Creating change sophisticated people: a change competencies workbook based on school support staff’s perceptions of strategic change in a post ’92 higher education institution

Abstract
This research critically examines school support staff’s perceptions of strategic change within a post ’92 higher education institution. The need for effective communication as well as valuing and empowering employees during any change process is discussed. The research uses a mixed methods approach. Qualitative and quantitative data are obtained from questionnaires and emerging themes identified. Further qualitative data are gathered from diary logs, interviews and focus groups. This research represents the opinions of school support staff at a particular moment in time within a particular educational context. The results suggest some limitations to the change capabilities of the post ’92 institution, but also some areas of good practice. The production of a change framework and the change competencies workbook provides both the institution and its employees, with an opportunity to explore further the prospect of improving their ability to manage change. Both the framework and the competencies require an environment of trust for them to work effectively. The subject headings of identity, perception and communication are utilised in the change framework and the change competencies. The subject headings were chosen in order to assist the researcher to categorise various data covering areas of concern raised by research participants. This thesis suggests that the post ’92 institution has yet to establish a corporate change policy or embed a continuous change culture within its organisation. This thesis concludes that incorporating the following could assist the institution’s management of change: * create a culture of change by utilising the change framework and implement a corporate change strategy based on Kotter’s (1996) eight steps for change; * create an environment of trust through excellence in two-way communication by promoting Perkins (2008) supportive communication and listening skills; * create empowered and change sophisticated people by improving their change competencies using the workbook and regular targeted staff development.
a. The Four Strategic Solutions Based on SWOT Matrix are: 1) The strengths and opportunities (SO) solution. It focuses on internal strengths to achieve competency, calculate potential benefits, make a comparison of costs and draw up recommendations (Bahlis & Tourville, 2005). F. Strategy 6: Duplicate Effective Training Programs and Identify Issues. The appearance of e-learning at the beginning of the 21st century has.