

The company's need for change stems from outgrowing the current management practices and systems that once helped the manufacturer succeed in the early growth stages. Since the company has experienced rapid growth over the last decade, they are now facing many organizational challenges. Due to a significant increase in sales, recent international expansion, and employees who do not feel encouraged to participate in decision-making, there is a need for organizational change. Using the organizational life cycle model will help the company manage change, as it suggests that the organization moves through stages of development, including entrepreneurial, collectivity, formalization, elaboration, and revitalization or decline. Given the rapid growth the company is experiencing, the organization is now entering the formalization stage, in which leadership will clarify who does what and provide clear direction. If they want to remain competitive, they will have to embrace change by replacing their outdated systems, improving their leadership approach, and creating a culture that supports creativity and innovation.

There are many differences between a traditional organization and a learning organization. Currently, the manufacturer operates as a traditional organization, using a top-down decision-making approach in which leadership maintains control and employees are not encouraged to participate in decision-making. Other characteristics of a traditional organization include resistance to change, viewing training as a cost, and limited innovation. Some characteristics of a learning organization include shared decision-making among employees, encouraging employees to contribute ideas and solutions, a focus on continuous improvement through ongoing training and development, and viewing change as an opportunity.

The company is currently in the forming stage of Woolner's 5-stage model, in which an organization begins to recognize the need for change and improvement but has not yet established new systems or practices to support organizational learning and growth. There are many indicators that the manufacturing company is currently in this stage, including limited employee involvement in decision-making, a lack of learning programs, employees not feeling empowered to be creative, and an absence of systems that encourage innovation. Despite the company's massive growth, it has not yet developed a culture that supports continuous learning and knowledge sharing among employees, which leaves the organization in the forming stage.

The company can become a learning organization by applying Senge's five disciplines, the first of which is personal mastery, which focuses on continuous individual learning and self-improvement. The manufacturer can start by offering professional development programs, providing leadership training, and even creating career development plans for employees to encourage them to continue improving their skills. The second discipline is mental models, which are assumptions and beliefs that influence behavior. The manufacturer should reconsider its current beliefs about leadership practices, such as the idea that employees should simply follow instructions and that innovation comes only from upper management. Leaders should challenge the traditional belief that managers alone make all the decisions and instead encourage open discussion and suggestions to improve existing processes and foster new ways of thinking amongst employees. The third discipline of Senge's five disciplines is a shared vision. Leadership should involve employees in creating a shared vision focused on innovation,

global competitiveness, and continuous learning. When the employees are encouraged to help create a vision, they become more committed to achieving it themselves. The fourth discipline is team learning, which emphasizes collaboration and collective problem-solving. The company should encourage team learning through open knowledge-sharing meetings and collaborative projects. Cross-functional teams should collaborate to improve processes and initiate innovative projects to develop solutions. Using the team learning approach allows employees to learn from one another and generate new ideas along the way. The final discipline of Senge's five disciplines is systems thinking, which focuses on understanding how the different parts of an organization influence one another. Employees and leaders at the manufacturer should analyze the organization's departments to understand how their operations are interconnected and how they affect one another. Systems thinking will enable leadership within the company to deal with the root causes of problems rather than just their symptoms. The manufacturer can then gradually develop a culture of continuous learning and innovation by applying all of Senge's five disciplines.

Using Balogun and Hope Hailey's model, the nature of the change is big bang, and the end result is transformational. The nature of the change is appropriate for the company because the organization is experiencing rapid growth that requires new technology and a new organizational culture. These changes are interconnected and will require an immediate, coordinated, all-at-once transformation. Implementing the changes simultaneously will help the company quickly establish up-to-date processes and begin transitioning to a learning organization. The end result is appropriate because the company requires changes that go beyond simple process improvements. The major changes include moving from a top-down culture to a collaborative one, replacing outdated inventory systems, developing employee learning programs, and encouraging greater creativity and experimentation across the organization. These changes will affect the organization's strategy, organizational structure, culture, leadership style, and operational systems, all of which are characteristics of a revolutionary type of change.

Using the steps of the action research model will allow us to transform the manufacturer into a learning organization. First, we will diagnose the problem by having management collect information to identify potential barriers to the organization becoming a learning organization. For example, managers can offer employee surveys to measure engagement and innovation, assess the training programs, and analyze inventory inefficiencies. The diagnosis will help reveal issues related to the top-down culture, low employee engagement, outdated systems, and limited learning opportunities. Next is to analyze the provided feedback. The leadership team should review the feedback, then present it to the employees. The results will show low employee engagement, operational inefficiencies caused by outdated systems, and the impact of limited training on innovation and productivity. The data will raise awareness and help build support for the change. After the feedback is analyzed, it is necessary to develop and implement the action plans based on the new information. Management will then create solutions by implementing a new inventory system, establishing employee suggestion programs, creating cross-functional teams, and expanding training and leadership development programs. These actions will help move the organization towards a learning culture. Finally, the

company should evaluate the results. The managers will measure outcomes and determine whether the changes are achieving the desired goals through the data. Management will review employee engagement scores, training completion rates, productivity improvements, and inventory accuracy rates. Continuous evaluation of this data will help ensure that learning and improvements continue after initial changes have happened.

The first innovation strategy that management could use to transition the company to a learning organization is exploration. Exploration could involve establishing a system in which employees can contribute ideas and solutions to problems, thereby encouraging creativity and participation and ensuring they feel heard and included in the decision-making process. This strategy will help increase participation and establish an environment of creativity and innovation. The second innovation strategy the organization could use is to hold innovation challenges or contests where employees can generate ideas for voting, and management could reward the idea chosen for implementation. These contests would bring together employees from various departments to share ideas and solve organizational challenges. The benefits of this strategy include greater creativity and faster problem-solving. The leadership team has agreed to hold a monthly contest to encourage employees to share ideas and suggestions on how the company can improve processes, solve problems, and enhance customer service. To encourage employee participation, management will use a reward system for ideas that are implemented. This change supports the second innovation strategy by encouraging participation, increasing employee ownership, and fostering a culture of innovation and creativity.

After applying an innovation strategy, we need to explore the four steps of Kotter's 8-step model to support the company's change process. The first step of Kotter's 8-step model is for management to create a sense of urgency among employees to help them understand why the changes are necessary. Examples include explaining why outdated inventory systems need to be replaced, highlighting the increased global competition, and showing employees how innovation is essential to future growth. The second step in Kotter's 8-step model is to form a powerful guiding coalition that includes influential leaders from different departments within the organization, such as executives, department managers, IT specialists, HR professionals, and front-line workers. This group of leaders will help coordinate and sustain the change efforts. The third step is for the coalition team to create a clear vision for the company that directly supports its transformation into a learning organization. For example, it could sound something like "To become a creative global manufacturer that values continuous learning and empowering employees to be innovative." The fourth step in Kotter's 8-step model is for the coalition team to communicate the vision to all employees at the company through meetings, internal channels, and training sessions. Leadership should make sure that all employees understand the new vision and strategies, and model the behaviors they want employees to demonstrate.

For the manufacturer to maintain a learning organization and sustain the changes made, they must apply the five pillars of sustainable change. The first pillar is leadership. Leaders at the company should actively reinforce learning throughout the organization by providing coaching rather than supervision. Leadership should also ensure that the organization's strategy, culture, and systems are aligned. The second pillar is strategy, which refers to the company's strategic

position and what sets it apart from competitors. The manufacturer should have clear strategies about how they will approach the change process and stand out from others. The company could perform similar activities in different ways to differentiate itself from rivals. The third pillar is culture, which the company can maintain by reinforcing the importance of learning and taking risks through contests, open knowledge-sharing discussions, and a reward system. Culture exists when there is mutual understanding of who the organization is, what it stands for, and how it operates. The fourth pillar is structure, which plays a role in determining the success of the change initiatives. The company should ensure that communication and shared knowledge are supported within the organization, thereby increasing operational efficiency and helping it manage change. The last pillar is systems, which refers to the different departments and systems within the organization that make up the company as a whole. Access to data within each system will be a major factor in determining whether the company can withstand the change. Together, these five pillars will help the company determine whether the organization is ready for change by assessing whether the strategy, culture, leadership, structure, and systems align with the company's vision.