

Boosting the Chance of Organizational Change Success: The Role of Individuals' Goal Orientation, Affectivity and Psychological Capital

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Abstract : Organizations are constantly changing in today's business environment. Research findings have revealed that overcoming resistance and getting employees ready for change is a crucial driver for organizational change success. Thus, change adaptability has become a more prominent selection criterion used in many organizations. Although change readiness could be situation-specific, employees' personality, emotion, and cognition should also be crucial factors in shaping their readiness. However, relatively little research has focused on the roles of individual characteristics in organizational changes. The present study examines the relations between individual characteristics and change readiness with the aim to validate a model, which proposes three types of individual attributes as antecedents to change readiness. The three attributes considered are trait cynicism, positive affectivity, and personal valence covering personality, emotional, and cognitive aspects respectively. The model also hypothesizes that relations between the three antecedents and change readiness will be moderated by a positive mental resource known as psychological capital (PsyCap), which consists of hope, optimism, efficacy and resilience; and a learning culture within the organization. We are currently collecting data from a targeted sample size of 300 Hong Kong employees. Specifically, participants complete a questionnaire which was designed to measure their perceived change efficacy in response to three scenarios commonly happened in the workplace (i.e., business acquisition, team restructuring, and information system change) as a measure of change readiness, as well as the aforementioned individual characteristics. Preliminary analysis provides some support to the hypotheses. That is, employees who are less cynical in personality and more positive in their cognition and affectivity particularly welcome the potential changes in their organizations. Further data collection and analyses are continuously carried out for a more definitive conclusion. Our findings will shed light on employee selection; and on how strengthening positive psychological resources and promoting the culture of learning organization among employees may enhance the chance to succeed for organizations undergoing change.

Keywords : learning organization, psychological capital, readiness for change, employee selection

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