

Change Management in Higher Education Institutions

Taiga Brahm & Tobias Jenert

SFDN

Taiga Brahm, taiga.brahm@unisg.ch, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

Tobias Jenert, tobias.jenert@unisg.ch, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

The workshop is about change management in higher education institutions (HEI). Based on a computer-based simulation, the participants will gain an understanding how to initiate change initiatives in HEI and how to deal with open or hidden resistance in change processes. The simulation and own experiences will provide the background for the participants to reflect upon their own competences in change processes. They will get to know (or refresh) basic concepts of change management (e.g. roles in change processes, change process models) and reflect how they can use these in their own work.

After the workshop, the participants will

- know about the most important change management models.
- have experienced a simulated change process acting as a team of change agents.
- have reflected upon methods and instruments how to deal with resistance in change processes.
- have transferred some of the workshop content to their own HEI.

The simulation and the workshop are based on change management theory such as the models of Lewin (Lewin & Graumann, 1982), Müller-Stewens & Lechner (2005) and Hall & Hord (2001) who describe that change processes commonly go through different phases such as development, implementation and institutionalization (e.g. Hall & Hord, 2001). The workshop itself will centre on the simulation "EduChallenge" (Angehrn, Schönwald, Euler & Seufert, 2005). EduChallenge is a team-based simulation on the dynamics of change and change management in higher education contexts. It integrates both insights from research on change processes as well as the specific characteristics of higher education institutions as "loosely coupled systems" (Weick, 1976) who require special care in "managing" change. The participants are put into the roles of change agents. The context of the simulation is a university where a university-wide Quality Assurance System was implemented over the last two years. However, the business school of the university is still resisting the change. The participants will experience the simulation and in the debriefing of the simulation, change management theory will be applied in order to connect theoretical concepts with the practical experience from the simulation or from one's own institution.

To provide the participants with the experience of being a change agent in a university context, the simulation will be played in teams during the workshop. We will start out with a short introduction into change management and into the simulation (10 minutes). The participants will be asked to play the simulation in teams of three participants to gain some initial change experience (30 minutes). In a first debriefing round, the experience will be discussed and first insights will be highlighted (30 minutes). After the break, the participants have the chance to play the simulation again (20 minutes). After the second round of the simulation, the final debriefing will take place (40 minutes). The participants will reflect on their lessons learned (with guiding questions) and exchange them. This simulation-based method of developing competence for managing change processes was evaluated in an early stage by Schönwald et al. (2006).

Short version/Abstract

The workshop is about change management in higher education institutions (HEI). Based on a computer-based simulation, the participants will experience how to initiate change initiatives in HEI and how to deal with open or hidden resistance in change processes. If you are facing a change initiative in your HEI, join our workshop and learn about important change concepts and most importantly experience the sometimes frustrating, sometimes joyful role of a change agent.

References

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