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Creating a Culture of Knowledge-Sharing within the Public Sector: A Collaborative Approach

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Abstract

The Department of X is a public sector provincial department moving towards a more modernized approach to client service delivery. The Department of X is a mature organization with clearly defined reporting and hierarchical structures, where employees are organized by branches, units, and teams. Employees on each team bring a variety of unique skill sets; however, it is noticeable that work teams create their own subcultures, known as siloes, as a result of the structure, leading to systemic issues, such as lack of communication across teams. Employees often feel less engaged in the overall achievement of the department's goals, and front-line employees tend to be excluded from projects and initiatives outside of their direct team. This Dissertation-in-Practice examines the organizational structure and works within the existing paradigms and hierarchy to create a coordinated approach to sharing knowledge openly across teams. Using adaptive leadership, underpinned by caring leadership and ethics, this Dissertation-in-Practice suggests collaboratively constructing an internal communication strategy in partnership with end users will promote knowledge sharing through collaboration. Prosci's methodology of change management guides the change framework. The proposed solution aims to work within the existing structure and resources to tap into employees' expertise, knowledge, and diverse viewpoints to create a strategy for employees to utilize as a communication framework.

Keywords: knowledge sharing, collaboration, internal communication strategy, adaptive leadership, caring leadership, hierarchy

Executive Summary

This Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP) examines how a public sector department can take a more coordinated approach for leaders to share knowledge and communicate within the existing hierarchical reporting structure. Using adaptive leadership and systems thinking, combined with a caring approach to ethics and leadership, I argue that creating opportunities for knowledge sharing naturally increases employee engagement and provides opportunities for front-line employees to interact with, and be more involved in ongoing projects, change, and decisions and have input into communication. Although this DiP focuses on a small department within a larger provincial government, the results apply to multiple areas within government, such as policy development, change management, and internal communication.

Chapter 1 outlines the problem of practice (PoP) through organizational context using two frames, namely Bolman and Deal (2021) and the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) analysis. My leadership power and agency are explored through several bases of power (French & Raven, 1959), positioning myself within the organizational context as an informal leader, internal communication specialist, and change practitioner. Systems thinking underpins the theoretical leadership lens whereby the department is a smaller piece of a larger collective, with all parts working together for the betterment of the organization (Senge, 2006). Using a political, economic, structural, technological, and structural (PESTS) analysis, I underscore the external factors impacting the DiP and frame the PoP using Bolman and Deal's (2021) four-frame model, which reveals a need to create a positive workplace culture and embrace diverse viewpoints. The SOAR analysis uses a hierarchical lens to supplement the four-frame analysis results. Three questions emerge within the PoP, acknowledging the organizational complexity, the need for employee input, and how to increase knowledge-sharing practices. The analysis revealed that I must work within the existing organizational structure while ensuring employees feel included and heard throughout the process of addressing the PoP. The vision for

change is to move from a siloed team-based culture to a more open, collaborative, communicative culture, leading to long-term problem-solving and increasing employee engagement.

Chapter 2 outlines the leadership approach to change to address the lack of opportunities for leaders to communicate with teams outside their unit. A dual framework change model examines, and guides change from a leadership and employee perspective. Ethical considerations from Wood and Hilton's (2012) ethical framework for decision-making guide the change approach. Each solution is analyzed using a benefits and drawbacks comparison table and then analyzed through various lenses, such as the potential to address the gaps, answer the guiding questions, and follow the ethical framework. After careful analysis, the chosen solution is to collaboratively construct an internal communication strategy in partnership with leaders and interested employees to launch it department-wide for all employees moving forward. This solution also aligns with my agency and current role as the internal communication specialist, which provides me with the creative freedom to organize the approach and utilize my experience as a teacher and facilitator to help build workshops where employees collaboratively construct the strategy.

In Chapter 3, I bring my chosen change leadership framework into my change implementation plan (CIP) using the Prosci methodology and the change journey. The Prosci tool, awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement (ADKAR), will anchor the change plan, communication plan and monitoring and evaluation section, acting as a dual purpose of checkpoints and steps for change. A Prosci change triangle (PCT) will be utilized throughout the CIP, and to ensure an iterative process can respond to change, I align the ADKAR model with an iterative option called agile. A knowledge mobilization plan will ensure that learnings are translated into actions through practice and real-life examples. To monitor and evaluate the change, I will again engage with Prosci tools, such as PCT and ADKAR, as checkpoints along the way. Focusing on inclusion throughout the change plan ensures that underserved voices are heard and valued.

In summary, this DiP considers various internal and external factors, leadership approaches, and employee principles to create a solution whereby employees feel valued, heard, and included in the process. The questions of how to effectively and inclusively collaboratively construct a viable solution to the PoP are answered through the dual development and implementation process during the CIP and conclude by suggesting this approach may be considered in other program development areas as a more modernized approach to working towards shared goals.

Land Acknowledgements

I want to thank Indigenous peoples for welcoming my ancestors to this land, helping them fish, hunt, and survive in unfamiliar territories, and being caretakers of the land past, present, and future. As a public service employee and citizen of this province, I am grateful to work with and engage in community dialogue and partnerships. Still, I acknowledge the undue hardships experienced by the communities caused by the policies and actions of those in power. As an educator, I am committed to continually learning to engage deeply and move forward in truth, reconciliation, and equity. I recognize that without action, an acknowledgment is empty; therefore, this land acknowledgement signifies my commitment to acknowledging colonial structures where they exist, challenging the status quo, and my responsibility to listen to first-person perspectives.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the African community, who have inhabited the province for over 400 years and provided a rich and diverse cultural experience to the community in which I live. Both communities have experienced colonization, which has lasting impacts on those communities. Although this dissertation does not focus on or highlight a specific cultural community, I want to acknowledge the historical realities that have shaped employee experiences and values. I intend to move forward in the spirit of truth and inclusivity based on a foundation of caring, listening, and trust, and I will continue to pursue opportunities to listen to first-person experiences, self-reflect on my impacts, and use my position of privilege to amplify underserved voices.

Dedication

Completing this DiP was possible due to the support of my family, friends, colleagues, and cohorts. Thank you to my mom for instilling a love of learning and the value of education, inspiring me to continue pursuing my educational dreams. To my dad for being my biggest supporter throughout my educational journey, especially these last three years: Your encouragement and advocacy for my life pursuits mean the world to me. My brother, lifelong friend, and quiet supporter: Thank you for always being proud of my milestones and achievements. To Liam, my perpetual writing buddy: Thank you for being my sidekick, reminding me to take breaks, and being an unconditionally loving companion. To my husband: You have been my greatest ally, giving me time and space to research and write. You have been my ultimate life partner, sharing my excitement and providing reassurance and advice. Thank you for your openness to take on life journeys with me. To my friends and colleagues: Thank you for checking in and showing an interest in my research. I admire each of you for your uniqueness and passion as you skillfully navigate your own life paths. To my cohorts: This has been quite a journey – I am so grateful for the memories we created, the camaraderie we shared, and our continued push to finish.

Congratulations!

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List of Acronyms

ADKAR   Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement

CIP   Change Implementation Plan

CoP   Community of Practice

DiP   Dissertation-in-Practice

ICS   Internal Communication Strategy

PCT   Prosci Change Triangle

PDSA   Plan-Do-Study-Act

PM   Program Manager

PESTS   Political, Economic, Structural, Technological, and Structural

SOAR   Strength, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results

Definitions

Agile model: A change management approach with a plan-do-check-act iterative method as a mini-evaluation (Horlick, 2024).

Change team: The team responsible for overseeing the change plan. The change team consists of an executive sponsor, a project manager, and a change practitioner.

Senior Leadership/Table: Employees in senior leadership roles, such as executive directors, senior executive directors, chief executive operators, project executives, and appointed deputy ministers.

SharePoint: An internal digital platform to share information through a website accessible to all employees.

Soft launch: Sharing or communicating an initiative before it is expected to be acted upon.

Sponsor: A member of executive leadership responsible for supporting the change implementation plan.

Underserved employees: Underserved employees identify as members of the following communities: Mi'kmaq and people of Indigenous descent, African Nova Scotians, and people of African descent, 2SLGBTQI+, newcomers (immigrants, refugees), faith-based, persons with disabilities, Acadian, and Francophonie communities (Maritime Province, 2023).

Chapter 1: Problem Posing

At the Department of X (DOX, a pseudonym), a modernized approach to client service delivery has recently become a priority. While DOX's modernized approach focuses on upgrading outdated digital systems, the hierarchical organizational structure continues to create barriers to cross-team collaboration, vertical collaboration, and knowledge sharing. This Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP) will explore how the DOX could take a more coordinated approach to knowledge-sharing practices, enabling more opportunities for collaboration within the confines of the existing structure using a lens of systems thinking, adaptive leadership, and inclusion. The first chapter outlines the problem of practice (PoP), describing the internal and external forces which impact existing practices, and sets a leadership vision of creating a knowledge-sharing culture. I begin by situating myself within the organization by describing my positionality and experience, followed by my leadership agency through bases of power (French & Raven, 1959; Raven 1965, 2008).

Positionality and Lens Statement

This section describes my role, positionality, and agency within the DOX, including my leadership agency through bases of power, followed by my leadership approach, philosophy, and personal worldview. Exploring these concepts at the beginning of my DiP encouraged me to be aware of my privilege and position throughout but also considered how my experiences have shaped my relationships with my colleagues and how I view the world.

My Role and Previous Experience

I am an internal communication consultant responsible for supporting programs and initiatives, including leading, planning, and developing internal communication plans to support strategic business. My position has three primary areas of work: managing and coordinating internal communication programs and services, providing strategic recommendations, advice, and support, and assessing opportunities for continuous improvement. As a recently certified change practitioner, the scope of my

role has evolved to include change communication for several strategic projects and initiatives.

I have been fortunate to carry my skills forward from my previous career as a classroom schoolteacher. I have been a certified Working Mind facilitator for government since 2015, teaching awareness and acceptance of colleagues living with mental illness to both leaders and employees. I am also a course designer, developer, and instructor at a local university where I teach Biology online to students looking to upgrade their skills to enter the science program at the post-secondary level. Using the design principles of adult learning, communication, and e-learning, I engage my students to think critically about science related to everyday life and current events.

My current role in internal communication, part-time instructional role, and previous career as a teacher aligns cohesively and eclectically to combine the discourse of the current public sector realities with theoretical foundations of learning and communication required to explore this PoP through multiple lenses, theories, and frameworks.

Positionality

I am a middle-aged, middle-class, able-bodied, white cis-gendered female settler of European descent born in a maritime province in Canada. I have lived predominantly in larger metropolitan areas surrounded by mainly heteronormative groups and working-class nuclear families. Using system thinking (Meadows & Wright, 2008), I position myself within a post-positivist data collection and analysis approach. My equity, diversity, inclusion, reconciliation, and accessibility (EDIRA) lens is inclusion, further defined in the problem-framing section. Being Canadian and white, however well-intentioned, my efforts towards inclusion and decolonization may be perceived negatively and inadvertently reintroduce colonial practices (Ermine, 2007; Vanner, 2015). I acknowledge this possibility and fully commit to continuously listening, changing, and learning from scholars such as Shields (2020) and Ermine (2007) to alleviate the undue hardship of impacted communities, colleagues, and teams.

Leadership Power Through Agency

My leadership agency can be explained using the bases of power (French & Raven, 1959), specifically Raven's (1965, 2008) subsequent addition to the original bases, which includes the informational power base. As my current role is at the base of the reporting structure (See Appendix A), it does not hold coercive or reward power such as making decisions, budgeting, hiring, or managing staff. However, informational power suggests that leaders who use information as a position of effective influence set the stage for desired behaviour and actions (Raven, 1965, 2008). Furthermore, an informational power base is not connected to an authoritative position but is created individually through consistent, trusted actions (Raven, 1965, 2008), and how a person uses the information creates a source of power and influence. An example of my informational power within my role is access to sensitive information. I have legitimate power over sharing information, such as providing guidance for internal announcement rollouts, drafting communication to suit specific audiences, and holding administrative rights to the internal intranet platform (SharePoint).

Informational power is best used with another form of power (Raven, 2008), such as expert or referent power. Expert power is based on credentials, such as education, experience, and skills, while referent power relies on relationships built on professionalism and affiliations with internal committees (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1965; Yukl, 1998). Examples of expert bases of power within my role include credentials such as teaching, facilitation, internal communication, and change management. Examples of my referent power include memberships on several committees, including the internal communication network and the disability network, chairing the engagement committee, and working closely on communication plans with several committee co-chairs, including occupational health, pride, and accessibility. Choosing when to exercise each power should be situation-dependent and mindful of cultural factors that may impact the outcome (Raven, 2008), suggesting that a strong self-awareness is required to determine which strategy will be more effective. Combining informational, referent, and experiential power, knowledge, skills, and abilities will help me to address the PoP.

Theoretical Leadership Lens: Systems Thinking

My theoretical lens of leadership is rooted in systems thinking (Meadows & Wright, 2008). Through this lens, systems thinking views an organization as a collective agency working towards a shared goal (Meadows & Wright, 2008). Aligned with my leadership agency, a systems thinking lens supports all employees in leading change from any position in the hierarchy, regardless of authority. Stroh (2015) suggested that systems thinking can facilitate knowledge sharing, strengthen the focus toward a shared goal, and promote a continuous learning environment. Furthermore, systems thinking views the organization as a connected community where all parts interact and work together for long-term changes (Senge, 2006).

My role often requires a systems-thinking approach when developing strategic communication due to the complex nature of the organization. My work involves writing significant communication assets for senior leaders to share corporately and within the department, and my expertise is called upon when projects require significant change management and communication elements. Considerations for who is impacted by the communication and other stylistic decisions, such as the style, tone, and method, are considered during the communication planning and development stages, requiring a systemic lens to ensure the communication is well-received and understood by employees.

Worldview

I acknowledge my predisposition for positivism based on my educational background in science and my current role teaching secondary science at a local university. However, positivist paradigms dismiss or sideline non-Eurocentric viewpoints (Capper, 2019). Therefore, I will use a mixed-method approach of post-positivism, including positivist tenants and humanistic values such as socially constructed realities. This paradigm acknowledges the importance of the leader and followers collaboratively constructing solutions, aligning with adaptive leadership theory's disposition to create and construct knowledge through collaborative dialogue.

Acknowledging the DOX's disposition for positivist research, such as data, trends, and scientific methods, is required to adhere to public sector expectations; therefore, built-in accountability measures will be required to convince decision-makers to adopt potential solutions (Heifetz et al., 2009). Furthermore, because of the rigid decision-making structure, moving change forward will require following the strict reporting structure, preexisting planning, and governance models (see Appendices A and B; Aucoin, 2005). Therefore, a well-developed presentation to senior leadership describing the benefits and potential outcomes of this DiP will need to include quantitative reporting elements and altruistic indicators, such as caring leadership.

Leadership Philosophy

My philosophy of leading with care underpins my leadership approach and leadership agency. Adopting a caring leadership philosophy positively impacts all employees, followers, and community partners by indirectly increasing employee success and achievements (Louis et al., 2016). Quality leaders see love as an evolving characteristic that leads to social justice and fairness, as it likely emerges when leaders face challenging issues (Sinclair & Ladkin, 2020). Caring leadership was defined by Sinclair and Ladkin (2020) as "the wish for another to be happy" (p. 66) and, similarly, by Mayeroff (1971) as helping others to flourish. This philosophy highlights my leadership approach to ensure staff feel cared for while developing solutions to address the PoP.

In summary, as an educator, facilitator, and communicator with informational power and agency, I am privileged to explore the idea of knowledge sharing through a caring lens while considering the organization as an entire system of people who interact, behave, and see the world differently. In the next section, I explore the DOX through internal and external lenses, outline the organization's broader goals, and connect my personal EDIRA positioning within the organization.

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Organizational Context

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The DOX is situated within a spectrum of other government departments, boards, agencies, and

commissions. To explore the organizational context, I begin by outlining major contextual internal factors, such as reporting structure, people management, governance structures, and current leadership styles. Next, using a modified PESTEL analysis tool, DOX is analyzed for external factors influencing the organization's behaviours, policies, actions, and values. Lastly, equity and diversity analysis reveals several inherent and robust links to DOX's commitment to the corporate diversity strategy, including examples of programs and initiatives supporting underserved employees.

The DOX is a provincial government department under the executive branch of government (Maritime Province Legislature, n.d. -a) located in a maritime province in Canada. It has about 200 staff, primarily in the urban centre, with some staff throughout the province who directly serve those communities. Provincial government departments, such as DOX, are assigned to either line or staff functions (Maritime Province Organization and Responsibilities, 2022). Line function denotes a department that provides services directly to citizens in the province, whereas staff functioning departments coordinate internal services, such as finance, administration, communication, human resources, technology, et cetera. In the case of DOX, the department is a staff functioning department, meaning its clients are employees across government, agencies, boards, and commissions, and its mission is to support employees to ensure they have the required resources to deliver services to citizens and community partners. A ministerial mandate provides direction and advice for the DOX to develop policies, programs, and procedures necessary to support employees in their work as an internal function (Maritime Province, 2022a). Several multiyear projects are underway to work towards achieving the mandate, including a sizeable department-wide effort to modernize client service approaches, ensuring resources and budgets are allocated appropriately to meet the mandate's demands and strategic work.

Organizational Structure

The DOX is structured hierarchically and vertically, with the most authoritative power at the top

(See Appendix A for the reporting structure). Ministers of each department are elected officials and executive council members, chosen by the province's Premier and appointed by the Lieutenant Governor (Maritime Province Organization and Responsibilities, 2022). Deputy ministers are the chief administrative officers of each department, and they are assigned by the order-in-council (Maritime Province Organization and Responsibilities, 2022). Deputy Ministers report directly to the Minister and are responsible for the day-to-day management of the department. Senior leadership roles are awarded based on job competition, which includes an application, interview process, and scoring based on expertise and experience. To meet its mandate goals, the DOX is organized into divisions based on their functions, such as expertise and abilities. Every position is assigned a job description that clearly defines the role and outlines specific authorities granted to the role, such as decision-making, budgeting, and hiring.

Governance

A planning and governance structure exists to facilitate decision-making and approvals (see Appendix B). The decision-making team comprises senior and executive directors (leaders of each division) and government-appointed leaders accountable for strategic planning, business planning outcomes, and financial expenditures. Changes in policy, procedures, or approaches must flow through the governance structure and may require specific levels of approval (Foster, 1986). The governance structure clearly outlines the pathways for approvals, and any large-scale changes must be approved by senior leadership.

Dominant Leadership Style

Transactional and bureaucratic leadership styles are the most prevalent at the DOX. For example, transactional leadership exists in the form of performance contracts. The management enters a yearly performance and development contract with the staff members, outlining several vital goals aligning with the organization's values. This structure provides potential rewards for employees (Bass,

1985; Burns, 1978; Weber, 1947), such as flexible work options and incremental pay increases. However, issues with transactional leadership include limited support for innovation, leading to short-term solutions and employee dependency on leadership to solve problems (Bass, 1985). Bureaucratically, government organizations prioritize budgets, planning, and management (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014), following strict rules, policies, and procedures (Blau, 1952; Weber, 1947). Decision-making and direction are initiated top-down to maintain the organizational process, authority, and control (Clarke, 2018), and several layers exist between the front-line staff and the decision-making senior leadership team. Several issues arise with the bureaucratic leadership approach, such as too much focus on following rules, leading to inflexibility and a lack of innovation opportunities (Bolman & Deal, 2021). Therefore, adopting a more modern approach to flexible and innovative leadership styles may assist the DOX in embracing experimentation and a shared responsibility to solve systemic problems.

External Organizational Analysis Through PESTS Analysis.

Using a variation of the political, economic, structural, and technological (PEST) analysis, I examine the DOX's external factors that may impact how I address the PoP. My variation of PEST includes a structural frame; therefore, I use the acronym PESTS herein.

Political

The DOX is a public sector organization; therefore, it is susceptible to external events and outside influences, such as elections, demonstrations, and media coverage. The political party in power develops the DOX's mandate, and shifting political powers causes senior leadership shuffles, such as rotating or introducing new ministers and new senior-level leadership appointments. Middle and upper management typically stays consistent within the organization for extended periods; therefore, they are most impacted by a change in political power (Guo et al., 2017). Furthermore, during transition time, budget reallocations often lead to internal restructurings, such as the amalgamation of work teams and even the dismantling of entire departments. Therefore, to address the PoP, building relationships

between middle and upper management and staff is the foundation of supporting all employees through political changes.

Economic

The DOX is held accountable publicly for its budgetary allocation and justification of spending on projects, staff, and programs (Maritime Province Legislature, n.d. -b), and therefore, there is a need for budget-conscientiousness. Improving services and reducing costs are always at the forefront of the DOX. Therefore, cost-effective solutions to internal issues are essential and likely a critical decision-making factor for approvals by senior leadership. DOX is an internally focused and facing department that supports other employees and partners; therefore, funding for projects is typically less than those of counterparts, such as education, healthcare, and transportation. When considering solutions to addressing the PoP, the economic impact of the DOX will be a critical factor.

Social

It is evident that teams often work independently on individual goals and move in different directions, such as working on the day's priority without a broader focus on the organization's goals. Some measurable effects of the problem include consistently reduced engagement scores. For instance, our most recent employee survey data indicates that less than 60% of staff feel engaged (Maritime Province, 2022b). The problem becomes increasingly evident when the DOX needs to implement a department-wide policy or procedural change. For example, teams may reject or perceive the imposed change as threatening the existing structure (Schein & Schein, 2016). Understanding how individuals and teams behave and respond to change will facilitate selecting an appropriate change model to address the PoP.

Technological

Lack of coherence and agreement on streamlined technology platforms continues to be an issue. For example, a study by Forrester (2022) found that, in general, 36% of employees experience

knowledge-sharing barriers when teams use different software platforms for data and record-keeping. Specific teams may have access to highly specialized software that requires privacy and permissions; therefore, sharing the knowledge or resources within these programs becomes a barrier for those outside those specialized teams. Therefore, technological and communication issues arise when specialized teams are approved to use individual software programs for information management, but those licenses are not extended to all employees. Further research by Forrester (2022) found that approximately 63% of employees surveyed in their study spent time and resources searching for the needed information. To address the PoP, the solution must include software accessible to all employees and pre-approved by procurement and IT for internal use.

Structural

DOX's hierarchical and bureaucratic structure creates stability and clarity for employees and clients. However, the hierarchy creates isolated work teams, and addressing systematic change is often distracting to their daily operations (Kotter, 2012), as isolated teams tend to pull away from the organization's vision and goals by creating their own team culture, referred to as *suboptimization* (Bolman & Deal, 2021). These teams perform well in isolation but need help working cross-functionally. So, although the DOX may be seen as functional, inefficiencies persist at both the senior leadership and front-line staff levels. Addressing the PoP within the structural frame requires me to consider options that will fit the existing hierarchical structure and the dynamics and complexities of suboptimized teams.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in an Organizational Context

The DOX highly values EDIRA work, as evidenced by several strategies, structures, and policies. First, the DOX has an EDIRA office dedicated to developing and implementing policies and programs that align with the government's diversity and inclusion strategy (Maritime Province, 2019). To illustrate, the current business plan outcomes include modernizing the employee equity policy with updated language (Maritime Province, 2022a). In addition, a four-year diversity action plan is ongoing to ensure the

workplace is diverse, inclusive, and reflective of the public it serves (Maritime Province, 2019). Lastly, the DOX follows several corporate policies related to EDIRA, such as employment equity, fair hiring, and respectful workplace, as well as several guidelines and program documents for employee consideration, including the duty to accommodate, designated positions, diverse hiring panel program, interpreter services, supporting trans and gender variant employees, pronoun guides, and accessible meetings. Overall, the DOX contributes to EDIRA through various projects in support of the mandate and to help improve equity and diversity in the workplace. However, discordance exists between the robust EDIRA-focused programs and policies and how employees feel included or excluded in decision-making, as reported in the most recent engagement survey (Maritime Province, 2022b). To address the PoP, inclusion, and opportunities for participation from all employees will be considered.

Leadership Problem of Practice

Leaders often rely on internal communication consultants to develop communication plans to communicate or share knowledge within the department. However, as the only consultant supporting over 200 staff, my time is often prioritized for corporate communication, leading to limited capacity for me to support multiple projects. In addition, leaders are often working at capacity; therefore, sharing internal updates on in-progress projects can be time-consuming. As a result, projects are often worked on in isolation at the team level, and initiatives are launched and communicated only when completed. Employees on different teams may be interested in contributing to or providing feedback on projects and initiatives but miss the opportunity to do so when projects and initiatives are not communicated regularly. Based on recent engagement surveys, employees want increased opportunities to share knowledge and be more aware of cross-departmental projects (Maritime Province, 2022b). Leaders in large organizations may also lack the foundational awareness and desire to communicate project progress with staff, leading them to rely on others for communication planning (Berger, 2014). This PoP) explores the lack of a coordinated approach to support and encourage leadership knowledge-sharing

practices across the organization.

The intended change at the DOX is to shift the existing isolated working culture to an open, transparent, and knowledge-sharing culture. Leaders facilitate connections between teams to ensure goals and outcomes are communicated across the DOX, especially connecting these priorities back to the daily work of front-line employees. An important consideration for this change involves incorporating diverse viewpoints, such as employees from diverse backgrounds and front-line staff, as collaboratively solving issues generates more valuable solutions, significantly improving the potential for employee buy-in (Leviton & Melichar, 2016). This change could be considered evolutionary, requiring a gradual culture shift to enable an environment that supports knowledge sharing and innovation (Alexandrova, 2020).

Framing the Problem of Practice

Shifting to a knowledge-sharing culture requires further analysis of the current issues affecting employees and leaders. The problem is first explored through an epistemological perspective, followed by leadership's predisposition towards quantitative measures (positivism) and how both consequently inhibit knowledge-sharing practices from occurring naturally in the workspace. Bolman and Deal's (2021) four-frame model is then used to explore current leadership practices through a behavioural and values lens to reveal opportunities in the human resource and symbolic frames. Next, through a hierarchical lens, DOX is analyzed through a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and assessment (soar) tool, which offers a positive and forward-looking perspective. Lastly, the problem is examined through an inclusive and decolonization lens.

Historical and Organizational Views

From an epistemology perspective, the DOX operates within a positivist paradigm, requiring employees to use quantitative measures for decision-making and progress reporting, aligning with the need for transparency in public service. Clear data trends such as success measures indicate a program's success or failure, positioning closely within DOX's values toward program accountability. All

departments, including DOX, must report annually via several public forums, such as public accounts, annual reports, and budgets. However, one of the challenges with a positivist paradigm at the DOX is the singular reliance on numerical data and statistics to make business decisions and build business cases that will provide the best return on investment (Aucoin, 2005). Therefore, the organization will likely require quantitative data collection to justify options to increase knowledge-sharing practices.

Leadership generally accepts the limitations of the existing organizational structures and works within the prescribed parameters in the hierarchy and governance (Capper, 2019). Examples of leadership approaches at the DOX operating within the structure include developing strategies and action plans and aligning them with the department or government's overall goals. Strategies that align with business plans and include elements of continuous improvement processes are most likely to be accepted by senior leadership (Deloitte Insights, 2019). The governance structure must be followed, beginning with a review and approval at the middle manager level, moving upward once approved. Despite existing efforts, however, most leaders do not have time or resources to examine issues thoroughly and often rush to a straightforward and cost-effective option that helps them better cope with the existing problem instead of solving it (Higgs & Rowland, 2005).

Four-Frame Model

I use Bolman and Deal's (2021) four-frame model to address several leadership issues contributing to the lack of knowledge-sharing. First, I organize the four-frame assessment within a chart to evaluate leadership behaviours: (a) how leadership approaches differences of opinion, (b) how they communicate, and (c) how they collaborate. Next, leadership views are assessed based on values, space, and authority. A chart is outlined in Appendix C using grey scales to indicate if the DOX *currently practices* (black), *sometimes practices* (dark grey), or *does not practice* (light grey). An initial assessment indicates that the DOX is strong in political and structural frames; however, symbolic, and human resource frames are weak, suggesting that the DOX needs to focus on improving workplace culture.

The political frame views organizations as a series of competitions between various interest groups of employees for resources such as people, information, and budget (Bolman & Deal, 2021). Within this frame, the DOX shows positive examples of strong political actions; leadership positions are assigned positional authority, and a transparent governance structure exists for decision-making. Communication at the team level is strong, but communication horizontally and vertically within the organization could be better, as indicated in the engagement survey (Maritime Province, 2022b). The lack of communication may be attributed to the hoarding of information, and the reasons for these actions by leaders can vary from a perceived competitive advantage, protecting oneself from downsizing, or maintaining a sense of authority within a group (Bilginoğlu, 2018). Finally, one challenge facing leadership within this frame is determining when to share and gatekeep knowledge, as a balance between the two approaches should be explored (Bolman & Deal, 2021).

The structural frame views the organization from a roles and responsibilities perspective, whereby job descriptions, policies, and procedures are critical concepts (Bolman & Deal, 2021). Consistent with this frame, the DOX has a well-defined bureaucratic, hierarchical structure that incorporates function, processes, and policies. Senior leaders have legitimate power over financial and strategic decision-making. They are responsible for ensuring that the organization meets its goals in the mandate letter provided by the elected official. These senior leaders' responsibilities include communication and people management. Bolman and Deal (2021) suggested that leaders are most familiar with hierarchically structured approaches, as they elicit a sense of clarity and consistency in the workplace. Conversely, modern approaches to leadership view employees as independent problem-solvers who prefer autonomy regarding their work (Bolman & Deal, 2021).

Next, the human resource frame explores people resources as a critical construct required for successful organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2021). The human resource frame shows that leaders at the DOX are involved in department-wide gatherings where leaders communicate with employees in person

at all staff meetings twice yearly. Leaders have the opportunity to share successes and elicit feedback.

However, the limited frequency of staff attending and sharing feedback twice a year suggests that

several processes and behavioural approaches still need to be included in the human resource frame,

such as engaging front-line staff in ongoing discussions as opportunities for relationship building

throughout the year. In addition, information flows top-down only, suggesting a need for multiple two-

way communication channels for staff to share ongoing thoughts and concerns. Overall, staff would

prefer more opportunities to express their opinions and have more growth opportunities within the

department (Maritime Province, 2022b).

Lastly, the symbolic frame assesses the employee's sense of purpose behind their work, where

employees buy into the overall goals and values of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2021). Regarding

the vision and mission, the DOX leads the government in collegial campaigns, encouraging shared vision

and encouraging employees to work together and do better. However, the engagement survey shows

that employees need to fully buy into the vision and mission of the organization (Maritime Province,

2022b). Opportunities noted within the symbolism frame include leadership embracing differences to

engage in deeper meanings of issues from diverse perspectives, and there is a need and desire to create

a positive workplace culture; however, reporting, planning and mandate priorities tend to outshine these

opportunities.

Strength, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results

Next, a strength, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) analysis through a hierarchical

lens was conducted to supplement the four-frame analysis and used to assess external and internal

factors that might impact the feasibility of knowledge sharing from a positive perspective (See Appendix

D).

Strengths

As noted in the four-frame analysis, the DOX has several strengths, such as clearly defined roles

and reporting structures. These work teams are subject-matter experts and are frequently relied upon for their expertise and advice. Having specialized teams means the organization can hire well-trained people to do the necessary work. There is also clear accountability for decision-making at the highest levels of seniority. Accountability includes policies and procedures, data-driven decision-making, and following laws, acts, and protocols with clearly defined and historical processes. In summary, the DOX has highly skilled staff, but they may need encouragement, support, and foundational knowledge to be supported through creating a knowledge-sharing culture.

Opportunities

An opportunity identified is to work within the existing bureaucratic and hierarchical structure to address the PoP. Although staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities and whom they report to, they remain isolated within their teams. Leaders of individual teams who feel isolated may focus inwardly on their team's success and priorities, creating missed opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration on shared issues (Waal et al., 2019). A study by Forrester (2022) found that 36 % of staff are challenged when required to share knowledge with other teams, creating systemic and organizational issues that are never fully addressed due to a lack of understanding of the root causes. Instead, temporary fixes often allow the system to get by, but more significant issues never get addressed. The opportunity emerges when these multiple teams of employees share everyday work, challenges, and clients.

Second, opportunities exist to create a culture of knowledge sharing whereby teams working on daily tasks may also interface with others across the department on shared issues, and leaders forge relationships beyond their existing teams. Many untapped people resources within the staff, including highly educated people with diverse backgrounds, may feel limited to working in their current roles. Uhl-Bien (2006) suggested that building relationships between leaders and followers beyond the traditional reporting structure is a more modern knowledge-sharing approach. Leaders can also commit to and

support their staff in developing their skills collaboratively by joining cross-government networks and

sharing their learnings with teams. Evidence shows that knowledge sharing across platforms supported

by leadership can positively impact the organization's strategy and goals (Sonmez Cakir & Adiguzel,

2020). Various information-sharing and collaborating options exist within our digital platform series of

applications; however, they should be better utilized.

Aspiration

The DOX aspires to provide excellent client services to government employees, is committed to

acknowledging barriers to innovation, and is open to addressing and improving services. DOX is

committed to advancing the need to address EDIRA challenges within the workplace and for those

interested in working for the government. Recently, a shift in mindset has evolved with a push to

modernize the workplace, such as embracing flexible working schedules, streamlining the hiring process,

and working to improve the workplace culture. Hence, staff feel engaged and inspired to stay with the

government.

Results

The DOX has several goals related to its mandate. DOX is internally focused and, therefore, is

accountable for providing services to other departments. First, DOX provides client services, such as

consultative services and strategic advice, which requires DOX to understand clients' business needs.

Next, DOX develops internal policies related to its industry and is also required to champion, lead, and

execute programs related to EDIRA. Lastly, DOX is required to ensure its staff are safe and healthy

through various policies, programs, and committees. In summary, the DOX is reviewing current practices

while moving towards a more modern workplace. Communication and knowledge sharing are at the

heart of every action to address these outcomes, requiring a strategic and innovative approach to solving

the PoP.

Inclusion Problems with the PoP

Nguyen et al.'s (2023) research suggested that while leaders attempt to integrate and advance inclusion within organizations, leaders struggle to conceptualize inclusion and understand how inclusion impacts EDIRA programs and outcomes. To better understand inclusion problems with the PoP, it is important first to define inclusion in the workplace context. Inclusion can be explored through three levels: individual, aggregate and process (Nguyen et al., 2023). At the individual level, inclusion means employees feel included (Mor-Barak, 2022), are engaged in the workplace, and are treated equally and fairly while respecting their individuality (Shore et al., 2011). Aggregate levels of inclusion are defined as collective behaviours and "shared employee perceptions of the work environment in terms of recognizing employees' talents and encouraging a sense of commonality and belonging among all organizational members" (Ngyuen et al., 2023, p. 341). Lastly, inclusion can be viewed as a process with the goal of providing employees "access to areas from which they were formerly un/intentionally excluded" (Ngyuen et al., 2023, p. 341). Inclusion can be further explored through the intersectionality of employee demographics, and employees can experience inclusion on a spectrum, from inclusion to exclusion and many stages in between (Nguyen et al., 2023). Qu and Wang's (2002) research found that fostering inclusion in the workplace can lead to other positive outcomes, such as increased engagement, feeling supported, and employees perceiving there are opportunities for development within the workplace.

In the context of the PoP, inclusion issues emerge when staff are asked to share information (Xie, 2019). For example, employees may hesitate to share opinions at meetings or committees outside of their immediate teams because they have previously been excluded from meaningful decision-making conversations (Shields, 2020) or have been only invited to conversations when their views align with the dominant group's values (Ahenakew, 2016). Shields (2020) noted that persons from underserved communities are often selected to be part of a group based on their inferred sole value as community representatives rather than experienced value-added professionals. According to the most recent

employee survey, DOX employees may not feel free to express their opinions if they differ from

leadership (Maritime Province, 2022b). The issue with finding common ground in knowledge-sharing

practices could also be influenced by outside forces such as colonialism and neoliberalism, which, in the

Western world, have shaped our workplace experiences and, inevitably, our views on how we

communicate (Glass et al., 2018). Knowledge sharing within an organization can be complex as

"intellectual tools and concepts were steeped in the power hierarchies and academic traditions that had

marked and shaped each of us" (Glass et al., 2018, p. 507). Addressing the PoP will require inclusive,

open, and transparent approaches, as well as an evaluation method to assess employee inclusion.

In summary, framing the problem reveals several strengths of the organization, such as clear

reporting structures, allowing employees to focus on their assigned tasks; however, the structure has led

to systemic issues, such as employees feeling undervalued and excluded and confusion around how their

work fits into the larger organizational goals. Three questions emerge further from the complex framing

analysis, which will be investigated in the following section.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the PoP

Teams within a hierarchical structure are highly specialized employees working together toward

their mandated goals (Weerakkody et al., 2021). However, a consequence of this structure is the

negative impact on organizational culture (Forsten-Astikainen et al., 2017), as identified in DOX's recent

employee engagement survey (Maritime Province, 2022b). These siloed teams consist of highly self-

sufficient specialized professionals who communicate well within their teams but experience

misunderstandings around responsibilities and ownership when required to communicate horizontally

(Bundred, 2006) due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of other teams' workloads, demands and

mandates. Work teams focus on individually assigned tasks and actions rather than integrating their

work within the organization's overall goals and objectives. Vertical hierarchies contribute further to the

issue because several layers of management decision-making and project approvals hinder process

efficiency (Bolman & Deal, 2021). Changing the organization's structure is outside of my role and agency; therefore, the question to be explored is: "How can DOX increase knowledge-sharing opportunities between work teams within the limitations of the existing hierarchical structures?"

The second question explores the importance of including employees most impacted by the change within the change process. Pivoting from the typical decision-making process (top-down), addressing the PoP should be collaboratively constructed with partners and employees to help build knowledge and capacity about the change and be well-informed from an end-user perspective along the way. Heifetz et al. (2004) suggested using adaptive leadership as a collaborative approach, allowing the employees to take ownership of the problem and creatively build a solution. Furthermore, employees should be given multiple opportunities to provide input through engagement opportunities while developing a solution (McGrath et al., 2016; Russ, 2009). The question to be explored is: "What approach will be best suited to involve multiple partners in collaborating and developing a solution to address a lack of knowledge-sharing practices across DOX?"

Lastly, when a workplace assigns EDIRA organizational responsibilities to one team, several issues could arise, such as creating additional barriers (Capper, 2019). EDIRA work isolated to one team or committee's responsibility focuses on incremental improvements rather than addressing the perpetuation of inequities and barriers as a systemic issue (Capper, 2019). In addition, when an organization has separate equity and diversity teams, it can be perceived as advanced in moving equity forward. Murray-Johnson and Guerra (2018) suggested that leaders will perceive the organization as equitable due to ongoing engagement in multiple celebrations, holidays and festivals celebrated and communicated throughout the year; however, these traditional diverse celebrations do not address deep-rooted social and equitable injustice issues. The question to be explored is:
"How might we mitigate potential barriers for underserved employees that may arise either during, or as a result of, the solution to this PoP?"

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

My vision for change is to create inclusive opportunities for employees to share knowledge outside of their own work teams. The intended shift from working in isolation to a more informed and aligned workforce includes a future state of shared staff awareness of all current projects within the organization. Adaptive leaders and employees facilitate connections between work teams through multiple communication channels to ensure goals and outcomes are communicated across the department, especially connecting how these projects impact staff work. This approach leads to long-term systemic problem-solving instead of short-term reactions, allowing staff to provide input throughout project lifecycles.

Changes Needed and Gaps Identified: Defining Knowledge Sharing Characteristics and Assumptions

To describe the changes required, knowledge sharing must first be clearly defined and distinguished apart from informal processes that already exist at the DOX, such as 'cooperation' and 'coordination.' I view cooperation as the act of senior leadership breaking down the organization's larger goals into smaller, more manageable fragments and coordinating the work through several layers of management downward to individuals or work teams, who complete these separate tasks in silos (Roschelle & Teasley, 1995). Knowledge sharing has similar characteristics to cooperation and coordination in working towards the organization's goals; however, knowledge sharing is a continuous process whereby employees share information about their work, and there is an opportunity for engagement and interaction with all employees through shared understandings and ideas (Baker, 2015). Currently, the hierarchy allows cooperation and coordination to dominate by distributing work top-down through multiple divisions and work teams; however, limited knowledge-sharing opportunities exist across teams. Consequently, several changes are needed to address the lack of knowledge sharing between teams (see Table 1).

Table 1

Gaps Between Current and Future State

(Current)	(Future)
Leaders make all decisions.	Employees participate in decision-making.
Employees are not willing to share opinions outside of their teams.	Employees share different perspectives, contributing to systemic improvement.
A positivist approach relies on data for analysis, problem-solving and reporting.	Employees' feelings are considered, and solutions are generated through collaborative construction.
Failure is not an option.	Failure is a process by which learning happens.
Top-down communication.	Two-way communication.

Note. Adapted from *When the Only Constant Changes: Adaptive Leadership for Any Context* (Table 1), by Vantage Partners Consulting, n.d., (https://info.vantagepartners.com/adaptive-leadership). Copyright 2023 Vantage Partners Consulting.

First, leaders should be encouraged to implement adaptive leadership tenets. Adaptive leadership requires rethinking how leaders currently cooperate within the hierarchical structure to move toward a more transparent approach (Heifetz et al., 2009). Knowledge sharing enables employees to solve common problems and collaboratively construct a shared understanding of respect for their colleagues (Baker, 2015).

Secondly, developing trust between work teams is required (Sharkie, 2009), as developing trust facilitates a level of vulnerability by employees to openly share their thoughts, feelings, and concerns with leaders without fear of job loss, differential treatment, or dismissal (Kelly & Schaefer, 2014). Currently, staff do not feel comfortable sharing opinions that differ from those in senior leadership

positions (Maritime Province, 2022b), as collaborative networks often fail due to employee's

unwillingness to share out of fear of retribution (Baker, 2015). Uneven power dynamics impact the

outcomes of collaborative spaces (Baker, 2015); therefore, leaders need to value differences of opinion

and treat them as opportunities for deeper understanding (Baker, 2015).

Third, the organization functions exclusively in a positivist paradigm, measuring success through

data, surveys, and positive trends. As discussed, the DOX typically rushes to solve issues swiftly;

therefore, shifting to a constructivist (Piaget, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978) paradigm could alleviate the desire

to rush to solutions, which aligns with systems thinking and adaptive leadership models. Hine (2020)

suggests this approach reframes issues not as problems to be solved but as opportunities to bring about

positive change for employees.

Lastly, employees and leaders require self-awareness about their own style of communication

(Kelly & Schaefer, 2014). To share knowledge effectively, one must understand one's preferred

communication style and the ability to recognize other styles and build skills to modify approaches

where necessary (Kelly & Schaefer, 2014). A knowledge-sharing culture requires a clear commitment to

understanding diverse communication perspectives (Kelly & Schaefer, 2014). Moving from one-way to

two-way communication allows employees to provide feedback and use their communication skills

upwards, downwards, and cross-functionally.

Challenging Inequities

Ahenakew (2016) suggested rethinking how inclusion in knowledge sharing is conceptualized in

organizations, as most are centralized in Western philosophies. Historically, inclusion in the workplace

meant bending the existing colonial structures to include people from diverse backgrounds; however,

this approach required participants to alter their diverse voices to fit within the Western construct

(Capper, 2019). In doing so, organizations maintain the same Western culture, limiting progress toward

equity. When committees are not diverse, members have potentially limited knowledge or experience of

the current issues (Senge et al., 2007). EDIRA work in the public sector often requires or expects

employees to engage in advocacy outside their regular duties. A decolonized approach to knowledge

sharing in the organization could focus on de-centring the current Westernized approach, starting with

critically thinking about existing practices of standing up committees or networks to address systemic

issues (Arshad, 2020). In addition, addressing inequities means tackling the dynamic of power that

maintains the status quo (Thakur & Tuinstra, n.d.), whereby leaders evaluate the current structures in

their leadership practice to which injustices are preserved and upheld in the organization.

Priorities for Change

Based on the four-frames analysis (Bolman & Deal, 2021) completed in the framing section, two

priority areas for change were identified: human resources and symbolism. The human resource frame

explores people resources as a critical construct required for successful organizations (Bolman & Deal,

2021). The human resource frame revealed that leaders at the DOX are involved in department-wide

gatherings where they share updates and successes and elicit feedback. However, several processes and

behavioural approaches still need to be included in the human resource frame, such as involving staff in

discussions as opportunities for relationship building. In addition, information flows top-down only,

revealing a need for two-way communication channels for staff to share ongoing thoughts and concerns.

Overall, staff would prefer more opportunities to express their opinions with senior leadership and

growth opportunities within the department (Maritime Province, 2022b). Therefore, the priority is to

address the behavioural and process approaches to human resources.

Next, the symbolic frame assesses the employee's sense of purpose behind their work, where

employees buy into the overall goals and values of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2021).

Opportunities noted within the symbolism frame include leadership embracing differences to engage in

deeper meanings of issues from diverse perspectives, and there is a need and desire to create a positive

workplace culture; contrarily, reporting, planning and mandate priorities tend to outshine these

opportunities. Therefore, the second priority is to address the concerns with the symbolic frame.

Lastly, a final priority for change is understanding how knowledge sharing is valued at all leadership levels at the DOX. Leaders should allocate time, space, and resources for creativity and innovative problem-solving, as time spent on improvements enhances the overall quality of work and engagement values in a workplace (Brunner, 1997; DuFour, 1997). However, there needs to be a set policy, plan or dedicated time allotted for leaders or employees to facilitate knowledge sharing outside the current options, such as committees or corporate networks.

Leadership Considerations at the Micro, Meso, and Macro Levels

The levels of leadership at the micro, meso, and macro levels will impact the outcome of this DiP as all play a role in organizational determinants for knowledge sharing (Guedda, 2021). The macro-level leadership involvement will be significant as initial adopters and supporters of the collaborative culture; however, as the change is embedded within the organization, their role becomes less important (Guedda, 2021). This level includes senior leadership, such as appointed and elected officials and senior leadership teams for the macro level (see Appendix B for Governance Structure with micro, meso and macro labels). A positivist approach is required to gain initial support from the macro level, such as a business case and a return on investment, based on potential benefits for the organization and ensuring alignment with overall goals. This level will be necessary for the initial phases of awareness and desire (Anderson, 2023) and to ensure employees understand the alignment between the initiative and the overall goals (Caldwell & Mays, 2012).

The meso level consists of middle managers, directors, and committee chairs reporting directly to the macro leadership level. The importance of meso leadership support at this level includes employees understanding of the initiative and how it fits within the organizational landscape (Caldwell & Mays, 2012). Although this level is highly focused on problem-solving, the challenge will be to restrain their desire to move toward a fast solution and instead explore systemic issues from diverse perspectives

with the micro-level employees (Caldwell & Mays, 2012).

Micro-level leadership are the employees who are the client-facing service delivery partners at the DOX. This group is critical to success, as the micro group would be the most beneficial in reframing and building knowledge-sharing opportunities. Front-line employees will be particularly interested in how the change will translate into their operational work (Caldwell & Mays, 2012) and will be curious about the operational-level impacts. In alignment with my chosen post-positivist and constructivist approaches (Piaget, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978), collaboratively constructing the communication and change plan with this group will be required.

In short, although the macro-level leadership is vital at the launch phase, the meso- and micro-levels of leadership become increasingly important due to employees' proximity to the change (Guedda, 2021). These levels are also embedded in the DOX's governance structure (see Appendix B), whereby the macro leadership is at the departmental level (top), meso is near the middle, and micro is at the bottom. Collaborative efforts rely primarily on the willingness of the employees to create and innovate (Guedda, 2021). It should be noted that social proximity can be utilized as a primer to knowledge sharing, but the process requires further scaffolding and framework for a successful collaborative effort (Guedda, 2021).

Chapter 1 Conclusion

The DOX must consider diverse perspectives and a systematic approach to solving ongoing issues to meet its mandated goals and desire to become more modernized. Knowledge sharing using inclusive and decolonized perspectives enables leaders to be knowledge-contributing members toward the organization's greater purpose. Diverse perspectives become valued in decision-making, and increased two-way communication allows underserved voices to be heard. In Chapter 2, I outline the leadership approach and framework to address the PoP, which will help identify strategies within an inclusive, caring, and decolonized framework.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

In Chapter 1, I outlined the leadership Problem-of-Practice (PoP), including organizational

contexts and my leadership lens and agency. In this chapter, I discuss the identified and needed change

leadership approach to address the lack of knowledge-sharing opportunities at the Department of X

(DOX, a pseudonym). Two change models have been chosen to lead the transformation from a dual

perspective: leadership and employee, which follow adaptive leadership methods. DOX is then assessed

for change readiness using Prosci and Change Journey models, with several key areas identified as

requiring additional attention and providing a starting point for Chapter 3. From an organizational

perspective, ethical considerations are evaluated based on Wood and Hilton's (2012) ethical framework

for decision-making, which considers ethics of care, justice, responsibility, and community. Lastly, three

solutions are proposed to address the PoP, followed by a detailed discussion and analysis of each,

including resources, inclusion, ethics, benefits, and its ability to address both the gaps and three

questions posed in Chapter 1. Based on the analysis, one solution is the most appropriate to address the

PoP.

Leadership Approach to Change

Increasing knowledge-sharing opportunities will require a unique leadership approach that

rethinks how leaders make decisions, build relationships, and connect with other teams within the DOX.

This change will also require an Equitable, Diversity, Inclusive and Accessible (EDIRA) lens to ensure

underserved employee voices are heard. In this section, I outline how adaptive leadership will enable the

DOX to become more collaborative by increasing knowledge-sharing opportunities while addressing

issues using a systems approach. Adaptive leadership theory supports my positionality and agency as an

informal leader within the DOX and will enable all employees to lead from where they are in the

hierarchy.

Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership was initially introduced by Heifetz et al. (2009). It was inspired by evolutionary and genetic biology, specifically how species adapt to their environments by growing, evolving, and surviving over time. Scholars such as Linsky, Grashow and DeRue further researched and developed adaptive leadership theory. The close alignment with biological origins was a natural fit for my DiP, having taught biology for the past 18 years in public and post-secondary schools. Specifically, three characteristics support the linkage between biology and adaptive leadership through an ecological and evolutionary lens: Preserving the best traits, removing irrelevant traits, and shifting existing traits to give a particular advantage or competitiveness (Heifetz et al., 2009). Organizations such as the DOX can take a similar approach to ensure survival in a rapidly changing environment by using adaptive leadership to increase its capacity to respond better to change. To contextualize the workplace through an adaptive lens, organizations need to understand their best assets and traits and work to keep them, eliminate outdated processes and tweak existing practices to ensure they remain capable of responding to future changes.

An adaptive leadership focus on relationship building will be a critical theory to address the need to share knowledge (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997). Increasing knowledge-sharing practices will require first- and-second-order changes (Bartunek & Moch, 1987) in leaders and employee behaviours, often requiring them to experience discomfort and challenges in pursuing authentic adaptive leadership (Heifetz & Linsky, 2017). Adaptive leadership engages staff in problem-solving, enabling a united front for tackling the ever-changing workplace environment (Heifetz et al., 2009). The adaptive leadership approach does not rely solely on authoritative leaders to solve issues within the organization; instead, it facilitates opportunities for staff to dwell on the problems, ultimately empowering them to become independent problem-solvers (Northouse, 2019). Moving from a traditional leadership framework to one of inclusive and adaptive knowledge sharing requires a shift in mindset and shared responsibility that can lead to increased organizational performance, as outlined in Table 1.

Adaptive Leadership and Organizational Context

Adaptive leadership differentiates itself from the traditional top-down managing approach, whereby decision-making is held at senior leadership levels or the highest position in the hierarchy (Heifetz et al., 2009). Senior leaders make the most critical decisions at the DOX, which trickle down through the hierarchy. However, adaptive leadership supports the behaviours of engaging and collaborating with others to facilitate discussions leading to solutions (Williams, 2005). Where top-down leadership focuses on straightforward processes and tasks, mostly with input and predictable outputs (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997), adaptive leadership issues often include systemic organizational matters such as culture, beliefs, and behaviours (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). Therefore, adaptive leaders will challenge the existing status quo, leaving them somewhat vulnerable to colleague resistance (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). Although leaders may prefer to avoid vulnerability and risky conditions, adaptive leadership provides a foundation for leaders to collaborate for the betterment of the organization and the leaders themselves. Adaptive leadership also stresses the importance of working collaboratively within a 'triad' approach, including multiple partners in conversations, such as leadership, workstreams and community partners (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Currently, there are several examples of adaptive leadership opportunities upon which we could improve at the DOX. For instance, the DOX holds regularly scheduled staff meetings (both in-person and virtual). During these meetings, senior leaders present project updates, and staff can engage with others through interactive team-building exercises, consistent with how adaptive leadership theory encourages creating space to solve problems (Northouse, 2019). However, one issue with the process is that the follow-up after the meeting usually falls short, and ideas are documented but need to be implemented, making staff doubt that their thoughts will make a difference. As a first-order change, I can use these pre-existing collaborative spaces to use an adaptive leadership approach to ensure voices are heard and outcomes are followed through (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Diagnosing/Effecting Change

The adaptive leadership approach supports addressing adaptive challenges, whereby the solution to the problem is not the leader's responsibility but rather a collaboration of multi-level employees and partners. Heifetz et al. (2009) suggest six guiding principles to assist with change; these steps are sequential; however, flexibility and agility are permitted for course correction or self-reflection (Heifetz et al., 2009). The first step is deciding if the issue is technical or adaptive; the second is creating a sense of urgency within the organization to get everyone on board; the third is ensuring all participants understand the problem from multiple viewpoints; the fourth is allowing participants to come up with solutions; fifth is to mitigate conflicts between participants; sixth is keeping the momentum going but also preventing burnout, and lastly, seventh is ensuring a continuous feedback loop is available for participants to safeguard the iterative process (Miller & Dalglish, 2018). Although these linear steps are change-focused, they lay the foundation for collaborative principles where new knowledge-sharing opportunities are identified. This sequential approach also aligns with my chosen change management framework, which will be introduced in a subsequent section. In the solutions section, I discuss several options to address the need for knowledge sharing using adaptive leadership principles.

My Role/Agency and Adaptive Leadership

Leading without authority is a relatively new concept (DeRue, 2011). As I differentiate leadership from authority, it becomes evident that only some studies look outside traditional leadership positions. However, many people have led without positional authority, relying on their sub-optimized teams or their vast network of connections outside the scope of their job duties, including connecting with those with formal authority (Heifetz et al., 2009). As I am in a position without traditional authority, adaptive leadership aligns with my agency for this change, as authority is not a prerequisite (Heifetz et al., 2009). Authority leaders are not necessarily obstacles to achieving my vision for change; instead, I see them as parts of the complex system through my systems thinking lens and, as such, allies in the change work

ahead (Heifetz et al., 2009).

One benefit of not being in a traditional leadership role is that there is no expectation for me to follow a normative decision-making process (Heifetz, 1994). It also allows me to hyperfocus on the issue of knowledge sharing, as I am not required to meet leadership demands (Heifetz, 1994). Lastly, I am closer to the end-user experience because I am considered operational; therefore, I have gained lived experience of the challenges and processes of the lack of knowledge sharing and its effects on service delivery (Heifetz, 1994).

Adaptive Leadership, and Inclusion

Leading with care (Shields, 2020) requires everyone's creative participation to solve issues. To alleviate worry and fear of participating in knowledge-sharing activities, Glass et al. (2018) suggested "to make transparent all inquiry steps and protocols" (p. 513). Transparency of the process will play a key role in fostering safe and collaborative opportunities for staff to share knowledge, so we do not mistakenly reintroduce the values that prevented the legitimate participation of underserved groups in the first place. To assess employee's perception of inclusion while addressing the PoP, I will use a modified Mor-Barak Inclusion-Exclusion scale (2022), which will measure employees' involvement in addressing the PoP, their roles in the decision-making process and access to information at various stages of the process. The results from employee input into the survey will be reviewed collectively and discussed collaboratively in the spirit of inclusion and adaptiveness. Choosing a solution based on inclusive principles will be necessary, but also to develop and integrate a barrier identification and mitigation strategy in cooperation with employees to ensure this practice is upheld.

Next Steps

In summary, adaptive leadership aligns with my personal leadership philosophy of systems thinking and my underpinned approach to caring leadership. The skills, behaviours and approaches embedded within the theory facilitate several new opportunities to rethink how we approach solving

systemic issues and more opportunities for employees at front-line levels to share creative solutions. In

the following section, I discuss a new framework for change to implement new knowledge-sharing

opportunities.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

To address the change component for this DiP, I chose a dual approach from Rafferty et al.'s

(2013) framework that suggests addressing from two perspectives: change led by leadership (top-down)

and how employees experience change (bottom-up). Exploring change at dual levels can unearth diverse

perspectives yet to be explored, aligning with my adaptive change leadership, and supporting a

decolonization approach to change (Department of Justice Canada, 2021; Rafferty et al., 2013). From a

leader-led perspective, I chose the Prosci change methodology (Hiatt, 2006) as my primary leadership

approach to change due to its rigorous process structure and well-researched methods focusing on

changing individuals and teams and its popularity and familiarity within the public service. Many

employees have taken Prosci training through the official institute or a shortened course through the

learning centre. From the employee perspective, I use the change journey (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as

cited in Buller, 2015), which acknowledges the employee's journey through change while recognizing

that individual needs and personal journeys may differ. Both change models align with my chosen

adaptive leadership systems thinking, underpinned by a caring approach (See Appendix E).

Interconnecting Change Theories

The Prosci methodology (Hiatt, 2006) is rooted in change theories from scholars Bechard and

Harris, Van de Ven and Poole, and Vroom and Lawler, respectively (Burke, 2018). Prosci methodology

uses transition theory to address organizational change as a sequential planning method where linear

foundations apply and attempts to simplify complex change behaviour (Burke, 2018), aligning with my

systems thinking leadership lens. To address the limitations of the linear model, I overlay a change

journey framework (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015) built upon the change roadmap

(Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010) to address the limitations of Prosci's linear models, recognizing the importance of the employee experience throughout the change. This method softens the top-down sequential approach to considering employees' feelings and validating their experience as they go through the change (See Appendix E). Both are discussed in the following subsection, including how I will use both methodologies to address my PoP.

Prosci Methodology

Considered the best practice in change management among many top organizations, Prosci is supported by over 20 years of scientific research (Prosci, 2020). The Prosci methodology (Hiatt, 2006) provides several tools to assess organizational gaps, such as a Prosci change triangle (PCT), awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement (ADKAR) assessment, and multiple plans that can be used as ongoing evaluations throughout the change lifecycle (Anderson, 2023). Prosci also has a well-developed input/output dashboard for certified change practitioners that simplifies data analysis. The Prosci change practitioner program is also a favourite model in the provincial government because training is readily available for employees internally and via the Prosci training organization. As a certified change practitioner, I am well-positioned to utilize the tools. Lastly, my entire team recently took the Prosci change management training together as a team-building exercise and are familiar with the terms and approaches.

The Prosci methodology is a step-by-step process with three distinct phases: preparing, planning, and sustaining (See Figure 1). Beginning with an initial assessment to evaluate the organization's capacity for change (Hiatt, 2006), this model uses a PCT assessment to evaluate the project's readiness for change and an ADKAR assessment to measure the individual's capacity for change throughout the change process's lifecycle (Hiatt, 2006). To succeed, all ADKAR model steps must occur in order: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement.

First, awareness is measured from an employee's understanding of the change, why it is needed,

and the risk of not changing (Prosci, 2020). Desire is measured through the employee's choice to engage

and participate in the change. Knowledge is an actionable step whereby the employee undergoes

training to understand the new process or tool and involves learning new skills. Ability is accessed during

the live implementation of the change, where employees demonstrate the skills and are ready for the

Figure 1

Prosci Methodology

Change Management Model
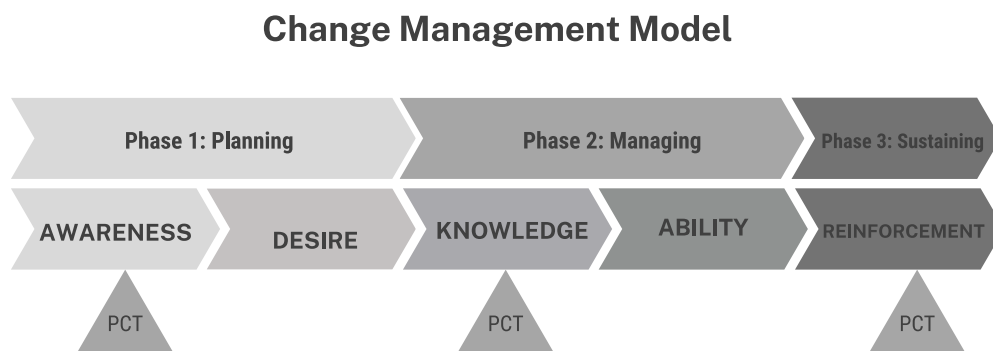
Note. Prosci methodology is organized into three phases, and its corresponding ADKAR component is

based on the foundation of the triangular PCT assessment. From: Prosci, n.d.

https://www.prosci.com/methodology/3-phase-process.

change launch. Lastly, reinforcement must be included to increase the chances that the change will be

sustained. Rewards and recognition are essential for continuity (Prosci, 2020).

To assess the individual's change readiness, each element of the ADKAR tool is scored based on

readiness on a scale of 1 (*not ready*) to 5 (*ready*). If any element of ADKAR scores a three or less, it is

considered a barrier point, requiring enhanced efforts and focus in that area before moving on. In

addition, the Prosci methodology states that if any of these elements are not met before moving on,

there is a high likelihood of failure (Hiatt, 2006). The Prosci methodology follows the recommended

multi-framework approach at the collective level, as Prosci assesses the team and the organization's

capacity for change (Hiatt, 2006).

Change Journey Model

Considering the DOX's complexity and the potential for employee resistance, I added a layer to

the Prosci methodology that helps build relationships and trust with employees struggling with change.

Purokuru and Nauheimer (as cited in Buller, 2015) built onto the change roadmap approach (Anderson &

Ackerman-Anderson, 2010) by incorporating pauses throughout the change process (for a description of

each destination point, see Appendix F). These pauses allow employees to rest for varying periods;

therefore, this process acknowledges that each employee experiences the change differently and

supports a caring leadership approach (Shields, 2020). The change journey model (Purokuru &

Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015) addresses the limitations of the Prosci, especially in understanding

why employees resist change. Furthermore, this approach is an iterative process that supports

incremental planning changes and shifts as required, such as adding additional destinations depending

on the needs of the employees and the organizational culture (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller,

2015).

To address my PoP within this DiP, I will use the change journey model (Purokuru & Nauheimer,

as cited in Buller, 2015) by engaging with staff to self-assess their experience during the change by

placing themselves at destination points. Because it is difficult to predict how employees will react to the

change, the change journey model provides further insight into why employees may resist at various

points and suggests options to overcome these obstacles and get the process back on track (Purokuru &

Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015). Resistance to the change is explored further below as a helpful tool

indicative of potential gaps in the plans.

Resistance

Both Prosci and Change Journey methodologies will help anticipate and reduce resistance;

however, Rafferty et al. (2013) believed that employee resistance may be helpful for the change

practitioner, such as indicating potential gaps in the plan. Increased resistance pockets at various levels

or teams or low scores on the ADKAR assessment will help me rethink the communication of the change.

For example, resistance might indicate a weakness or opportunity to improve the change plan and

strategy (Rafferty et al., 2013) and provide me with an opportunity to engage the team further, re-adjust

the communication plan and re-focus additional efforts where required. Therefore, paying close

attention to the ADKAR evaluations, including survey feedback and focus group conversations, can help

inform the subsequent steps in the change process.

When an individual perceives that change is being forced upon them, the change is usually

resisted, whereas changes owned by the staff tend to be embraced (Burke, 2018). Furthermore,

adaptive leadership principles encourage participative voices; therefore, Prosci assessments should be

completed by impacted employees, not just the project team. Burke (2018) supported the precedence

of following this approach, specifically "more open communication regardless of level, more employee

involvement in the decision-making process, that is, including them in the decisions that directly affect

their work, increased teamwork, and initiatives that provide a clear direction for the future" (p. 293).

The Prosci methodology provides several tools to assist the change team with employees' resistance,

and the change journey helps inform the reasons behind resistance and provides advice and guidance to

help get the change back on track.

First-, Second-, and Third-Order Changes

The types of changes required, such as first, second and third-order changes, will be further

defined in the change plan; however, several instances of first and second-order changes are initially

evident. A first-order change (Bartunek & Moch, 1987) will be engaging in two-way communication more

frequently using existing software platforms and all-staff meetings. A second-order change will require

adopting a new knowledge-sharing approach (Bartunek & Moch, 1987), such as leaders engaging in

knowledge sharing outside their immediate teams. A third-order change perspective requires changing deep-rooted belief systems, which might require several years of consistent leadership focus (Bartunek & Moch, 1987). External factors, such as political powers, media, and public perceptions, may impact third-order change potential (See Chapter 1, Four-Frame Assessment). Examples of other third-order changes include leaders feeling safe to fail and using post-positivist or critical realist paradigms to report successes.

Inclusion

The dual framework approach to change (Rafferty et al., 2013) facilitates several avenues for staff inclusion throughout the change process. Incorporating the individual-level inclusion perspective, the change journey approach (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015) acknowledges staff experiences and feelings as valid. The change journey promotes a collaborative practice between leaders and employees (Faircloth, 2017) whereby employees construct meaning and understanding within the process, aligning with the post-positivist paradigm. This approach creates a space for staff to share knowledge between work teams in a mutually respectful way, aligning with the values of adaptive leadership and requiring the creative participation of everyone to solve issues (Heifetz et al., 2009).

From an aggregate inclusion perspective, leaders can involve staff directly impacted by the change throughout the change process. By doing so, individuals will feel connected to the change, creating a sense of empowerment (Armenakis et al., 1993). Furthermore, Rafferty et al. (2013) suggested that providing individuals with opportunities to voice opinions throughout the change process increases employees' acceptance of the change. This approach aligns with my adaptive leadership approach, whereby the leader empowers staff to be innovative and creative in their work and supports the principles of diversity and equity by creating space for employee viewpoints (Heifetz et al., 2009). This approach of two-way communication will be included in the change framework.

In summary, inclusion approaches at the individual and aggregate levels serve as behaviours

toward inclusion-as-a-process toward building a more inclusive workplace. Using a dual-level framework

supports adaptive systems thinking and an inclusive and caring approach to leadership throughout the

change process. Moving to increased knowledge sharing will require participative voices to be heard,

especially from underserved employees. In the next section, I discuss the DOX's readiness for change.

<p style="text-align:center">Organizational Change Readiness</p>

Combe (2014) and Armenakis et al. (1993) defined organizational change readiness as measuring

the staff's self-efficacy, including how well they feel they can participate and contribute to the change.

Combe (2014) further added the need to measure "the organization's financial, material, human and

informational resources that can be applied to the change" (para. 12). In this section; I assess the DOX's

readiness for change using the Prosci change triangle (PCT) model and awareness, desire, knowledge,

ability, and reinforcement (ADKAR) tool from my chosen change management theory, which is part of

the Prosci methodology approach to change management (Hiatt, 2006).

Organizational Change Readiness Tools: The PCT and ADKAR

The PCT framework is the first tool to assess change readiness, which serves two functions as

part of the change management strategy (Creasey, 2024). First, it defines the four critical aspects of the

change effort from a leadership perspective, defining success and clarifying the roles of the change

team: the sponsor, the change manager, and the project manager. Next, a questionnaire is completed by

the change manager with input from the change team to determine change readiness and assess which

areas may require more attention. Based on the results, the change team must address any shortfalls

discussed in the following section (See Figure 2).

Applying the PCT

To apply the PCT tool (Prosci, n.d.) to assess the organization's readiness for change, the change

practitioner must review 40 questions and score each on a readiness scale, from *low/inadequate* = 1 to

adequate = 2 or *exceptional* = 3. See Appendix G for a complete list of questions with scores. The scores

Figure 2

PCT Model: Critical Elements for Success
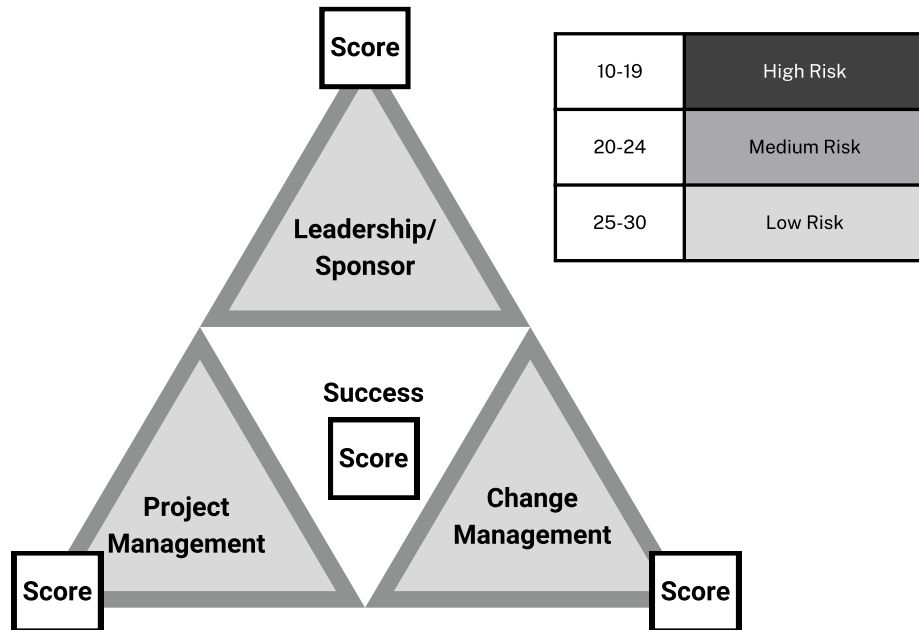
Note. From Prosci Change Practitioner Program.

for each section are tallied, and the results are assigned a colour code based on risk: Red indicates *high risk*, yellow is *medium risk*, and green indicates *no risk*. Areas in the red or yellow zones require immediate attention and action before the change can be launched. Prosci emphasizes that all aspects must be green before the change is launched in the organization, or there is a high likelihood of project failure (C. Zender, personal communication, February 14 - 16, 2023). After completing an initial PCT assessment to assess DOX's readiness for change, each category met the minimum readiness standards. However, there is room for improvement in 3 of the four categories. To address the gaps, the questions from the assessment with a score of 2 or less provide a guide for the change team to prioritize areas

requiring attention. The PCT will be part of the change implementation and monitoring and evaluation plan, as it is recommended that a PCT assessment be completed several times throughout the process.

Applying ADKAR

Like the PCT, the ADKAR model uses a series of sequential questions to assess the organization and the employee's readiness for change (Hiatt, 2006). For example, each element of the ADKAR tool is scored based on organizational readiness on a scale of 1 (*not ready*) to 5 (*ready*). If any element of ADKAR scores a three or less, it is considered a barrier point, requiring enhanced efforts and focus in that area before moving on (Hiatt, 2006). In addition, this methodology states that if any of these elements are not met before moving on, there is a high likelihood of failure (Hiatt, 2006). An initial ADKAR assessment of the PoP revealed that the first barrier to addressing the PoP is desire, and the reasons for this evaluation are discussed further below.

In previous iterations of the department's engagement survey, it has been noted that employees want and value more opportunities to share across work teams and more opportunities to be recognized for the successes of project implementation (Maritime Province, 2022b). From an organizational change readiness perspective, leaders must be consistent with their actions and communication efforts, and knowledge sharing, including past experiences, must be widely accepted (Weiner, 2009). However, many long-service employees have experienced unsuccessful change efforts, resulting in skepticism of any proposed large-scale culture change initiatives (Roberto & Levesque, 2005), and there is no current framework or strategy to approach or address this issue. In summary, the awareness of the PoP is present, but the desire of leaders to take on this change of increased communication is not clear. Therefore, since desire is the first barrier, this element will be the starting point for my change planning approach in Chapter 3.

Strengths

The PCT provides the DOX with a tool to assess organizational readiness and can be used as an

iterative evaluation tool throughout the change lifecycle (Anderson, 2023). In addition, the tool's

questions are ordered chronologically, indicating that the change practitioner has a sequential roadmap

to address the issues (Anderson, 2023). Next, the Prosci methodology has a well-developed input/output

dashboard for certified change practitioners, such as myself, that simplifies data analysis (see Appendix G

for input and Appendix H for an output example). Third, Prosci is the most common methodology used

in the public sector. Many staff, including my team, are trained, and certified to utilize the tools as

change practitioners. Being a certified practitioner gives staff access to the Prosci portal to use tools such

as the PCT and ADKAR assessments.

Limitations

Based on the Prosci methodology, only the change leadership team assesses the change

readiness and ADKAR surveys; however, Burke (2018) cautioned against limiting the initial project phases

to leadership teams, which could lead to employee resistance. Therefore, in the case of this DiP, I will

complete the initial PCT in partnership with the change team (responsible for leading the change) and

suggest we include end-users in the AKDAR assessments as a self-assessment when moving through the

change. In addition, other data retrieval may be required to assess the staff readiness for change as part

of the assessment, as required by Combe (2014) and Armenakis et al. (1993); however, due to the

limitations on first-person research within the scope of this DiP, this will not be completed.

EDIRA Considerations

The PCT tool offers an excellent framework for assessing change readiness in the organization,

and the ADKAR model is a good indicator of how employees are moving through the change; however,

additional assessment questions should be added to measure employee self-efficacy. Weiner (2009)

suggested asking employees the following questions: "Do we know what it will take to implement this

change effectively, [and] can we implement this change effectively given the situation we currently face"

(p. 4). Furthermore, Combe (2014) suggested bringing impacted staff together to be included during the

initial assessment to help define the plan's success. Based on Combe's (2014) and Weiner's (2009) suggestions, staff input during the assessments is essential to gather various perspectives, ensuring the change approach is created with employees. As part of an action plan and further implementation, I will add the questions in the initial assessment suggested by Weiner (2009) to assess change efficacy. Collaboratively creating the vision of success for the change follows my post-positivist paradigm and is rooted in a decolonization approach to leadership (Department of Justice Canada, 2021).

In summary, using the PCT and ADKAR tools from the Prosci methodology to assess the DOX's and employees' readiness for change revealed several focus areas, namely clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities of the change team and using the desired element as a starting point for employee change. Several questions from Weiner (2009) were suggested as add-on questions to address staff efficacy. Based on recent engagement surveys, employees want increased opportunities to share knowledge and be more aware of cross-departmental projects (Maritime Province, 2022b). Organizationally, the priority of moving to modernization aligns with the PoP in that sharing information is a way to streamline processes, share experiences, and collaborate on shared issues. Overall, the organization is ready for change, and the focus on employee change will begin with a focus on the desire milestone of ADKAR. Each of these elements will be considered and addressed in Chapter 3. The following section considers ethical considerations and challenges as they apply to the change processes.

Leadership Ethics in Organizational Change

The DOX has a workplace code of conduct asserting that public servants are guided by five ethical values: respect, integrity, diversity, accountability, and the public good (Maritime Province, n.d.). These values are intended to help guide ethical behaviour and decision-making for public servants in the interest of the greater good (Maritime Province, n.d.). The code of conduct is supported through several internal policies and Provincial Acts. Employees are expected to adopt and enact these values in their roles and encouraged to think about the following ethical questions while engaging in work for the

public: "Who can I ask for objective advice? Can I feel good about my decision? Would colleagues support my decision? Is this decision lawful and within government policy?" (Maritime Province, n.d, p. 16).

Ethical Framework for Decision-Making

Wood and Hilton (2012) suggest that leaders use an ethical decision-making framework. For this DiP, I used four pillars: ethics of justice, care, profession, and critique. Each of these perspectives is further explained and discussed through a changing lens below, and these pillars will be used to assess the feasibility of each of the solutions in a subsequent section.

Ethics of Justice

First, ethics of justice consider fairness throughout the process (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016; Wood & Hilton, 2012). Kim et al. (2023) suggested that perceived fairness in the change process is critical to how employees perceive leadership and success. Based on the fairness heuristic theory (Lind & van den Bos, 2002), employees will look to their colleagues during times of uncertainty, creating a social culture based on employees understanding. To address this uncertainty from employees, Kim et al. (2023) suggest using change norms and status differentiation to build trust during the change process. Questions to consider for this ethical lens include: "Is there a law, right, or policy that relates to a particular case? If there is a law, right, or policy, should it be enforced? And if there is not a law, right, or policy, should it be enforced?" (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016, p. 29). For this DiP, fairness in knowledge sharing might require communication to be presented consistently, with employees having equal access. Leadership support for sharing knowledge improves the workplace's sense of justice and fairness (Tran Phram, 2023).

Ethics of Care

Secondly, ethics of care considers compassion at the centre of decision-making, whereby leaders reflect on how their decisions may impact others to improve their outcomes (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016;

Wood & Hilton, 2012). Leaders should consider employees as the centre of the change; however, several

forces exist in which caring for employees during change proves challenging (Ripamonti et al., 2021),

such as internal pressures, sub-cultures, and organizational culture. Questions to consider for care

include:

> Who will benefit from what I decide? Who will be hurt by my actions? What are the long-term
>
> effects of a decision I make today? Moreover, if I am helped by someone now, what should I do
>
> in the future about giving back to this individual or society in general? (Shapiro & Stefkovich,
>
> 2016, p. 34)

For this DiP, the ethics of care are decisive and align with my chosen value of caring leadership. To

increase knowledge-sharing opportunities, the leader or facilitator must ensure they lead with care in

mind, provide opportunities to learn, and create a safe and caring environment to exchange ideas

(Hamington, 2011).

Ethics of Profession

Ethics of Profession considers several guidelines intertwined in the workplace, such as the

organizations versus an individual's professional ethics (Wood & Hilton, 2012). Through this lens, leaders

should modulate between system-level and professional, ethical guidelines to prioritize the staff most

impacted by the change (Wood & Hilton, 2012) and recognize the standardized code of ethics and

limitations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) suggested that leaders set aside

time to develop their own set of ethical guidelines, which, in the case of the DOX, many leaders would

need to do as they do not need to follow professional ethical codes. Some questions to consider would

be: "What would the profession expect me to do? What does the community expect me to do?" (Shapiro

& Stefkovich, 2016, p. 42).

Ethics of Critique

Lastly, the ethics of critique considers challenging the policies, processes, and power currently in

place rather than accepting the current structures (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Based on critical theory, this lens addresses the underserved and social justice issues by rethinking how and why privilege and power intersect in decision-making (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). As the DOX strives to be more diverse and inclusive in its workforce as part of its mandate, leaders will require this lens when sharing information or collaborating, namely, how unconscious bias may impact underserved employees due to a chosen approach, policy, or procedure. Questions from this perspective include:

> Does one group have certain advantages over others? If so, how are these advantages sustained? What are the ramifications of these advantages? Does one (or more) group(s) need access and voice in the decision-making process? What assumptions are at play? (Wood & Hilton, 2012, pp. 202–203)

For this DiP, assessing barriers and biases to knowledge sharing may be considered part of the change implementation plan (CIP).

Ethical Organizational Context

To ensure employees make sense and cope with the change, clear, consistent, and transparent communication is required to alleviate uncertainty, fears, and resistance (Li et al., 2021). In my role and agency, my expertise in strategic communication will be critical in navigating the need for employee communication, balanced with the need for leaders to share information. Participative communication, where employees can voice their opinions, is recommended throughout the change process, leading to increased trust (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, building two-way communication opportunities is critical during the change process to keep employees informed and to feel part of the change itself.

Implications/Risk of Knowledge Sharing

There are several ethical leadership risks and implications related to knowledge sharing and collaboration within the DOX. First, leadership may feel a loss of ownership over information, leading to increased vulnerability to being replaced or losing a competitive advantage of their role or title (Bavik et

al., 2018). Second, leaders require a dual approach to ethics: personal and managerial ethical lenses. The balance of both behavioural approaches will significantly influence an employee's desire to collaborate and share knowledge with colleagues (Bavik et al., 2018). Lastly, role modelling is required by leaders to exhibit the values and qualities they want to see in their employees (Bavik et al., 2018). Leaders who act and behave ethically will influence staff to do the same (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

In summary, the ethics of care, justice, profession, and critique provide considerations and questions to help guide the chosen solution through the change process, which will be outlined in Chapter 3. The DOX's workplace code of conduct and values align closely with the values of Wood and Hilton's (2012) ethical framework, helping to guide ethical behaviour and decision-making for both employees and leaders. The potential solutions for the PoP will be assessed within the ethical framework in the next section.

Strategies/Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Opportunities to increase knowledge-sharing opportunities could lead to improved efficiencies, solving systemic issues, and creating a better environment for employee engagement and involvement. In this section, I explore three practical solutions that move the DOX toward a model where employees feel well-informed about cross-departmental projects and impacts and can see themselves within the broader goals of serving internal clients of government. To determine the best solution, I use two methods to compare three solutions: a comparison analysis table, comparing the benefits and drawbacks of each, followed by a risk matrix analyzing which solution best supports the gaps identified. Lastly, I revisit the three guiding questions posed in Chapter 1, and analyze each solution based on its potential to answer these questions while also following my ethical framework.

Solution 1: Community of Practice

Creating a community of practice (CoP) framework using a digital ecosystem approach focuses on increased knowledge-sharing opportunities within DOX's existing hierarchical and structural barriers.

A digital ecosystem is an "open community, [with] no permanent need for centralized or distributed control or single-role behaviour. In a digital ecosystem, a leadership structure may be formed (and dissolved) in response to the dynamic needs of the environment" (Boley & Chang, 2007, p. 2). The structure of a digital ecosystem includes staff coming together virtually to share an interest (Dubé et al., 2005), such as increasing knowledge-sharing opportunities through staff awareness practices. Through online interactions, such as first-person experiences, employees have opportunities to grow professionally (Lave & Wenger, 1991). More recently, Wenger et al. (2011) have expanded the definition of CoPs to include "learning partnership[s] among people who find it useful to learn from and with each other about a particular domain. They use each other's experience of practice as a learning resource" (p. 9). Several digital CoPs emerged out of necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic across various disciplines in government to maintain communication with colleagues during isolation and stay-at-home orders. As such, most employees became comfortable with meeting technology, and therefore, leveraging the opportunity to create digital CoPs may be one benefit from the foregone pandemic.

At the DOX, employees are highly skilled and well-educated and have many job duties as required by the organization, such as communication, leadership, managing people, diversity, and inclusion. However, many staff are limited to exploring or expanding their knowledge of these competencies due to prescribed job duties and workloads. By participating in CoPs, Wu (2022) suggested that employees in a hierarchical organization can expand their knowledge from their siloed teams to cross-collaborative knowledge, improving their skill sets.

Employees are more likely to join CoPs if the content and topics are relevant to them (Sant Fruchtman et al., 2021). There is also an opportunity to expand further to create interest area groups, such as facilitation, SharePoint users, policy analysts and engagement. For example, the topic of flexible working arrangements is relatively new for the government (within the last five years). Although not explicitly tied to any team or role, employees may be interested in coming together to discuss their

experiences with flex work and how they can offer suggestions for improvement. This CoP could meet monthly and be led by an expert who is involved in or leading a successful flexible work team. As long as there is interest in discussing the topic, the CoP remains active, with newcomers welcome to join, learn, and share knowledge.

Limitations

One drawback to the CoP solution is the time required for employees to collaborate with others outside the dedicated team. Most staff have high-demand workloads and are focused on completing tasks and meeting deadlines (Maritime Province, 2022b). Finding time in the day to reflect or collaborate when it is not a priority nor supported by leadership can be problematic as adding one more 'thing to do' for staff and leaders could lead to burnout (Bass, 2000). In addition, many organizations do not equip leaders with the proper training on the basics and foundations for communicating across teams (Berger, 2014); therefore, there would need a level-set communication training or workshop for leaders to communicate better and how to share knowledge effectively before joining a CoP, so members do not inadvertently share poor practices or outdated ideas.

What Needs to Change

To create CoPs using a Dual-Operating framework, three steps are required: training, roadmap, and sustainability (Anuar, 2022). First, leaders may need education to set up and run a CoP within the department. Training should be based on Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of legitimate peripheral participation. Once the knowledge and skills are built, a network roadmap must be constructed and communicated, ensuring staff know about the CoPs and the opportunities to participate. Lastly, built-in agility and iterative practices should be ongoing, where CoP leaders can discuss challenges and best practices.

CoPs: EDIRA and Ethics

CoPs typically follow a utilitarianism approach to ethics, meaning CoPs follow the principle of the

greatest good for the greatest number (Racher, 2007). Several ethical challenges could exist within DOX

CoPs, such as respecting clients' privacy versus a group benefiting from the sharing experience (Racher,

2007). It should be noted that the province follows the Freedom of Information, *Protection of Privacy*

(FOIPOP) Act; any written materials may be disclosed and shared under the policy and act. Therefore,

caution and care should be taken during conversations within the CoP, where an agreed-upon approach

to confidentiality concerning sharing personal details is maintained. Another challenge is ensuring the

CoP is open and inclusive of all viewpoints, which may require building guiding principles and values such

as fairness and transparency (Racher, 2007).

From an inclusive perspective, CoPs provide a platform for underserved and front-level

employees to share ideas from the bottom up (Sant Fruchtman et al., 2021). The CoP must value

diversity in viewpoints, as members will have a shared interest in topics but do not necessarily have the

same experience or worldview. Therefore, the values of the CoP should be collaboratively constructed as

a group (ASU ShapingEDU & CoAction Learning Lab, 2019). To consider further inclusiveness, CoPs

should meet at various times to ensure everyone can participate (ASU ShapingEDU & CoAction Learning

Lab, 2019).

Solution 2: Internal Communication Strategy

Solution 2 considers developing an internal communication strategy (ICS) to enhance employees'

understanding of all the work happening across the department while creating knowledge-sharing

opportunities (Kalla, 2005). Typically, communication strategies are the responsibility of the internal

communication consultant; however, Araújo and Miranda (2021) suggested that internal communication

responsibilities should be shared across the department. Creating an ICS will be based on stakeholder

theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 2010; Friedman & Miles, 2002; Mitchell et al., 1997;

Phillips, 2003), whereby the needs of the most impacted groups, such as end users, will be at the

forefront of the design and creation. Components of the ICS would include creating a vision,

communication values, communication methods, tools, and channels, measuring internal

communication underpinned by adaptive leadership, and a continuous improvement mindset.

In this solution, my agency and positionality would allow me to coordinate the development of

the ICS. I will need to use adaptive leadership practices and a constructivist (Piaget, 1971; Vygotsky,

1978) paradigm, which views problems as opportunities to bring about positive change for employees

(Hine, 2020). The ICS would be a collaboratively constructed document based on input from all

employee levels using several employee workshops to build the ICS, along with formalized training on

communication tools. For example, employees have access to several digital knowledge-sharing tools,

such as SharePoint and MS Teams, which will be helpful in collaboratively constructing the ICS with

multiple participants, as these technologies provide a document management and flow platform for

ongoing changes and capture versions seamlessly. However, training may be needed for those leaders

and employees unfamiliar with digital platforms or general communication. Furthermore, this ICS could

also influence new and existing policies and procedures to align the value of internal communication and

knowledge sharing with DOX's mandate and priorities, as Sita Nirmala Kumaraswamy and Chitale (2012)

suggested that organizations create a culture of knowledge sharing when they align processes and

policies to reflect the importance of collaboration to overcome silo barriers. This solution would be

favourable as Lemon and Towery (2021) suggested that effectively creating and implementing

communication strategies is essential for large, complex organizations, such as DOX, which frequently

change. Ultimately, the ICS provides guidelines and suggests ways to improve knowledge-sharing

opportunities for leaders across DOX.

Theoretical Support for ICS

While most communication is meant to influence, educate, or persuade, participative

communication endows the employee with an active voice (Araújo & Miranda, 2021). An ICS founded in

organizational values drives internal value for employees, improves employee engagement scores, and is

1.7 times more likely to perform at higher levels than comparable departments (Stegaroiu & Talal, 2014).

Several examples of employee participation include soliciting ideas, suggestions for improvement,

decision-making and developing an organizational strategy (Araújo & Miranda, 2021). Araújo and

Miranda (2021) suggested that employees are the most critical contributors to internal communication

and suggest several guiding principles to consider when developing an internal communication plan:

1. Good listening skills are required for soliciting feedback and should always be enacted to action the responses.

2. Employees are diverse. Therefore, individualized internal communication research should be conducted to best understand workplace diversity.

3. Employees will know if soliciting ideas is only seen as an exercise in engagement or genuinely received and actioned.

4. Trust and transparency in the process is needed.

5. Leading by example requires role models in senior leadership roles to embody the values and behaviours outlined in the communication strategy.

6. Good internal communication creates champions, and inadequate internal communication creates resistance.

These guiding principles align with adaptive leadership, encouraging employee participation and

enacting suggestions. They also guide the change team in initiating conversations with impacted

employees.

What Needs to Change?

Because many of DOX's work teams are siloed, responsibility for internal communication

typically lies within one work team, while other subject matter experts focus on their tasks. However,

within this solution, leaders and employees must embrace knowledge sharing and communication as

everyone's responsibility. This behavioural and value change aligns with the core competencies of each

job description, whereby communication skills are required at all levels of the DOX. Cultural change

includes embracing knowledge sharing as simple tasks integrated into daily operations and as part of

daily work. Role modelling through adaptive leadership may be required through senior leadership

practices that eventually trickle down to front-line staff.

Potential Drawbacks/Ethical Issues

Several potential issues arise when collaboratively constructing an ICS. Putting program

managers (PMs) and end users at the forefront of developing strategies may pose difficulties for the

change team in balancing all the requests and suggestions received. Furthermore, self-interest groups

and larger groups within the DOX may leverage this opportunity to push forward self-interest agendas,

which may stagnate or prevent the DOX from introducing innovative ideas or moving towards

decolonizing approaches (Mansell, 2013). Training on culturally sensitive communication may be

required to ensure colonial practices are not normative. Overall, an ICS must be based on ethical

principles, and employee suggestions must be incorporated into the plans as much as possible (Men &

Bowen, 2017). A barrier identification and mitigation strategy may need to be implemented to coincide

with the ICS for this solution.

Solution 3: Centralized Project and Change Management Office

Many projects and tasks are happening simultaneously at the DOX. Therefore, one solution is to

create a focal point of responsibility for communicating and knowledge sharing: a centralized project and

change management office (PCMO). The PCMO would manage the communication governance using

consistent guiding principles and best practice methodologies (Franklin, 2018). The office would be an

internal service that is primarily accessible to project managers and leaders of teams who work closely

within their siloed work teams to communicate essential information and changes that impact how they

do their work (Franklin, 2018). However, to address the need for employee voices to be heard, a

voluntary employee-led advisory committee will provide recommendations and suggestions for

communicating about projects and change. Based on a systems approach, the office can foresee where cross-departmental and end-user impacts are likely to occur, build mitigation strategies, and change plans into project plans from the onset (Franklin, 2018), while the employee advisory board reviews the work and makes recommendations on the next steps.

Centralizing a team to better respond to the gaps outlined in the PoP creates several EDIRA and ethical issues to explore. First, there is a risk that centralizing an office will be perceived by employees as authoritative, dictating change directives and when or if there are opportunities to participate in the change process (Russ, 2009) perpetuating normative and colonial practices (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). In addition, centralizing office structures is an outdated practice, as organizations should strive to be more flexible in response to the ever-changing environment (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010).

In summary, three functional solutions have varying possibilities for addressing the PoP. In the following section, I assess each solution's ability to address the gaps, respond to the guiding questions, and meet all four pillars of ethics.

Comparison of Solution: Benefits and Drawbacks

Each solution poses several benefits related to many of the gaps identified in the PESTS analysis, SOAR assessment, and four-frame analysis in Chapter 1. To assess the solutions, I use a simple assessment table to determine how each solution rates against its resource needs, addresses the PoP gaps and ethical considerations and answers the guiding questions. I first compare all three solutions using a benefit versus limitations comparison chart (see Appendix I).

First, Solution 1 facilitates the collaborative construction of knowledge despite the existing hierarchy, whereby equitable and horizontal partnerships are formed (Sant Fruchtman et al., 2021). Using the dual operating system framework means this solution works within the existing hierarchical structure, and all employees have an opportunity to participate in the network. Responsibility for communication and collaboration is shared amongst staff, and there needs to be more onus on senior

leadership to carry the weight of change management (Kotter, 2014). This solution minimally disrupts

daily operations as it works harmoniously with the reporting structure and appeals to employees looking

for greater meaning or purpose in their roles (Kotter, 2014). However, several drawbacks include finding

time to participate and skepticism of members from other professional areas/expertise, such as long-

service employees who may have had negative experiences participating in cross-collaborative

experiences. In addition, dual operating systems are a relatively new concept; therefore, resistance and

pushback from employees may arise. However, Kotter (2014) suggested several mitigating opportunities,

such as education, role modelling, and sharing successes. Lastly, staff may feel that since the network

does not follow the traditional hierarchical reporting structure, there may be no benefit to them as it is

outside the scope of the manager's ownership over an employee who generally has authority to approve

perks, such as performance reviews, which lead to raises (Wirth & Butterfield, 2021). In summary,

employees may feel that everything stays the same by participating as they do not have the power or

authority to change the primary concerns (Wu, 2022). Members might also perceive a collaborative

opportunity as requiring time and effort with little return based on previous experiences (Wu, 2022).

Solution 2 poses several benefits for employees, such as improving employee engagement. For

example, an ICS development process that is open and transparent increases trust between work teams

and leadership (Men & Bowen, 2017). Practicing knowledge sharing with employees instead of to

employees makes employees feel freer to express opinions and concerns honestly and respectfully (Men

& Bowen, 2017). However, several challenges exist within this solution, namely, there is no clear

consensus on the most practical knowledge sharing or communication method in organizations (Men &

Bowen, 2017). It is also vital that a delicate balance exists between the need for knowledge sharing with

employees for awareness and engagement, the need to occasionally hold back information as required,

and how to ethically decide when and which information is communicated (Men & Bowen, 2017).

Solution 3 explores setting up a new office to manage the gaps in communication and

collaboration. There are many advantages to centralizing the work, such as a clear reporting structure, a dedicated and focused team, and a possible quick implementation (Wale, n.d.). The reporting structure aligns with the preferred hierarchy at the DOX and would be a familiar approach to all. However, several drawbacks exist in that it maintains the autocratic, top-down structure, funnelling all communication and knowledge-sharing decisions through one centralized entity (Wale, n.d.). Although information will be shared broadly, there may be limited options for participation in two-way communication from all employees outside of the employee advisory board.

Assessments

The following section assesses each solution using analysis tools to review resources and address gaps, ethics, and guiding questions (See Appendix I).

Resources

The first assessment analyzes each solution for resource requirements, specifically people, time, and finances (See Appendix J for a complete assessment of solutions). Solution 1 requires a medium commitment from people to participate in the CoPs and dual operating systems, which may change over time as required. However, a substantial amount of time is required, such as initial training, setup, design, and communication about the CoPs, because there is no system standard for implementing digital ecosystems within a network (Wenbin et al., 2012). Financially, this solution is the most cost-effective, as it can operate within the existing structures, and the DOX can utilize the existing technology to facilitate the CoPs.

Solution 2 requires a standard level of commitment from PMs beyond their everyday tasks, which may need to be revised and require support from the executive. The time required to participate in developing the ICS would be higher for the six months it would take to develop and complete the ICS, including soliciting feedback. PMs may require training to explore current modes of internal communication. Financially, there would be a limited cost as all training and software platforms will be

designed in-house and pre-existing software will be utilized.

Solution 3 would require a high commitment from senior leadership for financial support, such as hiring new staff and setting up a workspace for the office. A substantial amount of time is required initially to onboard the team and communicate and share the new office with staff. Time will also be required to decide how the office governance will work, such as the responsibility of the project teams and the employee-led advisory council to work with the office and a reporting structure to ensure accountability. People resources would be slightly less than a CoP as the team would be small (2 – 5 people).

Potential to Address Gaps

The four-frame assessment (Bolman & Deal, 2021) completed in Chapter 1 revealed that human and symbolic structures were considered opportunities. A comparison of each solution's ability to address the potential gaps in human and symbolic frames can be found in Appendix J. Solutions 1 and 2 have the potential to likely improve the human resource frame as they are rooted in social networking and have a high potential to create a culture of collaboration. Solution 3 has been assessed as having no change to address human or symbolic gaps, as the office shares a similar structure to the existing hierarchy structure, which perpetuates employees' feeling that they are omitted during changes and relies heavily on data reporting over improving workplace culture.

Ethical Considerations

Each solution was assessed using the ethics of justice, care, profession, and critique (Wood & Hilton, 2012; see Appendix J). First, Solution 1 is more likely to meet all four ethical models; however, the professional ethics may not be met as the CoPs have the potential to have multiple members with varying backgrounds with professional ethical requirements. Solution 2 provides the opportunity for input by many employees; therefore, the ethics of critique is strong. Ethics of justice and care will be significantly higher as participation, care, and respect for individual perspectives will be valued. Solution

3 shows vital requirements for professional ethics, as many office members will be highly qualified; however, there is not likely a chance of it being open to full ethics of critique.

Potential to Address Guiding Questions

Each solution has been assessed for success based on three guiding questions from Chapter 1, and a visual of the comparison can be found in Appendix J. Upon assessing the potential to address the guiding questions, Solutions 1 and 2 meet all the criteria. In contrast, Solution 3 meets the criteria for Question 1 but is unlikely to meet the criteria for Questions 2 and 3.

Chosen Solution

Upon assessing all solutions, Solution 2's ICS will most likely address the gaps and questions outlined in Chapter 1 and the ethical considerations discussed in Chapter 2. Collaboratively creating the ICS will allow employees to voice their opinions and feel connected to the organization. The ICS development and implementation has the most significant chance of addressing the three guiding questions, responding to ethical and inclusion needs and requiring the least financial resources and support.

Solution 2 will require my role, agency, and skills as a change practitioner, an internal communication specialist, and a facilitator to build a plan and construct the ICS collaboratively. As a certified Prosci change practitioner, I can use the tools from the Prosci methodology to help guide and manage the change. As an internal communication specialist, building an ICS to align with Prosci methodology will ensure that staff are supported through the change. As a trained teacher, I can comfortably facilitate exploratory workshops with PMs and use techniques to solicit feedback and consensus in the building phases to ensure multiple voices are heard throughout the process. Lastly, the solution will require digital resourcing, where documents and artifacts can be shared internally with members. As a SharePoint administrator, I can assist with knowledge management systems, creating a robust digital community for sharing ideas based on two-way communication.

Chapter 2 Summary and Conclusion

Based on the need to use adaptive leadership to address the problem, Prosci and the change journey will be the best tools to assess and lead the change approach to a more inclusive, knowledge-sharing culture. Ethical considerations to address the change were analyzed from four perspectives: ethics of care, justice, critique, and profession, and three questions outlined in Chapter 1. Based on careful analysis, Solution 2 was chosen as the best approach to address the PoP and to drive the change by collaboratively constructing an ICS while working together towards a shared goal to increase knowledge sharing. Leaders can use the ICS as a starting point to build communication plans and share information about their work across DOX. Chapter 3 outlines how I will facilitate and organize the collaborative construction of the ICS using the change framework, how I will communicate with all staff, and how the change team will monitor and evaluate the adoption of the ICS at the DOX.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation

Introduced in Chapter 1, my PoP outlines a lack of a coordinated approach for leaders at the Department of X (DOX, a pseudonym) to share knowledge horizontally across the organization. My chosen solution is to build an internal communication strategy (ICS) using a collaboratively constructed model, dual change framework, and an inclusive approach. The change approach plays a vital role in building the ICS, as many employees participating in developing and constructing the ICS will be the users. To create the ICS, I use tools outlined in the change framework in Chapter 2 from Prosci's awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement (ADKAR) model to inform the change implementation plan (CIP). Employees kept informed during a change initiative are more apt to be ready to change (Ellis et al., 2023). Therefore, to support the CIP, I will initially build a communication plan to garner support from multiple partners and allies, then shift the communication focus to two-way communication methods between the change team, end users, and employees. Lastly, I utilize the Prosci change triangle (PCT) tool to inform the change team of the ICS's progress over time. To ensure the process is iterative, I use the agile option of the ADKAR model, similar to the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle (Moen & Norman, 2009) throughout Phase 2 of the CIP to ensure the ICS is on the right track while allowing for small pivots in the plan as needed.

Change Implementation Plan

To implement my chosen solution of developing and applying an ICS, I use the change management framework presented in Chapter 2 to build the CIP using several tools from Prosci. To organize the CIP, I will use Prosci's three-phase methodology sequential approach to change: Phase 1 planning, Phase 2 managing, and Phase 3 sustaining. Each phase is broken down further into specific actions as outlined in Table 2 and aligns with each milestone of the ADKAR tool and adaptive and caring leadership. Tools from the Prosci framework include ADKAR and PCT to help guide activities within the CIP.

Table 2

Change Implementation Plan Aligned

Aspect	Pre-Work	Phase 1: Planning	Phase 2: Managing	Phase 3: Sustaining
ADKAR milestones	Awareness & desire		Knowledge & ability with the agile method	Reinforcement
Change implementation plan	Build the Change Team Request Senior Leadership approval	Create a communication plan. Selecting Participants for Working Group Working group orientation	Workshops with working group	Launch Accountability
Adaptive & caring leadership	Get on the balcony & initial assessment		Give work back to the people. Protect voices of leadership from below	Regulate distress & change journey

Note. ADKAR = awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement.

To ensure the CIP is iterative and flexible, I use the ADKAR agile option from Prosci during Phase 2. This option is similar to the (PDSA) approach (Moen & Norman, 2009) and has built-in checkpoints at various steps in the process to pause and gather employee feedback. An agile approach focuses on more minor, incremental improvements based on feedback, allowing a change team to foresee potential risk areas and quickly address them (Kranzen, 2024). Each change team member will have specific roles to apply within the agile framework, allowing employees to contribute to the CIP in real time. Therefore, the CIP provides the change team with perpetual insights into progress (Kranzen, 2024). In each phase description below, I outline the goals, ADKAR elements, and my role as the change practitioner.

Prosci provides a questionnaire as a guide to assess ADKAR, where a score is tallied based on readiness on a scale of 1 (*not ready*) to 5 (*ready*). If any milestone of ADKAR scores a three or less, it is

considered a barrier point, requiring enhanced efforts and focus in that area before moving forward. For example, moving onto activities to build employee knowledge and ability to change is not recommended if the awareness and desire milestones are unmet. In addition, this methodology states that if any of these elements are not met before moving on, there is a high likelihood of failure (Hiatt, 2006).

Phase 1: Planning (Timeline September 2024–January 2025)

The goals for this phase will be met by the end of January 2025, taking approximately five months to complete. Phase 1 covers the awareness and desire elements of the ADKAR tool (Hiatt, 2006), which help guide participants through change. Before beginning the awareness phase, some pre-preparatory administration must be completed, such as building a change team and acquiring senior leadership approvals. After the prework is complete, the goals of Phase 1 include establishing a working group of PMs and employee volunteers, further known as the working group, setting up a meeting schedule, and holding initial orientation meetings with the working group to build relationships and set the stage for building the ICS.

Building the Change Team

To build support for building and implementing the ICS, I will establish the change team to oversee the CIP. This approach aligns with Prosci's methodology and adaptive leadership principles, suggesting that building a support team is essential in enacting change (Heifetz et al., 2009). The change team comprises three key actors: a project manager, a change practitioner, and a sponsor. The project manager is my direct supervisor, and the sponsor is my executive director, who sits at the senior leadership table. I will be the change practitioner. The change team will meet weekly to plan, discuss, and monitor the change throughout the process (September 2024–December 2025). A list of specific roles and responsibilities is noted in Table 3.

Table 3

Change Team Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Assigned to	Responsibility
Sponsor	Executive director	Championing the change at the executive tables Aligning the change with strategic priorities Authority of decisions Building a coalition of support with executives
Project manager	Director	Project tracking Budget, resourcing, direction Assists with facilitating engagement sessions
Change practitioner	Internal consultant (me)	Change the implementation plan. Facilitates workshops. Manages resistance through various methods. Collects feedback and suggests iterative changes.

Senior Leadership Approvals

Once the change team has been established, the next step is to garner senior leadership support and approval. To do so, I will build a business case for change in consultation with the change team to present to the senior leadership table for approval in September 2024. The business case will include a condensed version of Chapters 1 and 2 of this DiP, highlighting key areas such as the scope of the change, risks, impact, and potential outcomes. Getting senior leadership buy-in and support for this ICS is critical, as research shows collective support at higher leadership levels for an initiative, results in a strong likelihood that the ICS will be implemented (O'Reilly et al., 2010). To ensure support from senior leadership, I will align the ICS with DOX's business plans and operational and strategic initiatives (Maritime Province, 2022a) and include information about metrics and reporting, which is a notable interest for senior leadership. My director and I will present the business case to senior leadership, with the support of our sponsor, by the end of October 2024. Based on feedback from senior leadership, the plan may need some minor adjustments. However, I anticipate approval based on the solid support and interest to modernize our work and improve employee engagement. An additional outcome from the

presentation may be identifying those senior leaders who show particular interest in the work, as they will become allies and supporters of the change and can be called upon at later stages (Randall & Coakley, 2007).

Awareness (ADKAR)

Building awareness and understanding of the need for change begins by establishing why we are developing an ICS, why we are prioritizing this change now, the problems with how we currently communicate and what happens if we do not change (Hiatt, 2006). I use the recommended actions from Prosci to help build awareness in Phase 1 by building a communication plan, selecting participants for the working group, and engaging with organizational actors.

Building a Communication Plan

As a certified change practitioner and an internal communication specialist, I will develop the communication plan for building and implementing the ICS. A key communication channel for this change will require me to develop an intranet site (visible to all DOX employees) to share information and interact with employees through Phase 2. The communication plan section will discuss the plan in detail.

Selecting Participants

After senior leadership approvals, November and December 2024 will be dedicated to recruiting participants to join the working group, who will work collaboratively to build the ICS from January to June 2025. Initially, I will work with the project sponsor to get a list of PMs and their supervisors from senior leadership who oversee the projects and programs at DOX. However, in alignment with my values and approach to inclusion and caring, employees with different opinions, lenses, and experiences will be invited to participate. As part of this recruitment (included in the communication plan), I will present a modified version of the presentation to several tables and committees throughout November 2024, such as the Directors' table, team meetings, Diversity, Engagement and Health and Safety Committee.

Members from these committees will be invited to participate in the working group. A small request at

these tables will be for members to share this opportunity amongst their teams to garner further

interest. Other methods for inviting participants to participate will be outlined in detail in the

communication plan; however, it will include a variety of channels, such as a website, information

session, and agenda topic at the fall all-staff meeting. By the end of December 2024, I will have a list of

participants for the working group. Subsequently, I will send out meeting invites to participants via

Outlook, with meetings taking place twice monthly, beginning in January 2025 and ending in June 2025.

In keeping with inclusionary principles, participants will be encouraged to connect with me during the

recruitment phase if they require additional resources or accommodations to ensure they can

participate fully.

Social/Organizational Actors

As noted in Chapter 1, DOX's employee engagement survey results suggested that employees

below the management level do not feel included in decision-making that impacts their daily work

(Maritime Province, 2022b). The planned change to move towards a culture of knowledge sharing has

the potential to benefit the knowledge-sharer, the receiver, and the organization in several ways, such as

employees feeling connected to the organization, the sense of giving back, and increased capacity for

problem-solving, leading to increased motivation and self-esteem (Wziątek-Staśko et al., 2022). Inclusive

principles throughout the process generate an improved workplace environment for all employees

(Sapon-Shevin, 2003). Therefore, in the spirit of being inclusive, an open invitation will be shared with all

employees to participate in the working group or provide feedback. Accessibility and removal of

potential barriers to participation will be assessed through a modified health equity assessment tool

(Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care [MOHLTC], 2012) included in the monitoring and

evaluation section.

Desire (ADKAR)

Next, creating a desire for change with workshop participants will be grounded in the adaptive leadership principle of framing the issues (Heifetz et al., 2004). Creating a desire amongst employees and leaders to engage in the work is considered one of the most challenging milestones in the ADKAR process (Creasy, 2024). Desire was also the first barrier noted in the initial organizational readiness assessment in Chapter 1. Therefore, a collective approach to achieving the desire milestone, such as the change team and sponsor engaged in the process, actively managing resistance, and a strong voice of employees (Creasy, 2024), can be used to bring employees along through the change process. All of these elements will be included in the orientation to the workshops for working group members.

Workshop Orientations

To set the stage for collaborative conversations, keeping in alignment with a caring and inclusive approach and following the ethics of care, I will create an atmosphere of trust in the orientation sessions by allowing participants to speak freely, as conversations within the working group will not be reported back to supervisors, therefore allowing participants to share views different from those in authoritative positions (White, 2003). Although the participation is not anonymous, individual contributions will not be identified or linked to an individual. Therefore, a safe environment is paramount to ensuring participants can participate inclusively. Using my background as a mental health facilitator, I am comfortable navigating difficult conversations, setting expectations for group discussions, and ensuring that time is spent working towards a shared goal.

To achieve the desire milestone, the change practitioner and change team will present the problem to the workshop participants in the orientation sessions. Here, participants take responsibility for the problem, which can challenge their views on how they may intentionally or unknowingly contribute to the issue (Heifetz et al., 2004). Throughout the orientation to the working group, I will encourage them to develop several guiding principles for discussing topics from different viewpoints (Heifetz et al., 2004), followed by a self-reflection exercise suggested by Weiner (2009), asking, "Do we

know what it will take to implement this change effectively, [and] can we implement this change effectively given the situation we currently face" (p. 4). Both exercises are essential to ensure that dominant voices do not overtake lesser-heard ones and that employee self-efficacy is at the forefront of the process (Combe, 2014; Weiner, 2009).

In January 2025, the working group will meet once per week for the first three weeks. During meeting 1, I will share the presentation given to the executive table in October, providing an overview of the approach. I will answer questions and ensure that participants understand the scope of the ICS development. I will also capture notes during the meeting, noting recurring questions or concerns. The sponsor will also attend this meeting to reiterate the importance of the change and answer questions about how the ICS connects to the DOX business and strategic plan. To ensure participants' experience is grounded in theory but also practical and to avoid potential biases introduced by myself, bringing in first-person knowledge will help ground the discussions, ideals, and vision to more of a grounded purpose (Haffey & Rowland, 2015). To do this, during meeting 2, subject-matter experts on internal communication will be invited to present a successful communication strategy from start to finish, including what worked well and what did not, as well as lessons learned.

Once the participants have learned about the scope and approach during meetings 1 and 2, in meeting 3, I will lead a discovery workshop involving the working group participants. In this discovery workshop, we will discuss what the changes mean to them, how this will impact their work, and how they might have to do things differently. Ideas are captured and shared with participants post-meeting in the working group's shared drive. These points will be reviewed at the beginning of each workshop in Phase 2 as a reminder of their role in the change process. This workshop concludes Phase 1 of the CIP. At this point, I will reassess the working group's readiness for change using the ADKAR tool's awareness and desire assessments. If awareness and desire score a three or less, an additional drop-in meeting can be held during the last week of January 2025 for any participants who need additional support in bringing

them closer to awareness and desired milestones of ADKAR.

Phase 2: Managing (Timeline February–June 2025)

Phase 2 requires my role as the change practitioner to manage the change and cover the knowledge and ability elements of the ADKAR model. As outlined in Solution 2, Chapter 2, the approach uses stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 2010; Friedman & Miles, 2002; Mitchell et al., 1997; Phillips, 2003), which involves engaging and collaborating with the most impacted groups to ensure their participation in involvement throughout the entire ICS development. This phase's goals are to construct the ICS collaboratively through workshops, engage employees in feedback, and build capacity for participants in internal communication tools and methods. I will continue to use adaptive leadership as it supports a collaborative approach to change, which suggests employees creatively construct the solution's details, ultimately owning the change (Heifetz et al., 2004). The anticipated timeline for this phase is five months.

Knowledge and Ability (ADKAR)

In Phase 2, managing the change (See Figure 1) involves knowledge and ability elements of the change will be intrinsically embedded in the planned workshops with the working group. Aligning with my question 2 in Chapter 1, employees should be given multiple opportunities to provide input through engagement opportunities while developing a solution (McGrath et al., 2016; Russ, 2009). Therefore, providing the opportunity to construct the ICS through workshops collaboratively follows the adaptive leadership principles of asking employees to propose solutions to issues (Heifetz et al., 2009). Workshops also provide informal learning, whereby participants may share previous experiences with the group. Formal training will also support knowledge for participants to learn about communication tools, channels, audience mapping, et cetera. The formalized training will include time for participants to decide how to use the techniques learned in the course, giving them space to explore new tools and get feedback from the working group.

Workshops

Beginning in February 2025, the working group will meet for six scheduled workshops, including two training days (See Table 4), which I will organize and facilitate. Complete details of the workshop topics, including duration, action items and planned results, can be found in Appendix K. The purpose of each workshop is to construct one section of the ICS at a time collaboratively: Communication Values, Strengths and Opportunities, Visioning, Tools and Techniques and Measures and Evaluations. Workshop 4 will be dedicated to participant training, where a facilitator will teach various communication techniques and allow participants to apply what they have learned to a real-life project. One clarification is that the measures and evaluation section for the ICS differs from the monitoring and evaluation section of this DiP. The measures and evaluation section in the ICS will provide options for PMs to utilize in building their own communication plans. However, the monitoring and evaluation section of this DiP measures the solution's effectiveness.

One essential action between workshops is sharing the workshop outputs with all employees on the intranet site, allowing them to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement via the online website using comments sections, track changes in the Word document, or connect directly with me. This agile approach aligns with the ADKAR model and is similar to PDSA (Moen & Norman, 2009), which allows for pauses in the process and making minor adjustments before moving forward (McGrath et al., 2016). The workshops conclude in May 2025.

Decisions regarding what feedback to implement from employees into ICS will follow a consensus model, similar to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (White, 2003), where all members (participants in the working group) are considered equal and may voice their opinions that differ from those of their supervisors. Consensus on what feedback will be accepted into the final version of the ICS will be encouraged. However, if extensive or contradictory feedback is received, White (2003) suggested that voting may be enacted to ensure the iterative process moves forward. This approach follows the

historical traditions of how Inuit peoples came together, supporting a decolonization approach to decision-making (White, 2003).

At the end of the workshop sessions, a document capturing final decision points from the working group workshops and employee feedback will be posted online for comments/revisions throughout June 2025. After a brief period for final comments, a complete ICS document, collaboratively constructed and reviewed extensively by employees, will be soft launched at the end of June 2025. During July and August, working group participants will use the ICS, consider what they have learned, and decide how to use it to share knowledge of their program areas across DOX. The expected official ICS launch is September 2025.

Table 4

Workshop Schedule

Month	Workshops	Duration	Lead
February	1: Communication values 2: SOAR analysis	1 hr per session	Change practitioner
March	3: Creating the vision	1 hr	Change practitioner
April	4: Training	2 days	Learning Centre Change practitioner (support)
May	5: Debrief, tools and consensus 6: Measures	1 hr per session	Change practitioner

Phase 3: Sustaining (September–December 2025)

Phase 3 of the CIP includes two goals: launching the ICS and deploying ongoing measures, which will be further outlined in the monitoring and evaluation section. Phase 3 covers the reinforcement element of the ADKAR model, whereby employees are encouraged to sustain the change through various recognitions, such as participating in a panel discussion at an all-staff meeting. The change team shares responsibilities for sustaining the change to ensure that ICS is a priority. This phase is expected to

last four months and conclude in December 2025.

Reinforcement (ADKAR)

The reinforcement element of ADKAR suggests several key actions to help reinforce the change outlined in the final two actions: celebrating success, recognizing employees involved in the process, managing resistance, and building accountability mechanisms (Hiatt, 2006; See Figure 1). Following Prosci's recommended actions for reinforcement, the sponsor will present to staff during an all-staff meeting, celebrating the success of the process by recognizing the contributions of all employees in building the ICS (Creasy, 2024).

Launch

The change team will host the new ICS launch session at the fall all-staff meeting (September 2025). Each change team member (sponsor, project manager and change practitioner) will discuss the collaborative approach to developing the ICS and reiterate the importance of knowledge sharing. In addition, participants from the working group will be invited to the panel to discuss their experience. The ICS will not be a new concept to employees at this point due to ongoing communication throughout 2024/25; therefore, the focus will be on what happens next and how employees can be involved moving forward, such as interacting with PMs, using the ICS and tools, et cetera. Ongoing support from the change team will be provided, such as one-on-one check-ins throughout September to December, to ensure PMs use the ICS.

Accountability

Using evaluation and metric systems will hold PMs accountable for communicating with all staff across DOX. Accountability is also a way to recognize exemplary efforts by PMs who utilize the ICS to the fullest (Hiatt, 2006) and, if acceptable, can share their ongoing successes at all staff meetings and executive teams. The monitoring and evaluation section in Chapter 3 will discuss the official measures for the solution.

Managing Resistance

During Phase 3 of the CIP, I anticipate three potential resistance points from PMs. First, during the soft launch (summer of 2025), PMs may delay working on their knowledge-sharing plans. Second, PMs may complete their initial plans to use the ICS but not sustain the change in the long term. Examples include creating an informative website at the onset but not updating it, resulting in outdated and stale information. Third, some PMs may see the accountability measures as negative reinforcement. As the change practitioner, I will use a caring leadership approach by connecting with PMs individually through July and December 2025 to check in on progress. Based on one-on-one conversations with PMs and through a self-assessment of their change journey, I can assist them using the change journey model (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015), as discussed in Chapter 2. Using the change journey as a guide provides context for employees to walk through the change, acknowledges how employees feel, and aligns with my caring leadership approach. Using this approach, I will stay true to the collaboratively constructive paradigm, resisting the urge to employ the top-down approach to enforcing change. Providing space for simple conversational workshops with struggling PMs will help them construct solutions to their own challenges. In preparation for Phase 3, the change team will have several workshop options ready for employees during the summer of 2025 if PMs struggle to adopt the change.

Change Implementation Summary

In summary, organizing the process to develop the ICS into three succinct phases, using ADKAR elements and incorporating adaptive and caring leadership provides a clear path to implement the ICS. Using the change journey roadmap (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015) provides a caring approach to change, encouraging employees to discover their own solutions to challenges. In the next section, I will discuss using the Prosci methodology and adaptive leadership principles to communicate the change to partners and employees.

Plan to Communication the Need for Change and the Change Process

The communication plan will support the implementation of the ICS using Prosci's ADKAR tool

and a knowledge mobilization plan. Communicating clearly with employees throughout the change is

critical for its success (Phillips & Klein, 2023). To ensure a clear communication pathway, I follow the

ADKAR model of my chosen change framework, using the principles of awareness and desire to guide

Phase 1 of the communication plan. In Phase 2, I will use the knowledge and ability principles from

ADKAR and a knowledge mobilization plan to transfer knowledge to the PMs, who will be responsible for

enacting the ICS. Lastly, I will use reinforcement principles from ADKAR to celebrate and monitor the

change. Throughout the communication plan, I will ensure ongoing two-way communication between

the change team and employees and ongoing administrative and coaching support is available for PMs,

as two-way communication is an essential concept for adaptive leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009). A clear

communication plan will help facilitate the change plan (Nelissen & van Selm, 2008) using various

communication methods and tools throughout the plan (Heifetz et al., 2009). The communication plan

will incorporate existing communication channels, such as using hierarchical reporting structures to

disseminate information and pre-existing committees and senior leadership tables as a platform to share

information. Face-to-face interaction will be the preferred method during Phase 2 and will be used

where possible in Phases 1 and 3 (Barrett, 2002; Prosci, 2020). A detailed table of the Communication

plan can be found in Appendix L.

Communication During Phase 1

In Phase 1 of the CIP, employee groups must build awareness and desire to ensure they will be

prepared for the change. Generating awareness and desire requires first engaging with two key

employee groups, the sponsor, and the directors, to get leadership buy-in and provide clarity about the

upcoming change. After communicating with these key groups, the change team will communicate with

the working group and, finally, all employees. During Phase 1, I will build the communication plan

outlining key messages, methods, timing, audience, and preferred sender. Each audience's role and responsibilities for communication are described below.

Sponsor

The sponsor is a senior leadership team member who is critical in the change and communication planning and will require active engagement to help employees connect the change with the organization's vision and mission (Mento et al., 2002). "Research has shown that an actively engaged sponsor increases the likelihood of change success" (C. Zender, personal communication, February 14 - 16, 2023). I will support and enable the sponsor to execute their role in several ways, such as providing them communication assets like key messages, one-pager highlights and speaking notes, which will be shared with the change team's shared document folder (Microsoft Teams). Sponsors require regular project updates in order for them to advise, guide and inform their colleagues at senior leadership tables (Mento et al., 2002). To do this, the change team (sponsor, project manager and change practitioner) will meet weekly to review the project's progress and to ensure the sponsor receives the information they need to perform their duties. The sponsor can use these tools during their senior leadership meetings and as a guide when meeting one-on-one with their direct reports. Their role is to also build a team of supporters at the senior leadership level to share the messages within their teams, showing support for the change. Lastly, the sponsor will present the overall change to all employees at the fall 2024 all-staff meeting, which will be delivered online via Microsoft Teams. Employees will have an opportunity to ask questions during the meeting. A recording of the all-staff meeting will be uploaded to the SharePoint site for those absent.

Change Practitioner

For this CIP, I am both the change practitioner and the internal communication advisor for DOX. I will develop the communication assets for use throughout the phases, such as draft emails and communiques, set up the change team shared drive (Microsoft Teams), and create the SharePoint

website for all staff. The SharePoint website, an internal intranet for employees only, will be the source

of truth for the project and will be available to all DOX employees. Using a shared communication

platform, such as SharePoint, follows the ethics of justice approach to fairness concerning knowledge

sharing, as all employees will have equal access to the same content throughout the process. Contents

include project information, supporting documents, change team contact information, how to get

involved, progress and timelines, and milestones achieved. In addition, I will develop and organize the

orientation meetings for the working group for January 2025, including gathering supplies, creating

engaging sessions, and using two-way communication platforms to ensure staff can get quick answers to

high-level questions.

Directors

The next group critical to partner with throughout this CIP is the director's table. The directors at

DOX will be communication partners by disseminating the information efficiently and correctly to their

teams. The most effective communication method with this group is face-to-face (Prosci, 2020).

Therefore, the change team will present at their monthly director's meeting early in Phase 1. Key

messages about the ICS will be shared, followed by a question-and-answer session. The goal of the first

presentation is to ensure they are fully equipped to share the information with their teams, manage

resistance and know they can pass along concerns to the change team as required. Employees rely on

the management level as a source of informational truth; therefore, directors must be well-informed

upfront to help dispel misinformation (DuFrene & Lehman, 2014). Following the presentation, the

project manager (director) will email the director's group with attachments from the meeting and invite

volunteers from the table (or their teams) to participate in the working group. The email will include

clear participation expectations, such as commitment, time required, and outcomes.

Senior Leadership

As outlined in the CIP in Chapter 3, senior leadership buy-in occurs in Phase 1 of the plan. To

create awareness and desire with senior leaders, I will develop a presentation based on Chapters 1 and 2 of this DiP and present it at the senior leadership meeting at the end of October 2024. To keep them informed as the plan progresses, a change team may need to periodically return to the senior leadership table to share progress and updates. In addition, the change team can provide regular updates for the sponsor to share at the senior leadership table.

Committees

Several employee committees pre-exist at DOX and will provide additional platforms for the change team to share the project's scope with employees face-to-face. For example, diversity, employee engagement, and a French language and health and safety committee exist. I will connect with each committee chair to get on the agenda for the meeting in November 2024. These committees have many memberships, from front-line staff to senior leadership, and will effectively reach a cross-section of employees.

Next, the internal communication committee is a government-wide committee comprised of seasoned internal communicators who meet monthly to discuss trends and challenges in internal communication and keep abreast of upcoming communication events. This committee will be invited to the second working group orientation meeting during Phase 1 to discuss real-life examples of successful communication efforts. Sharing challenges, missteps, and lessons learned with the working group will also be essential during the project launch phase and subsequent presentations. Continuous learning, in alignment with adaptive leadership, will be discussed during this meeting. In the reinforcement section, I will discuss how we can reinforce the importance of using the ICS in developing individual communication plans.

Program Managers (Working Group Potentials)

To build awareness and desire with the PMs, I will lead a series of orientation meetings in January 2025 to cover the scope of the work, share best practices and facilitate a discovery workshop

where working group participants will construct their desire for the change. A Microsoft Teams channel will be created for the working group as a two-way communication platform to keep in touch between meetings, share documents, and get feedback.

Employees

Building awareness and desire amongst employees will be a team effort. First, the change team will facilitate the all-staff meeting presentation by the sponsor to all employees in Phase 1. Next, I will develop the SharePoint site for all employees. However, this will be only one communication channel, as our partners at the senior leadership table, directors and PMs will assist in disseminating the information to their teams. There will be two opportunities to participate and get involved in the change: working group and feedback, as two-way communication between the employees and the change team is essential (DuFrene & Lehman, 2014). As we build knowledge and ability with the PMs through workshops in Phase 2, employees will continue to go through awareness and desire stages through opportunities to provide feedback on materials from the workshop.

To summarize Phase 1, several key employee groups will be involved in the communication plan by sharing or receiving information. In Phase 2, the communication plan becomes more targeted to the end-users of the ICS: PMs.

Communication During Phase 2

In Phase 2, the change team begins to engage deeper with the working group through a series of workshops designed to be constructivist (Piaget, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978) and collaborative to create the ICS as a group, acting as the knowledge mobilization plan (Appendix M). These workshops will be held monthly between February and May 2025.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

A knowledge mobilization plan ensures that research is effectively translated to decision-makers (Lavis et al., 2003). For the knowledge mobilization plan, I will use the collaborative entanglement

approach (Bennet & Bennet, 2007) that follows the importance of including program owners in

developing the ICS, whereby knowledge is constructed through interactions between the knowledge

holders, change agents and participants (Mosher et al., 2014). Learning occurs through interactions

where ideas, knowledge and expertise are exchanged (Mosher et al., 2014). This approach changes the

people involved in the process, leading to creative and innovative organizational changes. The

workshops provide a platform for learning through interactions where ideas, knowledge and expertise

are exchanged. This approach leads to changing people involved in the process, not simply focusing on

the change itself, creating potential for innovative organizational changes (Mosher et al., 2014). In

alignment with the post-positivist paradigm, the workshops are designed to ask open-ended questions

to help drive the conversation to identify overarching principles.

After each workshop in Phase 2, I will transcribe all of the outputs from the workshop sessions

posted to the SharePoint site. Employees at DOX will be invited to provide feedback and suggestions via

online formats, such as surveys, or directly via track changes in digital documents. The feedback will be

collected between the workshops, condensed, and shared with the working group before the next

workshop.

An essential component in the communication plan is developing the working group's

knowledge and ability (from ADKAR) to enact the change by helping them learn, understand, and utilize

various communication tools available for public service. The communication and CIP collide to form the

training session. The formalized training will ensure that the working group fully understands the various

communication tools and methods available to public servants. I will work with a learning centre

consultant through the corporate learning centre to schedule a 2-day training session for the working

group. In the training session, the facilitator will share information about internal communication in

public services, such as building communication plans, methods, channels, audience, feedback

mechanisms, best practices, et cetera. On day two of the training, the participants will share what they

learned from day one by building a communication plan using a real-life example from their work. At the

end of the session, participants will be asked to post their draft plans to an internal private shared folder

where other working group members may have access to critique and provide feedback. I will work

closely with the course facilitator to provide feedback and suggestions.

At the end of Phase 2, the workshops will have been completed, and a comprehensive,

thoroughly reviewed, and collaborative ICS will be posted to the SharePoint site, which will be available

and accessible to all employees to review one final time. In addition, PMs (from the working group) will

have started building communication plans for their projects to share knowledge across DOX. At this

point, I will email all employees a link to the draft ICS, directing interested staff to review and provide

feedback to the change team on the finalized plan. All participants in the working group should score a

three or more in the knowledge and ability milestones for ADKAR at the end of Phase 2.

Communication During Phase 3

In Phase 3, the essential milestones include launching the ICS, sustaining the change, and using

the reinforcement milestone of ADKAR to assess the sustainability of the change and provide guidance

for reinforcing the new knowledge-sharing behaviours. As the internal communication specialist, my role

will be important in developing an internal communication plan to roll out the launch and build a

continuity communication plan to maintain the ICS's momentum.

To begin Phase 3, at the fall 2025 staff meeting, the change team will host a panel discussion

about the journey to building the ICS and its subsequent launch. This event follows the principle of

reinforcement for ADKAR (Hiatt, 2006). The change team will also invite several members from the

working group to talk about their experience in developing the ICS. The meeting will be recorded and

posted to the website later for those unable to attend the meeting. The presentation's key messages

include how the ICS was constructed using a collaborative approach, the outcome, and a discussion of

the lessons learned. In addition, messaging about how employees can use the ICS in their work teams

will be provided.

Next, to ensure the change is sustained, I will send quarterly updates to all staff on the ICS via digital newsletters, including uptake, usage, and other metrics outlined in the evaluation and monitoring section. The PM's communication (via email, SharePoint, or other channels) will be monitored and re-shared in quarterly newsletters, reinforcing the information and celebrating the PM's communication efforts. Ultimately, the ICS will be available for all employees to use as a guideline for internally communicating information across teams, and all employees will be encouraged to utilize the ICS in their capacities.

Managing Resistance from Program Managers

Several steps can be taken if PMs score a three or less on the reinforcement milestone of ADKAR. First, the change team will continue to meet until the end of December 2025. The team will closely monitor the PMs' progress toward building communication plans throughout those months. If any PMs struggle with the development, software or content, the change team will schedule one-on-one direct meetings with the appropriate team member using the change journey approach (Purokuru & Nauheimer, as cited in Buller, 2015). From a position of understanding and using two-way communication, the goal will be to understand the PM's challenges and work with them to construct solutions collaboratively. These meetings will be individualized based on the needs of the PMs.

In summary, the communication plan uses several Prosci tools to help guide the communication process. My role as an internal communication specialist helps facilitate this requirement as I have many connections across government, internal connections at DOX, and several years of experience and knowledge. Understanding that priorities can shift occasionally, the communication plan has several options if we need to pivot. Next, using the same change tools (Prosci, 2020), I explain how to monitor and evaluate the plan for success.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation measures outline the expectations for change, monitor the change process, ensure employees understand expectations and act as a guide to course-correct plans, if necessary (Deszca et al., 2020). To incorporate all principles from Deszca et al. (2020), I will begin the monitoring and evaluation plan by leading a change readiness assessment with the change team using the project change triangle (PCT) assessment tool from Prosci (Hiatt, 2006). This tool helps define the project's success and outcomes, as well as define and clarify the roles of each member and how they will interact throughout the change. Next, the project team will use an ADKAR assessment tool from Prosci throughout the project's lifecycle to assess individual readiness for change (Hiatt, 2006). An agile approach is embedded into the ADKAR model and utilized throughout Phase 2 of the CIP to receive feedback and quickly re-evaluate minor changes before moving forward. To evaluate the project's success, I use Prosci's three performance metrics: individual, organizational and change management performance (Horlick, 2024), for change management projects to ensure the project goals will be clearly defined, and outcomes can be measured. Lastly, I utilize a modified health assessment tool to ensure we do not create additional barriers throughout this change process (MOHLTC, 2012) to anticipate any positive or negative unintended consequences through the lens of underserved employees at DOX, as well as a modified Mor-Barak (2022) Inclusion-Exclusion Scale (MBIE) to rate how included employees feel during the change process. Throughout the monitoring and evaluation process and to align with my adaptive leadership approach (Heifetz et al., 2009), I will modulate between leader and participant to understand issues happening from a broad and front-line employee perspective. The monitoring and evaluation approach will be underpinned by caring leadership and will value building relationships during the change process (Abma et al., 2020). A detailed table outlining each assessment tool and how it aligns with the ADKAR model and 3-Phase approach can be found in Appendix N.

Prosci Change Triangle

For the first monitoring assessment, I will use the PCT introduced in the change implementation section to assess four critical project factors: Success, sponsorship, project management and change management (C. Zender, personal communication, February 14 - 16, 2023). As outlined in the change implementation section, the combined strength of all four factors is critical for its success. Using a PCT assessment will help inform the change team of potential risks throughout the project. It is recommended that the change team assess the project at the beginning, middle, and just before launch (C. Zender, personal communication, February 14-16, 2023). Therefore, the first PCT assessment will occur in September 2024 during Phase 1. I will lead this evaluation during one of the initial weekly meetings. Later, in Phases 2 (May 2025) and 3 (September 2025), the change team will collectively complete the assessments to look for potential risk indicators and re-assess if needed.

The PCT assessment consists of ten questions for each factor: success, sponsorship, project management, and change management. I will complete the first assessment and rank each question based on existing knowledge using a scale from 1 to 3, 1 being inadequate, 2 being adequate, and 3 being exceptional. Scores are then totalled for each factor out of thirty. Based on the results, we can interpret the factors as "High-risk (scores 19 or lower and require immediate action and attention), possible risks (score of 20 to 24 and require action), or exemplary" (score of 25 and above; C. Zender, personal communication, February 14-16, 2023). It is recommended that no factor is below 25 before launching the ICS in Phase 3, as this could lead to a higher risk of failure; therefore, the PCT assessment in Phase 2 will be a critical milestone in the project's plan. If any factor is high to medium risk, the change team can use a simple action template to determine what factors need to be addressed (See a sample template in Appendix O). Factors that scored a two or less will be added to the template, and the change team will use this template during weekly meetings to address and resolve the risks.

ADKAR Assessment

The ADKAR assessment outlined in the change implementation section will measure the

employee's current reactions to the change and identify potential barriers to success. As the CIP

outlines, the ADKAR assessment is a Prosci tool used sequentially to assess project readiness after each

phase. During Phase 1, the change team will complete an initial ADKAR assessment for the working

group most impacted by this change. Each ADKAR milestone is assessed on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 =

unready and 5 = *ready*. Any element with a score of 3 or less is considered a barrier point to success.

Each milestone is assessed in order. For example, if the working group scores four or above in awareness

and desire but a three or less in knowledge, knowledge becomes the starting point for targeted efforts. It

is most likely that the working group will be aware of the change, but some participants may score low in

desire. Therefore, orientation meetings were included in the communication plan in Phase 1 of the CIP

to address the possibility of a low score in desire. In Phases 2 and 3 of the CIP, I will engage the working

group to self-assess their ADKAR journey as part of the inclusionary and collaboratively constructed

approach to change and following the principles of adaptive leadership to give the work back to the

employees (Heifetz et al., 2009). Each assessment will inform the change team and the working group if

additional time, resources, or training is needed before moving forward with the CIP. Each milestone of

ADKAR is discussed in detail below, including recommended actions to mitigate the issues and get back

on track with the change plan. A detailed table of each mitigation strategy is included in Appendix P.

The ADKAR tool provides several recommended actions If the working group scores a three or less.

For example, if awareness is scored a three or less, Prosci offers several reasons that may be the cause,

including a weak case for change (Hiatt, 2006). This could be caused by the key messages in the

communication plan not resonating with staff or misinformation being shared amongst staff (Hiatt,

2006). Mitigation tactics to address a weak case for change would be to meet as a change team to

review the initially proposed case, realign the key messages to match the organization's goals and

strengthen the connection between the change rollout and DOX's overall goals. Lastly, if misinformation

spreads, I will set up a private email where employees can directly send their concerns. I will update the

SharePoint site with the latest information and redirect employees to the site.

Having the desire to change is ultimately up to the employee. Root causes of resistance to change can stem from the change team failing to clearly articulate how individuals will do their jobs differently, a lack of role modelling by the sponsor or a lack of support from senior leadership (Prosci, 2020). This assessment can occur in the orientation meetings with the working group in January. I will administer a quick digital survey to gauge the desire to change. If the score is three or less, to address this barrier, the change team will encourage directors to meet with their teams individually to address any concerns they may have. The change team can join the meetings to answer any questions. The change team will ask the directors to report their findings for further action if necessary.

Knowledge and ability milestones in ADKAR could be a barrier for employees if there is inadequate training for PMs to utilize communication tools. To mitigate this risk, a debrief session has been added to the workshop schedule to review the training and get direct feedback from participants. At this point, I may determine the need for additional training. In addition, some PMs unfamiliar with digital communication tools may need additional time to learn and test the software. In this case, I can provide one-on-one training support for platforms and use a pre-existing digital resource toolkit as a support tool. I can also work with the technology department to set up a sandbox training site where PMs can 'play' around with the software tools to get comfortable creating webpages and using other digital communication assets before launching a website to all staff.

Lastly, the reinforcements milestone of ADKAR encourages employees to continue to adopt the change in place, and senior leaders generally recognize and reward employees for progress. Barriers to reaching reinforcement milestones could be a lack of expectations and clarity around using the ICS. A score of three or less on the ADKAR assessment for the reinforcement milestone means the project could fail to sustain the change. To mitigate this risk, the change team can again engage the director's table to present the progress of the ICS and the expectations for PMs to communicate their work across

DOX. From a caring lens, I can meet with the director and PM to develop an action plan that works for both parties. There will be an expectation for PMs to create an evaluation framework for their communication materials and report back to senior leadership, so ultimately, the change will require some dedicated time and effort from all parties.

A monitoring tool throughout Phase 2 of the change implementation uses the ADKAR agile model from Prosci. Using this agile model, I will collect and post the outputs from each workshop on the SharePoint site for all staff to review. This pause in the process allows for minor changes, discussions, and modifications during the development of the ICS, allowing the options to be modified to better fit the solution during the process, saving time, money, and resources (Taylor et al., 2014). To use this model in my evaluation plan, employee feedback is collected through various methods, such as tracking changes in Word documents, comments on the website, and a small survey tool embedded in the site. Feedback is then consolidated, accepted, and shared with the working group at the next workshop before moving on to the next topic. This critical step follows a caring and ethical approach to change, as front-line employees may have different perspectives and values, offering different approaches to what was discussed in the workshops (Abma et al., 2020).

Prosci's research has shown that using agile within a change framework can increase the uptake of the change, client appreciation for being included in the change and the ability to be flexible with programming (C. Zender, personal communication, February 14–16, 2023). Using the agile model to pause incrementally during Phase 2 will also provide insight for me to monitor if the change is happening too fast and adjust the plan as necessary (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Evaluation

To evaluate the ICS development and implementation, I will use Prosci's three performance metrics for change management projects (Horlick, 2024) to create clarity for senior leaders, directors, PMs, and employees. The three performance levels include individual, organizational and change

management performance (Horlick, 2024). First, change management performance assesses the change team's success in implementing the change by asking how well we did change management. (Horlick, 2024). To answer the question, the change team will self-assess their performance based on a checklist (Horlick, 2024) of questions, such as, did we define the success of the change in Phase 1? Have we tracked progress along the way with Prosci tools like PCT and ADKAR? Did we track and periodically review the change in team roles and responsibilities throughout the process? Are we prepared for the project's continuity? Did we close the project and ensure the knowledge transfer to PMs was complete?

Next, I will assess individual performances by asking how effectively impacted individuals adopt and use the change (Horlick, 2024). To do this, the change team evaluates individual performance during Phase 3 to assess the working group's ability to implement the ICS by measuring how quickly employees are using the ICS, how many are using it, and how well they are using it (See appendix Q). Lastly, DOX is assessed for the change by measuring if we met or exceeded the goals and objectives outlined in Phase 1. In Chapter 1, I articulated that the objective of this DiP is to create a knowledge-sharing culture across DOX. This evaluation will require collecting data over time to assess the trends. To do this, a bi-annual pulse survey will be sent to random employees, PMs, and senior leaders throughout DOX to assess their knowledge of what is happening across the department. The survey results will be shared with senior leadership, and further strategies may be implemented if the trend is not favourable. A sample survey is noted in Appendix Q. In addition, I will closely monitor the biannual corporate engagement survey, paying close attention to questions about employee engagement, communication, and participation opportunities.

Inclusion and Barriers

Creating a culture of inclusion throughout this change process requires uplifting diverse viewpoints (Phillips & Klein, 2023), which aligns with DOX's commitment to diversity and inclusion. To ensure inclusion and follow the ethics of critique, I will engage with the DOX Diversity Committee to

collaboratively assess the risks using a modified version of a health equity assessment tool from Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC, 2012). This exercise and tool will help identify any intended or unintended consequences of creating a knowledge-sharing culture through the lens of various underserved staff communities in DOX. I will work with the Diversity Committee to gather existing evidence, grey literature, and staff-generated feedback after engagement events and lived experiences. Once the initial assessment is complete, the Diversity Committee and change practitioner can make recommendations to the change team to suggest adjustments to the change plan to maximize the benefits for everyone at DOX. This tool will be used in two stages: at the end of Phase 1 and during Phase 3, as recommended by the originators of the assessment (MOHLTC, 2012).

At DOX, we have a diverse population of employees ranging in ethnicity, age, income, hierarchy, orientation, et cetera. To ensure we do not unintentionally exclude underserved employees in this process, the first step is for the change team to identify underserved employee groups at DOX using pre-existing data and map out potential positive and negative unintended impacts on these groups. In the spirit of collaboration, I will share the initial assessment with our employee committees (engagement and diversity) and, subsequently, with all employees for their feedback and recommendations. An example of the modified assessment tool is provided in Appendix R, outlining potential unintended positive and negative impacts and how the change team might mitigate these based on adaptive, caring and inclusion leadership principles.

In addition, I will use a modified Mor-Barak (2022) Inclusion-Exclusion Scale (MBIE) to rate how employees feel included in the change process. The scale will require deploying a survey to the working group participants after each workshop throughout Phase 2. The questions for the assessment can be found in Appendix S. An average score will be tallied, and the results will be used as discussion points in the next workshop, including how the change team might improve the next workshop to be more inclusive. This follows the agile, iterative methodology of Prosci (Hiatt, 2006), whereby small,

incremental changes are completed throughout the process.

In summary, Prosci's ADKAR, PCT, and agile are utilized to assess, monitor, and evaluate the change throughout the process. To ensure employees feel included, I use the Mor-Barak MBIE (2022) scale and the modified MOHLTC assessment as a preventative measure. Although most of Prosci's tools are quantitively based on mathematical models, post-positivist paradigm ideologies, such as human interaction, will occur organically through interactions during the workshops. For example, a caring approach to evaluation can still be achieved through building relationships, understanding the challenges of the working group, and learning more about their values. Building relationships through the workshops will be critical in accurately assessing and monitoring the change process. A reflective approach during the agile pauses in Phase 2 using the MBIE will help evaluate the change accurately.

Chapter 3 Summary

In this last Chapter of my DiP, I included a comprehensive CIP based on my change framework introduced in Chapter 2, using Prosci, a common and well-known change management methodology within government, underscored by a caring approach to helping employees through the change. Creating more capacity for knowledge sharing is just as important as the outcome. Therefore, both stakeholder theory and principles of constructivism become pivotal in ensuring the change is embraced by employees. Using the ADKAR model from Prosci also provides the framework for the communication plan using an agile approach to respond accordingly based on the ADKAR assessment checkpoints, along with increasing two-way communication between PMs and employees. The monitoring and evaluation plan seamlessly follows the use of ADKAR elements as checkpoints for employee change and a PCT to monitor the project's health. The CIP and approach to creating an ICS is a shift from traditional top-down methods for implementing change to a more collective and collaborative approach involving employees in the process from beginning to end. As we move towards a more modernized workplace, Gaubatz and Esminger (2017) suggested that leadership should embrace adaptive and collaborative approaches to

understand employee behaviours and be better positioned to facilitate and succeed with future

organizational changes.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

In the future, I foresee the approach to collaboratively constructing the ICS being applied to

other areas, such as policy, capacity building and improving client service. In general, employees from all

levels want to be involved in improvement efforts, from collaboration to decision-making (Austin &

Harkins, 2008). DOX has vast expertise and experience in many areas just waiting to be tapped into. This

process breaks down the barriers between teams and facilitates employees' thinking as a system instead

of in silos. I will be thrilled to share the experience with other internal communicators, sharing lessons

learned and outcomes so that other departments who face similar challenges may try something new

and innovative.

Using the change journey, adaptive and caring leadership approaches in collaboratively creating

a coordinated approach for knowledge can be further explored in new ways with PMs and leaders. I

foresee a continuation of communication through a PM's community of practice. In Chapter 2, I

discussed a possible solution for creating a Community of Practice (CoP). However, the foundation for

building communication was not yet present; therefore, I needed to build the scaffolding and framework

to facilitate this practice as part of this DiP. As a next step, I would like to revisit my solution one as a

potential continuity practice now that PMs have a foundational approach and strategy to work with. As

an internal communication specialist, I can lead this CoP as it aligns directly with my work, ultimately

supporting and uplifting others in all positions of varying authorities to be empowered to communicate

and celebrate their work.

DiP Conclusion

DOX's vision for a modernized approach to client service delivery supports the development of

an ICS. Many projects are currently completed in isolation; however, my approach to creating this ICS

involves bringing together multiple PMs and the entire employee community to construct an innovative approach to sharing knowledge. As a department, we collectively work towards the same goals, and thinking like a system can facilitate and strengthen knowledge-sharing practices. Using existing hierarchical channels within the structure helps communicate up and down, whereas the PMs will utilize the ICS to communicate horizontally. Although an approach to developing strategies, there is a more substantial likelihood of success due to the involvement of many partners (Heifetz et al., 2009).

As the DOX continues on a pathway to modernize its systems, reporting and organizational structures will continue to create workplace siloes, along with unintended consequences of closed communication circles. Working within existing structures and paradigms, the ICS can supersede structural boundaries, bringing together teams to create better solutions for shared problems and setting a leadership vision of creating a culture of collaboration. Support from executive leadership can also lead to interdisciplinary research opportunities, which could help solve complex and modern issues (Crossman et al., 2013). This DiP provides one solution to address the challenges using adaptive leadership principles to encourage employees to communicate across teams and learn more about internal communication and collaboration, ultimately ensuring that each team works towards a shared vision and goals.

Narrative Epilogue

At the beginning of this journey, I knew two things to be true: (1) I wanted to explore a systemic problem that exists in many organizations, and (2) I wanted the solution to be adaptable to suit similar challenges. As discussed, the government undergoes frequent changes, and my role, position, branch, and department could shift in response to changing priorities. Therefore, I wanted this PoP to be transferable in the event of a significant change, ensuring that wherever I ended up over the three-year journey, I knew the PoP would persist, regardless of location. Several of my professors, peers, and the writing centre tutors confirmed along the way, either in small discussions or by feedback, that my chosen

PoP was familiar and evident in their own organizations. Having colleagues and peers resonate with the problem bolstered my confidence and motivation to continue researching, writing, and completing my DiP. My hope is that by reading this, you also see yourself or your organization within this DiP and that the solution may spark the creative plan for collaboratively constructing policies, programs, or initiatives within your own organization.

I have worked for many departments and experienced extensive change, especially within the last four years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The DOX was one department where I was fortunate to spend time learning, working, and growing. My description of DOX is purposely vague, as I feel this work culminates my 15 years in government and crosses over many departments. Therefore, it was vital for me to highlight and uplift the organization, which has incredibly dedicated and hard-working public service employees who have proven time and time again that they put citizens first. My hope is that it is reflected in many of the analysis tools mentioned in the DiP. It is essential to note that this PoP does not directly reflect any individual leaders or employees at the DOX but rather a shared and systemic challenge that most large organizations face.

In conclusion, throughout the process, I held tightly to the belief that leadership is not a position or title but exists "in the spaces between and around people" (Sinclair & Ladkin, 2020, p.7). My journey has solidified my leadership perspective that everyone in an organization can be a leader no matter their position in the hierarchy. I will continue to reflect on the research and values outlined in this DiP throughout my life and career journey, remembering that my position of privilege brings opportunities to give others space and a platform to share and be heard. I also want to thank those adaptive leaders who have shown adaptability and flexibility within their practices, including those who have stepped back or aside to let me shine throughout my career.

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Appendix A: Reporting Structure
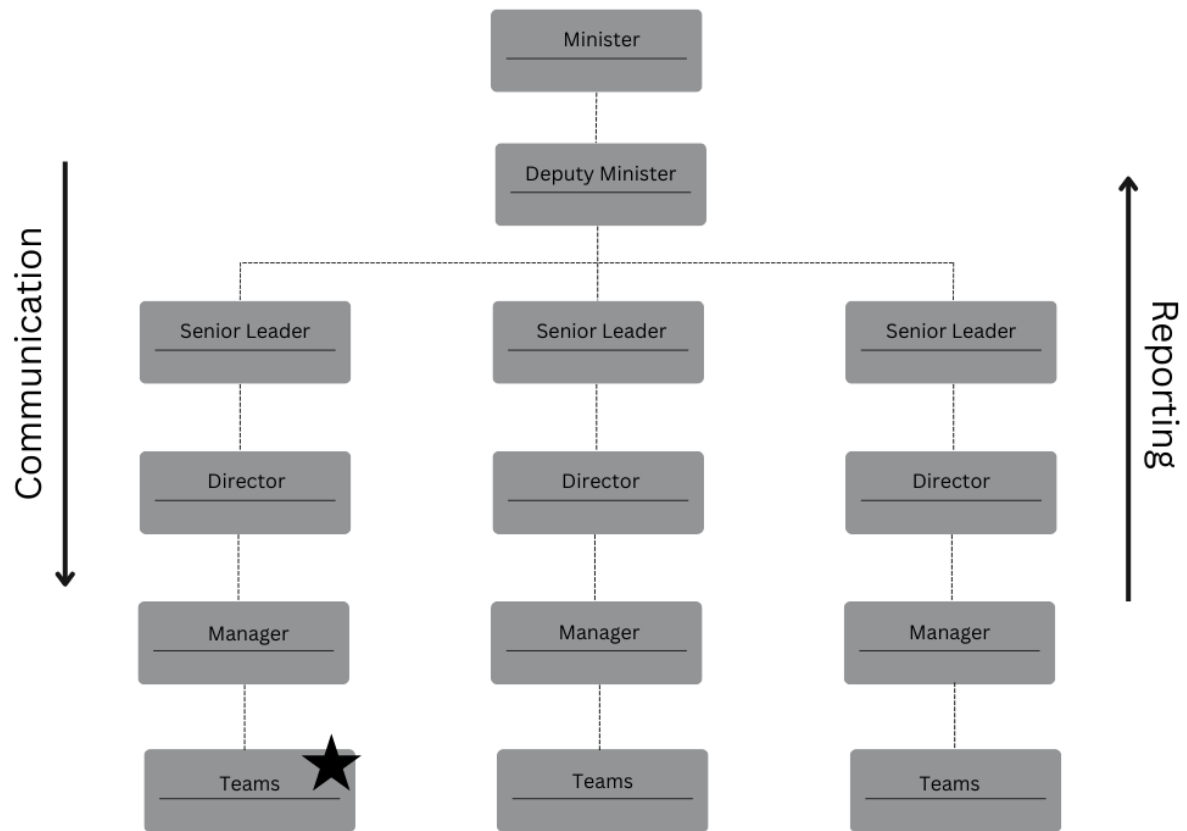
Note. The star denotes my position within the reporting structure.

Appendix B: Planning and Governance Structure

Departmental (Macro)

Strategic planning (Macro)

Business plan (Macro)

HR plan (Meso)

Operational plan(Meso)

Divisional & unit
plans (Meso/micro)

Individual
performance
plans (Micro)

Individual (Micro)
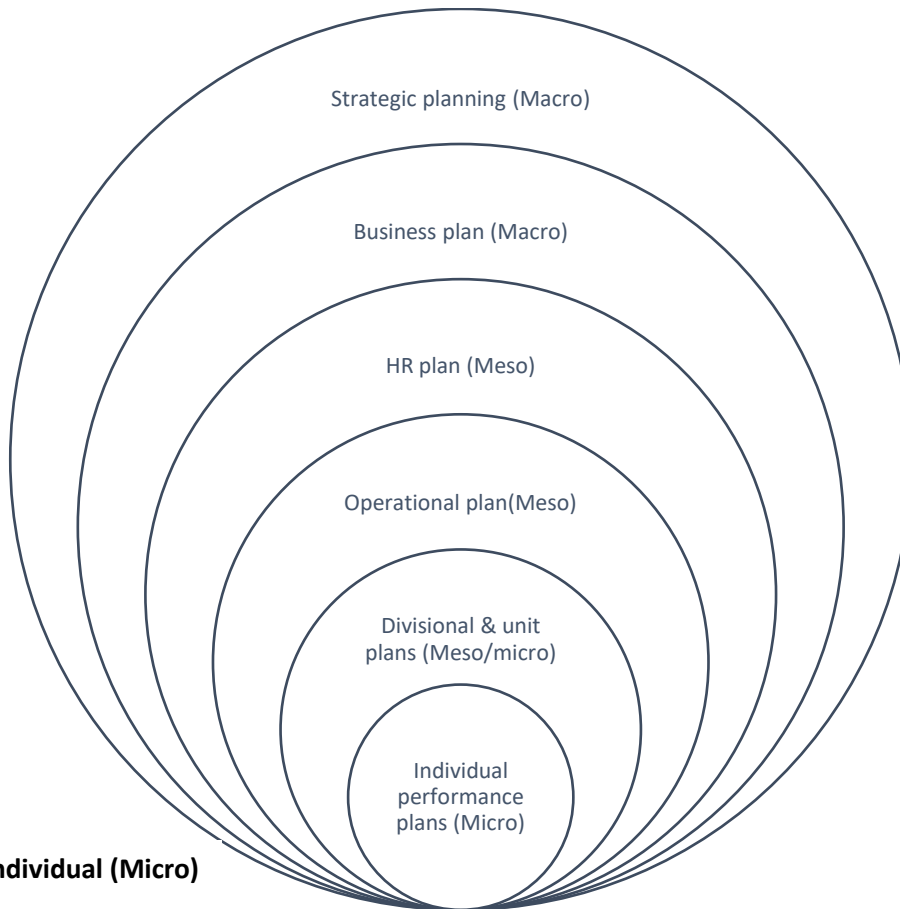
Note. At the top of the structure are the senior leadership levels who make strategic and business

decisions. Human resources and operational planning occur at the meso level (middle managers and

directors), followed by individual and divisional units.

Appendix C: Bolman and Deal Four Frames Through Process and Behavioural Lenses

Process or behaviour	Structural	Human resource	Political	Symbolic
Approaching differences	Leaders resolve differences.	Staff participate in meeting differences to help develop and improve relationships.	Leaders are assigned positional authority.	Leaders use differences to help understand the deeper meanings and work together to create shared values.
Communication	Information flows top-down and contains straightforward facts	Information is exchanged, with needs and feelings considered.	Leaders communicate with their teams directly.	Leaders use the opportunity to tell stories.
Meetings	Leaders attend formal meetings to make decisions.	Informal occasions exist to share thoughts and feelings and elicit staff involvement.	Leaders present their projects and work at various team and executive meetings.	Leaders use traditional meeting spaces to celebrate staff and create an improved work culture.
Values	Reporting structure is followed.	Facilitate conversations and sensitivity to both tasks and processes.	Follows prescribed policies and procedures as outlined with a focus on outcomes.	Culture over numbers and outcomes
Space	Structural, rigid, clear, and organized	Sharing leadership space – knowing when to lead and knowing when to follow	Building coalitions	A workspace that allows chance encounters and collaboration
Authority	Staff are required to report directly to their supervisor.	Staff feel included in decision-making.	Competition for limited resources, such as people and budget.	Various slogans and symbols exist.

Note. Presence of behaviours, somewhat present, and absence.

Appendix D: SOAR Analysis

Strengths

- Clearly defined job roles
- Organized reporting structure
- Specialized teams
- Accountability for decision-making
- Highly educated and experienced workforce
- Comprehensive policies proceedures

Aspirations

- Service excellence
- Acknolweding barriers to innovation
- Advancing EDIRA needs
- Modernization
- Improving workplace culture

SOAR

Opportunities

- Create a culture of knowledge sharing
- Interface with other teams on shared issues
- Utilize untapped human resources
- Leaders build relationships with employees outside of their teams
- Better utilize existing digital platforms

Results

- Awareness of mental health programs
- Updated and modernized policies
- Create capacity for a diverse workforce
- Increased understanding of workforce intersectionality

Note. SOAR = strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. EDIRA = equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Appendix E: Change Model Framework

Leadership-led	Employee experience
Prosci methodology	Change journey
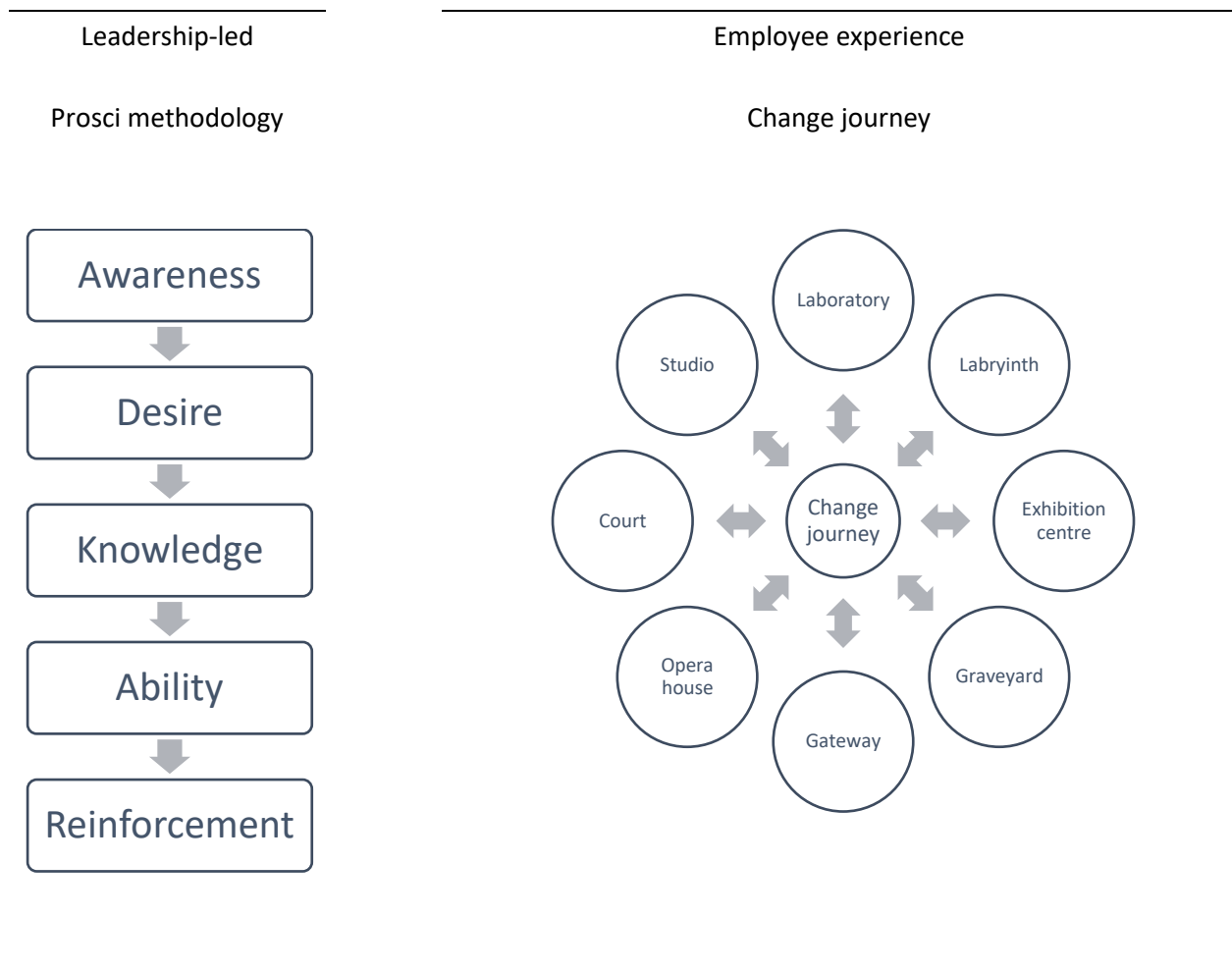
Note. Prosci methodology is a linear approach to change, whereas the change journey is nonlinear.

Appendix F: Change Journey Roadmap Destination Descriptions

Destination	Description
The laboratory	The organization experiments with newly proposed changes, including new processes, procedures, or hierarchical structure.
The labyrinth	The organization is lost along the journey and needs help getting back on track.
The exhibition centre	The organization celebrates achievements and successes.
The graveyard of old habits	Employees languish for a time and are preoccupied with past practices.
The gate to goals	The organization is setting clear goals and objectives for the change.
The opera house of emotions	The organization recognizes that there is drama arising in response to the change.
The court of conflicts	The organization acknowledges that strained relations are causing the process to stagnate and must be addressed and resolved.
The studio for ideas and creativity	The organization chooses innovative ways to deal with challenges along the process.

Note. Adapted from *Change Leadership in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Academic Transformation* (pp. 87–88), by J. L. Buller, 2015, Jossey-Bass (https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119210825).

Copyright 2015, Jossey-Bass.

Appendix G: Initial Prosci Change Triangle Assessment Completed

Assessment Question	Answer 1 = *inadequate* 2 = *adequate* 3 = *exceptional*
Inputs into the change management process are defined (may include a business case, charter, scope, or plan).	2
Organizational benefits are fully defined (what the organization gains).	3
Project objectives are fully defined (what the project achieves).	3
Adoption and usage objectives are fully defined.	2
Units of measure for benefits and objectives are established.	1
Benefits and objectives are prioritized.	3
Benefit and objective ownership are designated.	2
People's dependency on benefits and objectives is evaluated.	3
The definition of success is clear and ready to be communicated.	3
The sponsorship coalition is aligned to a standard definition of success.	2
Success score	22
The change has a primary sponsor with the necessary authority over the people, processes, and systems to authorize and fund the change.	3
The primary sponsor can clearly explain the nature of the change, the reason for the change and the benefits for the organization.	3
The organization has a clearly defined vision and strategy.	3
The change is aligned with the strategy and vision for the organization.	3
Priorities are set and communicated regarding the change and other competing priorities.	2
The primary sponsor resolves issues and decides the project schedule, scope, and resources.	3
The primary sponsor actively and visibly participates throughout the change's lifecycle.	2
The primary sponsor encourages senior leaders to participate and support the change by building a sponsor coalition.	2
The primary sponsor is directly building awareness of the need for change among employees.	3
The primary sponsor visibly reinforces the change by celebrating successes and addressing resistance.	2
Leadership/sponsorship score	26

Assessment Question	Answer 1 = *inadequate* 2 = *adequate* 3 = *exceptional*
The nature of the change is clearly defined, including who is impacted and how.	2
The project has specific objectives.	2
The project has a clearly defined scope.	2
A project manager has been assigned to manage the project lifecycle.	3
Project milestones are identified, and a project schedule is completed.	3
A work breakdown structure with deliverables is complete.	2
Resources for the project are identified and acquired.	2
Periodic meetings are scheduled with the project team and key stakeholders to track progress and resolve issues.	2
The project manager understands the value of change management in ensuring the change will be adopted and used.	2
The change management plan is integrated with the project management plan.	2
Project management score	22
The change is applying a structured change management approach to benefit the organization.	3
An assessment of the change and its impact on individuals and the organization is complete.	2
An assessment of the change risk is complete.	1
The change has specific adoption and usage objectives.	2
An assessment of the strength of the sponsor coalition is complete.	2
A customized and scaled change management strategy with the necessary sponsorship commitment is complete.	2
The resources required to execute the change strategy and plans are identified, acquired, and prepared.	2
Change management plans that will mitigate resistance and achieve adoption and usage are complete and are being implemented.	2
The effectiveness of change management is being monitored, and adaptive actions are being taken if required to achieve adoption and usage.	2
The organization is prepared to own and sustain the change.	3
Change management score	21

Note. Assessment was completed on January 8, 2024. Assessment questions are from *PCT Assessment:*

Assessing Project Health, by Prosci, n.d. (https://www.prosci.com/hubfs/2.downloads/webinars/Prosci-

Assessment-PCT-2022.pdf) Copyright by Prosci.

Appendix H: Prosci Change Triangle Assessment Output
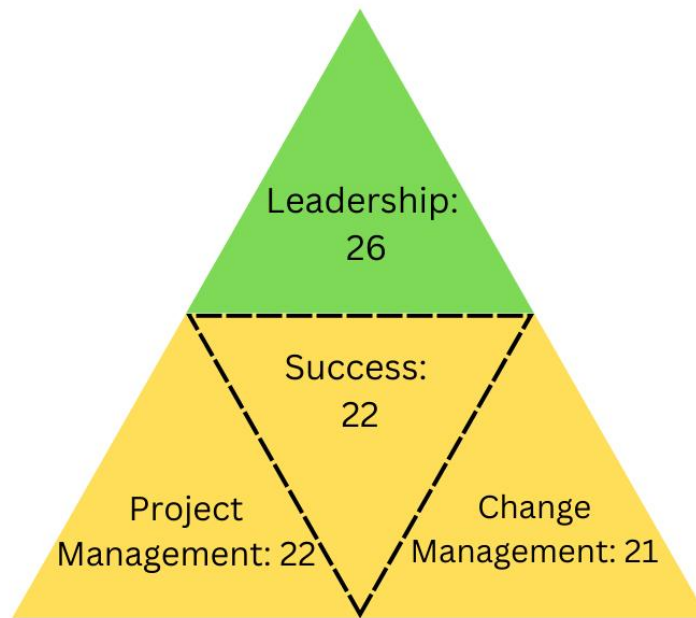
Score	Interpretation
10–19	High risk – needs immediate action
20–24	Alert – Needs further investigation
25–30	Strength – maintain status quo

Note. Assessment for organizational change readiness completed on January 8, 2024.

Appendix I: Solutions Comparison: Solutions 1, 2 and 3 Benefits and Limitations

Solution	Benefits ++	Limitations −−
1 Community of Practice	Technology is preexisting. Inclusivity is a foundation. Everyone is considered equal (no reporting structure). Potential for expansion Inclusive participation: All employees can participate anytime; however, most operate at 10% capacity (Franklin, 2018). Agile and fluid – responds well to change.	Coordination can be time-consuming. Hierarchy can interfere with progress. (Kerno, 2008). Requires trust (Fruchtman et al., 2021). No power/authority to change existing structures (Wu, 2022). It can be challenging to maintain and sustain due to its informality and fluid dynamics. Could be considered additional work by employees, creating confusion around job role clarity. Unclear boundaries (Kerno, 2008).
2 Internal Communication Strategy	Reduce the need for email communication. Capacity to build a strategy. Promotes recognition through sharing successes. Organized and centralized document resources. Inclusive practices with a coordinated effort.	Employees may not have the time to contribute. Information overload Ethical considerations – what information can be shared? No consensus on the best practice
3 Centralized offices	Clear reporting structure Comprised of subject matter experts (Franklin, 2018). Leadership values the importance of change. (Franklin, 2018). Employee-led advisory committee will provide voices from multiple levels.	Follows hegemonic practices. Limited number of job roles and opportunities available Top-down approach. Small team means limited capacity. Costly (salaries, offices, supplies).

Appendix J: Solutions Assessments

Solution	Resources required		
	People	Time	Financial
1 Community of Practice	🟧	🟥	🟩
2 Communication strategy	🟨	🟥	🟩
3 Centralized Office	🟨	🟧	🟥

Legend: Resource cost			
Low	Standard	Medium	High
🟩	🟨	🟧	🟥

Solution	Potential to Address Gaps			
	Structural	Human	Political	Symbolic
1 Community of Practice	x	🟨	x	🟩
2 Communication strategy	x	🟨	x	🟩
3 Centralized Office	x	🟥	x	🟥

Potential to Address Gaps			
Most Likely	Likely	Not Likely	No Possibility
🟩	🟨	🟧	🟥

Solution	Ethical considerations			
	Justice	Care	Profession	Critique
1 Community of Practice	yellow	green	green	yellow
2 Communication Strategy	yellow	yellow	orange	green
3 Centralized Office	orange	yellow	green	red

Potential to address gaps

90% or higher	75%	50%	25% or less
green	yellow	orange	red

Solution	Potential to address guiding questions		
	Q1: Can the DOX become more collaborative within the limitations of the existing hierarchical structures?	Q2: What approach will be best suited to involve multiple partners in collaborating and developing a solution to a lack of knowledge sharing across DOX	Q3: What approaches to collaboration would be the most inclusive and equitable to support underserved employees?
1 Community of Practice	green	green	green
2 Communication strategy	green	green	green
3 Centralized office	green	yellow	yellow

Potential to Address Gaps

Highly likely	Likely	Not likely	No possibility
green	yellow	orange	red

Appendix K: Phase 2 Workshop Schedule

Activity	Milestone	Actions	Assigned to	Outcomes
Workshop 1: Communication values (1 hr)	January 2025 (Week 2)	Workshop facilitation with the working group Post outcomes from workshop to intranet.	Change practitioner (facilitation) Working group (participation)	A list of initial values is generated from the working group
Employee feedback	Before next workshop	Employees can provide feedback. Guiding questions for employees: Do you see your values represented here? A Likert scale is deployed to rank employees' favourite values. The top 5 values will be selected.	Change practitioner (monitoring) Employees (feedback)	5 core communication values to guide the strategy are established and added as Section 1 of the ICS.
Workshop 2: SOAR analysis (1 hr)	January 2025 (Week 3)	Workshop facilitation with the working group Posts outcomes from the workshop to the intranet, which includes a brief description of the activity for context.	Change practitioner (facilitation) Working group (participation)	Strengths and opportunities are noted in a list posted online. Aspirations become the platform to create the vision in Workshop 3. Results become the platform for measures in Workshop 6.
Employee Feedback	Before next workshop	Employees can provide feedback. Questions to help guide the employee feedback: Does this resonate with you? Do you agree? Disagree? Why? Are we missing anything?	Change practitioner (monitoring) Employees (feedback)	The strengths and opportunities section of the strategy is finalized based on employee feedback. Section 2 is complete and added to the ICS.

Activity	Milestone	Actions	Assigned to	Outcomes
Workshop 3: Creating the Vision (1 hr)	February 2025 (Week 1)	Review the aspirations results from the SOAR analysis in Workshop 2. Using think-pair-share techniques, a consensus is reached on the vision for the strategy. Vision posted to the intranet.	Change practitioner (facilitation) Working group (participation)	Initial vision developed by the working group. For context, we have included a brief description of how/why we arrived at the vision. Employees can comment using the SP widget or email the change practitioner directly.
Employee feedback	Before next workshop	Employees provide feedback. Questions for employees: Does this vision resonate with you? Is it clear? Effective?	Change Practitioner (monitoring) Employees (feedback)	The vision of the strategy is complete and added to the ICS.
Workshop 4 (Training) (2 days)	Mid-April 2025	The working group and change team attend internal communication training through the learning centre. Participants bring an existing project idea to the course to work through developing a communication plan.	Learning centre facilitator Change team (participation) Working group (participation)	Participants clearly understand various internal communication methods, such as channels, audiences, feedback mechanisms, et cetera. Participants have the opportunity to practice their learning using a real-life example.
Workshop 5: Course debrief and tools consensus (1/2 day)	May 2025	Facilitate a brief discussion with participants on their experience in the communication course. Based on all the tools presented, participants	Change practitioner (facilitation) Working group (participation)	A list of current and potentially useful communication tools is posted to the intranet for employee feedback.

Activity	Milestone	Actions	Assigned to	Outcomes
		sorted communication tools into categories: current use, potential use, and not for me.		
Employee feedback	Before next workshop	Employees provide feedback. Employees vote on their preferred methods of communication.	Change practitioner (monitoring) Employees (feedback)	A comprehensive list of internal communication tools is added to the ICS. (I developed an existing digital toolkit for internal communication that links to additional resources.)
Workshop 6: Measuring internal communication. (1 hr)	May 2025	Review the results from the 'results' section of the SOAR analysis from workshop 2. Participants will work on 3 – 5 key measures in small groups, turning results into SMART goals.	Change Practitioner (facilitation) Working group (participation)	Measures are posted to the intranet site for employee feedback.
Employee feedback	End of May 2025	Employees provide general feedback and ask clarification questions on the Internet site.	Change practitioner (monitoring) Employees (feedback)	Three to five measures are added to the ICS.

Workshop Close (June 2025)
The ICS document capturing all inputs and feedback will be posted online for final comments/revisions. A complete internal communication strategy document, collaboratively constructed and reviewed extensively, will be soft launched at the end of June 2025. Throughout July and August, PMs (participants in the working group) will begin to develop their communication plans in preparation for launching the strategy in September 2025.

Note. ICS = Internal Communication Strategy; SMART = specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and

time-limited.

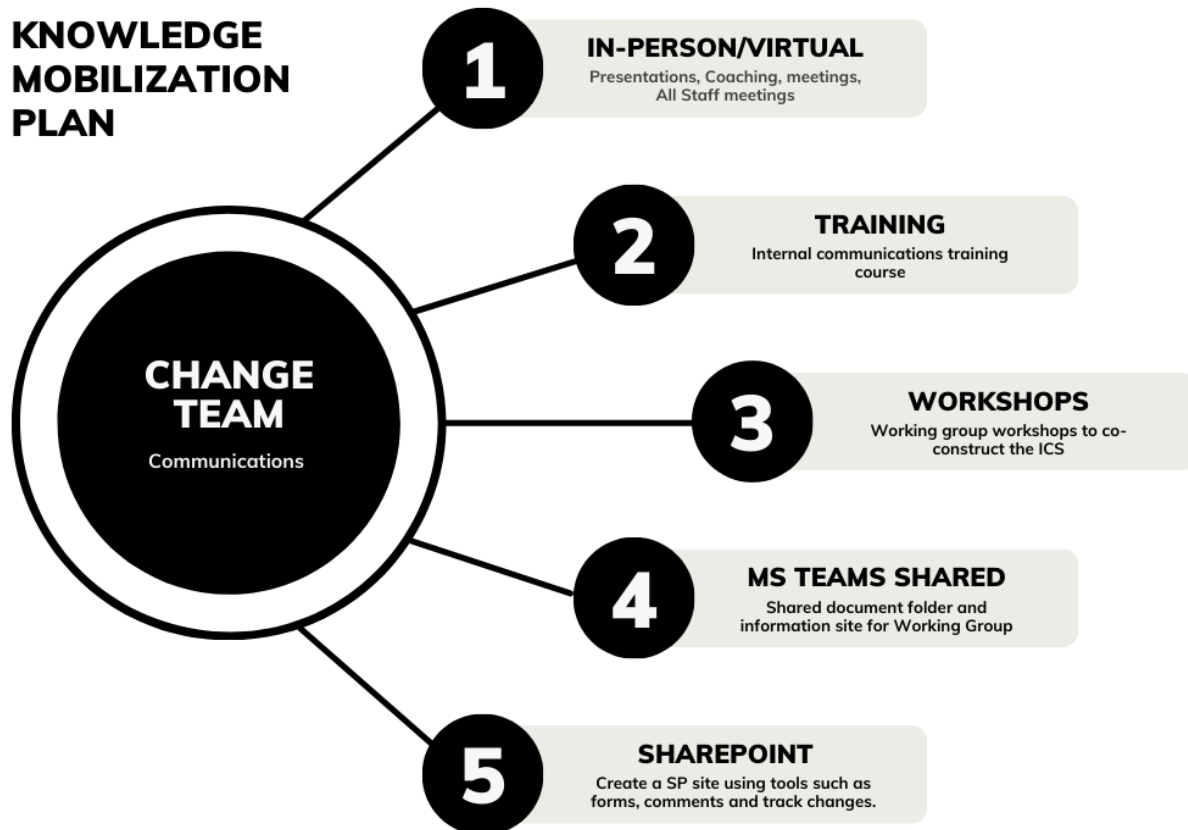**Appendix L: Communication Plans for Phases 1, 2, and 3**

Goals	Method	Communication asset(s)	Audience	Person responsible	Timeline	Outcomes/actions
Communication plan Phase 1: Building Awareness and Desire (AD of ADKAR)						
Set up change team	Weekly in-person meetings	MS Teams channel for all documentation	Change team (Project Manager & Sponsor)	Change practitioner	September 2024	The change team will meet weekly to discuss project progress, communication, monitoring, and evaluation.
Prepare the sponsor to be the champion.	Weekly in-person meetings	One-pager FAQs Business case Key messages	Sponsor	Change practitioner	September 2024– December 2024	The sponsor will be equipped to share information about the project and answer any questions at senior leadership tables.
Get buy-in from senior leadership	Presentation	PowerPoint presentation of business case	Senior leadership table	Change team	September 2024	Share information about the project with respective teams via scrums, weekly meetings, et cetera.
Share initial plans with staff. Recruit participants for the working group.	All staff meeting	PowerPoint presentation	All Staff	Change team (prepares the presentation) Sponsor (delivers)	November 2024	The first introduction to the project will be given to all staff.
	Online resource	SharePoint website		Change Practitioner		The SharePoint website is an internal employee website where the change practitioner will post all information

Goals	Method	Communication asset(s)	Audience	Person responsible	Timeline	Outcomes/actions
Generate interest in providing feedback on the ICS						about the project. Two-way communication is set up to gather feedback from employees.
Recruit participants for the working group.	Presentation at the director's meeting	Presentation (PowerPoint) Additional references Email template communication to staff	Directors	Change Team	November 2024	The change team will present a modified version of the business case at the director's meetings to generate interest and recruit participants for the working group.
Recruit participants for the working group.	Presentation at monthly committee meetings of engagement, diversity, and occupational health	Presentation (PowerPoint) links to the website	Employee committees (engagement, diversity, and occupational health)	Change practitioner	November & December 2024	The change practitioner will ask for time on the monthly meeting agendas for each committee to share a condensed presentation to garner interest in participating in the working group.
Prepare participants for the workshops.	Orientation meetings	Presentation (PowerPoint) facilitation tools MS Teams channel	Working group participants	Change practitioner	January 2024	The orientation meetings will prepare the working group for the workshops in Phase 2.
Communication plan Phase 2: Knowledge and Ability (ADKAR)						
Collaboratively construct the ICS	Workshop (See workshop schedule)	MS Teams channel for all documentation	Working group	Change practitioner	January–May 2025	The change practitioner will lead the workshops.

Goals	Method	Communication asset(s)	Audience	Person responsible	Timeline	Outcomes/actions
		SharePoint website				
Provide an opportunity for feedback	Virtual	SharePoint: comments, document tracking, feedback survey	All staff	Change practitioner	January– May 2025	The change practitioner monitors the feedback from all employees and shares it with the working group.
Communication plan Phase 3: Reinforcement (ADKAR)						
Launch the ICS	All staff meeting presentation & panel	PowerPoint presentation	All staff	Change team working group	September 2025	The change team, with volunteers from the working group, will present their ICS to all employees as a panel at the fall 2025 all-staff meeting.
Quarterly updates	Via email post to the website	Digital newsletter	All staff	Change practitioner	October 2025 onward	The change practitioner will draft and share quarterly updates with all staff.
Ensure staff are supported.	One-on-one meetings	Change journey roadmap	PMs (as needed)	Change Practitioner	September – December 2025	The change practitioner will meet one-on-one with any PMs who need additional support.

Note. ICS = Internal Communication Strategy; PM = program manager; MS = Microsoft; ADKAR = awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and

reinforcement.

Appendix M: Knowledge Mobilization Plan

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION PLAN

CHANGE TEAM
Communications

1. **IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL**
Presentations, Coaching, meetings, All Staff meetings

2. **TRAINING**
Internal communications training course

3. **WORKSHOPS**
Working group workshops to co-construct the ICS

4. **MS TEAMS SHARED**
Shared document folder and information site for Working Group

5. **SHAREPOINT**
Create a SP site using tools such as forms, comments and track changes.

Note. ICS = Internal Communication Strategy; MS = Microsoft; SP = SharePoint.

Appendix N: Change Implementation Plan with Monitoring and Evaluation Checkpoints

Aspect	Pre-Work	Phase 1: Planning	Phase 2: Managing	Phase 3: Sustaining
ADKAR milestones	Awareness & desire		Knowledge & ability Agile method SA	Reinforcement
Change implementation plan	Building a Change team Senior leadership approval	Creating Communication plan Selecting participants Working group orientation	Workshops with Working Group	Launch Accountability
Adaptive & caring leadership	Get on the balcony Initial assessment		Give work back to the people. Protect voices of leadership from below	Regulate distress. Change journey
Assessments	Awareness & desire Assessment (performed by the change team)		Knowledge and ability assessment (performed collaboratively with the working group)	Reinforcement assessment (performed by PMs)
		PCT: Initial assessment (performed by change team)	PCT: midway (performed by change team)	PCT: before launch (performed by the change team)
			Agile after each workshop (working group)	Prosci's three performance metrics (includes all employees)
			Begin inclusion and barrier assessment.	Continue inclusion and barrier assessment (ongoing)

Note. The grey highlighted rows indicate the monitoring and evaluation points. ADKAR = awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement; PCT = Prosci change triangle; PM = program manager.

Appendix O: Prosci PCT Actions Template

Factor (Sponsor, Success, CM, PM)	Question #	Action to Address
(PM) An assessment of the change risk is complete.	Q3	1) Engage the risk manager from Audit to perform a risk assessment. 2) Review risk assessment during workshop phases with participants. Make adjustments as needed. 3) Review in the reinforcement stage and address any outstanding issues.

Note. CM = change manager; PM = program manager.

Appendix P: ADKAR Barriers and Mitigation Tactics

Milestone	Barrier	Mitigation
Awareness	The case for change is weak	Strengthen critical messages to include: How the change aligns with DOX's business plan and goals The risks of not changing Benefits for the organization and the individuals
	Key messages not resonating with staff.	Hold a focus group to review and revise the key messages based on feedback.
	Misinformation	Establish a confidential email address where employees can send their concerns. The change team should acknowledge this in future messages. The SharePoint site will be considered the source of truth.
Desire	Not addressed how the change will impact individual jobs	Ask directors to meet with the impacted team individually to discuss and brainstorm. Ideally, the group will create their own solutions. Report back to the change team or invite the change team to the meeting.
Knowledge and ability	Course not adequate Skills are lacking	Additional training is offered to WG upon request. Create a sandbox website for employees to practice their skills.
Reinforcement	Directors do not reinforce change	Meeting one-on-one with the directors and PMs.

Note. ADKAR = awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement; DOX = Department of X; WG = working group; PM = program manager.

Appendix Q: Sample Survey Questions

Employee Pulse Survey
1) Where do you find information about our teams and their work?
2) Have you provided feedback or directly engaged with a project team outside your team?
3) Did you participate in a feedback activity or exercise with a team outside of your work team?

Program Managers Pulse Survey
1) Have you created and implemented your internal communication plan based on the ICS?
2) What measures do you utilize to ensure communication is received and understood?
3) Do you use a variety of communication methods?

Senior Leadership
1) Are you checking with your PMs to ensure they use the ICS?

Note. ICS = Internal Communication Strategy; PM = Program Manager.

Appendix R: Inclusive Barriers Assessment

Employee demographic	Unintended positive impacts	Unintended negative impacts	Inclusion	Mitigation
Front-line staff	Interest in learning about communication methods and tools	Information overload	Two-way communication methods are required for all comms plans.	Explore real-time information-sharing programs with MS suite, such as Viva.
Underserved communities	Diverse communication methods emerge from discussions.	Knowledge sharing maintains a colonial approach, inadvertently favouring the dominant culture.	Alternative methods of communication are welcome to be shared by members of that community.	Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities. Training is suggested through the corporate learning centre.
Disability	Universal design for inclusivity	Communication is not designed with accessibility in mind.	Universal accessibility principles are applied to all communication practices (in-person and online)	Ask staff to review the inclusive and accessible communication toolkit on the online resource page.
English as a second language	Cross-cultural understanding.	Language barriers, mainly when using multiple acronyms or anecdotes.	Use plainer language in everyday communication by considering the end user.	Use plain language guidelines accessible from the corporate division's intranet site.
Gender & orientation	Increased visibility of diverse representation of PMs	Unknowingly using outdated language in communication.	Language changes daily; staying up to date on the latest inclusive language will help everyone feel more included.	Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities. Refer employees to the pronoun guides provided by

Employee demographic	Unintended positive impacts	Unintended negative impacts	Inclusion	Mitigation
				the corporate unit.
Multigeneration and leadership	Enhanced cross-team collaboration, saving time on projects and increasing efficiency in client-turnaround times.	Feeling the need to hoard knowledge to protect position.	Knowledge ownership can still be acknowledged but sharing it with others does not diminish a person's competency or skills in the workplace.	Solicit a volunteer from the senior leadership table to be an exemplar of knowledge sharing.

Appendix S: Mor-Barak Inclusion-Exclusion (MBIE) Scale Modified Questions

Question	On a ranking scale of 1 to 5, 1 being never, 5 being always
I feel included in the development of the ICS (Individual)	1 2 3 4 5
I have had an influence on the development of the ICS (Individual)	1 2 3 4 5
I feel the workshops are practical in making me feel valued as a contributor to the ICS (Aggregate)	1 2 3 4 5
The process for developing the ICS has been inclusive and barrier-free to allow me to participate fully (Process)	1 2 3 4 5