had a great experience with change.

Schuitema summarized the first goal of people factor by stating that ignoring the people factor would not allow the change to go well. Organizational change models differ from personal change models and must be treated as such. Change vs. transition where change is in reference to things and transition is in reference to people. Finally, the head and heart/gut connection must be in sync.

Structured chaos: The state of utter confusion can also be arranged in a definite pattern of organization

- through the action of building, meaning you have to do something. You can build the structure out of skills, workflows, trust, self-confidence, other? Audience members added communication,

collaboration, experience, and not being afraid to ask for help when you need it. Schuitema stated that all of these created structured chaos.

- by destabilizing existing structures and building new ones. CARLI would coordinate building of a new structure.
- by restructuring your thinking, your feelings, etc. Transitions generate uncertainty and vulnerability and everyone will experience this.

Schuitema stated that this structured chaos was a period ripe for growth both professionally and personally and we need to discover ways to maintain grounding and connectedness. CARLI is doing their end to make this ground more stable and the key to all of this is trust, and everyone can work on this.

Support growth and morale:

3 responses to change

1. Proactive response (preferred): address and correct stressors beforehand. Schuitema stated that this forum was prime example of a proactive response. One should build a growth mindset to compliment an existing task-oriented mindset. Leadership should start thinking about what's coming up that I'm going to need to know myself to help me grow.
2. Reactive responses (most common): occur after the stress has happened. The response is aimed at correcting or minimizing the damage. It makes use of interventions and tools. Choose your response vs. responding to your choice which means any kind of therapeutic work. You help them choose a response as opposed to helping them have a gut reaction. You will get a knee jerk reaction to change.
 - Normalizations: stressors and associated reactions that ensue are expected with the changing to the new library system; e.g. productivity will go down, patrons will be frustrated, collections will not be discovered for a while, and an audience member suggested that the Fiscal Period Close not running. Schuitema said that you have to identify what the normal reactive responses will be that happen in every system change.
 - Reframing a stressor: change in thinking can result in a change in feelings and/or behaviors & vice versa. A realistic example was an audience member suggesting that you cannot print labels after the library system change. This inability might produce a knee jerk reaction like maybe an eye roll; however, we should take this opportunity to rephrase it. Say once this system is up, we won't have this problem anymore. Rephrasing makes you think about the situation in a different light. Maybe you have to perform a lot of keystrokes in the new system, but maybe system has templates to help you really have less keystrokes. This helps you change your mindset so that it makes you less angry and less annoyed and allows you to get to a "Creative space." This space is where you can think of new ideas. An audience member gave the example that if it's web-based, what if the web isn't working then you can research what the workarounds are to see if there is anything else that can be done.
 - Reducing a stressor: these need to be identified; Is it data issues? Are training needs not met, or anxiety? It changes everything if you can name these stressors. Schuitema suggested sharing these stressors with your coworkers so that you can support each other. Be creative in order to find a way for you and your organization to have a place where you as an individual can identify what is frustrating you and encourage your

colleagues can do the same. Maybe it can be a designated whiteboard in which these can be written down on for everyone to see and then everyone comes together at the end of the week and talk about these stressors. You will find that maybe you all are feeling the same way and you can get it out and find a way to combat this. Find a way to have some fun to blow off some stress! E.g. dunking machine

- Grief work: losses are significant in their own right and must be acknowledged, honored, and let go. There will be a feeling of loss and you need to realize that whether it is a workflow or a relationship, it will be some sort of loss. Relationships will change with the new system. If it happens, the act of acknowledging things will help you let things go easier.
- Building on existing strengths. The strengths are CARLI Leadership (and documentation); amount of expertise held within the walls of 91 institutions; Maybe rely on people who have worked at your institution for a long time to understand why workflows were the way they are. Look for help from unexpected resources: at organizational level; right tool for the right job; at departmental, personal level, employee assistance program (EAP) .

3. Passive responses (not preferred): don't even think it!

Schuitema reminded us that change is hard; to remember the PERSON in the Professional; that things change, but people transition; great creations have been structured out of chaos; growth mindset to compliment task mindset; we've expanded our toolbox today; and to trust CARLI and each other. Let's do this!