

# Leading into the Unknown? Yes, we need Change Management Leadership

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## ABSTRACT

The paper is written for those who want to lead the new changes in biometric department. Currently, the biometric department is going through Big Changes from traditional SAS® programming to open-source programming, cloud computing, data science or even Machine Learning, and how to manage and lead those changes becomes critical for the leaders so that changes could be achieved under budget and on schedule.

Change Management is the activities/processes that support the success of changes in the organization and is considered as a leadership competency for enabling changes within the organization. More importantly, the success rate of the changes directly correlates with change management by the leaders. Leaders with excellent change management is six times more likely to succeed than ones with poor change management.

The paper will discuss major obstacles that leaders will face such as programmer/middle management resistance, insufficient support. And it will also discuss about success factors that leaders could implement in change management such as detailed planning, dedicated resources and funds, experiences in change, participation of programmers, frequent transparent communication, and clear goals.

Finally, the paper will show the examples of how change management effectively lead the success of Open-Source Programming Migration from SAS® for the department of more than 150 SAS programmers.

## WHAT IS CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The Association of Change Management Professional defines “Change Management” as a deliberate set of activities that facilitate and support the success of individual and organizational change and the realization of its intended business results.

Here “Change” means building a permanent organizational change, moving beyond one time project. For example, if Biometric department uses opensource programming to one time deliverable, it won't be considered as a permanent change. But, if Biometric department builds open-source programming capability/infrastructures that will be used constantly across the organization, it could be considered as a permanent change. In this permanent change, change management will help the Biometric leaders successfully manage the transition to open-source programming.

## THE GOALS OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The purpose of Change Management is to help the people / organization to successfully change. Successful change means meeting the objectives of change project in time and on budget.

The success rate of this kind of change directly correlates with how good the change management is. Based on the survey by Prosci, an excellent Change Management will increase the likelihood to meet the objective by 6 times.

## STAKEHOLDERS IN CHANGE PROJECT

Organizational change will impact many departments and involve many people, and it is very important to identify the stakeholders and to define their roles in Change Project.

- Sponsor Leaders – the greatest contributor to the success of Change Project who will sponsor and oversee Change Project
- Managers/middle management – Team leaders who will supervise the changes impacting the team members who they lead.
- Sponsor Teams – Team members who will go through the change and will work with the outcome of the new change.
- Change supporting team : team who will implement changes. They could be outside consultants.
- Subject Matter Expert : subject matter experts who understand the know-how of the changes and landscape of the outcome and process of Change Project.

## FAILURE FACTORS OF CHANGE PROJECT

There are many reasons that changes in organization have failed, and below could be leading factors.

- Lack of effective sponsorship
- Employee and middle management resistance
- Insufficient resources

### SUCCESS FACTORS OF CHANGE PROJECT

In order to overcome challenges and possible failures, the leadership could implement below plans/activities.

- Executive sponsorship : Executive sponsorship is the most important success factor in Change Project. It should be also active and visible, so the whole organization knows and follow the change initiative.
- Resources and budgets for change : There should be enough time and resources for the team to go through changes.
- Frequent, transparent communication regarding coming changes and plan : Organizational change will go through many steps and plan, and it is critical to communicate across the organization so the whole team will understand and follow the changes.
- Full participation and engagement from team member and managers : Organizational change should get buy-in from the team members; otherwise, it will surely fail.

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Leadership in change management is not to tell people what to do. On contrary, it is what leaders can do for people. In order to lead a successful change, leaders ensure that

- Show Empathy for People
- Always User Friendly First
- Understand the problems of the people
- Identify the stakeholders and define their roles
- Identify the people who would be early adopters and those most likely to resist. Plan how to reach those people.
- People feel ownership of the change
- People have the role in the change

### UPCOMING CHALLENGES IN BIOMETRIC

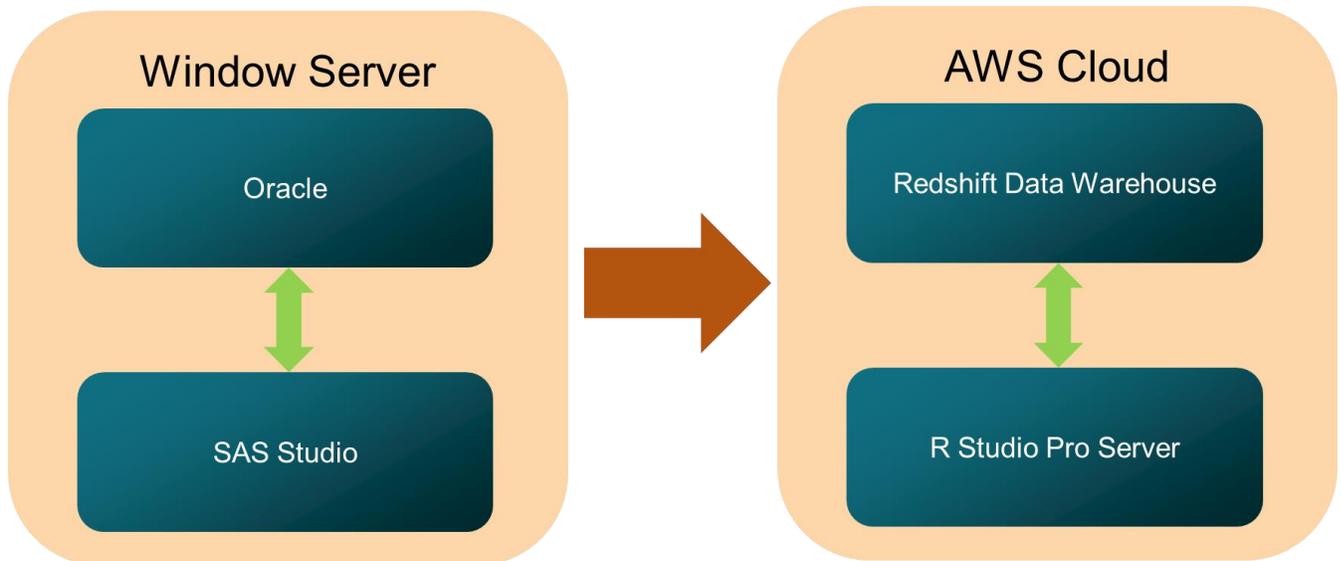
Biometric department is in crossroad now. We have been using the traditional SAS programming, and recently seeing the following new opportunities.

- Open-source Programming
- Cloud Computing
- Real World Data
- New analytic system (Jupyter, R Studio)
- Machine Learning
- Data Visualization
- And more

And these possible changes could be big challenges, but also great opportunities for Biometric department. Right change management by leadership help Biometric department successfully change and lead the new opportunities.

### SUCCESS STORY OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN OPEN-SOURCE TRANSITION PROJECT

I had led the organizational transition from SAS to Open-source programming in major pharmaceutical company. The whole commercial analytic department has moved from SAS Studio to R Pro Server (R & Python), and this change has involved 150 SAS programmers and 250 existing SAS codes.



This change to open-source programming has impacted the whole commercial analytic department and 150 SAS programmers, and the leaderships implemented change management activities for the successful transition.

- Leadership has initiated this change and supported throughout the whole transition project.
- Transition supporting team has provided frequent, transparent communication regarding the status and update of the transition project.
- Transition supporting team has provided the necessary trainings ( R, Python, and Machine Learning)
- Transition supporting team also provided the frequent workshop on how to use the new system ( AWS S3, AWS Redshift, R Studio, Jupyter, Git, SQL workbench).
- There were more than 250 existing SAS codes. Since SAS programmers were busy with their daily works, transition supporting team migrated SAS codes to R/Python/SQL codes, and also walked through the migrated codes and processes together. So, SAS programmers have enough times to learn and understand the migrated codes.
- There was SME/lead available from Transition supporting team, who knows the existing SAS environment and new open-source system/programming. So, Sponsor Team could ask about the new system and open-source programming any time.

## **CONCLUSION**

Any changes are difficult to people as well as to organizations, and if the change be implemented across the whole organization, it will become more difficult. Unfortunately, many organizational changes won't meet the objectives, or be delayed or become too expensive. In the era of fast-changing, constantly advancing, evolving business environment, not only leaders should be able to identify and initiate the change, but also manage the change. "Change Management" become critical leadership skillset for all the leaders. Biometric department has gone through many changes successfully and will see a lot more changes in the coming days, and Biometric Leaders with excellent change management skills will be able to lead those changes with a great success.

## **REFERENCES**

- <https://www.prosci.com>

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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