

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Chicago
January 30 – February 2, 2015**

Topic: Change Management Communication Best Practices

Background: At their 2014 Fall Executive Committee Meeting the group discussed the basics of change management and explored the topic within the context of board work and YALSA. From that discussion, Carrie Kausch has created the proposal below for the board’s consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Proposal

Establish Board change management best practices regarding communication to 1) ensure that members are informed on organizational change; 2) ensure that change is best set up for success; and 3) assist board members in modeling change management best practices for YALSA members, which might be useful at the institutional level in implementing recommendations called for in “The Future of Library Services For and With Teens: a Call to Action.”

What is Change Management?

Change management is the process of anticipating, preparing, introducing, and implementing change in a way that best ensures success, both as it pertains to the organization itself and our members.

“Change management focuses on people, and is about ensuring change is thoroughly, smoothly and lastingly implemented.” Mindtools.com, “Change Management”

Change is often feared, even when it is positive.

“70% of people are afraid of change.” Kay Sprinkel Grace, “Board Members as Leaders of Change,” BoardSource Leadership Forum 2014

People resist change because of:

- belief that the change initiative is a temporary fad
- loss of authority, career and/or social status, control
- lack of faith in their ability to learn new skills
- feeling of change overload (too much too soon)
- loss of job security

One of the important elements of change management is communicating with stakeholders in a way that ensures buy-in and success. In communication, anticipate reactions, questions, and possible positive and negative impacts. *Be empathetic.*

- “People don’t resist change; they resist the implications of change for themselves.” Darryl Connor (quoted by Susan Meier, “Champions For Change or Stalwarts of the Status Quo,” BoardSource Leadership Forum 2014)

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- “You need to recognize that for some, change may affect them negatively in a very real way that you may not have foreseen. For example, people who've developed expertise in (or have earned a position of respect from) the old way of doing things can see their positions severely undermined by change.” MindTools.com, “The Change Curve”
- “Make sure that you address these early with clear communication and support, and by taking action to minimize and mitigate the problems that people will experience. As the reaction to change is very personal and can be emotional, it is often impossible to preempt everything, so make sure that you listen and watch carefully during this stage (or have mechanisms to help you do this) so you can respond to the unexpected.” MindTools.com, “The Change Curve”

To capitalize on change management best practices for future organizational success and implement initiatives that support the recommendations made in “The Future of Library Services For and With Teens: a Call to Action,” Board Change Management Communication Best Practices should be established to support and model effective communication to the greater membership.

YALSA Board Change Management Communication Best Practices

When a change is made, the YALSA Board will:

- Evaluate the significance of the change to determine the level of communication necessary. Changes that call for a more extensive level of communication include but are not limited to:
 - Creation of new and unique member engagement opportunities
 - Changes to committee participation requirements
 - Sunsetting decisions
 - Conference or symposium structure that would affect a large percentage of attendees
 - Organizational structure
 - Changes to dues structures or levels
- Consider the best method(s) for communicating the decision to stakeholders. Possible methods include but are not limited to:
 - Board meeting minutes
 - Email blast
 - YALSAblog
 - Social media
 - YALSA E-news
 - *YALS*
 - Press release
 - Listservs
 - Virtual Town Hall
- When deciding on the method(s), consider:
 - Who are the stakeholders that need to be informed? Is there a priority order for informing them?
 - Using a variety of communication tools. Some organizations make a mistake in using only one vehicle. Repetition can be helpful in effective communication.

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- Communication resources should be expended only on communicating information that contributes to success or where a lack of communication can lead to failure.
- Consider who is best to convey the message and to which audience(s) .
 - Keep in mind only the President or Executive Director can speak for YALSA; however, the President could delegate the responsibility to someone
- In the communication, consider including answers to the following:
 - What exactly is the change?
 - Why is it happening?
 - What are the benefits to YALSA?
 - What are the benefits to members?
 - Consider possible concerns and objections.
 - Consider members who might have an emotional stake in the “old way.”
 - What are the benefits to stakeholders, such as teens, Partner organizations, etc.?
 - If this change were not made, what would be the possible repercussions?
 - Who will be affected by the change? How?
 - Timeline for the change
 - Will it be temporary or permanent?
 - Will it be gradual or swift?
 - What can YALSA members do to assist in the success?
 - How will we know it was successful?
- The communication should be reviewed by the YALSA President and the Executive Director to ensure that what is being communicated is thorough and correct.
- After review, the designated person will release the communication, working with YALSA staff as necessary.
- The communication should be shared in a time frame that best sets up the change for success. Some possible timelines to consider include but are not limited to:
 - Within two weeks after the Board meeting where the decision is made.
 - Simultaneous with a press release.

Recommended Board Action:

The Board moves to adopt the Board Change Management Communication best practices as outlined above and directs the Executive Director to work with staff to update the YALSA Handbook to include this new document.

Possible Next Steps

This document focuses on appropriate steps to take once a decision is made. The board may want to explore and formalize processes for engaging and communicating with members during the phases that come prior to decision making, such as discussions, proposal development and refinement, etc.

Additional Resources:

- Fall Executive Committee Meeting document on change management, <http://ow.ly/HoyvT>
- Short video on change management from BetterBusinessLearning.com: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nj-14KaTw1Y>

- “Leading Change” KnowHowNonProfit.org
<http://knowhownonprofit.org/leadership/change/basics-on-managing-change/leadingchange>
- Tips for Communicating Change
http://knowhownonprofit.org/leadership/change/tools/copy_of_communication

Work Consulted:

“The Change Curve.” MindTools.com http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_96.htm

“Change Management” Mindtools.com
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_87.htm

“Change Management and Communication Plan.” UQ Blackboard Implementation Project
<http://www.communicatieplan.info/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/communicationchangemngmntplanoct04.pdf>

“Communications Plan.” Office of the Chief Information Officer Washington State
<https://ocio.wa.gov/pmframework/initiation/planning/communications>

Fenson, Sarah. “10 Tips For Communicating Change.” Inc.
<http://www.inc.com/articles/2000/06/19312.html>

“Leading and Managing Change at the University of Bath: Guidance and Tool Kit.” University of Bath http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/leadership-and-management/change-management/docs/Managing_change.pdf

Lorenzi, Nancy M. and Robert T. Riley. “Managing Change” *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association* Vol. 7, No. 2 Mar/Apr 2000
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC61464/pdf/0070116.pdf>