Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Assess different types of change that need to be managed for e-commerce.
2. Describe a plan for implementing e-commerce change.
3. Explain alternative approaches to organization structure resulting from organizational change.
4. Portray the success factors in managing change.
5. Describe the role organizational structure play in response to e-business.
6. Explain how to manage the human aspects of the implementation of organizational change.
7. Clarify how to share knowledge between staff in the light of high staff turnover and rapid changes in market conditions.
8. Describe approaches so smoothing workflow through business process management.

Unit Summary

The Internet is proving to be a valuable learning, business and communications tool. Its influence has affected our commercial, political and social lives. It has provided a forum for addressing important issues, supporting causes and meeting new individuals. The effects of the Internet can be felt on both our personal and professional lives. The term digital divide is often used to describe what countries, cities, and school districts are doing to make Internet access universally available. The advantages and disadvantages of online communities and social interaction on the Web make for a lively discussion.

Enabling your web site to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities is an issue relevant to all businesses. Persons with disabilities make up a significant portion of the population, and legal ramifications exist for Web sites that discriminate by not providing adequate and universal access to the site's resources. The Web Accessibility Initiative refers to the requirements and laws regarding businesses to provide availability and accessibility to people with disabilities. Companies are developing their systems, products and services to meet the needs of this important demographic.

Managing change associated with the introduction of any information system is one of the keys to successful implementation. The adoption of e-business is a significant change to any organization, so managing the associated change is even more important to success. For this reason, this entire section is devoted to this topic. The aim of this section is to look at a range of issues involved in managing change from technical through organizational to human. The topics in this section will be expanded on (especially the technical issues of change) in subsequent units.
Change success factors include: communication, education and training. Different scales of change from BPR to BPI and BPA are introduced in this section. Change can also be put in the context of the systems development lifecycle and prototyping. Knowledge management is a separate topic, although receiving significant investment in large organizations is less important in smaller organizations and is not widely understood by those studying business. At the conclusion of this unit, you should be able to articulate the basic differences between information management and some of the tools that can be used to manage it.

Change as a result of e-business must be managed as part of the projects to introduce e-business as well as part of the overall organization-wide change initiative. Solid project management is required for an organization to achieve successful change. The traditional project management techniques such as estimation, resource allocation, scheduling, planning and monitoring are just as important in e-business as traditional business initiatives.

Managing staff responses to change is a crucial element in the successful change implementation initiative. Managers need to consider how to achieve commitment and action from other managers (including senior managers), gain staff acceptance of the new system and new practices and find techniques to educate and train employees on the change. Companies with a proactive culture are more predisposed to lead an e-business change initiative than a reactive, inflexible company culture.