LEWIN’S (1947) CHANGE MANAGEMENT MODEL

• Metaphor – an ice block cannot be transformed/ forced into a new shape without breaking
• Instead, it must be:
  1. melted (Unfreeze)
  2. poured into a mold (Change)
  3. frozen again in the new shape (Refreeze/ Freeze)
‘UNFREEZE’ STAGE

- There is usually a motivating event creating the need for change to occur
- E.g. Falling profits, tech. change, employee dissatisfaction, etc.
- Decision would be made that change is needed
- A change management strategy has to be communicated to prepare employees for the change.
‘CHANGE’ (MOVE) STAGE

• Actual changes take place
• Changes can be large or small, depending on the needs
• All changes should be carefully determined with input from employees and may take time to implement.
‘REFREEZE’ (FREEZE) STAGE

- Changes are normalized in day-to-day activities – a slow process, depending on the scale of change.
- Employees may take a long time to get used to new practices.
- Many organisations change constantly – difficult for the Refreeze stage to be successful.
- Important stage for the changes to last and everyone deals with it efficiently.
COMMUNICATING DURING THE ‘UNFREEZING STAGE’

• Primary communication objective – to prepare employees and the organisation for the change – “Readying” the organisation.

• Resistance will increase at the same rate with how big the change is and how much it affects the organisation.

• However, resistance is easier to overcome if the communication strategy is designed to account for the initial resistance (Klein, 1996).

• In order to ‘ready’ the organisation for the change, it is important to communicate the objective of the change and what is going to happen and why.
COMMUNICATING DURING THE ‘UNFREEZING STAGE’ (CONT)

• The first thing that must be communicated is the need for change, by pointing out the discrepancy between desired outcomes and actual outcomes

• If the change is an organisation-wide change, this first message should come from the top management of the organisation

• Although written communication followed by question and answers meeting has been proved to be an effective way of communication, face-to-face communication is important in this stage (Klein, 1996)
COMMUNICATING DURING THE ‘CHANGE/MOVE STAGE’

• When change is being implemented, there is a lot of organisational activity

• Those who are not directly involved in the change process do not know exactly what is happening – level of uncertainty raises and rumors appear

• Change begins to have more tangible outcomes and some organisational impact, the communication should have a more specific character than in the first stage (Klein, 1996)
COMMUNICATING DURING THE ‘CHANGE/MOVE STAGE’ (CONT)

• Communication in this stage is very important and has the following objectives:
  • to provide those not involved in the change implementation with detailed and accurate information of what is happening;
  • to provide those involved in the process with information about their roles in the change process, as well as information about how the change will affect them, and their new roles and responsibilities;
  • to dismiss all the misinformation that is circulating through the organisation
COMMUNICATING DURING THE ‘REFREEZING/ FREEZE STAGE’

• Primary objective during this stage – to build structures and processes that support the new ways
  • Communication should be centered on answering employees’ questions regarding efficiency, rewards, control and relationship roles
  • In this stage, the responsibility of communicating with employees shifts from the CEO and management, down the hierarchy to supervisory management
  • The information flow should be continuous, concrete and multidirectional, so that employees have enough understanding of the personal implications of the change
  • Inevitable misunderstandings may occur in this stage, communication should focus on making public the success of the change and spread the word to employees (Klein, 1996).
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION

- **Tackle Queries**
  - Communication must address (Dolphin, 2005):
    - the information of employees;
    - the management of changes; and
    - the motivation of employees
  - Excellent communication means that everyone in the organisation, at all levels, understands:
    - the need for change;
    - what the changes are;
    - how the changes will affect the business;
    - how the changes will affect each individual’s work.
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Generate Community Spirit**
  
  • Organisational communication helps define the identity of a group and to generate a community spirit, which fits into organisational requirements (De Ridder, 2003; Postmes et al., 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1997).
  
  • Communication to create a community within organisations leads to high commitment to the organisation, trust in the management and positive organisational identification (Elving, 2005).
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Build Trust**
  • Trust results in more positive attitudes, higher levels of cooperation, and superior levels of performance (Jones & George, 1998; Mayer et al., 1995).
  • Values in the workplace can be evaluated by the role communication plays (Cheney, 1999).
  • Trust and commitment are byproducts of open, appropriate, clear and timely communication (Chia, 2005).
  • Trust can be conveyed via openness and concern i.e. effective communication (Mishra & Mishra, 1994).
  • Communication practices in an organisation have important influence on employees trust level in their managers and the top management, as well as commitment to the organisation.
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Employee Commitment**
  - Commitment is linked to employee voice and argumentativeness i.e. freedom to speak up about concerns and ability to argue the issues surrounding these concerns (Gorden & Infante, 1991; Gorden et al., 1988; Infante & Gorden, 1991).
  - The effectiveness and commitment of employees depends on their knowledge and understanding of the strategic issues of the company (Tucker et al., 1996).
  - Clear, accurate and honest messages using a variety of media with high coverage and impact are needed to avoid confusion (Abraham et al., 1999).
  - People committed to a vision is more important than a well thought out strategy (Pascale, 1984).
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• Employee Participation
  • Employee participation is associated with higher job satisfaction (Parker et al., 1997)
  • Individuals tend to report higher job satisfaction when they have an opportunity to provide input into how decisions are made (Konovsky & Folger, 1987; Lind & Tyler, 1988).
  • Excellent organisations enclose management structures that empower employees’ participation in decision-making (Hyo-Sook, 2003).
  • Increased participation in decision-making by lower-level employees has positive effect on the efficiency of decision-making process and employees who participate in decision-making process have higher satisfaction and commitment levels to the organisation (Heller et al., 1988).
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Reduce Uncertainty**
  - Information may help influence outcomes, but knowledge about the motives for change also facilitates reducing uncertainty and creating readiness for change.
  - Effective change communication can manage uncertainty (DiFonzo & Bordia, 1998).
  - Uncertainty of employees will reflect on the individuals and work environment - “Will I still have a job after this change?”; “Will I still have the same co-workers after the change?”; “Can I still perform my tasks the same way I used to?”
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Job Security**
  - It is evident that employees who see their jobs as lacking security tend to have lower job satisfaction, less organisational commitment, and a stronger intention to turnover (Sverke et al., 2002).
  - Those who remain after workforce reductions often believe their jobs no longer offer security (Armstrong-Stassen, 1998).
  - Organisational communication and participation are negatively related to job insecurity (Elst et al., 2010).
  - The most negative impact of job insecurity can be prevented by providing accurate information and enhancing communication, supplying retraining for alternative employment, and training their employees in how to cope with the stress created by job insecurity (Hartley et al., 1991; Heaney et al., 1994; Kets de Vries & Balazs, 1997).
OBJECTIVES OF CHANGE COMMUNICATION (CONT)

• **Add Feedback**
  - Appropriate communications provide employees with feedback and reinforcement during the change
  - Enables employee to make better decisions and prepares them for the advantages and disadvantages of change (Peterson & Hicks, 1996).
CHANGE COMMUNICATION MODEL
(Husain, 2013)

Tackle Queries
Community Spirit
Trust
Employee Commitment
Employee Participation
Lesser Uncertainty
Job Security
Feedback

Effective Communication
Successful Organisational Change