

CULTURAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Today, in a change competitive age, management confronts many challenges and so needs to pursue and attune to the developments in marketing, economic, technologic and customer issues. Here, change must be considered as the key factor to success in establishments seeking to retain in the market. Because that total quality management can be regarded as a vital tool to any organization; continuous improvement, one of the quality management principles, refers also to change and emphasizes a respectable importance.

Needing a change to adapt organizations to total quality management is a complex matter and can only be achieved through long term approach. It requires an organizational transformation. In this regard it can be said that; cultural change has a relative importance to create a successful TQM strategy where an organizational culture is the fundamental factor considering the implementation of TQM. Although the guidelines for effective change management are important, it is the support of management that will lead the organization to a successful attainment of quality culture. In the tourism establishments, the change process has to be undertaken in an attentive manner as the relationship between the cultural change and customer-perceived service quality is more sensitive due to being a human sourced and human focused industry. Therefore, the purpose of the change through quality culture has to be adopted by all the personnel in the leadership of total quality management system. Not only the service personnel but also the customers should be involved in the enhancement of

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quality which will certainly lead the tourism establishments to success. In this paper, the cultural change management relating to the creation of corporate quality culture, in terms of the tourism industry, will be studied.

Key words: Change, Organizational Culture, Quality, Lodging

CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Changes are rapid in today's world. Markets are opened and closed, new technologies for both products and production are developed and more and more organizations want to compete on the market. Thus, organizations that want to be competitive have to react quicker and be more flexible. They have continuously to listen to and anticipate the customer's needs and expectations and be able quickly to adapt to these new needs and expectations in terms of new products and processes (Kennerfalk and Klefsjö 1995: 194). Because that every change reacts to tourism in a certain way; in order to enhance the positive impacts and reduce the negative ones, it is a necessity that the tourism establishments should be more careful than any other industry.

Tourism industry is first, a service industry. Accordingly, tourism establishments are very labor intensive and they serve millions of people throughout the world. Thus they need to pursue and accord the developing changes to their own organization. Today, quality is of first priority for the tourism properties that matters. Hence adapting to change indicates many changes, especially cultural change within the organization.

Needing to change an organization from function orientation and an individualistic culture towards process orientation and a culture of teamwork starts with a change in the culture of the organization, and goes on, with the help of the cultural change, to change the structure of the organization (Kennerfalk and Klefsjö1995:195).

Organizational culture can be presented as the "glue" of the organization, providing identity and strength. The most difficult aspect of studying organizational culture is that it is highly subject to interpretation and difficult to measure (Ruigrok and Achtenhagen 1999: 522). Particularly in the tourism industry, where the teamwork for the quality of service is important, the need for the glue is what those organizations have to focus on.

The notion of organizational culture gradually arose over the 1970s. There are a variety of meanings attributed to the concept of organizational culture. However many authors agree the notion refers to (Ruigrok and Achtenhagen 1999: 523):

- A set of values, norms, beliefs, meanings, and behaviors
- at a given point in time
- that are shared by people in an organization and can be conveyed to new members of the organization
- about how people should act and/or may improve their performance or solve problems
- that in addition to more formalized systems may serve as an informal coordination and control mechanism, or “glue”, at different levels of the organization.

The change in culture helps the organization change also its structure. The cultural change will work as a lever. As the culture is changed from individualistic to team-thinking, the function oriented structure will change towards a more process-oriented structure. The number of decision levels will decrease and the structure will be flatter. Focus will be more on work flows and processes than on departments and functions, and the importance of horizontal communication will increase (Saraph and Sebastian 1993: 76). Recognizing that change is a continuous process has implications for the way we manage change. No longer is it appropriate to consider organizational change as a project or event – with a beginning and an end- to be managed, but rather we must consider change management as an ongoing aspect of the leader’s job (Sausser and Sausser 2002: 241).

If we want to learn about how to change culture, we need to understand how it is created there are six different ways in which culture evolves. Some of these can be influenced by leaders and some cannot (Cameron, E., 2004, 221):

- A general evolution in which the organization naturally adapts to its environment.
- A specific evolution of teams or sub-groups within the organization to their different environments.
- A guided evolution resulting from cultural 'insights' on the part of leaders.
- A guided evolution through encouraging teams to learn from each other, and empowering selected hybrids from sub-cultures that are better adapted to current realities.
- A planned and managed culture change through creation of parallel systems of steering

committees and project-oriented task forces.

- A partial or total cultural destruction through new leadership that eliminates the carriers of the former culture (turnarounds, bankruptcies, etc).

Cultural Change Management

The service encounter is at the very core of the tourism industry and yet is subject to failure in every instance because of its nature. Consequently, service providers, and particularly front-line staff, are there not simply to provide the service and enhance the experience but also to solve problems as they arise. When this occurs quickly and effectively, it can greatly increase levels of customer satisfaction. With existing approaches to change management failing to deliver results, different ideas are needed. New organizational forms require a greater focus on change that emerges from real business opportunities. The opportunities can be the basis of pockets of good practice which act as influential role models for change (Clarke and Meldrum 1999: 70). As increasing number of organizations worldwide adopt the principles of total quality management, the concept is increasingly being preached in the dimensions of cultural development (Wilkinson and Witcher 1993: 54)

It can be said that, an operational model of organizational culture is a requisite of effective change management. It locates culture in the operating environment: the collectively constructed and owned objects constituting the realities of the organizations operation, the working theories that are in use to explain and control these objects, and the practices that implement these theories. The focus of analysis must be at those points of decision from which practices emerge, rather than on proclaimed values or beliefs detached from their context and, as often as not, contrary to the evidence of day-to day action. Change will concern the creation of new operating realities rather than new values or overcoming the resistance of individuals. With this approach the management of culture can be an integral part of change, with immediate relevance, and not lost in wishful thinking of marginal relevance (Smith 2000: 154).

Managers often embark on a journey of change without being fully aware of their starting point or clear of where they want to end up. There is often a significant gap between the actual and desired culture within the business where culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and

internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (Schein 2005: 2). This is in itself potentially dangerous if it means that an organization increases the expectation of its customers and travel agencies or tour operators to a level that simply cannot be sustained, given the prevailing attitudes and behavior within the business. In many instances managers develop a vision and define the organizational values needed to sustain this vision. Unfortunately, often these values are not interpreted into a set of key behaviors that will ensure that the business achieves the ends it is seeking to achieve (Smith, Barnes and Townsend 2002: 856)

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Commissioning a cultural audit that is both customized to the particular needs of the organization embarking on a change process and which is to be repeated at regular periods of time can help a group of senior managers (Smith, Barnes and Townsend 2002: 857):

- Through the design of the audit define the key behaviors that will ensure that the business continues to achieve its goals.
- Obtain a much clearer view of the actual state of the culture at the start of the change process. This can relate both to the overall culture and to that prevailing in different parts of the business.
- Consider the potential impact of the concepts and techniques that are being used to facilitate change in the culture. This through carrying out regular audits and assessing the degree of change achieved.
- Define and agree achievable critical qualitative goals for cultural change that can then be related to other critical qualitative and quantitative business goals through the use of a framework. Relevant goals for improvement can be agreed, set and reviewed at functional and unit level as well as the overall strategic level.
- Identify key areas within the business where problems continue to exist and where the rate of change in culture is slower than in the business as a whole.
- Recognize and publicize the degree of success that the company has achieved in changing

key elements of its culture. Often the tendency is to continue to look to the challenges that the company still faces without fully recognizing and celebrating the successes it has had.

Cultural Change and Quality Culture

Cultural change is increasingly being recognized as an important aspect of total quality development. However the issue surrounding quality culture has not been comprehensively studied and as such a structured approach to culture change remains largely unclear (Adebanjo and Kehoe 1998:275). The staff working directly interacting with guests have a great importance and effect on the customers to be the repeat guests as they implement the quality necessities in a voluntary and keen manner. The staff working in the tourism industry needs to create a personalized service as to satisfy the wants and needs of the customers. Successful hotels, restaurants, travel agencies and other tourism establishments implement effective strategies to deliver quality guest service consistently. The most important ingredient for a successful service emphasis within a tourism property is top-level commitment.

There is such a relationship between total quality management and culture that describes total quality management as the culture of an organization committed to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement. From this perspective, what makes total quality management different from other management processes is its concentrated focus on continuous improvement. This is why we claim that a cultural transformation from a set of bureaucratic postulates towards a TQM culture must be carried out through a long-term strategy, clearly formulated and implemented, in such a way that the change is achieved within an evolutionary process, not within a revolutionary one. This is so because we are dealing with individual and organizational behaviors, with all the opposition that a change of this nature tends to generate (Claver, Gasco, Llopis and Gonzalez 2001: 470).

The model of culture has important implications for the practice of change management. First, the primary focus of analysis must concern actions. Statements of beliefs and values, in an interview or workshop setting, are a poor starting point for understanding culture, and can easily be out of step with culture as implemented in action. Managers' statements about their beliefs and values may be primarily efforts to support their political aims or self-presentations. Culture in action, on the other hand, concerns the interactions between individuals and working life, and should be understood in terms of the decisions,

choices, options and explanations concerning norms of behavior and practice. Second, the focus of change must concern the creation of new objects, interactions and relationships. It is these that will lead individuals to seek new understandings and create the new practices and mechanisms demanded by the new environment (Smith 2000: 154).

The real key to success of total quality management is people especially in the tourism industry. In many services, customers value more highly the human dimensions of quality than the tangibles. Much will depend on the nature of the product and the characteristics of the market group, but the need for a competitive edge points to the impact of customer care and pre-service, core service and post service (Williams 2003: 191).

All employees are responsible for service quality. This applies to all organizations but particularly those labor-intensive lodging industry, with emphasis on the service encounter and the interaction between people. The significance of the psychological encounter between staff and customers suggests that much of the marketing takes place is of an interactive nature; there is the opportunity to influence customers at each point of contact and to encourage and receive feedback and opinion, which constitute valuable market research. How staff support and respond to each other is also important as service design is based on knowledge and understanding of all staff about each other's roles and the notion of the quality chain. However, certain staff, who deal directly with the public and are perceived by customers as the public face of the organization, have a particular responsibility for service quality. Attitudes, behavior and tangibles such as dress and what is said are important and represent the culture and values of the organization (Williams 2003: 191).

The management of people and the achievement of cultural change and service quality concern the notion of the internal customer and the nature and clarity of internal marketing (Williams 2003: 192). Organizations need to create a culture where all the employees should participate in the quality awareness programs and quality improvement projects relevant to their own workplace. This culture is to change an individual's behavior and attitude in different ways. Here are the critical successful factors for the successful implementation of total quality management which must be considered as a whole requirement (Tsang and Antony 2001:136-137):

- Each individual should be involved in quality improvement projects as the point of

involvement.

- Employees must do their own inspection at work.
- Absolutely no defective part, good or service can be passed on to the next process.
- Each person must be committed to satisfying his/her customers, both internal and external.
- External suppliers and customers must be integrated into the improvement process.
- Mistakes must be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.
- Honesty, sincerity and care must be an integral part of daily business life.

Changing attitudes mean, in the most usual sense of the term- the way in which people express themselves and behave individually in organizations. For example when it is a question of adapting the organization to the new demands of customers who are increasingly in a position to impose their wishes, it is simply, or even principally, necessary for those who are in contact with these customers, and who are rarely even represent a majority of the organization's members, to change their way of being. One would switch from agents, from uncommunicative and disagreeable employees, to actors who were smiling, quick, devoted, above all wanting to render service. Such an approach, which could easily be described as naive, is nonetheless omnipresent in modern organizations. However, there is nothing in this way of changing attitudes to indicate that the organization has changed in its reality, in its methods of functioning (Dupuy 2001:13).

As increasing number of organizations world-wide adopt the principles of total quality management, the concept is increasingly being preached in the dimensions of cultural development (Wilkinson and Witcher 1993: 54).

Everything that represent the culture in all organizations and help to shape the service process and service deliver, with the clarity of the organization's vision central to its efficiency and effectiveness. (Williams, C., 2003; 190) To successfully manage organizational culture, strategists must manage cultural artifacts. Cultural artifacts include myths and sagas about company successes and the heroes and heroines within the company; language systems and metaphors; rituals, ceremonies, and symbols; certain physical attributes such as the use of space, interior and exterior design, and equipment; and the defining values and norms. In managing execution by managing culture, strategists usually think in terms of managing values and norms. But as it turns out, if they don't also manage existing cultural artifacts, then they build in barriers to failure. Why? Because existing cultural artifacts support the old

strategy not the new one. To be successful, strategists must create new cultural artifacts or modify the existing ones so that they support the new strategy (Higgins, and Mcallaster 2004: 63).

Effective quality systems require a culture of mutual trust between departments, professionals and teams, where communication is open, honest and explicit. While achieving the right cultural blend can seem akin to nailing jelly to a wall, the right communication structure and practices can be achieved by an organization committed to quality improvement (Howard 2000: 53).

A quality culture requires the process of communicating to be seen as more than a technique but a part of the values and ways of working. People are needed to perform many of the tasks leading to the delivery of quality products and services for their guests. Service philosophy is very important to a tourism establishment's success. There must be a genuine enthusiasm to please the customers in the tourism industry.

Seven dimensions of quality culture were identified and researched for an evaluation of cultural problems. These dimensions are indicative of attributes which total quality practitioners generally agree should be present in organizations whose culture complements total quality implementation. This model defined by these dimensions is as follows (Adebanjo and Kehoe 1998: 276-277):

a. Senior management leadership: The commitment of senior managers has been described as the most important determinant of successful total quality implementation and its absence is a prime reason why total quality fails. It is clear that unless senior management is fully committed to, the idea of a real improvement in quality, exercises leadership and devotes time, energy and resources to this objective, it would be impossible to motivate the rest of the organization.

b. Employee involvement and empowerment: Employee involvement as the process of transforming an organization's culture to utilize the creative energies of all employees for problem solving and for making improvements.

c. Teamwork: It is argued that teamwork is universally accepted as the vehicle for change and the organizational mechanism for involving people in quality improvement.

d. Customer focus: Customers are recognized as the guarantee of the organization's continued existence and a focus on them is the foundation of the total quality approach to management. There is a commonly-held notion that all quality efforts are ultimately directed at the customer.

e. Partnership with suppliers: Many businesses persist in dealing with suppliers on the basis of price tag while the need is to move to few or single suppliers, based on a long-term relationship of mutual understanding of needs, loyalty and trust.

f. Effect of chief executive: It has been argued that unless the chief executive takes the lead in the process of quality improvement, any attempts and improvements made by individuals and departments will only be transient in nature. It is the chief executive that should be the focal point providing broad perspectives and vision, encouragement and recognition.

g. Open corporate culture: It is clear that an open attitude builds trust and is an essential condition for overcoming people's fears about the quality-related changes sweeping through the organization.

Guidelines for Effective Change Management

Today's organizations, leaders, managers, and other employees are under tremendous pressure from markets, customers, and competition to bring needed changes to their organizations. They desperately want to involve people in the increasing number of change issues that are vital to the organization's success. They want other employees to be willing partners rather than resistant or cynical. They want employees who are ready to put themselves wholeheartedly into the effort to bring about the required changes rather than employees who sit back or on the sidelines and take the attitude of "this too shall pass". In this sense change agents must move toward deeply involving employees in the change process itself, creating a critical mass of highly energetic employees who help design, sell, implement, evaluate, resell, and support change in the organization (Sims and Sims 2002: 42).

Effective change management is vital to any organization. Typically, vast amounts of resources are expended to adjust employees to a new way of achieving the corporate mission. Frustration can abound when a manager is not prepared to deal with the inevitable resistance to change (Ahls 2001: 2).

The greatest change in culture will be the change in management style. This has to be a change in the behavior of the managers and a change in their attitudes to other members of the organization, suppliers and customers. The manager has to change from a 'hero' to a 'coach'. The hero is a manager who knows everything and does everything. The hero plans, solves problems and forms objectives. This behavior leads to the alienation of the leader from the team. The coach, however, knows what everyone in the team can do and wants to do. The coach supports the members of the team, who themselves plan, solve problems and form objectives. The coach becomes a part of the team. The view of an employee has to change from that of a resource, where only one desired quality is used to achieve the objectives of the organization, towards a comprehensive view of the employee, where all skills and knowledge are used (Kennerfalk and Klefsjö 1995: 194).

The strategically successful firms make use of cultural artifacts to help reinforce desired changes in behavior so that it supports the new values and norms in common. All too often strategists will introduce a new strategy, and even seek to change organizational culture to some degree without attending to one of the key ingredients of making real changes in the culture; the artifacts which help define the culture. Managers, who retain old cultural artifacts that reinforce elements of the old culture they want to change, are leaving in barriers to their success (Higgins and Mcallaster 2004: 64).

The way to make a successful cultural change is not easy, so the guidelines for effective change management can be listed as follows (Abraham, Crawford and Fisher 1999: 114-118):

1. Visioning the future

The most important behavior describing leadership is the leader's display of trust in others. The ability to challenge, inspire, enable and encourage must be demonstrated if leaders

are to be viewed as capable. Leaders must be seen as forward-looking though demonstrating the ability to set or select a desirable destination for the organization. The fact that vision is indispensable: it is the basis on which an organization acquires and maintains personal meaning for all those who are associated with it.

2. Communicating for change

Effective communication is necessary for all phases of the change process. Communication is needed to clarify the future state in terms that are relevant and concrete for organization participants at all levels. There is a need to ensure that the vision is communicated effectively so that it is eventually translated into the concrete actions of the members of the organization. Any leadership action in an organization domain has potential symbolic value, so what leaders do in the realm of structure, policies, procedures, work practices, traditions, rewards, and managing relationships both inside and outside the organization will reflect their own beliefs and dedication to the cultural conditions they are trying to create.

Managers may be eloquent about their vision and values, but if their behavior does not match the rhetoric, people will lose respect for them. Managers need to devise various forms of "cultural communications which involve intervention through explicit communications, announcements, pronouncements, memos, slogans, as well as through implicit communications such as ceremonies, stories, logos, heroes, metaphors and so on. There are various approaches to convey the vision - leader centered approaches such as inspirational speech making and personal intimate conversations with individuals, and group centered approaches such as the use of slogans, metaphors, vivid and memorable stories, pictures, images, which "all have the effect of crystallizing a sense of purpose.

3. Emphasizing recognition and reward

The importance of recognition and feedback to employees in order to produce high satisfaction and high quality enhances performance.

4. Supporting the change with appropriate resources

Large-scale change requires the allocation of considerable resources in support of the change. Financial, human resources must be allocated to plan, monitor and implement the change. Resources must also be directed toward training and special communication associated with the aims and process of change.

5. Participation in the change

Because that an organization's employees have a significant role in the direction of change, they .have always been and always will be the most important single resource in change management. If we are to change the way we manage change in any way, then we must find ways to maximize employee involvement at every opportunity before, and after any change initiative (Sims and Sims 2002: 39).

6. The role of leadership in managing change

A change in management doctrine is needed; senior managers must change their own priorities and ways of thinking. Beyond designing corporate strategy, they must shape a shared institutional purpose. They must expand their focus from devising formal structures to developing organizational processes. And more than just managing systems, they must develop people.

Table 1: Leadership of change phase by phase, comparing inner and outer leadership (Cameron, E., 2004; 146)

Phase of change	Outer leadership -observable goes actions of the leader	Inner leadership –what on inside the leader
<p>1.Establishing the need for change</p> <p>The leader illuminates a problem area through discussion</p>	<p>Influencing, understanding, researching, presenting, listening</p>	<p>Managing emotions, maintaining integrity, being courageous, being patient, knowing yourself, judging whether you really have the energy to do this</p>
<p>2. Building the change team</p> <p>The leader brings the right people together and establishes momentum through teamwork.</p>	<p>Chairing meetings, connecting agendas, facilitating discussion, building relationships, building teams, cutting</p>	<p>Social and organizational awareness, self-awareness, managing emotions, adaptability, taking initiative, having the drive to achieve,</p>
<p>3. Creating vision and values</p> <p>The leader works with the group to build a picture of success.</p>	<p>Initiating ideas, brainstorming, encouraging divergent and creative thinking, challenging others constructively, envisaging</p>	<p>Strategic thinking, taking time to reflect, social awareness, drive to achieve, managing emotions</p>
<p>4.Communicating and engaging</p> <p>The leader plays his or her role in communicating direction, giving it meaning, being clear about timescale</p>	<p>Persuading and engaging, presenting with passion, listening, being assertive, being creative with ways of communicating</p>	<p>Patience, analysis of how to present to different audiences, managing emotions with regard to other people’s resistance, social awareness, adaptability, empathy</p>
<p>5. Empowering others</p> <p>The leader entrusts those who have been involved in the creation of the new vision</p>	<p>Clear target setting, good delegation, managing without micromanaging or abdicating, coaching</p>	<p>Integrity, trust, patience, drive to achieve, steadiness of purpose, empathy</p>

Obstacles for Effective Change Management

By definition, change represents something different from what employees are accustomed to; therefore, a clear, well-communicated vision and a path to achieve the change are needed. Asking employees to change must be paired with giving them the tools to achieve

it and removing obstacles. Careful planning will ensure that all aspects of the project have been accounted for and that unexpected roadblocks will be avoided or minimized (Ahls 2001: 1).

Lack of clear definition and distinction among types of change projects, and absence of appropriately differentiated management treatment, underlie many disappointing outcomes. Disciplined attention to some important aspects of managing change is necessary for success (Small and Downey 2001: 50) The following factors cause people to resist change and for these reasons change cannot be pushed through especially quickly (Williams 2003:150)

- Fear. It is a natural response and requires a clear and consistent message to overcome it especially as rumors can grow and become exaggerated very quickly.
- Personal uncertainty. Individuals will experience some insecurity about their abilities to cope with changes; the identification of training needs and the gradualness of change are important factors.
- It may mean more work. It is certainly an aspect that has to be handled very carefully, particularly where staff already perceive themselves to be stretched.
- Past resentments. This point reinforces the need for trust and honesty in the ways in which individuals and departments deal with each other; there can be no baggage from previous conflicts and the harboring of grudges.
- Flavor of the month. Short-termism has already been identified as one of the major factors in undermining quality approaches and the conviction that any quality measures are not a fad or a whim of management consultants.
- It may go away if I ignore it. Leadership by example is the only effective way of overcoming such inertia, especially where the commitment from the top is evident.
- Unwilling to take ownership and be committed. The reluctance of supervisors and first-line managers to accept responsibility and commitment, especially when change creates the pressure of conflicting goals for them (cost savings bur increasing quality) applies to everyone.
- It's your responsibility. This is where the understanding of total quality management focuses on the second word. quality has to be managed by management but its responsibility, just like marketing, is everyone's. Organizations such as Disney and Jarvis Hotels are good examples of this approach.
- First you change, and then I will. In some ways this is like the issue of whether culture

change and quality initiative should be a “top-down” or “bottom-up” process when neither is entirely appropriate. It reinforces the need for mutual trust and the ethos and spirit of cooperation and interdependence.

CONCLUSION

In today’s fast moving world, it is vital for every organization including tourism establishments to attune to the changes in a competitive manner in order to survive. Accordingly, cultural change is also a vital tool for any organization in pursue of success in the long run.

Therefore, cultural change being so important should be guided and directed consistently through a multidimensional leadership process due to the complexity of service quality. Cultural change through quality is essential in the tourism establishments in many aspects. So the quality of culture will lead the tourism establishments to a reputation where quality is the key for service industry and will able to attract many customers.

When service sector is the case, changing the current culture to quality culture among the employees of the tourism establishments requires more effort due to the nature of the sector being labor-intensive and being required close relationship with the customer. Hence, cultural change management is due to a dynamic process with a strong support of not a single leader but a group of leaders within the organization. Therefore, the change through quality should be managed in an attentive and consistent manner, following the necessary guidelines tailored to the organization itself.

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