Create, Communicate, Empower

How to Let People Know About Changes to Primo
(or anything else)

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John Kotter, *Leading Change*

- Classic management text from 1995 on why organizations fail to change
- Based on analysis of dozens of (failed) mergers, restructuring initiatives, downsizing operations, etc.
- Eight common errors and eight steps for successful change (“Kotter’s Steps”)
Wait, isn’t this supposed to be about Primo?

Sure, but...
Kotter’s Eight Mistakes

1. Allowing too much complacency
2. Failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition
3. Underestimating the power of vision
4. Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of 10
5. Permitting obstacles to block the new vision
6. Failing to create short term wins
7. Declaring victory too soon
8. Neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the corporate culture

Adapted from Kotter, p. 16
“Neglecting to anchor changes? Seriously?”

Okay, maybe some of this is a little over the top for announcing a new user interface for a library web catalogue.
Kotter’s Eight Steps for Creating Major Change

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Create a guiding coalition
3. Develop a vision
4. Communicate the change vision
5. Empower broad-based action
6. Generate short term wins
7. Consolidate gains; produce more change
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture

Adapted from Kotter, p. 23
Steps for Announcing Small Changes

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Create a guiding coalition
3. Develop a vision
4. Communicate the change vision
5. Empower broad-based action
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Consolidate gains; produce more change
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture
Create a Guiding Coalition

The guiding coalition is a group of people who will help you lead on change.

To have a successful coalition, you need to:
Find the right people; Create trust; Develop a common goal

Four Key Characteristics:

- Position power
- Expertise
- Credibility
- Leadership

Adapted from Kotter, p. 59
What Makes a Good Library Coalition?

Many institutions may already have a standing group of key library employees.

If the change you are considering is major, consider adding:

- Administrators
- Student leadership (Associated Students)
- Faculty leaders (Faculty Senate; Unions; Dept Heads)
Develop a Vision

A vision is essential because it gives people a reason to listen, and to support change.

Characteristics of an effective vision:

- Imaginable
- Focused
- Desirable
- Flexible
- Feasible
- Communicable

Adapted from Kotter, p.74
Effective Visions for Announcing Changes to Primo

- Imaginable
  - How can users picture the changes helping them?

- Desirable
  - What do users want from Primo? From the library in general?

- Communicable
  - Speak like a library user, not like a librarian.
  - If you can’t communicate it clearly and quickly, it’s not an effective vision.
Communicating the Change Vision

Having a vision is essential, but doesn’t do you any good if you don’t tell people.

Tips

- Avoid jargon
- Use metaphor, analogy, and examples
- Use multiple channels of communication
- Communicate repeatedly (over-communicate by a factor of 10)
- Use two-way communication whenever possible

Adapted from Kotter, p.92
Channels of Communication

- Faculty/staff e-mail lists
- Fliers
- Notices on the library home page
- Posts to social media
- Presentations at faculty/staff senate
- Drop-in presentations
Empower Broad-Based Action

- Communicate a sensible vision
- Make structures compatible with the vision
- Provide needed training
- Align information systems with the vision
- Confront those who undercut change

Adapted from Kotter, p.119
Empowering Library Patrons

- Communicate services
  - People can’t use what they don’t know about

- Provide training
  - People can’t use what they don’t know how to use

- Align information systems
  - Look to other web pages and systems outside of the one being changed

- Confront those who undercut change
  - If you run into patrons who are negative about the new system, treat that as another opportunity to communicate the vision
Questions?

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