

Organizational Change Management at Work in the Global Pharmaceutical Industry

By Dylan McGuire

Organization: GSK London, UK



Industry: Global Healthcare

Lesson Learned: Gain the trust and belief in leadership to lead change

In 2009, after undergoing a merger and appointing a new CEO, global healthcare company GSK, in London, UK, decided to adopt a new organizational approach to change. GSK decided it needed to “change how it changed” and felt that the uniqueness of the organization—as one of the world’s largest pharmaceutical companies—required a customized approach.

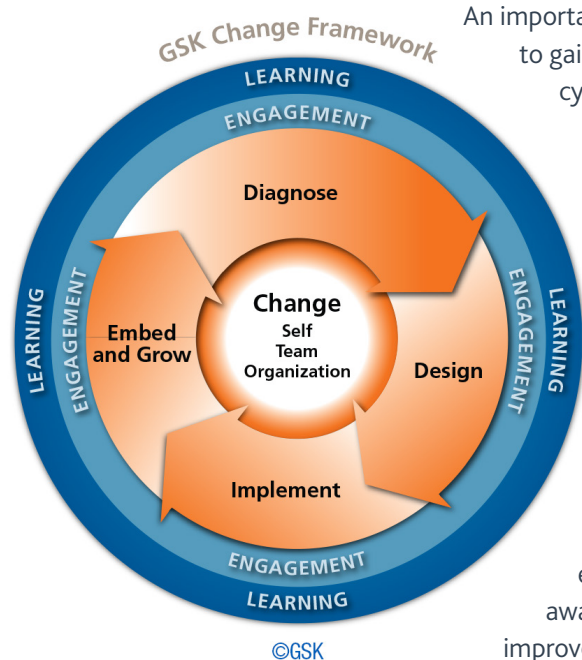
To accomplish this, it launched the Accelerating Delivery and Performance (ADP) program in order to focus its efforts on performance improvement. This program combines approaches derived from project management as well as Organizational Development (OD) and Lean Six Sigma (Lean Sigma). By taking sections from each of these disciplines, GSK was able to create an approach that could sufficiently support its ambitious strategy. ADP’s mission is to “embed and grow a performance driven culture in GSK,” says Jacqui Alexander, vice president of ADP at GSK.

In order to effectively communicate its vision, the ADP team created a “GSK Change Framework.” This framework was designed to be simple and accessible to leaders and their teams as they went through change.

“We have taken the simplest, most easily teachable and most sticky—i.e., people do them and keep doing them—approaches from the world[s] of project management, change management, OD and Lean Six Sigma,” says Ms. Alexander.

There are six core principles at the core of the ADP approach:

1. All change starts with oneself.
2. Active, committed and visible sponsorship by key stakeholders (at all levels) is imperative.
3. Ensure that simple, time-bound measures tied to financial/business results are defined.
4. Include people who are impacted by change to own and design it.
5. Focus on the few vital things that you can change now.
6. Design fit for purpose solutions that address customer needs, not wants.



An important milestone in the implementation of the GSK change initiative was to gain the trust and belief of leadership—many of whom were neutral or cynical about it. The team addressed this by implementing a series of small “beacon projects” that demonstrated to leadership that the ADP approach was effective and could produce both hard business benefits as well as softer organizational development benefits. This allowed the team to gain the attention of those leaders who wanted both.

After completing the beacon projects, ADP came to the realization that even though it was created for change projects, it could be used for a much broader purpose.

“We started to realize that if we brought in the concepts of how does a business align to a strategy and deploy a strategy effectively, connect it to a management system and then [become] aware of working in a mindset and working continuously around improvement, we could actually affect how a whole business unit operated—and improve how they operated,” says Ms. Alexander.

“What we help a leadership team do... is to really identify what their key goals are, what their key strategies are, what their key metrics are for the business—but then, specifically, we might help them identify what are the deeper dives or interventions that will help shift the needle for their business,” says Ms. Alexander.

ADP uses a diagnostic tool, which helps teams understand what their normal approach to change is and shows them how to identify and then choose the most effective approach for change. This way, the teams are involved in the change and the way it’s implemented, rather than having change done to them.













Another way that ADP gained the trust of the organization was to recruit its team members from the three disciplines—project management, OD and Lean Sigma.

“I would say [to them], let’s work together and you will see it’s not a threat working with us,” says Ms. Alexander.

“Many people were waiting for us to fail and disappear in the first couple of years,” she says. “But of course we didn’t—we actually became more and more successful because we were doing work that was valued by the organization.”

The ADP team continues to sustain change and manages the hearts and minds of the GSK workforce by applying a “Forum, Fieldwork, Feedback” approach to building capability in the organization. This process begins with a series of “Forum” workshops in which they teach employees the ADP approaches and how they can be applied immediately to their work. In the “Fieldwork” process, they are coached and observed in applying the ADP processes, which leads to “Feedback” to build skills.

Currently, there are about 1,250 certified ADP practitioners within GSK, says Ms. Alexander. Those who are certified as ADP practitioners have typically attended training workshops, but also have learned a good deal of their knowledge from other ADP practitioners. In fact, to be certified, practitioners are required to use 10 of 12 skills, but must also be able to teach five of those skills to other employees.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">GSK Fundamentals for Delivery</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Choose to do the right things • Get better at getting the right things done</p>		
	I seek the Voice of the Customer to understand what they really need and value. <i>Typical tools and practices: Gemba, Interviews, Strategy Deployment</i>	Diagnose
	I 'go and see' to understand processes, accountabilities and performance. <i>Typical tools and practices: GEMBA Walks, Process Mapping</i>	
	I carry out Problem Solving in order to identify Root Causes and implement sustainable solutions. <i>Typical tools and practices: Change Framework, Problem Statement, Root Cause Diagnosis</i>	
	I effectively define the benefits and scope of work to ensure alignment with strategy. <i>Typical tools and practices: Project Charter, Project Mural, KPI's, Return on Change</i>	Design
	I make a conscious decision about the Approach to Change to ensure successful implementation. <i>Typical tools and practices: Change Approaches, Change Curve</i>	
	I carry out Implementation Planning to accelerate execution and deliver benefits. <i>Typical tools and practices: Joint Planning Session, Risk and Issue Management</i>	
	I carry out Visual Performance Management to engage and align teams. <i>Typical tools and practices: KPI's, Comms. Cells, Accountability Boards</i>	Implement
	I take responsibility for continuously improving my part of the business. <i>Typical tools and practices: Sand-Pebbles-Rocks, Standard Work, Change Framework</i>	Embed & Grow
	I effectively engage the right stakeholders and sponsors to accelerate delivery. <i>Typical tools and practices: Stakeholder Map and Management Plan</i>	Engagement
	I am personally accountable for my own effectiveness, learning and development. <i>Typical tools and practices: Reflection, Journaling</i>	Learning Change Self, Team, Organisation
	I coach individuals and teams to improve performance. <i>Typical tools and practices: Feedback, Coaching, Inverted Triangle</i>	
	I focus on our Ways of Working in order to increase team effectiveness. <i>Typical tools and practices: IPO, Advocacy / Inquiry, Fist or Five, AAR</i>	

Note: This illustrates the primary Fundamentals for each phase of the Change Framework; however **all** Fundamentals can be relevant in any phase.

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ADP has had a significant impact on GSK's overall business as well. In fact, last year, it was successful in helping a number of the five new drug applications that GSK submitted to the FDA and globally to gain approval. The team helped support and build the capability to make sure that the applications were delivered on time, Ms. Alexander says.

The team is currently focusing on expanding the ADP way of working to emerging markets outside of North America and Europe. Ms. Alexander says that even though ADP is still an important part of the work that is done in North America and Europe, the emerging markets are "where the new engagement and the new desire is coming from."

"In ADP we are the ultimate generalists, we don't wish to stick around. You know, my dream is that my team is not needed by GSK because it has given the capability to our organization," says Ms. Alexander.

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