Change Leadership in the Centre of Higher Education

Baff Kuka

First Aid Safety Training, Australia

Abstract: The paper discusses about the change of Centers of Higher Education (COHE) toward the issues of internet-based learning. The problem evokes when education in Australia face the change in technology when many students come to Australia from around the world. COHE has difficulties in identifying who their consumers which may effect on their strategy in developing the business. This paper explores some important consideration toward the change in COHE.

1 INTRODUCTION

The change affects us all ranging from our personal life choices. Like all businesses, Centres of Higher Education (COHE) are not immune to such forces. Here, I will bring to your attention examples of the forces that can impact on change within the higher education sector.

During my tenure as a nonexecutive director on the board of studies of the Graduate College of Management of the Southern Cross University, I was on two panels that revamped the Masters in Business Administration Degree (M.B.A) program and the College of Industry and Professional Education (C.I.P.E.).

We identified that the main recipient (Customer) of our courses was the industry that the student was studying to seek employment within.

COHE have the same pressures that all businesses have. The main issue is installing a culture that not only accepts change but one that also encourages change. Ensuring that their staff is all agents of change is singular that the main threat to the COH's business viability in the now global education environment.

Internet-based learning, an ever-shrinking world, cross-border economic alliances such as Free Trade Agreements all contribute to the transportability of receiving a quality education all contribute to these challenges.

International students contribute to education being Australia's second highest export industry. It is both a highly competitive and a lucrative industry.

In Australia, shrinking government financial aid and increasing on and off shore competition has resulted in greater costs for COHE forcing them to change and save on costs. The competition for research grants is also an ever increasing burden on management to increase their fluidity and acceptance of change.

2 FACTORS AFFECTING CHANGE

The composition of the Board is of critical mass to all businesses, including centers of COHE. McKenzie (2007) Points to select directors include;

1. Integrity;
2. Standing within the academic community;
3. Educational background;
4. Research evidence abilities;
5. Gender balance;
6. Practical (life skills) skilling within the academia and business community.

Industrial relations should be kept to a level that sees remuneration that encourages (Kent, 2011):

1. Financial security by way of an attractive salary and working conditions of all employees so that skilled staff is attracted and retained from the wider workforce. Centers of higher education still have to compete for skilled staff who can pass on their knowledge and skills to students.
2. Maintaining good industrial relations is an investment in the organization stability; how it is viewed within the relatively small academic community. A stable organization will attract

private funding more easily as opposed to an unstable one;

3. Happy people are more productive;
4. Having a board member belonging to students and staff makes sound business sense;

Industry standing is another critical mass for COHE;

1. A Centre Of Higher Education's standing within the academic and business communities will attract quality students; philanthropists and government monies.
2. Leading academics and research fellows will also be attracted to an institution with higher standings. Look at the way the ivy league and sandstone universities attract their academic fame.
3. By having close links to leading businesses, the centre of higher education will access leading research as opposed to data that is out of date and therefore worthless;
4. Close industry ties leads to increasing currency of course material;
5. Current learning material leads to attracting better academics resulting in better-educated students and having those students being up taken into quality employment prospects.

Like many businesses, COHE's may have difficulty in identifying who their Customers are. Businesses will often make one fundamental flaw – they confuse their revenue stream with their end user or Customer. Students may be the revenue stream – the industry they learn to join s the actual Customer. Customers (industry) satisfaction is the key to the student's transition to employment, which in turn raises student application, then raises profits and the business expands.

Low industry satisfaction in graduates' performance results in low student transition towards employment thus stagnating the education center's attraction for new quality students and academics; this is turn reflects on them having a lower name, results and a low standing industry standing.

Staff satisfaction is closely aligned to industrial relations – they both deal with humans at work. Staff satisfaction has many facets;

1. The way they are treated, with equity, fair access to promotional courses, promotions and who are free of harassment;
2. Staff are the most important assets that any business has;
3. Staff should reflect industry currency having networked with industry gatekeepers and researchers.

Like all businesses, COHE requires significant leadership to develop strategies to achieve a set of objectives. Without the setting of strategies to achieve

long-term goals, any organization will find it difficult to remain in business. Investment in technology is a must-have strategic investment. All education providers are investing technology for their offices in their day to day activities, but also in their training components.

A balance of on line, face to face, as well as residential types of student interface, seems to be the ideal format. Having all your course as an on line component deletes from the student/academic interface. Students who ask questions are not able to read the lecturer's body language, interact with their fellow students and generally get a feel for the tutorial.

Clinically based courses require some significant hands-on patient-based component. The change process is a three-stage event;

Firstly, recognize the organization is currently frozen in its ways, and that will require it to change;

1. Communicate the requirement for change by selecting one of the four effectors to your teams through consultation and change by edict;
2. Set an agenda that identifies and signals the need and the benefits of change;
3. Involve the organization in the change process so that ownership is spread across the organization;

Secondly, implement your changes – the fluidity section; Thirdly, re-freeze your organization with the new changes have been made.

3 CONCLUSION

Implementation of a Change Leadership initiative can be complicated and challenging but also a necessary action. If the need for change is not recognised, sold, signalled and implemented, then the organisation will suffer the consequences and go by the way of the organisations listed above. Succession planning is a critical tool for a COHE. It should form part of its long term change management policy and goals. Mentoring of those identified as rising quickly is an important factor. Succession planning allows the organisation to plan and organise its target intake of certain focus groups such youths, females, geographically located and those in economic distress.

REFERENCES

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