

Numbers That Drive Change:

Unveiling the Power of Benefits

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Introduction

On several of our community events, the subject of collecting data, measuring benefits, and the use of statistics has been raised. So, this month, the conversation is on Numbers That Drive Change, Unveiling the Power of Benefits Statistics in Change Management.

We have recorded and included the [talk here](#). This paper summarizes the talk and adds in the key points you raised in the discussion.

Data

Corinne explained a little about the types of data that you may want to collect on your program. She prefaced the conversation by encouraging you to think upfront about how you intend to use the data and how you plan to present it. Thinking early will help prevent you from collecting data for the sake of it without any foresight on how it will help you.

As you collect data, you might want to consider how the data will be linked, what pieces of data might be related, and how they may impact each other. Most importantly, who has that data and when do they capture it. If we are capturing our own data, then we might want to think about when to collect it and ensure consistency in the frequency of collection. If you are not sure, then consider analysing a sample set of data to see what it tells you.

Types of Measure

We discussed the use of direct and indirect measures. Direct measures are the hard measures like sales data or income. Those secondary factors that are important but more indirect are things like engagement scores.

Remember to be careful in how you set up the collection of the data, and perhaps the data is more than just smiley faces. As we collect data, being aware of what else is happening in the organization may help us understand fluctuations that cannot be wholly attributable to the program.

Finally, we should also be thinking about payback times. Organizations are keen to get early payback on spending these days. They see agility and assume that this is a quick and sure

way to get an early return on investment. We, of course, know that change management plays a crucial part in the delivery of early success.

The Statistics

Before we all got excited about joining a math class, Corinne cautioned us to think about the presentation of data, and that she would cover only lightly some of the techniques.

Please do watch the video; this paper cannot do it justice.

She introduced box charts that gave us insight into how to show the spread of data, especially when the average score could be misleading about the number of outliers from the median.

It was a nice pictorial way to show whether people are grouped together or if there is a wide variation in scores. Avoiding explaining the intricate detail of how to create these, she did provide us with the relevant statistical terms.

This could be complemented with a scatter graph, showing all scores on a graph indicating another pictorial way to see the trends and what is happening on the project. We also considered various other graphical methods that show trends over time so we can start to see correlations with significant events.

Have Your Say

We asked the groups to go off and consider their current use of statistics in their change program and come back with insights. You said:

- Correlation discussion and thinking of metrics we are gathering led us to think about the outcomes and being able to show the client the leading and lagging indicators.
- There could be a whole series of metrics that we could collect earlier rather than later. Thinking about the leading indicators, what will allow us to show that we are on track or that we need to take corrective action if the leading indicators are not positive.
- Create indicators by putting in tests along the way, e.g., to find out how successful training is, put tests/quizzes in along the way.
- We should adopt the philosophy "Measure, Review, and Retry" as we want to get it right the first time, and only when we analyse the data will we realize what else we need.
- You need a baseline – we need to change something for the better.
- Create the As Is model so you can prove that the To Be model is better – you are changing because the status quo (As Is) is not acceptable.
- Consider having a benefits measurement strategy at the start.
- Drive out the mission statement by asking what improvements we really want to create.
- What is the bottom-line impact – how do we monetize some of the benefits that are intangible/feel-good metrics e.g., confidence increases activity levels/productivity which leads to efficiencies to cost savings.

- Secondary measures of leadership and engagement and process improvements, innovations, etc. – attribute these to monetary values – create the value chain leading to a financial outcome – Kaplan and Norton measures.
- Put the value to these secondary factors consistently across all changes.
- Also, identify who owns these different elements that you are measuring, who can influence them, and who cares about them.

Conclusion

This session was far too short! There is so much to think about, and we all had different take-aways. Already, I have used the valuable advice Corinne gave about using a timeline to show when other changes are taking place, so that you do not inadvertently “double-count” benefits by claiming only your change is triggering them, when other change initiatives are also having an impact on the same measures.

[Book now for the June event](#), where we are going to spend time creating a Benefits Management Strategy for use on our change initiatives.