

The Telenor Fornebu project

- Consolidating Telenor's more than 35 Oslo offices at Fornebu – the former airport
- Creating the largest office complex in Northern Europe: 137,000 square meters
- A total of 7,700 Telenor employees – and 6,000 workplaces
- Completion by 2001/2002



Characteristics of most innovations (Rogers)

- Obvious benefits
- Compatible with current solutions
- Not too complex
- Can be tested in advance
- Can study others who have implemented the solution – and their experiences
- Incremental
- And when it even can be reversed if wrong, people tend to be less anxious about the change process.

This is what we would like to accomplish:

General and flexible workplace solutions
ICT solutions supporting the needs of the
flexible, individual worker, as well as
the company

Change of mentality

- Why? Well, eventually it is all about competitiveness and profitability.
- Reduced cost
- Increased gain from the intellectual capital (through rapid sharing of knowledge)
- Profiled areas for customer relations

Therefore, our move to Fornebu means

- Transformational change
 - Huge, qualitative changes
 - Comprehensive, sudden and complex
 - Change encompasses the whole enterprise
 - Long-term consequences
 - Demands a holistic approach
- Not reversible
- In reality: More than one parallel change process
- Huge challenge for employees. All of them to be innovators.

3 different approaches to uncertain change processes

- Regard what is new as a challenge (See only the possibilities)
 - "I cannot move soon enough. . ."
 - "We will cope with this. . ."
 - "This will be fun. . ."
- Regard what is new as a threat (See possibilities and dangers)
 - "This could go wrong. . ."
 - "We might succeed. . ."
 - "Only effort can see us through this. . ."
- Regard what is new as a danger (Can't see the possibilities)
 - "This can only be heading in one direction. . ."
 - "We will never manage this. . ."

What has caused stress, concern and anxiety in Telenor individuals?

- Consequences for their personal lives/personal logistics
 - New workplace and means of transport and travel time may cause problems
 - Today many people only just manage to reconcile their lives at work and on the home front
- Lack of predictability and control over what is going to happen
 - Often applies to persons in the more subordinate positions
- Individual factors
 - Some people are more concerned than others about security and predictability
- What are the risks for me?
 - New tasks? Changed responsibilities?
 - Change in resources? Will I lose any of my present privileges? Lose my office?
 - Changed relations? Will I lose the colleague I am working next to?

Successful change processes (Kotter)

- External pressure to give the process a sense of urgency
- A clear vision has been communicated and understood
- The participants are given the authority, responsibilities and resources necessary to implement the changes
- Processes are broken down into partial goals
- The process is consolidated through the repetition and upholding of change objectives

Unsuccessful change processes

- Underestimate people's need for doing things the usual way
- Overestimate people's capacity for learning and change
- Spend too little time on changing relations, the rules of the game, communication methods, procedures etc.
- Allocate insufficient time for the changes to be implemented. Assume that changes in formal and physical structures will also change the social and psychological structures
- Do not take peoples concerns and anxieties seriously
- Produce unwillingness among employees by disregarding the psychological factors that create natural resistance to change

Communication during change processes

- Geared towards the recipient: Must also be attentive to the needs of employees and try to answer their questions and address their concerns
- On several levels:
 - Information (one-way)
 - Important to reduce uncertainty and establish predictability
 - Proactive internal mass communication through intranet and internal papers
 - External communication of the project's "qualities that make a difference".
 - Two-way communication (dialogue)
 - Important to reduce uncertainty and address people's concerns
 - Let people vent their concerns and how these can be addressed, but stop before it starts to nurture dissatisfaction.
 - Let trustworthy ambassadors and trade union representatives do the communication job.
 - Process-oriented (in each department)
 - Involve and assign responsibility to employees in developing the rules of the game, internal processes and working methods
 - Make the departments take ownership to their own workplace solutions.
 - Let them see their new workplace areas during VR and/or excursions
- Communication is not the answer to everything
 - For instance longer travelling time. . .

Some problems and our solutions. . .

- Structure: Lack of clarity as regards roles, responsibility, meeting places, routines, lines etc.
 - Spend time on clarification (two-way), training and specification
- Human relations: Employees are worried, concerned and anxious of losing what they already have (privileges, relations, job satisfaction, status, security, etc.)
 - Spend time on their concerns and let them be vented (two-way dialogue)
 - Emphasis on involvement and employee participation in decision-making
 - Storytelling at the theatre – provoke on dilemmas
 - Do make particular events for management
- Policy: Some people have interests to protect. Change opens up new opportunities for losses and gains
 - Clear communication of decisions and fora for "negotiating" new solutions, if applicable
- Symbolic: Many "lose something" when they move (a place, relations, their history, memories, an element of security, colleagues, a fixed workplace etc.)
 - Mark the occasion of the move and allow for the emotions it generates. Underscore what they gain in return.

Seven vital conclusions

1. Establish local ownership
2. Piloting solutions
3. Address employees concerns – take concerns seriously
4. Where the employees feel saddened by the move: Organise a symbolic farewell ceremony to say good bye to the past (wake). Welcome them warmly to the new place.
5. Set aside sufficient time for the moving process and the changes involved. Managerial focus on productivity.
6. Where many are not preparing sufficiently: Make the possible consequences clear. Paint a black picture and create some concern
7. Consolidate the process