**ISKO Singapore – AGM talk on 17 September 2021**

**Patrick Lambe on Managing Change in Knowledge Management**

*Edited notes of chat*

Patrick Lambe: Most formal change management is ineffective. It has been largely irrelevant during the pandemic. Theory of change management is inadequate for the complex realities we have to navigate in KM.

Brett: My beef with a lot of of the statements is the use of Change Management as a "noun" vs as a "verb”. And meetings have not gotten better, actually they have gotten worse. What HAS improved is the ability to have broader audiences at meetings (for example - this gathering with an international scope).

Bill: I’ve seen reports of managers who call Zoom meetings to direct staff en masse.

Brett: Concur. Sadly so.

Mark: Propaganda/persuasion/marketing - aren't these all just differences of perspective or subject matter?

[Patrick]: They sit on a “persuasion scale” but there is a big difference between the propaganda model and the marketing model.

Bill: The rise of ‘the spin’ is from the 1990’s.

Mark: But a new name for an old term? Or really different because of change of communication media?

Brett Patron: Also, management decisions being made to convince consumers as much as investors/corporate boards.

Bill: Yes and No Mark. Even with paper media there was spin. It became more manipulative with broadcast tv, radio, internet … Remember - Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky is the first spun pure internet scandal.

Mark: Have former power dynamics changed as a result of more knowledge symmetry? i.e. who has access to what information. Leaders of the past had unique access to information that is more widely accessible today.

Brett: "Agile" is more about creating "disruption" vs 'fostering "Change”.

Mark: Change - linear or messy? Theatre or substance?

Bill: Participatory change requires longevity, repetition, and grit! Silent observation - one side of participant observation.

Brett: I really like this Ladder of Participation...

Mark: But is it reality? One person's manipulation is another's citizen control?

Bill: Participants report their behaviour and reasons. Observer can then compare the results from both.

Brett: there's a fine line between "participating" in change and being "participated”.

Mark: The anti-vaxxers think they are expressing citizen control, not being manipulated...

Edgar: @Mark, that’s “citizens out of control” :)

Mark: How has access to information changed change management? Doesn’t it impact power dynamics?

Patrick: Not necessarily. Before pervasive computing and connectivity, we were much more deliberate about how we traded and shared information. Now we are drowning in noise and dominant voices (whether accurate or inaccurate) are the ones that get heard.

Bill: I worked until the 1990’s in the mode of draft, hand to assistant for typing, revise, retype, approve by supervisor, release. Knowledge was much more formal, possibly more accurate, changed much slower, rebuttals were carefully made.

Brett: I don't know that it was "more accurate".... but it was less rushed.

Brett: Sticking with the history of change management slide, and Mark's prescient point about knowledge access/asymmetry.. how has Trust influenced this?

Patrick: I think the nature of trust has changed over the decades. In the post\_war years, the dominant model was mistrust and that’s what influenced the propaganda/persuasion mental model of change. Then we simultaneously lost trust in the planning and control model and invested a great deal of trust in simple management models. Now I think we are in an environment of absence of trust.

Bill: Simple models are still the hallmark of the consulting companies.

Meena: Agree about the experimental nature of participatory processes, but also they were considered disruptive and controversial in my opinion.

Shah: Currently, the trend is to adopt "behavioural insights" … changing "behaviours" as part of change management … one such method is the Nudge Theory. Should take a look at it.

Patrick: Nudge theory is basically a more sophisticated form of propaganda.

Brett Patron: @Shah: "The Trend"...where?

Shah: @Brett … govts (UK … Spore) adopted this approach in their policy formulation process to ensure the public will change.

Mark: Change management = advocacy = nudge? Just a question of scale and magnitude?

[Patrick]: “Just” is a small word for a big shift ;)

Mark: Cynefin Framework slide: Context matters! Crisis? Business as usual?

Eileen: Most of these theories are from the “West”. I wonder if cultures will also have a big role to play?!

Brett: @Eileen..WOW! Great question!

Shah: @Eileen … definitely … one size doesn't fit all … :-)