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**Article**

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Journal of Applied Leadership and Management

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

Professional School of Business & Technology, Hochschule Kempten - University of Applied Sciences

*Suggested Citation:* Gerwing, Carlo (2016) : Meaning of Change Agents within Organizational Change, Journal of Applied Leadership and Management, ISSN 2194-9522, Hochschule Kempten - University of Applied Sciences, Professional School of Business & Technology, Kempten, Vol. 4, pp. 21-40,  
<http://www.journal-alm.org/article/view/17107>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/156751>

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## Meaning of Change Agents within Organizational Change

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### Summary

- Research questions: Does an officially appointed change agent overestimate his change related skills and knowledge in comparison to the assessment of his employees?
- Methods: Two questionnaires were developed to gather information related to the change related skills and knowledge from the target groups in a quantitative approach. The target groups consist of officially appointed change agents and employees.
- Results: The empirical results of the study are not very clear and shows that change agents mainly overestimate their change related skills, but also underestimate their abilities in some dimensions. It further shows that the change agents underestimate their change related knowledge.
- Structure of the article: 1. Introduction; 2. Literature Review; 3. Hypothesis & Research methods; 4. Empirical results; 5. Conclusions; 6. About the author; 7. References

### 1. Introduction

“There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.” (Machiavelli, 1532, chapter VI).

The reasons, why organizations decide for change are diverse. Organizations try to survive and remain competitive in the market and therefore constantly try to change. Organizational change can take place in forms of major changes like mergers, acquisition or outsourcing or minor changes throughout the organization to improve business effectiveness and efficiency. Even though intense research has been conducted on the field of organizational change, various practical frameworks and theories are available of how to implement change in organizations effectively, the failure rate of organizational change seems to be high and approximately constant over the last decades.

Behr and Nohria (2000) estimated that 70 percent of the organizational change initiatives fail completely. The reasons for failure are lack of strategy and vision, lack of resources, lack of management commitment, lack of applied knowledge and required knowledge or resistance to change.

According to Nikolaou, Gouras, Vakola and Bourantas (2007) most research dealing with organizational change are focusing on organizational factors and neglecting the person-oriented issues. They argue, if this might be the reason why change management programmes often fail.

During a change process two groups of people can be classified: those people who are implementing the change within the organization and those who receive the change. Those people who implement the change are acting as so-called “change agents” in their organization, while the receptor is usually the employee (Barratt-Pugh, Bahn and Gakere, 2012).

Change agents are critical to the entire change process. Change agents initiate, facilitate, implement and support organizational change from the beginning to the end. In order to be successful, the change agents need to possess a wide range of personality traits, skills and knowledge (Cawsey, Deszca, Ingols, 2012).

However: Not every change agent possesses the wide range of competencies. Furthermore internal change agents might be not aware of the huge skillset they need to possess in order to be successful.

Therefore this paper is focussing on the question, if change agents possess the wider range of personality traits, skills and knowledge in order to implement change successfully. It asks, if change agents are aware of the requirements or if they overestimate their personality traits, skills and knowledge. Especially internal change agents, who are selected as change agents might not possess the required competencies.

As an introduction this paper will provide a general understanding of organizational change, the different types of organizational change, change readiness and the reasons of failure. The second part of the literature review will deal with the change agent itself. It will provide an insight of definition of a change agent. Furthermore the differences, advantages and disadvantages of internal and external change agent will be described followed by the roles and responsibilities of a change agent. In addition to that it will describe the personality traits, skills and knowledge a change agent needs to possess in order to be successful. Moreover this paper will provide information about change agents at different levels and identification of a change agent.

The main objective of this study was to prove that internal change agents overestimate their skills and knowledge while deploying organizational change.

In order to prove the problem a questionnaire was developed to gather information from the target groups in a quantitative approach. The target groups consist of officially appointed change agents and employees.

## 2. Literature Review

“Change hurts. It makes people insecure, confused, and angry. People want things to be the same as they've always been, because that makes life easier. But, if you're a leader, you can't let your people hang on to the

past.” – Richard Marcinko, Vietnam War Veteran (Draft, 2012, p. 313).

### 2.1 Organizational Change

#### Defining Organizational Change

The reasons for organizational change are diverse. It can take place in forms of major changes, such as mergers, acquisition, outsourcing, downsizing, streamlining or restructuring (St-Amour, 2001). On the other hand, minor changes occur throughout organization to improve business operations and efficiency in forms of departmental reorganizations, installation of new technology and incentive systems, shutting particular manufacturing lines, or opening new branches in other parts of the country (Cawsey et al., 2012).

Helms-Mills, Dye and Mills (2009, p. 4) defined organizational change “as an alteration of a core aspect of an organization’s operation. Core aspects include the structure, technology, culture, leadership, goal or personnel of any organization.” Examples of alterations or change can be either minor or major, including the restructuring of a single department through the entire company, the introduction of new machinery through the complete change of the production or closing of one department to downsize all. It is not the scale of the change that holds importance, but rather the impact felt within the organization (Helms-Mills, Dye and Mills, 2009).

According to Lewis (2011), change is often considered a sign of progress and improvement. Although an organization is not forced to change due to financial necessity, many factors can lead to change, such as the need for organizations to stay in line with legal requirements, changing customer and/or client needs, newly created and/or outdated technologies, changes in availability of financial resources and alterations of available labour pool.

Moran and Brightman (2000) conducted extended research on organizational change and implemented successful change initiatives in organizations. Based upon their experience, they made the following observations: first, change is non-linear and often no clearly defined beginning or end; second, effective change interweaves multiple improvement efforts such as focusing more on the customer, improving and managing work processes and involving the employees; third, change is a top-down and bottom-up process - top-down because it provides vision and structure, and

bottom-up it encourages participation and generates support; fourth, organizational change has an important personal dimension, given that integrating change on a personal level is the foundation of corporate sustainability; and finally, the change has to be measured. Linking the organization's goals to the individual performance is important for successful change.

### Types of Organizational Change

In the early 1990's Porras and his colleagues Silver and Robertson reviewed largely theory and literature and conducted intense research on the field of organizational change. They distinct between planned versus unplanned change and first-order versus second-order change. Planned change is a deliberate decision or process to improve the organization whereas unplanned change is responding to external influences. External influences are most likely new technologies that affect an organization's core business. Organizations have to react more spontaneous and response in a more adaptive manner as in comparison to planned change. The so-called first-order change is the way of "continuous improvement" and means changes of a less fundamental impact. It means alterations or modifications in existing systems or processes, such as changes in an organization's hierarchy. In comparison to the first-order change, the second order change is more radical and fundamental. Given the major impact on an organization related to unplanned change, Porras and Robertson (1992) named this order of change "revolutionary". Despite the findings of Porras and Robertson providing an easy understanding of the different types of change, it lacks due to the misunderstanding, that "evolutionary" and "revolutionary" change cannot be planned at all.

Weick and Quinn (1999) shaped the types of episodic versus continuous change. Episodic change "tend to be infrequent, discontinuous, and intentional" (Weick and Quinn, p. 365, 1999). It occurs when organizations moving away from their equilibrium conditions due to "a growing misalignment of an inertial deep structure and perceived environmental demands" (Weick and Quinn, p. 365, 1999). It is named episodic because it occurs in distinct periods that are driven by external influences such as new technology or internal ones like changes in key personnel. On the other hand continuous change "tend to be ongoing, evolving, and cumulative" (Weick and Quinn, p. 375, 1999). It is related to the way

of continuous improvement, which the Japanese call "kaizen". According to Weick and Quinn (p. 375, 1999), the "distinctive quality of continuous change is the idea that small continuous adjustments, created simultaneously across units, can cumulate and create substantial change".

Comparing the above findings suggests that the similarity between the two models is intense. It can be stated that organizational change is continuous or discontinuous and is driven by either internal or external influences.

### Change Readiness/ Change Resistance

Given that resistance to change is one of the most reasons for the failure of change initiatives, it is important to deepen this field while exploring organizational change.

Understanding the difference or interrelation between the terms resistance and readiness to change is essential while dealing with organizational change, as they may appear clear opposites to each other. However, according to Self (2007), "resistance and readiness are not polar opposites on a linear continuum. Instead, resistance and readiness represent complex states impacted by numerous individual and organizational factors" (Self, 2007, p. 11). Why individuals resist to change, how individual resistance to change can be managed and how to create readiness for change will be described in this section to explain the terms resistance and readiness for change.

According to Dent and Goldberg (1999) people do not resist change per se. Related to the term of resisting change it is more likely that employees resist against the unknown or the implementation of change that is not feasible from the employee's standpoint

Because change is disruptive and awakes fear about the future and unknown many individuals resist to it and "organizational change efforts often run into some form of human resistance" (Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008, p. 3), even though change initiatives that might be positive or rational involve loss and uncertainty.

Although managers as change agents are often too aware of the above facts but do not take the time to assess the situation before implementing organizational change and think about employee's resistance to change initiatives and for what reasons. Employees might think that they will lose something of value and therefor focus on their own interests instead of the interests of the

organization. Resistance to change also occurs when employees do not understand the implications of change and consider that their benefit is less than their effort. Furthermore, a lack of trust between the change initiator and the employees might be a reason for resistance. In addition, a common reason is that employees assess the current situation in a different way as the change initiator and therefore perceive more costs than benefits (Kotter and Schlesinger, 2008).

While recognising employees' resistance to change, organizations have to deal with and manage it. Goldberg and Dent's (1999) review of theory identified common strategies to overcome resistance to change, which includes employees' education and participation, facilitation, negotiation, manipulation, coercion or discussions. Erwin and Garman (2009) conducted intense research on how managers and change agents can deal and manage employee's resistance to change. Managers and change agents need to be aware of resistance to change and thus have to plan with it. They need to provide additional support in terms of building trust and understanding the need and requirement of change. Those employees who are more open to change, due to their higher level of resilience, risk tolerance and positive self-concept have to be more involved in the change initiatives.

In comparison to resistance to change, Armenakis and Harris (2009) prefer the term readiness for change as it "fits better with a positive approach framing change" (Armenakis and Harris, 2009, p. 132). Their readiness model serves as a guide to create change readiness. Integral part and core of the model is the change message to build commitment to change effort while purpose of the change message is to create core sentiments among organizational members.

According to Kotter (1995), establishing a sense of urgency is the most critical step while implementing change initiatives and addresses the discrepancy component of Armenakis and Harris. Analysing the current and desired future state motivation and readiness can be created (Kotter, 1995).

To summarize the above concepts it can be stated, that whether decreasing the resistance to change or increasing the readiness for change is the key for the successful implementation of change the comparison of both methods point out various similarities. Understanding the need for change, communication, support, dealing with employees concerns and actively involvement are common strategies for change agents to

decrease employee's resistance to change and create employee's readiness for change.

### **Failure of Organizational Change**

Intense and deep research has been conducted on the field of organizational change, with various practical theories and change models available concerning how to implement change in organizations effectively (Bridges, 2009; Cummings and Worley, 2008; Lewin, 1951; Porras and Robertson, 1992; Weick and Quinn, 1999). Nevertheless, as stated below, the failure rate of organizational change seems to be still high and approximately constant over the last two decades.

Kotter (1995) suggested that only 30 percent of change programs are successful. Behr and Nohria (2000) estimated that 70 percent of the organizational change initiatives fail completely and 75 percent of the changes supposed to be successful failed their intended result (Nikolaou et al., 2007). Other statistics indicate that "research suggests that failed organizational change initiatives range from one-third to as high as 80% of attempted change efforts" (Appelbaum, 2012, p. 765). However, even smaller organizational changes with a lesser impact on the organization, such as mergers and acquisitions, are deemed to fail completely or fail to achieve their intended results. (van Witteloostuijn, J. & Zeyse C. ,2013, p. 773).

However, is there always a necessity for change? Zorn, Christensen and Cheney (1999) argued "that it has become managerial fashion for stakeholders to constantly change their organizations. If it isn't new, it cannot be good. If we aren't changing, we must be stagnant. If we don't have the latest, we must be falling behind. If we aren't improving, we must be inadequate".

## **2.2 Change Agent**

### **Change Agent defined**

Lippitt, Watson and Wesley (1958) probably provided the first book and definition on change agents: "the planned change that originates in a decision to make a deliberate effort to improve the system and to obtain the help of an outside agent in making this improvement. We call this outside agent a change agent" (Lippitt et al., 1958, p. 10).

A more general and comprehensive definition was selected by Beckhard (1969): "Change agent' refers to those people either inside or outside the organization who provide technical, specialist or consulting

assistance in the management of a change effort (Beckhard, 1969, p. 101).

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) defined the change agent as a “professional who influences innovation decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency” (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971, p. 35). Three groups are involved in the change process: The change agent coming from outside the organization, the opinion leader from inside the organization who is the change agent working closely together and the change adopter within the organization who is influenced by the opinion leader (Ottaway, 1983).

According to Hutton (1994) the change agent “is someone whose role is to support the president and the top management team in bringing about a purposeful transformation of the organization” (Hutton, 1994, p. 6). This transformation involves helping people to change the way they think, changing the norms and changing the organization’s systems and processes.

From the point of Armenakis, Harris and Field (1999) “anyone involved in initiating, implementing, and supporting change can be considered a change agent” (Armenakis et al., 1999, p. 8). They divided them into three different levels related to their position within the organization. The global change agent might be the head of the organization, the local change agents might be executives and other managers whereas horizontal change agents might be non-managerial organization members who interact socially on and off the job (Armenakis et al., 1999).

Saka (2002) maintain that the success of implementing change is associated with those people who facilitate change.

According to Cawsey et al. (2012) change agents are critical to the entire change process, from the initial diagnosis to implementation. They use the term change agent and change leader interchangeable and define the change leader as a person who “pulls people to change through the use of a powerful change vision” (Cawsey et al., 2012, p. 286).

To summarise the above findings, most definitions have the following in common: The change agent can be anyone possessing required skills and competencies supporting him/her in the change effort. The main purpose of the change agent is to support the organization in change efforts, whether it is facilitation, initiation, implementation or directing. If the change agent should be an internal member of the

organizational or an external facilitator is not explicit in O’Neil’s definition. Researchers use different terms instead or as an alternative to change agent. Change leader, change manager, change champion and change master are just a few. Some authors and scientists use these terms interchangeable with the term change agent, some do not and make a distinct between those.

According to Moran and Brightman (2000) the task of a change leader in an organization is to challenge people to align their purpose, identity and mastery with necessary organization change within a safe environment and help to create this required safe environment. Within this environment they “encourage people to collaborate, take risks, take responsibility and be accountable for the change process” (Moran and Brightman, 2000, p. 66). Therefore, change leaders must have the requisite skills e.g. in leadership, creativity or problem solving.

In line with leading change Katzenbach (1996) provides following broad definition of a change leader: “Real change leaders are individuals who lead initiatives that influence dozens to hundreds others to perform differently – and better – by applying multiple leadership and change approaches” (Katzenbach, 1996, p. 16). He emphasises the differentiation between real change leaders and traditional managers and maintains that real change leaders learn effectively how to overcome change whereas traditional managers are only effective in the current or future state.

Gilley (2005) provided a differentiation between the terms change agent, change leader and change champion. She maintains that everyone is or can be a change agent depending on the situation and possess the necessary skills to some degree, depending on the situation. Change leaders are experts in initiating and executing change. They help their organization achieving a long-term competitive advantage by engaging in initiatives that support change initiatives. In contrast, the change champion themselves acquired the necessary competencies to master change and move their people and organizations forward through change. In contrast to the main feature of self-reliance to acquire necessary competencies as a change champion (Gilley, 2005), Warrick (2012) provided a different definition: “An organization change champion is a person at any level of the organization who is skilled at initiating, facilitating and implementing change” (Warrick, 2012, p. 517).

Until now and related to the researchers' definitions, there has been no clear separation if the change agent is an individual from either outside or inside the organization. For the following use of this paper it will be defined, that an internal change agent is an individual from inside the organization and an external change agent from outside the organization.

In the context of this research paper the change agent can be viewed as an initiator of change, despite the decisions for change efforts being made by the top management or board. In his/her area of responsibility, the change agent initiates, facilitates and implements change effectively, as well as enabling others to deal effectively with change efforts. Areas of responsibility are units of different size within the organization, e.g. the whole organization, divisions, departments or even smaller units. Therefore, the change agent needs the required skills to effectively implement any change efforts.

Therefore, following definition of the term change agent will be used in this research paper (based upon the above definitions and findings):

“The change agent, in his/ her area of responsibility, is anyone skilled in initiating, facilitating and implementing organizational change and enables others to deal with these change efforts.”

### **Internal/ External Change Agent**

Once an organization has diagnosed a difference between the actual and desired future situation and decided to resolve it they face the next decision while implementing organizational change: Who should do it? Organizations often use one of two approaches to make a decision: They decide for either an internal or external change agent. According to Cawsey et al. (2012, p. 287), an internal change agent is “an employee of the organization who knows the organization intimately and is attempting to create change”. These might be members of the board, the Chief Executive Officer, a senior executive, managers, supervisors or general employees possessing the necessary skills, competencies and knowledge to implement change. Especially larger companies have employees working as professional “internal change agents” in the staff departments of Human Resources or Organizational Development. On the other hand an external change agent is an expert in the field of organizational change and development and is working as a professional

consultant. While internal change agents have an understanding of the organization, policies, procedures and existing relationships external change agents possess the required skills, competencies and knowledge to implement change successfully (Cawsey et al., 2012)

According to Cawsey et al. (2012) the internal change agent is crucial through the entire process because “they know the systems, norms, the subtleties of how things get done and they have the existing relationships that can prove helpful” (Cawsey et al., 2012, p. 275). Nevertheless they might not possess the required knowledge or skills, lack in objectivity or independence, have difficulty in reframing existing relationships with organizational members or lack an adequate power base. If there are concerns that these gaps cannot be filled sufficiently the organization might tend to hire an external change agent to assist with the project. They possess and provide subject-matter expertise, facilitate the analysis and provide guidance to the path forward (Cawsey et al., 2012).

According to Hutton (1994) the benefits of selecting internal change agents are that the characteristics and abilities are generally known. Internal change agents know the organization, the type of business, the process, the culture and people. In addition to that, these individuals are already known and respected by others. On the other hand external change agents need the time to familiarise themselves with the organization and business and need to build up non-existing relationships. According to Saka (2002) the term “internal change agent” refers to managers rather than internal organizational change professionals. Saka (2002) emphasises the managers as “internal change agents” rather than external consultants because they know the overall organizational goals and visions. Although the managers do not necessarily have the skills and knowledge in change theory or change processes, they are beneficial to the organization because they can reconfigure an organization's roles, responsibilities, structures, outputs, systems and resources.

Nevertheless the organization itself has to decide whether they select an internal or external change agent. Lippitt (1972), a pioneer practising in the field of selecting, evaluating and developing organizational development practitioners, suggests following criteria if an organization decides to select an external consultant. The external consultant needs to possess the competencies, skills and knowledge, such as forming

sound interpersonal relationship, the degree of focusing on a problem, the role contribution of the client and whether the consultant belongs to a professional association. In addition to that the organization has to prove references from other clients. Furthermore, it is important to know whether the external change agent approaches the organization with openness to find the root of the issue or just applies a programme that is suitable for any organization (Lippitt, 1972).

### **Roles and Responsibilities of a Change Agent**

According to Hutton (1994) the role of the change agent is generally seen as dealing with the softer issues, but sometimes requires also dealing with some hard objectives. Child and Smith (1987) point out that the change agent's role is to promote change in every aspect of the business, facilitating and directing the proposed change.

The change agent can also act as a clinical facilitator and support the employees throughout the organization to deal with change and adapt to the proposed change (Massey and Williams, 2006).

A more general overview of the different roles in any change process is given by Connor (1997). He points out three important roles: the sponsor, the advocate and the change agent. The sponsor is an individual within the organization with an appropriate authority to approve the change and formulate the change goal. The advocate sees the need for change and convinces the sponsor to approve it. Once the change is approved he or she provides the sponsor with detailed information about the change. The change agent is the third role. After the change is approved the change agent has to be selected. His or her responsibility is to assist in driving and communicating the change.

Chapman (2002) supports the stated above that an organization needs a high level sponsor. He indicates that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) should be the main change agent who drives the change and is responsible for the buy-in from every employee affected by the change. The CEO should provide the vision and lay the foundations for a successful implementation of change.

Hutton (1994) conducted intensive research on the role of change agents. According to Hutton the change agent is "someone whose role is to support the president and the top management in bringing about a purposeful transformation of the organization" (Hutton, 1994, p. 6).

This involves helping the people to change the way they think, change the norms and change the organization's systems and processes. The change agent educates and enlightens the top management. He or she supports and advises the leader and other colleagues as a senior manager, as a subject-matter expert or as a helper. He describes different roles that are appropriate as change agent, e.g. the role as a visionary, advocate, navigator, confidant, supporter, coach and as a subject-matter expert.

Buchanan and Storey (1997) identified several roles that also can be used in a flexible way depending on the situation: visionary and catalyst, analyst, team-builder and coalition former, implementation planner, action driver, facilitator and risk assessor.

Cawsey et al. (2012) identified four major types of change agents: the emotional champion, the intuitive adapter, the development strategist and the continuous improver. The emotional champion can foresee the desired future state of the organization, understand the gap between the current and future state and can articulate a powerful vision. The development strategist is an analyst and understands the competitive logic of the organization. He or she knows how to modify the organization's strategy, structure and processes to shift the organization in the right strategic position. The intuitive adapter develops a culture of learning, adaption and continuous improvement. The continuous improver analyses micro environments and thinks logically and carefully about detailed processes and how they can be improved.

Gilley (2005) describes five roles of change agents and their responsibilities: the visionary, the inspirer, the supporter, the problem solver and the change manager. According to Gilley the responsibilities of a visionary is to challenge the status and imagine the future through a mental picture of the desired future state. The inspirer has to sell the change and involve others at all levels of the organization. The supporter creates a culture of change. In doing so, the supporter creates a climate for change through communication, demonstrate understanding, provide formal and informal opportunities, provide input and feedback and involve impacted employees in decision making. The problem solver is the rationalist among the different roles and analyses the situation, craft creative solutions and constantly monitors these solutions. The fifth role is the change manager. His or her role is to coordinate and communicate the change. The change manager



establishes and articulates goals and expectations. Furthermore he or she anticipates and addresses personnel problems and conflicts.

Carter et al. (2012) identified three roles of change champions: initiator, facilitator and implementer. The initiator develops a change mindset by providing a strong vision. They involve key stakeholder strategically in the change process and identify supporters and antagonists. The facilitator builds commitment to change, networks with the right people and structures and guides team processes to help them function effectively. The implementer plans the change process, manages the change process and is responsible for sustaining the desired changes.

### **Competencies of a Change Agent**

#### **Personality Traits of a Change Agent**

Even though the literature is not being very comprehensive, valuable insights were found. Nikolaou et al. (2007) conducted intensive research and identified five personality traits to be important for an effective change agent: self-efficacy (confidence), locus of control (control over the environment), core self-evaluations (positive self-concept), openness to experience and personal resilience. These personality traits have positive relation to readiness to change, coping with change and dealing with stressful situations. Change agents who possess these traits generally have a positive attitude to change.

Caldwell (2003) explored and ranked key attributes of change leaders and change managers. An overall list of attributes of change agents were collected, selected, narrowed down and ranked. Key attributes of change leaders are integrity and honesty, openness to new ideas, risk-taking and creativity.

Gilley (2005) describes several personality traits of change agents. Change agents need to have an above average tolerance of risk that enables them to change the status quo. They need to be persuasive to influence others to achieve the goals. They need to demonstrate passionate enthusiasm and need to encourage this passion in organizational members. They engage, encourage and involve others in the change process, which requires a huge amount of trust. Change agents have to be creative to find new and different ways to solve a problem. They are confident and believe in their skills and abilities. Finally, change agents learn out of

their failures by reflecting and analysing the mistakes to become even more successful in the future.

According to Furnham (2002) the most important personality skill a change agent needs to possess is courage. He divided courage into three parts. The first is the courage to fail, namely to try something new, experiment and take risks. The courage to fail requires confidence and self-belief. The second sort of courage is the interpersonal or emotional courage. Change agents need emotional awareness in self and others and need to show compassion. The last sort of courage is moral courage, whereby the change agents have to stand up for some moral beliefs in the ethical disaster of today's business.

According to Hutton (1994), the change agent has to possess a set of personality traits to be successful. He or she needs to demonstrate integrity, honesty and reliability and the ability to earn the trust and respect of the employees. The traits of patience, persistence and a sense of humour are summarised in the trait of resilience. The change agent has to be willing to take personal risks and challenges. He or she needs to have a political nose, needs to be able to recognise and deal with politics without becoming involved into it. Finally, the change agent has to be confident, overall positive and enthusiastic.

#### **Knowledge of a Change Agent**

According to Bennis (1993) a change agent needs to possess a broad knowledge of the intelligence from the behavioural sciences and theories and methods of change. Furthermore a change agent has to possess knowledge about project management, organizational development, and general knowledge of Information Technology (IT) and the business they are operating in.

Dunphy (2007) suggests that the change agent should possess knowledge of project management and has to update his or her technical and organizational knowledge while working in related fields. In addition to that he suggests that the change agent should be able to use varied data sources and methods of analysis to provide insights and balanced judgements.

According to Gilley (2005) the change agent needs strategic knowledge to align the organization to its long-term direction and their vision, mission, values and goals. They need to know the change process, as well as understanding the complexities of change, human reactions to it and the impact of change on each

individual. Therefore, they also need knowledge about the human nature and their need for feedback, involvement and decision making during a change process. Finally, the change agent needs to possess knowledge about the business. He or she needs to know the internal environment (e.g. company politics, practices, capabilities, strength and weaknesses), as well as the external environment (e.g. competition, legal constraints, societal pressures and trends).

As a change agent manages specific projects and acts as a project manager or project sponsor for specific initiatives he or she needs to possess project management knowledge. In addition to that the change agent needs to know the business. This includes a broad understanding of the products or services, the market, the customer or clients, the formal organization structure and the informal networks and alliances. Finally, he or she has to know the key players personally (Hutton, 1994).

Gilley, J. (2001) supports that one of the change agent's basic roles is the one of a project manager as every change initiative is a project and underlies the triple constraint of a project: schedule, cost and quality. A change initiative as a project does have multiple, interrelated tasks and usually involves many people across several functional areas in the organization. Therefore, project management knowledge is essential to define, organise and conduct the change initiative within time, budget and the desired level of quality.

According to Cameron and Green (2013) the required knowledge of a development practitioner corresponds well with those of a change agent. He or she has to possess knowledge about organization behaviour (e.g. organization culture, work design, interpersonal relations, power and politics, ethics), individual psychology (learning theory, motivation theory, perception theory) and knowledge about group dynamics (e.g. roles, communication processes, decision-making process, stages of group development). Furthermore the development practitioner needs to possess knowledge of management and organization theory (e.g. planning, organising, leading and controlling, systems theory, contingency theory, organization structure, models of organization and system) and knowledge of research methods/ statistics (e.g. measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, basic sampling theory). Finally, he or she has to possess knowledge about project management and theories and models of change. Nevertheless it is

questionable, if change agents really need all of the above mentioned knowledge.

Waddell et al. (2014) suggests that people who do organization development as a profession should possess all of the above mentioned whether managers or specialists in related fields should possess subsets of the broad knowledge.

### Skills of a Change Agent

The literature mentions a wide range of skills that change agents need to possess to be effective, the most important of which are described in the following.

Communication skills are one of the most essential skills a change agent needs to possess (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Bennis, 1993; Hutton, 1994; Gilley, A., 2005; Dunphy et al., Nikolaou et al., 2007; Cawsey et al., 2012; Waddell et al., 2014). According to Gilley, A. (2005) change agents have to share information in a timely matter, understand the needs of the receiver, use different methods to deliver the message appropriately and need to understand the channels of communication. According to Dunphy et al. (2007) the change agent needs to be able to adopt multiple viewpoints, the ability to communicate clearly (in speech and writing) and keep the employees informed.

Beside the communication skills the interpersonal skills are the most important to possess as an effective change agent (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Hutton, 1994; Gilley, A., 2005; Dunphy et al., 2007; Cawsey et al., 2012; Waddell et al., 2014). As change agents spend most of the time interacting with other people they must have strong interpersonal skills. According to Waddell et al. (2014) change agents must "create and maintain effective relationships with individuals and groups within the organization to help them gain the competence necessary to solve their own problems (Waddell et al., 2014, p. 73). The change agent has to listen actively to recognise the needs of the employees and the organization (Hutton, 1994), ask skilful and meaningful questions to determine the needs (Dunphy et al., 2007) and has to provide adequate feedback (Waddell et al., 2014).

A change agent needs to possess a tolerance of ambiguity and must deal with uncertainty (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Gilley, A., 2005). Situations of change are often uncertain and ambiguous. Even though organizational change is planned, the outcome and desired future state might be not sufficiently

predictable. Change agents take the risk to step into an “unknown” future (Gilley, A., 2005).

Effective change agents possess strong problem solving skills (Hutton, 1994; Caldwell, 2003; Gilley, A., 2005; Dunphy et al., 2007; Waddell et al., 2014). Change agents need to be investigative and analytical to solve a problem. They need to know the process of problem solving and should be able to generate and assess alternatives. They need to understand and analyse complex issues (Gilley, A., 2001).

Change agents need to possess skills in conflict resolution (Hutton, 1994; Caldwell, 2003; Gilley, A., 2005; Nikolaou et al., 2007). Conflicts may arise among employees while they experience change. Change agents have to deal with upcoming obstacles, conflicts or oppositions. Managers as internal change agents have to face the “raw reality”: “Leaders may create the big picture, it is managers who have to deal with the devil in detail” (Caldwell, 2003, p. 291). According to Gilley, A. (2005) change agents have to know why conflicts occurs, how to respond and how to guide to an agreement.

An effective change agent needs to be flexible (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Caldwell, 2003; Gilley, A., 2005; Cawsey et al., 2012; Waddell et al., 2014). Change agents need to modify their plans due to new options or information, internal or external changes or due to actions caused by others (Cawsey et al., 2012). According to Gilley, A. (2005) flexibility shows one’s awareness, responsiveness and awareness to change.

Effective change agents needs to possess skills in strategic thinking also sometimes named as “helicopter view” (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Gilley, A., 2005). They see the “big picture” of the organization and its long-term objectives, vision, mission and values, which are interrelated with the initiated organizational change (Gilley, A., 2005). They possess the ability to break down business trends and processes into manageable and understandable units for others. It is a conceptual level activity that establishes business priorities (Gilley, J., 2001).

Change agents need to possess negotiating and skills to be successful (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Hutton, 1994; Gilley, A., 2005; Dunphy et al., 2007). According to Gilley, A. et al. (2007) negotiation skills are important in conflict resolution and moving change forward. The change agent balances losses with

acceptable gains, often through compromises or collaboration.

Change agents need to possess networking skills to be successful (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Hutton, 1994; Dunphy et al., Cawsey et al., 2012). According to Cawsey et al. (2012) change agents build up networks through their trustworthiness, credibility and interpersonal skills and through the value other members derive from them. Through these networks the change agents obtain the information they need to know and are aware of changing situations.

Change agents need to be team players and be able to build up teams (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992; Hutton, 1994; Caldwell, 2003; Gilley, A., 2005; Dunphy et al., 2007; Nikolaou et al., 2007; Waddell et al., 2014). According to Gilley, A. (2007) a collaborative and participative style will build up and foster the relationship within the team due to mutual trust and respect. Further advantages are increased support of and cooperation for decisions, as well as improved results.

Furthermore change agents need to have facilitation skills. A change agent needs to have a clear vision of the purpose and outcome of a meeting or workshop. He or she has to bring events to closure by summarising actions, decision, time frames and responsibilities. Furthermore the change agent needs to understand their own limits and take care not to take the group into inappropriate territory (Cameron and Green, 2012; Gilley, 2001).

To summarise, change agents should ideally have a number of specific key skills to be effective. Above mentioned are the most important and common ones as indicated by various researchers in the field. Nevertheless researchers identified more skills that are important to be an effective change agent: sensitivity, clarity, influencing skills, practical awareness, selling skills (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992), influencing, resourcing, delegating (Dunphy et al., 2007), commitment to improvement, determination (Cawsey et al., 2012) and decision making skills (Gilley, A., 2001).

Summing up the above, it can be stated that the change agent should possess some key skills in order to be successful. Most common skills indicated by researchers are at least communications skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills and flexibility skills.

### Identification of a Change Agent

Ideally, every employee should act as a change agent within their organization to carry out change. Nevertheless specific personality traits, skills and change related knowledge is required to carry out change successful. There are some guidelines the literature suggests to identify, recruit or select a change agent, whether it is an insider or an external consultant.

According to Luecke (2003) identified four guiding principles for identifying change agents within an organization. Organizations have to identify those employees who others listen to. These may be not employees with formal authority and positioning power. Like change agents these people lead through their power and their ideas. Furthermore organizations have to seek for employees who think differently. Like change agents these people are not satisfied with the status quo. In addition to that organizations have to focus on new employees because they might possess a different mindset and offer new ideas and approaches. Finally the organizations have to seek for employees with unusual training or experience. Like change agents these people see the world through different eyes.

Randall (2004) disagrees with Luecke (2003) related to the selection of new employees as change agents. New employees often become too late involved into the change process. Fears, uncertainties and anxieties are unmanageable at this point.

Hutton (1994) provides insightful information for selecting and recruiting a change agent. When selecting a change agent the organization have to make sure that he or she identifies with the aims of the change process. Furthermore the change agent has to identify with the underlying values and the cultural changes. In addition to that the change agent has to be effective in a senior management role. On the one hand he or she must understand the way senior management works. On the other hand the change agent must be able to deal with the issues of his or her peers. Organizations should focus on people with a high level on integrity and the ability to earn trust. The change agent should be a person that per se helps others, involve others and collaborate with others. Finally the organization should focus on people who have patience, persistence and a sense of humour.

Nevertheless the question will arise, if an insider or an outsider should be selected. According to Hutton (1994) the central issue will be, if the change process is first

being launched. It will be difficult to select a change agent from inside the organization that already has acquired the required level of knowledge. If no ideal internal employee can be found the organization has to recruit an external consultant.

Cawsey et al. (2012) provides guiding principles on how an external consultant should be selected. First the organization has to have a clear understanding of the tasks the change agent has to fulfil. Furthermore the organization has to talk to multiple consultants. Organizations have to focus on common working styles and the right chemistry. Once a suitable candidate has been found the organization should ask for a request for proposal. At the end of the selection process the organization should make a decision and communicate the expectations to all the relevant parties.

Most researchers prefer to select and appoint an insider as internal change agent. His or her personality traits, skills, knowledge, abilities and past successes are already known through the organization. The internal change agent knows the people, processes and the business. Furthermore the internal change agent already has established relationships, is known and respected by others. Once an organization decided to select an insider he or she can be trained and developed. This will be worthwhile for the organization in the long-term.

### Change Agent at different levels

Armenakis et al. (1999) defines that “anyone involved in initiating, implementing, and supporting change can be considered a change agent” (Armenakis et al., 1999, p. 8). They can be found at different levels within the organization. These internal change agents might be the CEO, managers or employees.

According to Armenakis et al. (1999) a change agent might be the head of the organization (global change agent) or people in leadership positions throughout the organization, such as executives or other managers (local change agent). Non-managerial organizational members such as general employees can also serve as change agents (horizontal change agents).

Dunphy et al. (2007) also identified change agents at different levels within an organization and their contribution to change. The board of management sets the operating rules, the CEO who envisions the change and the managers who translate the strategies into practical action plans.

Caldwell (2003) makes a distinction between two types of change agents within an organization: a change leader and a change manager. According to Caldwell “change leaders are those executives or senior management at the very top of the organization who envision, initiate or sponsor strategic change of a far-reaching or transformational nature. By contrast, change managers are those middle level managers and functional specialists who carry forward and build support for change within business units and key functions” (Caldwell et al., 2003, p. 291). One of the major problems of managers as change agents is that they have to cope with different and sometimes contrary goals: on the one hand they have to meet profit targets and on the other hand they have to manage change.

Doyle (2001) argues that the traditional view of the singular mandated change agent is obsolete. Nevertheless he criticises the notion, that everybody is or can be a change agent. He states, that organizations need a plurality of actors and players. Many organizations focus and seek for organizational actors who adapt to the role of a change agent as part of their professional task and manage change within and beyond their area of responsibility. According to Doyle (2001) this strategy is dangerous due to lacking skills and competencies of the agents. He suggests a comprehensive Human Resource strategy to manage, train, develop and control those who manage change.

### 3. Hypothesis & Research Methods

#### Hypothesis

Based on the theoretical part the complexity of organizational change should be presented. Furthermore it should present the huge challenges a change agent has to face while deploy organizational change. The change agent has to fulfil several roles and responsibilities and has to possess various personality traits, skills and knowledge in order to be successful.

It can be concluded, that internal change agents have advantages and disadvantages in comparison to external consultants. Especially internal change agents do not possess the wide range of skills and knowledge in comparison to an external professional. Nevertheless they are selected and appointed officially as change agents. They perform the task as a change agent in part-time within their organization. They might be not aware

of the huge skillset and knowledge that is required while deploying change.

The first hypothesis therefore is:

that internal change agents, who are officially appointed as change agents, overestimate their change related skills in comparison to the assessment of their employees.

The second hypothesis therefore is,

that internal change agents, who are officially appointed as change agents, overestimate their change related knowledge in comparison to the assessment of their employees.

This chapter will provide information about the company where the quantitative survey was conducted. Furthermore it will describe the methodology approach and will present the analysis of the results.

#### Research method

##### About the company

Herron Todd White commenced offering valuation services in 1967 and has since developed into the largest independent property advisory and valuation firm in Australia. Herron Todd White is 100% Australian-owned with over 64 offices in capital cities and regional areas, employing over 800 staff. Herron Todd White provides professional services for all classes of property including commercial, industrial, retail, residential and rural.

The company headquarters, named Herron Todd White Australia, is located in Brisbane and is a not-for-profit organization. It is financed by the 64 offices of Herron Todd White. Each office is directed by one or more directors (90 directors in total). The directors of the offices are coincidentally the shareholders of the company Herron Todd White Ltd.

##### Target Groups

To prove or falsify the above-stated hypothesis the results of the employees and directors are compared. Therefore, the first target group are the employees of selected offices of Herron Todd White (Brisbane, Sydney and Perth). The second target group are the directors (officially appointed as change agents) of all offices of Herron Todd White.

### Data Collection Method

To falsify or prove the hypothesis a quantitative research was chosen. Two questionnaires were designed to collect the data. The employees and directors were invited via e-mail to participate in an online survey. A link in the e-mail directly connected the participant with the survey.

### Design of the Questionnaire

Based upon the findings above, two questionnaires were developed to evaluate the skills and knowledge of internal change agents. The most important skills and knowledge that are required to be an effective change agent were selected. Based on literature on change

agents questions were defined to assess the skills and the knowledge.

In the first questionnaire the employees assess the skills and knowledge of their directors. In the second questionnaire the directors assess their own skills and knowledge. The defined dimensions of skills and knowledge are both the same. The questions related to each dimension were the same concerning the content.

### Scale

The questions are measured on the basis of a five point Likert scale. The five point scale ranged from “never” (1 point), “rarely” (2 points), “sometimes” (3 points), “often” (4 points) to “always” (5 points).

## 4. Empirical Results

Table 1:  
*Statistics Organizational Change Skills*

Description	Skill	employees		directors		sign. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	M	SD	
Q1: ...openly communicate...	Communication	3.60	1.10	4.00	0.65	.03*
Q2: ...utilise variety of methods...	Communication	3.60	1.07	3.78	0.81	.37
Q3: ...effective at coherently communication...	Communication	3.77	1.00	3.90	0.69	.44
Q4: ...request feedback...	Interpersonal	2.70	1.09	2.65	1.09	.83
Q5: ...communication climate...	Interpersonal	4.03	.99	4.32	.64	.10
Q6: ...listen effectively...	Interpersonal	3.70	1.09	4.27	.72	.00**
Q7: ...provide feedback...	Interpersonal	3.56	.89	3.75	.69	.29
Q8: ...encourage opinions...	Ambiguity	3.66	.92	4.22	.78	.00**
Q9: ...get impatient...	Ambiguity	2.17	.69	3.06	.75	.00**
Q10: ...don't perform well if vague goals...	Ambiguity	2.50	.78	3.29	.72	.00**
Q11: ...think broadly to generate alternatives...	Problem Solving	3.53	.94	3.78	.75	.17
Q12: ...approach to new problems...	Problem Solving	3.60	.97	3.73	.75	.47
Q13: ...determine the causes...	Problem Solving	3.53	.90	3.93	.78	.02*
Q14: ...win-win solution...	Conflict Resolution	3.47	1.11	4.10	.59	.00**
Q15: ...involved into conflict...	Conflict Resolution	3.67	1.10	3.71	.75	.79
Q16: ...deal with disagreement/ conflict...	Conflict Resolution	3.40	1.10	3.84	.75	.02*

Q17: ...respond to changes...	Flexibility	3.86	.69	3.97	.74	.51
Q18: ...adapt to changing situations...	Flexibility	3.62	.76	3.56	.74	.69
Q19: ...adopt ideas/ approaches...	Flexibility	3.79	.82	3.81	.72	.92
Q20: ...long-term focused...	Strategic Thinking	3.79	1.03	3.76	.78	.90
Q21: ...change support vision/ mission/ goal...	Strategic Thinking	4.00	.82	4.00	.78	1.00
Q22: ...provide wide context...	Strategic Thinking	3.75	.80	3.70	.78	.77
Q23: ...negotiate effectively...	Negotiating/ Influencing	3.51	.84	3.84	.65	.09
Q24: ...adress the needs/ priorities...	Negotiating/ Influencing	3.46	1.14	3.83	.66	.06
Q25: ...effective at convincing...	Negotiating/ Influencing	3.54	.88	3.52	.59	.93
Q26: ...use network...	Networking	3.97	.71	3.86	.78	.54
Q27: ...build cooperative relationships...	Networking	3.96	.76	4.00	.72	.82
Q28: ...use network to influence...	Networking	3.70	.78	3.32	.93	.06
Q29: ...work collaboratively...	Team Building	3.52	1.01	4.19	.56	.00**
Q30: ...identify behaviour...	Team Building	3.41	1.01	3.71	.73	.10
Q31: ...enhancing individual's satisfaction...	Team Building	3.48	1.16	3.76	.69	.15
Q32: ...outcome of a meeting...	Facilitation	3.77	.76	3.71	.71	.74
Q33: ...understand their own limits...	Facilitation	3.65	1.02	4.08	.70	.02*
Q34: ...bring event to closure...	Facilitation	3.69	.97	3.62	.79	.71

Even though the data shows that the directors overestimated their change related skills (Table 1) in some dimensions, the results in other dimensions are not clear and do not support the first hypothesis as they are not statistically significant. In the following the results will be differentiated with regard to the change related skills.

The directors clearly overestimated their change related skills in the following dimensions (three mean scores of the questions per dimension are higher in comparison to the employee's assessment and statistically significant on the 0.05 or 0.01 level could be determined related to some/ all questions): communication (Q1\*), interpersonal (Q6\*\*), tolerance for ambiguity (Q8\*\*, Q9\*\* and Q10\*\*), problem solving (Q13\*), conflict resolution (Q14\*\* and Q16\*) and team building (Q29\*\*).

The clearest results are in tolerance for ambiguity. Here all three questions have been rated lower by the employees than by the directors and the differences are highly significant.

In the following dimensions the directors mainly (two mean scores per dimension are higher in comparison to the employee's assessment) overestimated their abilities related to the questions: flexibility and negotiation/ influencing. These differences are not statistically significant.

In the following dimensions the directors mainly (two mean scores per dimension are lower in comparison to the employee's assessment) underestimated their abilities related to the questions: strategic thinking, networking and facilitation. Only in the dimension of facilitation question Q33\* shows a statistical significance. All other differences are not statistically significant.

The directors completely underestimated their change related knowledge and project management knowledge related to all questions (Table 2). Nevertheless no significant difference could be determined.

Table 2:  
*Statistics Organizational Change Knowledge*

Description	Knowledge	employees		directors		sign. (2-tailed)
		M	SD	M	SD	
Q35: ...understand complexity of change...	OC Knowledge	4.00	.85	3.76	.73	.18
Q36: ...aware of OC/ CM tools...	OC Knowledge	3.68	.72	3.63	.89	.82
Q37: ...use effective OC/ CM tools...	OC Knowledge	3.45	1.06	3.32	1.04	.59
Q38: ...know change agent role...	OC Knowledge	3.95	.90	3.57	.98	.11
Q39: ...manage project...	PM Knowledge	4.00	.75	3.81	.64	.27
Q40: ...manage critical dependencies...	PM Knowledge	3.89	.74	3.83	.68	.70
Q41: ...establish/ monitor steps...	PM Knowledge	3.95	.71	3.84	.65	.54

In general it can be stated, that the above findings can neither clearly support nor clearly refute the first hypothesis, that internal change agents (directors), who are officially appointed as change agents, overestimate their change related skills in comparison to the assessment of their employees.

The results would support the new hypothesis, that internal change agents, who are officially appointed as internal change agents, overestimate their communication skills, tolerance for ambiguity skills, problem solving skills, conflict resolution skills and team building skills in comparison to the assessment of their employees.

To summarize the above findings it can be stated, that the evaluation of the results can neither support nor refute the first hypothesis. Therefore a differentiation was executed to point out, in which dimensions the directors as internal change agents clearly overestimate their change related skills and in which dimensions a clear answer is not possible.

In general it can be said, that the directors underestimated their change related knowledge related to all questions. The differences between the results are low to moderate and the directors underestimated their organizational change and project management

knowledge in comparison to the assessment of their employees related to all seven questions.

It can be stated, that the above findings do not support and therefore refute the second hypothesis, that internal change agents (directors), who are officially appointed as change agents, overestimate their change related knowledge in comparison to the assessment of their employees.

## 5. Conclusions

The empirical part of the thesis consists of a quantitative survey. Employees were asked to assess the change related skills and knowledge of their superiors.

Directors were asked to assess their own skills and knowledge. The participants were invited via e-mail to take part in the online survey. The survey was not time consuming and designed in a way that allowed the participants to fulfil it quickly and easily by "ticking the boxes". Due to the five point Likert scale data could be collected and analysed which are statistically reliable.

Nevertheless the questionnaire has its limitations. The questionnaire was designed to measure the change related skills and knowledge. Eleven skill dimensions



and two knowledge dimensions were selected. Each dimension contained between three and four questions. To generate a broad perspective this approach was selected. Thus the significance of each dimension is reduced to three to four questions.

The questionnaires were new developed. The questions have been orientated towards the requirements of the literature related to change agent skills and knowledge. Furthermore the questions were tailored to the needs of the company and assessed by the CEO of Herron Todd White. Thus common scientific questionnaires are more valid and reliable in comparison to my questionnaire.

Another limitation of the methodology approach is the perception of the employees according the performance of their superiors and their relationship to them. The employees assess the superior's skills and knowledge based on what they have done or how they behaved in the past. Therefore the employees were asked and sensitized to answer the questions honestly, not to overestimate the abilities in order to do something wrong while assessing others and not to underestimate the abilities due to personal differences. Nevertheless the relationship between the employees and the directors and a negative perception might have influenced the results.

One major limitation of the research is the self-assessment of the directors. The human being tends to overestimate their skills and knowledge. This has a major influence on the significance of the results. Therefore the directors were sensitized beforehand to decrease the error.

Finally there is the fact, that this survey was conducted in only one single company. The company has its own culture, processes and people. Furthermore the employees assessed only the directors they know and therefore were able to assess. This may limit the potential for generalization.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

First of all this study has to be carried out to various companies facing the same problem. Even though the first hypothesis was neither supported nor refuted and the second hypothesis was disproved this might not lead to a generalization.

Secondly a comprehensive questionnaire has to be developed to identify the required personality traits, skills and knowledge. Today's questionnaires measure personality traits, skills, knowledge or a mixture of all.

Across the literature no accepted skillset of change agents is available. Researchers have to define personality traits, skills and knowledge. Once the variables are defined a questionnaire has to be developed. Originating from this questionnaire selecting/ recruitment processes can be developed. Furthermore major gaps related to personality traits, skills and knowledge can be defined. Once the gaps are defined tailored training and development can improve the abilities of the change agents.

In addition to that further research may limit the survey to those change related skills and knowledge which are most important for a change agent. As pointed out in chapter 2 the most important change related skills and knowledge a change agent has to possess are: communications skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, flexibility skills, organizational change/change management knowledge, project management knowledge and organization behaviour knowledge. If the survey is limited to fewer dimensions it could lead to more clear results.

Furthermore a 360° research should be conducted. As mentioned above, the self-assessment and the assessment through employees can lead to incorrect results. Superiors have to participate in the study as well as peers and change agents to achieve reliable results.

Finally a research can be conducted which compares the skills of the change agents with the success or failure rate of organizational change initiatives. Even though the success rate is depending on more variables a correlation between an effective change agent and successful change programs would be worth for research.

## **6. About the Author**

Carlo Gerwing studied electrical engineering at the Helmut-Schmidt-University (University of the Bundeswehr), Hamburg and International Business Management and Leadership at the Professional School of Business and Technology, Kempten. During his military service, he served as platoon leader and intelligence officer within the Airborne Forces. Afterwards Carlo Gerwing worked for Herron Todd White, Australia in the Risk & Compliance area, conducted depth research and analysis of current business processes within the HR division and assessed

current competencies, skills and knowledge of Herron Todd White's internal change agents. Currently, he is working for Rheinmetall Defence Electronics as a projectmanager.

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