



Change on campus... ready or not?

Mark Twain once said, "It's not the progress I mind, it's the change I don't like." This sentiment rings true today on campuses across the country. Innovators in higher education regularly face the challenge of instigating progress on campus while dealing with the natural resistance to change that we humans have.

How do we get administrators and academics who want progress to embrace the change that invariably results? Move over Mark Twain! Here's a simple planning process that campus leaders can use to help stakeholders deal with and overcome resistance to change.

Change impact analysis

Change impact analysis is a planning tool leaders can use to identify the sources of resistance to change, and then design interventions to help mitigate or even eliminate resistance.

Here's how it works. The champion of a change initiative first gathers a representative cross-functional group of university stakeholders for a half-day workshop. The workshop participants brainstorm completion of a "change impact table" by identifying the groups of stakeholders (faculty, deans, staff, students, board members, suppliers, etc.) who will be affected by the change and asking:

- (a) How each group will be affected,
- (b) When they will be affected,
- (c) What new skills they will have to develop,
- (d) What barriers and issues they are likely to encounter, and
- (e) What interventions would be most helpful

These sessions are usually lively in nature, should last no more than four hours, and result in a logical plan for proceeding.

Campus change brought about by technology change

ERP projects touch a large number of people on campus. ERP is a major

technology undertaking for any university that can produce significant changes in the way the organization goes about its business.

MIT's Michael Schrage understands that the impact on people caused by such technological innovations can be more challenging than the technical demands of the intervention itself. "The smartest thing innovation-savvy CIOs could do to boost their chances of success is to target the sources of resistance to innovation implementation," Schrage recently wrote in *CIO Magazine*.

That's exactly what change impact analysis is designed to do.

The table below shows the possible effects on one group of stakeholders, university accountants, who will be affected by an ERP implementation on campus.

Once the planning session is over, the real work begins. There should be no secret about this plan. So the next step for many change leaders is to show the plan to the affected groups, one at a time, to get them involved directly in dealing with the change.

This engagement and frank communication begins the process of creating a sense of trust. Of equal importance, this helps shift the "ownership" of the reaction to change to those who will be affected by it. As Gary Moorehead of Arizona State University, and Ricky Griffin of Texas A&M University have observed, "Resistance may be reduced when those affected by the change are involved in the design."

Mark Twain was right...people want progress but not necessarily change. Change impact analysis is a planning tool that helps make things on campus just a little bit easier. ■

A partial Change Impact Table

Group	Staff accountants
How impacted?	New monthly closing process Net IT system for general ledger New cross-functional organizational structure
What's new?	SAP navigation skills Team skills Standardized monthly closing process
Barriers and Issues	Currently, enjoy working in isolated staff function Poor team skills to operate in cross functional capacity Only mainframe experience
Change Management	Communication plan Engagement and involvement plan Team training SAP navigation training Leadership alignment intervention



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