

AIMing to Change the Way We Change: Building Change Agent Capacity at Victoria University

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VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Session Overview

- The VU Change Context
- Accelerating Implementation Methodology (AIM)
- The CAST
- The Importance of Change Agents – what we have learnt to date
- Change Lessons Learnt at VU
- Future AIMing at VU



Victoria University – The Context

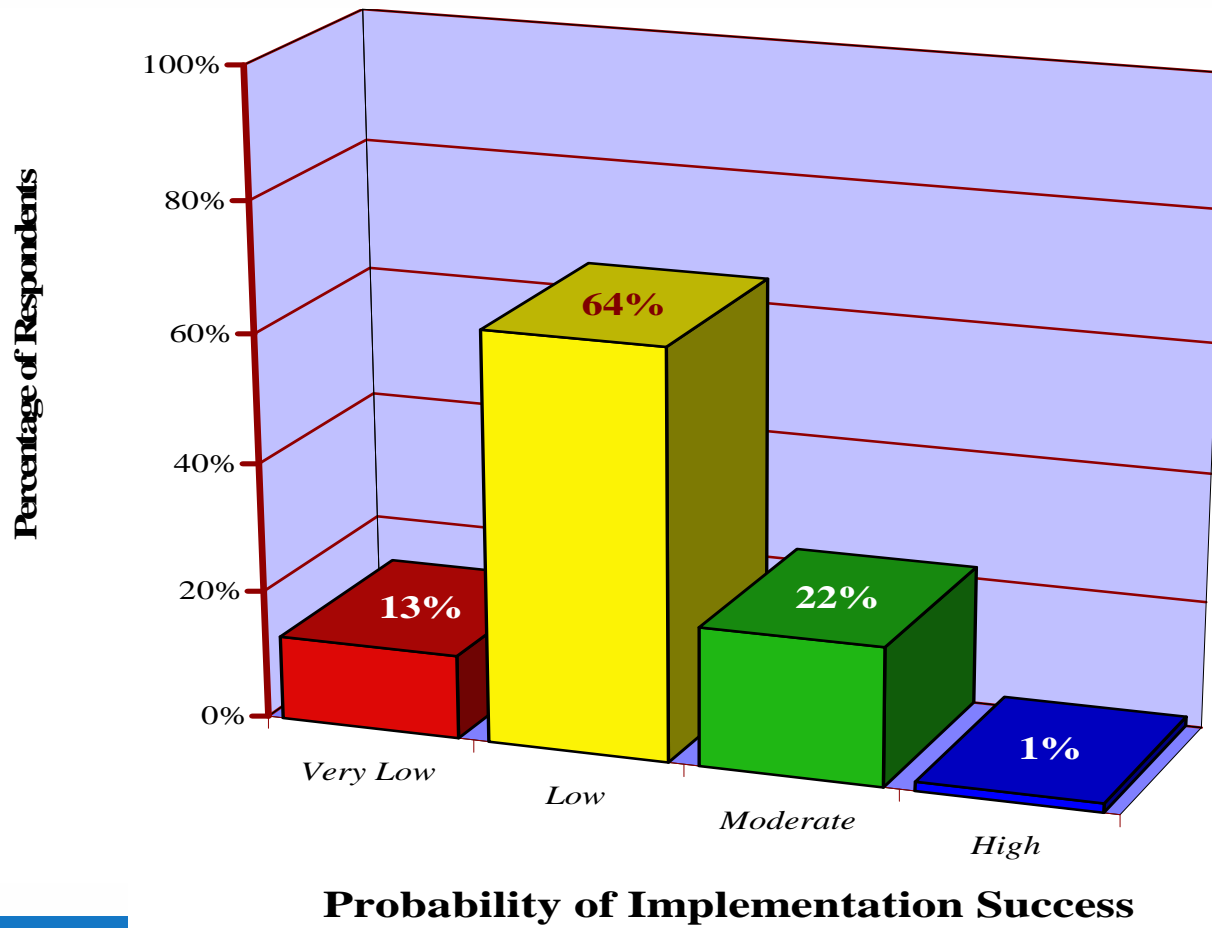
- Over 55,000 students
- 4,380 headcount (including 2,243 sessional/casual staff)
- Multi-sector – Higher Education, Vocational Education, Further Education
- 11 campuses
- Western Melbourne
- Major Organisational Reform Program in 2012/2013 – move to 7 Integrated Colleges and a Shared Services Model
- Workforce Strategy Program for VU requires considerable further change



Victoria University – The Change Context

- History of compliance-focused approach (formal Change Management Process in Enterprise Agreement)
- Change is a way of life at VU – change plans and change projects are a constant which will continue given ongoing sector challenges
- To date - limited focus on the human elements of change – staff are 'change fatigued' and the intended benefits of change programs have not always been realised
- Limited capacity in managing change effectively (lack of effective change agents)
- Identified need for consistent change management approach which would more successfully implement change
- In mid-2012 adopted 'AIM' from Implementation Management Associates (U.S.)

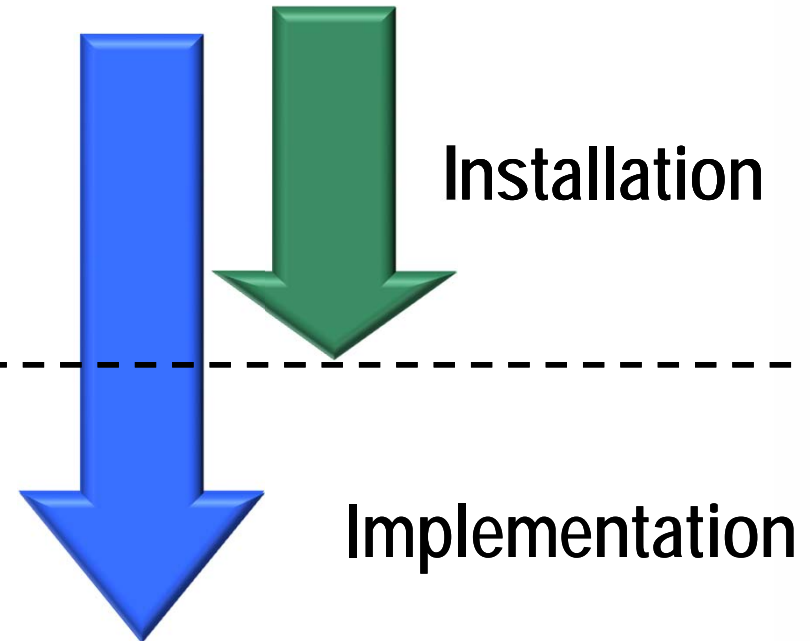




Implementation vs. Installation

Implementation Success Defined:

- On Time
 - On Budget
 - Technical Objectives met
-
- Business Objectives met
 - Human Objectives met



Installation *does not* equal Implementation

Cost of Implementation Failure



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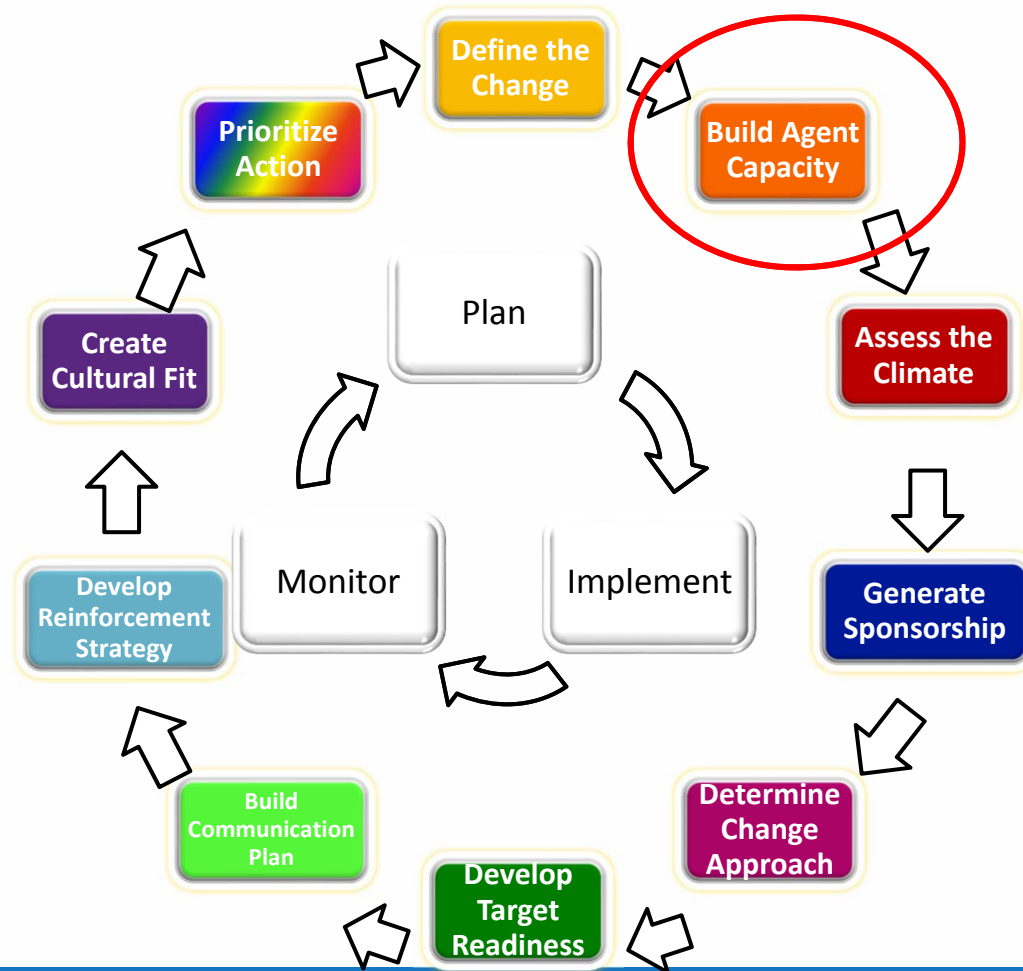
AIM and VU

- The AIM approach was adopted by VU in May 2012 - 4 staff accredited, 3 year license agreement set up with access to online tools and resources
- Limited application during the Organisational Reform Program – change agent capacity not built
- Now in 2013 – AIM getting some traction in preparation for Workforce Strategy Program implementation and continuing change agenda ahead

Accelerating Implementation Methodology (AIM):

- is a structured approach to managing the **human** and **cultural** elements critical to achieving strategic business objectives
- provides a repeatable set of principles and tools to manage the **human elements of change**
- systematically analyses and identifies significant **personal and organisational barriers** to change
- generates tactics to **increase readiness** and decrease the time and resources required to achieve business results

How does AIM approach implementation management?



- Assessment of personal and cultural barriers
- Development of strategies and tactics to minimise anticipated barriers/risks
- Development of strategies and tactics to increase readiness for new ways of operating

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The CAST



Champions



Believe in and want the change and attempt to obtain commitment and resources for it



Agents



Implement change. Agents have implementation responsibility through planning and executing implementation.



Sponsors



Authorize, legitimize and demonstrate ownership for the change: either as the Authorizing Sponsor or Reinforcing Sponsor



Targets



Change behaviour, emotions, knowledge, perceptions, etc.

Change Agents implement change

- Agents have responsibility for planning and executing implementation change and their performance is evaluated on the success of the project or change
- Successful implementation requires Change Agents who have a formidable range of skills, motivation and relationships to guide the organisation through the uncertainty of change as quickly as possible
- Change Agents should not be limited to HR practitioners
- Change Agents must be carefully selected and investment made in their capabilities and skills relating to change - **organisations which select Change Agents based simply on who is available or affordable are making a critical error**

Change Agent Assessment Tool

- AIM provides a tool which profiles the type of individual who can successfully implement complex change
- The tool asks questions on characteristics, relationships, performance and competencies and produces an overall Change Agent Assessment Score which represents the probability of implementation success for the change project based on the levels of skill and motivation of Change Agents
- This tool can be used to:
 - Select Change Agents for current and future projects
 - Assess capability of current Change Agents and identify potential training and motivation needs
 - Evaluate performance of Change Agents

VU Learnings about Change Agents

- Don't under-estimate the need to invest in Change Agents
- Too few agents with limited influence upon impacted parts of the organisation will not work – need Change Agents embedded across the organisation
- Select change agents carefully using criteria
- The change needs to be clearly defined and change agents clearly identified
- Don't expect Change Agents to be effective whilst they are still Targets themselves

Other Lessons Learnt from VU's Change History

- Understanding your CAST is critical
- Authorising and reinforcing sponsorship will make or break the success of your change
- Use Project Heat Maps – highlights how many change projects are occurring concurrently and competing for limited resources
- Don't be afraid of or ignore resistance – surface and manage it
- Ensure a coordinated communication strategy which accounts for the different frames of reference of target groups

Future AIMing at VU

Our Workforce Strategy Program will be underpinned by AIM

Current investment in rolling out AIM through:

- Accreditation of more staff (Quarter 1 2014) – from across the organisation as well as People and Culture
- Development of criteria to select those to be accredited - need best return on investment
- Internal delivery of workshops (by accredited staff) for key change agents
- Integration of AIM terminology and approach in University project documentation and methodology (for projects of any scale)

Future AIMing at VU ctd...

- Plans for an AIM Community of Practice – to be launched by AIM ‘creator’
- Institutional communications strategy – to incorporate AIM principles
- AIM sessions included in other programs, eg Managers Induction, Women in Leadership
- Conduct a second AIM Implementation History Assessment in 2014
- AIM terminology (eg “the CAST”, “Frames of Reference”, “Authorising Sponsor”) is becoming a part of VU language:

“Have we AIMed that?”!