Creating a sustainable innovation environment within large enterprises: a case study on a professional services firm

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Abstract. This paper considers the question of which structures, strategies and practical activities large firms can use to successfully create a sustainable innovation environment within an organisation. The paper has a special focus on communication activities used to support this change process. Using the ADKAR change management model as the underlying framework, this study analyses the story of a large professional service firm's national innovation program to show and discuss a successful example. The paper shows how the firm successfully managed both the change project and the stakeholder change to transform the nature of their organisation. The paper provides valuable insights for professionals, practitioners, consultants and academics involved in or studying the creation of innovation and how to affect this within large organisations.

Keywords. innovation program; innovation management; sustainable innovation environment; large enterprises; ADKAR change management model; communication; organisational change; stakeholder change; structures, strategies and practical activities

1   Introduction

The growing interest in innovation within large organisations has developed alongside major changes in the academic, technical, political and business environment. Especially intensification and rapid changes in the competitive environment (Siguaw et al., 2003), fostered by factors such as globalisation (Gummesson, 2002) and faster technological development (Santoro and Chakrabarti, 2002), increased the need for an immediate adoption of these changes and the development of innovative products, services, processes and business models (Szerb, 2003).

Whilst innovation, which can be understood as the successful introduction of new products, services, processes or business models (Luecke and Katz, 2003), has been shown to be a key driver in organisational growth (Tucker, 2002; IBM, 2006), innovation is still not completely understood or accepted by those involved in large firms. The responsibility to shareholders, need to manage risk, lack of understanding of innovation (including its benefits and appropriate processes to facilitate it within the organisation), and desire not to be distracted from current business are some of the reasons for this.

With there still being no commonly accepted method for establishing a successful

firm-wide innovation program that can be used in different sectors and with the development of innovation strategy theory still in a growth phase (Davey et al., 2008), still far from reaching maturity, the ability to get resources committed at the executive level can be difficult. Whilst the Google approach of allowing staff to have 20% of their time dedicated to new venture creation (Carr, 2007) has been successful in achieving growth within the software industry, it may not be realistic for most large firms.

Establishing a common definition for innovation and vision of how it can assist the firm's objectives is a vital first step in establishing an innovation program. This process however can be extremely problematic within large firms owing to the complex nature of large organisations as well as the often difficult task of getting buy-in from key personal at the top level of the organisation. Conversely, getting understanding, trust and acceptance of the benefits and process of innovation by employees, suppliers, customers and shareholders can also create significant issues in getting momentum for an innovation program.

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to create a better understanding of which structures, strategies and practical activities large organisations can use to successfully create an innovation environment within an organisation with special focus given to communication activities used to support this change process. In order to do so, this paper uses the case study of a large professional service firm and its innovation program – a program recognised as a successful example in how to engender a more innovative corporate culture.

A further objective of this largely exploratory study is to develop a framework for the infusion of innovation into a large organisation rather than how to build an innovative organisation. This paper therefore is targeted at professionals, practitioners, consultants and academics involved in or studying the creation of innovation and how to affect this within large organisations.

This paper is organised as follows. Firstly, the next section briefly reviews the literature with respect to the creation of an innovation environment as well as to organisational change. Following an outline of the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006) acting as the theoretical framework, section four presents the research design of the present study. Chapter five then introduces the firm's innovation program as well as describes the methods they employed in building momentum for the innovation program within and outside the firm with special focus on communication methods used. The paper outlines the full context of the program so that the reader can understand the way in which the firm combined strong internal and external communication with hands-on innovation activities in order to win over stakeholders in the organisation. Following a discussion of the results, the paper closes with a conclusion and suggestions for future research.

2   Literature review

Research on creating a sustainable innovation environment within enterprises is closely linked with the concept of entrepreneurship and especially with the concept of intrapreneurship. Following Schumpeter (1934) as well as Drucker (1985),

entrepreneurship can be defined as "the process of uncovering and developing an opportunity to create value through innovation" (Antoncic and Hisrich, 2001) which is also the core of organisational innovation. More recently, research on intrapreneurship (Pinchot, 1985), which is also called corporate entrepreneurship (Zahra, 1991) or corporate venturing (Stopford and Baden-Fuller, 1994), has evolved. This research stream focuses on the application of the entrepreneurship concept within existing organisations (due to the common usage of the term entrepreneurship this study stays with the term but refers hereafter to its application within existing organisations). Today, broad consensus is reached that fostering entrepreneurship can help to enhance a company's growth and profitability (Zahra, 1991). Acknowledging this potential, the question arises whether or not an organisation can foster entrepreneurship, if so, how? Since entrepreneurship takes place in interaction with its environment (van de Ven, 1993), organisations need to provide an innovation supporting environment in order to enhance motivation, inspiration and drive (Russel, 1999). Most researchers believe, that environmental factors such as organisational cultures, social networks, reward systems and adequate resource allocation can foster entrepreneurial spirit and help to extract entrepreneurial value (e.g. Hisrich and Peters, 1998; Gnyawali and Fogel, 1994). Moreover, clear goals, strategies and tasks are needed to encourage employees to act as entrepreneurs. Given the required time, space and monetary as well as non-monetary resources, entrepreneurs are able to exploit their full potential and to develop new ideas resulting in organisational growth and competitive advantage.

Today no accepted method for creating a successful and sustainable innovation environment exists. Rather, vague concepts such as the concept of 'organizational slack' which allows staff to have a certain amount of time (15 to 20 percent in the cases of Google and 3M) dedicated to new venture creation are known (Carr, 2007; Bartlett and Mohammed, 1995). However, to exploit the mentioned potential, organisations need a strategic approach to change themselves to create an environment suitable for entrepreneurship.

The following section briefly reviews the literature on firm-level innovation models as well as change management – the two parent theories of this research.

2.1   Firm-level innovation models

The use of innovation models to explain and/or guide innovation management has a long history. In his seminal work, Rothwell (1991) characterised 5 generations of innovations models, from the 1950s until today.

First generation innovation models (1950s to mid-60s) are simple linear sequential process models focused on technology push. Here, the emphasis is on the research and development (R&D) process with the market/customers just being the 'receiver' of the innovation, thus not being the initiator of the innovation and/or shaping the innovation in the commercialisation process. *Second generation* innovation models (mid-60s to 1970s) are still simple linear sequential however with the market being the starting point of innovation. Also called market pull, customers / consumers represent the source of innovation. In these models, R&D reacts based on the market needs identified. Compared to first generation innovation models, these models focus

more on marketing. *Third generation* innovation models (1970s to 1980s) combine the key aspects of the first and second generation models, namely technology push and market pull. With the first two generations being sequential models, marketing and R&D are integrated in the third generation with feedback loops existing between the different stages of the model. *Fourth generation* innovation models (1980s to 1990s) are focused integration of parallel teams / departments / activities (e.g. marketing, R&D, product development, product engineering, manufacturing). The models consider not only the integration within firms, but also the external integration with external organisations and individuals such as suppliers and customers. *Fifth generation* innovation models (1990s till today), also called systems integration and networking models, are fully integrated parallel development models. The main differences to fourth generation innovation models are the extensive usage of information technology (automating and speeding up many processes) as well as wide integration of network partners, both horizontally as well as vertically integrated.

As the above described development illustrates, innovation models have become more and more complex, inter-disciplinary and integrated over time. Innovation models and firm-level innovation management are not considered anymore as a simple linear process containing a small number of activities only, but integrates various aspects from a wide range of disciplines. These aspects, often also mentioned in literature as key success factors, include creativity (e.g. Amabile, 1988) and entrepreneurship (e.g. Drucker, 1985; Burgelman and Sayles, 1986), cross-functional teams (e.g. Baldridge and Burnham, 1975;) and product / project champions (e.g. Rothwell et al., 1974), team structure (e.g. Schon, 1963; Frohman, 1978) stage gate processes (e.g. Cooper, 1983), leadership (e.g. Clark and Fujimoto, 1991), customer and user integration (e.g. von Hippel, 1976, 1986; Rothwell, 1972), innovation culture (e.g. Burns and Stalker, 1961), integration of external sources and organisations (e.g. Chesbrough, 2003), absorptive capacity (e.g. Cohen and Levinthal, 1990) and internal and external communication (e.g. Marquis, 1969; Rothwell, 1972; Rothwell et al., 1974).

Due to the multi-facetted nature of firm-level innovation, introducing a new, or restructuring an existing, innovation program within organisations can be considered as a highly complex and time-consuming activity. As innovation programs have an influence on the work of many employees in an organisation, change management is often applied to increase the chances of success when new innovation programs are introduced or an existing innovation program is advanced. Therefore, the next section will briefly review existing literature on change management.

2.2   Change management

Due to the increasing need of (corporate) renewal in today's knowledge society, fostered by factors such as faster technological development or globalisation, change management has attracted a lot of interest in the past decades. Various starting points for discussions on change management can be identified in literature, e.g. discussions on incremental vs. radical change (e.g. Burnes, 2004), planned change vs. continuous change (e.g. Burnes, 2004; Peters and Waterman, 1982) or the discussions on ambidextrous change (e.g. Duncan, 1976). For a more extensive review on change management literature please refer to Iles and Sutherland (2001). In this section,

however, the focus will be on different definitions and perspectives of change management.

Change management definitions primary focus on three different perspectives: (i) change management as a systematic process, (ii) change management as a means of transitioning people, and (iii) change management as a way to achieve an outcome / make an impact. While some definitions focus on just one or two perspectives others integrate all three. Ryerson (2011, pp. 4-5) presents some example of definitions, primary from practice. Key elements of these definitions include:

- to approach systematically and apply knowledge (process perspective),
- to lead, manage and enable people (people perspective),
- to help people transition (people perspective),
- to accept new processes, technologies, systems, structures, and values (outcome/impact perspective),
- to transition employees from their present way of working to the desired way of working (outcome/process perspective).

A definition that integrates the three perspectives has been developed by the Change Management Learning Center (cited through National Learning Consortium, 2013, p. 1):

> Change management refers to "the application of the set of tools, processes, skills and principles for managing the people side of change to achieve the required outcomes of a change project or initiative."

This definition integrates the systematic process and the resources used in the process (tools, skills, principles) and the "people side" of the change, and states that a certain outcome/impact is expected.

Indeed, transforming an organisation towards an innovation-friendly environment, and convincing the different internal and external stakeholders of innovation is often a very hard task due to the necessary (often large) extent of change in an individual's thinking and acting. There is a growing view that resistance to change is a natural phenomenon (Buchanan and Huczynski, 1985) and that initiating change often results in a process which is accompanied by competition and hostility (Lindblom, 1994). As a result, organisations need to find appropriate organizational structures, strategies and activities to force a change of their different stakeholders which, in turn, results in greater innovation activity, new income streams as well as organisational growth. Figure 1 shows a conceptual framework covering these three elements and the perspectives derived from the definitions presented above (process, people, impact).
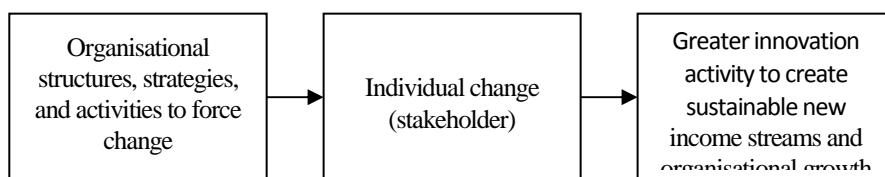

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

In the next section different change management models are discussed to identify the most suitable one for this research purpose – namely understanding the creation of a sustainable innovation environment within large enterprises.

3   Theoretical framework

Literature refers to a variety of models which can be used for explaining and fostering organisational change. For instance, the McKinsey 7S Model developed by Peters and Waterman (1982, 1990) breaks down an organisation into seven elements which make up an organisation, namely shared values, strategy, structure, systems, style, staff, and skills. Since these elements are linked to each other, the model can be used to diagnose organisational issues and to plan organisational change processes. Another change management model developed by Lewin (1951) focuses on the process of change. Lewin's model refers to a three-stage change process of unfreeze, change, and re-freeze. Basically, this means that inertia/resistance has to be overcome first (unfreeze) before change can occur (change) and the new situation can be stabilised (refreeze). Yet another model can be found in Kotter's (1996) book 'Leading Change'. Kotter proposes an eight-step process for creating organisational change, including (1) establishing a sense of urgency, followed by (2) creating a guiding coalition, (3) developing a vision and strategy, (4) communicating the change vision, (5) empowering broad-based action, (6) generating short term wins, (7) consolidating gains and producing more change, and finally (8) anchoring new approaches in the culture.

While all three models provide valuable insights into change and its management, none was seen as optimal to investigate the change of an organisation and its stakeholders towards an innovative culture. McKinsey's 7s Model focuses on building blocks, but neither on the change process itself, nor on the individual's change required. Lewin's unfreeze-change-refreeze model, on the other hand, provides a too simplified look at the innovation change process not being able to handle its complex nature. Lastly, Kotter's eight-step model provides a detailed reflection of the change process, but does not put the focus on the individual which is recognized as being a key component in change management in respect to innovation.

Since people rather than processes are seen as the main priority of any successful and sustainable change management approach (Tierney, 1998; McAlpine and Jackson, 2000; Dawson and Jones, 2003), the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006) has been highly valued for its separate consideration of the change process for employees and has been chosen as the theoretical framework of present study. Consisting of five building blocks (awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement), the ADKAR model looks at individual change management, meaning how change can be fostered at a personal level (x-axis in figure 2). However, the model also considers the phases of a change project, namely business need, concept and design, implementation, and post-implementation (y-axis) since successful change can only happen when both goals are achieved (project level as well as employee level goals).

In contrast to the original ADKAR model, the model used in this study has been altered slightly. Rather than simply looking at the change made by employees, this study considers all stakeholders involved in the change process (e.g. employees, suppliers, customers or investors). Figure 2 shows the slightly modified model graphically.
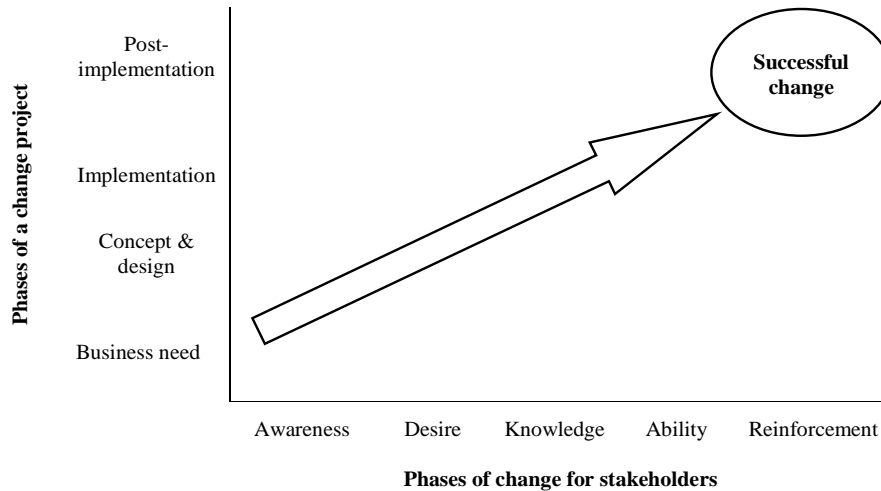
Phases of change for stakeholders

Fig. 2. The ADKAR model (following Hiatt, 2006, p.59)

According to Hiatt (2006) the five elements of the model (awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement) must occur in sequence and are cumulative. This means that all building blocks need to be present to execute a successful and sustainable change. Furthermore, organisations need to establish the five elements in order meaning that they have to start with raising awareness before awakening desire, creating knowledge, forcing abilities, and lastly fostering reinforcement. In the case that one of the first elements is weak, the whole change begins to break down. For instance, change will fail if stakeholders are aware of the importance of innovation and have a desire to take part in creating new innovations but lack the required knowledge and ability to innovate. Therefore, organisations need to look at each element in sequence and foster their achievement. The following table 1 shows some factors influencing the success of each element.

Table 1. Factors influencing each element of the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006, p.45)

ADKAR element	Factors influencing success
Awareness of the need for change	• A person's view of the current state • How a person perceives problems • Credibility of the sender of awareness messages • Circulation of misinformation or rumours • Contestability of the reasons for change
Desire to support and participate in the change	• The nature of the change (what the change is and how it will impact each person • The organizational or environmental context for the change (his or her perception of the organisation or environment that is subject to change) • Each individual's personal situation • What motivates a person (those intrinsic motivators that are

	unique to an individual)
Knowledge of how to change	• The current knowledge base of an individual • The capability of this person to gain additional knowledge • Resources available for education and training • Access to or existence of the required knowledge
Ability to implement required skills and behaviours	• Psychological blocks • Physical abilities • Intellectual capability • The time available to develop the needed skills • The availability of resources to support the development of new abilities
Reinforcement to sustain the change	• The degree to which the reinforcement is meaningful and specific to the person impacted by the change • The association of the reinforcement with actual demonstrated progress or accomplishment • The absence of negative consequences • An accountability system that created an ongoing mechanism to reinforce the change

Amongst other applications of the ADKAR model, Hiatt states that it is a "learning tool for teaching change management, especially when analyzing case studies of successful and failed changes" (Hiatt, 2006, p.60). Agreeing with Hiatt's statement, the ADKAR model was chosen to act as the theoretical framework of present study.

4   Research design

According to the problem of successfully carrying out a change in the behaviour of an organisation's stakeholders with respect to innovation, the aim of this paper is to contribute to the research stream of creating sustainable innovation environments within large enterprises. In this context, a large enterprise can be defined as having 250 or more work units and having either 50 million Euro or more annual turnover or 43 million Euro or more annual balance sheet total (European Commission, 2003). A more precise research question is as follows:

> *Which structures, strategies and practical activities can be used by large organisations in their quest for infusing a more innovative culture by instituting a firm-wide innovation program?*

In order to answer the research question presented, a descriptive, qualitative research method was applied. In contrast to exploratory and causal research which explore circumstances and coherencies (Kotler et al., 2006), descriptive research aims to picture "specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship" (Neuman, 2000, p.21). Due to the fact that setting up an innovation program within large enterprises and convincing different stakeholders is still a not well researched field, a qualitative approach was chosen. Strauss and Corbin (1998) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that qualitative research is an appropriate method for understanding

phenomena which are rather unknown so far, and for exploring new perspectives/concepts. According to Yin (1984) who suggests to choose the research strategy by evaluating three criteria (type of research questions, the researcher's control over behavioral events, and focus on contemporary events), case studies were identified as the most suitable method for this research project. Case studies aim to investigate contemporary phenomena within their natural settings (Benbasat et al., 1987) and are appropriate to research 'how' and 'why' questions (Yin, 1984). Generally, case studies can be undertaken in order to provide description, test theory or generate theory (Eisenhardt, 1989, Kidder, 1982; Pinfield, 1986; Gersick, 1988). The interest of present study is neither to generate nor test theory. Rather, it aims to provide description how a company achieved the goal of convincing their stakeholders of innovation. As a result, the study has an illustrative character.

When undertaking case study research it is crucial to select a case which contributes to answer the research question. Therefore, theoretical sampling was applied instead of statistical sampling. Theoretical sampling refers to a selection which is based on a case's richness of information (information-oriented sampling) and does not take into account how representative a case is (statistical sampling) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In regard to choosing the right case, different strategies can be applied. Flyvbjerg (2004) outlines that researchers can use extreme/deviant cases to study unusual situations (problematic or especially good cases), maximum variation cases to determine the significance of circumstances, critical cases to allow logical deductions with maximal ramifications for other cases, or paradigmatic cases to establish a school for a certain domain.

Since this study's purpose is to look at a successful case, the extreme/deviant strategy was applied and *the Firm* has been identified as an appropriate example and provides a remarkable success story. *The Firm* is a professional services firm who recognised innovation as a pathway to bring greater ingenuity and efficiency to the company's market performance with clients. It started a national innovation program in 2004 to encourage people to explore innovative ways of thinking and applying different perspectives to solving business issues. More than 2,000 employees regularly collaborate on the in-house social media channel, with an equal number attending service line and national client-focused idea cafés and workshops aimed at complex problem-solving and creating opportunities in the marketplace. The premise is that everyone is an innovator.

As of 2009, with some 80% of the firm's employees actively participating in the innovation program, more than 20% of the firm's revenue is generated through new or substantially different businesses and service offerings. The innovation program is regarded as highly profitable due to its return on investment of more than 300%. Having successfully set up the innovation program, the firm was awarded a CFO Magazine's Accounting Services Firm of the Year Award in 2006 and 2008 with the commitment to innovation noted as a differentiating feature, and was named 'most innovative firm' in Australia by another major business-oriented magazine (2005).

For the empirical data collection, a triangulation (method) data collection method was applied to maximize the internal validity of the study. The data collection method chosen included a mix of in-depth personal interviews with key people within the company, use of confidential proprietary internal material provided by the firm,

promotional material (including internet and marketing collateral) and personal experience (Blaxter et al., 1996). A series of 3 interviews were undertaken whilst the personal knowledge of two of the authors, one a former consultant within the Innovation team, was accessed. Those interviewed included a partner of the Innovation Group, a Director who oversaw the innovation program's development and a further Director associated with the implementation of some of the activities described in this paper. Candidates were selected based upon their high level of knowledge of the innovation program. The interviews were transcribed and checked by the interviewee for accuracy. The notes from the interviews were manually synthesized and then reviewed by the interviewees again for accuracy.

The ADKAR model and its success factors outlined in section two provided the framework for data collection and analysis. Interviewees were provided information about the ADKAR model prior to the interviews, and the interviewees supported the process of data collection providing evidence of progress, either verbal or documented.

Following a call for great transparency and personal disclosure of possible Author-bias and involvement with the organisation at the centre of the study (Dyer and Singh, 1998), it should be noted that two of the co-authors worked with the case organisation in the past. The first author spent some time working within the case organisation in order to create a greater depth of understanding of the case organisation. The intimate knowledge created through these associations allows for a much greater depth of analysis and explanation which would have otherwise not been possible. The first author has held the responsibility of challenging claims made by the case organisation and ensuring objectivity. Additionally, where possible, third-party validation of claims has been sought to underpin the papers objectivity. It is acknowledged that a limitation of this paper could be the potential bias resulting from these associations, however it is believed that this approach has allowed the paper to reach greater levels of depth of information and therefore use in practical implementation.

Table 2. Research design overview

Attribute	Characteristic(s)
Research strategy	Case study
Aim of the case study	Provide description
Type of case study	Qualitative
Target population	Large enterprises
Industry sector	Professional services
Case selection strategy	Extreme/deviant cases
Data sources	Intranet and promotion material, non-structured interviews with key people within the company studied as well as personal experiences

The following section now outlines the firm's innovation program and takes a closer look at the structures set up, the strategies applied and the practical activities undertaken.

5   The case of a large professional services firm

5.1   Introduction to the firm's innovation program

The firm studied is part of a larger corporation, a globally connected network of firms in more than 140 countries employing nearly 200,000 professionals. The firm employs more than 4,500 people who provide audit, tax, consulting, and financial advisory services to public and private clients. In 2009, *the firm* achieved revenue growth of 11 per cent in spite of the toughest trading conditions in decades after maintaining growth rates of more than 20 per cent for the previous three years. *The firm*'s commitment to innovation has supported this growth through the development of new products and services. Known as an employer of choice for its innovative human resources programs, the firm is committed to helping its clients and people excel. *The firm's* professionals are dedicated to strengthening corporate responsibility, building public trust, and making a positive impact in their communities.

Nine years ago, *the firm* recognized the importance of creating and sustaining an innovation environment in order to archive its ambitious growth plans. Regarding this, the biggest challenge was to transform the vague concept of innovation into a solid activity for its partners (joint owners and most senior position in *the firm*), employees (in order of seniority: director, manager, consultant/analyst, graduate), and other stakeholders (e.g. clients, industry groups, vendors, universities, etc.). Apart from communicating the significance of innovation regarding *the firm*'s overall business and growth strategy, it was seen as crucial to create a sustainable work environment which encourages stakeholders to actively participate in and contribute to innovation.

Since 2004, *the firm* has been addressing this challenge with its national innovation program, which sought to transform the work environment at the deepest level. The central premise of the program was that "everyone has the right to innovate." This means that everyone in the organisation must have permission and encouragement to "play in the innovation space". The innovation program educates and supports stakeholders who then generate and develop ideas on how to improve internal processes or service delivery to clients, as well as creating ideas for new products and services to bring to market. As a structured and comprehensive business process covering targets, funding, resources and accountability, the program covers the whole innovation process from helping people to generate ideas to the successful launch of disruptive and breakthrough innovations.

The firm's initial strategic vision and approach was based on the framework presented in figure 3:

Fig. 3. The first innovation framework

Innovation Strategy: The heart of *the firm*'s framework is the innovation strategy. Defining the role of innovation within the organisation, the innovation strategy provides the context and guiding principles for the design, implementation and operation of the innovation program in alignment to the overall business or growth strategy. By determining the program's goals and objectives, its boundaries, and its measures of success, the innovation strategy enables organisations to clarify the vague and intangible concept of innovation. Most importantly, the innovation strategy is aligned to *the firm*'s overall business strategy and has a strong commitment by the CEO/board.

Culture: The innovation program aims to create an innovative culture, and to embed and continually improve an innovation capability of an organisation. The objective is to educate employees (ability), and, most notably, to encourage and maintain their interest and engagement in the long run (willingness). Winning over the hearts and minds is seen as a key to drive the quantity as well as quality of ideas, and finally to extract value from the program. In order to do so, *the firm* uses strong communication, networking activities, a Reward & Recognition program and relates the innovation program to the company's business culture, which is shaped by *the firm*'s award winning communication campaign.

Idea management software: The firm's idea management software is a web based idea management solution providing the primary contact point for employees to interact with the innovation program and with each other. The centrepiece of the software is the ability to collaboratively improve submitted ideas in order to extract the maximal value at the end. However, the interaction is not limited to employees; rather the idea management software is aligned with the other building blocks of the framework and supports the whole innovation process, including idea generation, idea capture, idea review by an innovation council, idea development and launch.

Funding & Governance: Effective governance is vital to achieve the defined goals and objectives, and to manage funding in an appropriative manner. The firm has

employed a multi-tiered governance structure, including an Innovation Executive to direct the program at the strategic level, and two Innovation Councils, which perform the more tactical role of filtering ideas. Financial and other resources have to be identified, approved and tracked to set up and manage a program respectively to develop and implement ideas. Furthermore, long-term oriented management and operating structures need to be developed as the backbone of the program.

Value: In order to reach the program's objectives, and to ensure that the program contributes to the overall business and growth strategy, specific tangible and intangible targets have to be defined. These targets, working as both goals and measures, ensure in conjunction with costs and benefits tracking, a target-oriented execution of the program.

Innovation Acceleration Team: To ensure that business as usual does not get in the way of high potential ideas with a crucial speed to market, a specialized team accelerates the development and implementation of time-critical ideas. This team, focused on maximizing and capturing value of an idea, has expertise in intellectual property (IP) management, rapid prototyping, business case development and go to market strategies.

Pipeline Management: The program's pipeline management component defines criteria, tools and templates to provide a structured process for moving an idea from its generation to launch. Different stage gates (raw idea, active concept, funded prototype, and market expansion) ensure to drive the quality through the program, and hence to extract the maximal value of an idea.

Due to its internal success, *the firm* took the strategic approach of its innovation program to market and has successfully applied the program to a number of clients across varied industries, e.g. a large bank in Australia, a leading general insurer, one of the world's leading commercial real estate services and money management firms, and one of the world's largest news media companies.

Over the past nine years, *the firm*'s innovation program has gone through both minor and major changes as part of an overall continuous improvement cycle. There have been four distinct points at which the direction of the program changed. Not surprisingly, these changes correspond with changes in the program's leadership and governance structures:

1. Inception (2004) – the program was run by a small team comprising one director, a part time communication director and manager. There was a small provision for operational funding with the focus on communication and socialising the concept of innovation across *the firm* as a whole. Funding for innovation initiatives was appropriated and approved on a case-by-case basis by an innovation council and *the firm* executive.

2. Integration and Acceleration (2006) – the program was aligned and integrated with the mainstream investment and growth function of *the firm* and a dedicated pool of funding was allocated. Financial, operational, governance and project management processes were established. In addition, a team of innovation specialists were assembled to help incubate and accelerate ideas. This resulted in the creation of a new business unit (focussing on the digital business side) and several spin-off companies.

3. Innovating Innovation (2008) – To continue to drive innovation deeper into each service line so that innovation could be confidently regarded as embedded in its DNA, *the firm* developed metrics and KPIs to benchmark and monitor cultural impacts and portfolio performance. Early results highlighted the need to enhance ways for staff members to collaborate across its national offices, industry groups and service lines. A new ideation and education platform was rolled out along with social media tools including Yammer. The innovation team of four fulltime and two part-time members including two directors and a manager, facilitated departmental and 'top gun' ideation sessions as well as firm-wide initiatives. To further test the assumptions, experiments with new types of funding models, ideation techniques, execution strategies and governance structures were conducted and the resulting impacts were analysed using the new metrics.

4. Re-vision (2010) – These experiments, *the firm*'s successes and track record, and the economic marketplace led to identifying innovation as one of the five pillars of *the firm*'s 2015 business strategy. To ensure tight alignment of innovation strategy with *the firm*'s organic development strategy, funding and governance structures have been adjusted and strengthened. The more mature innovation program of 2010 will now develop into three more distinct functional components comprising a:

- strategic radar for identifying innovation opportunities
- culture and capability development and
- portfolio management.

5.2   Applying the theoretical framework to *the firm*'s innovation program - Phases of change project explained

Considering that *the firm* provides services in the areas of audit, assurance and advisory, tax, corporate finance and consulting mainly to large and middle sized corporate and government organisations, it perhaps would not be considered to be a typical environment for innovation. Resistance to change and the long time-frame to create momentum for the innovation program across *the firm* are common challenges faced by large firms when seeking to embark on long term cultural change. Owing to the nature of the industry in which *the firm* competes, with few employees familiar with innovation, *the firm* needed to overcome a lack of understanding and trust of innovation and its ability to provide the desired growth levels. As a first step, this required the creation of a structure (Innovation Framework), strategies and activities that would drive this change. This created a true change management challenge that required a multi-faceted change management approach with a robust communication strategy at its core.

The firm's innovation program will now be evaluated using the ADKAR change management model. Firstly the phases of a change project will be analysed.

Business need

The initiative to develop innovation within *the firm* was as a pathway to bringing greater ingenuity and integration to their market performance with clients. Further, the commitment to a long-term strategic focus of creating a culture of innovation was

seen as something that could potentially offer sustainable growth for the company. The primary business need therefore was determined to be the creation of growth through innovation particularly focused on improving current business and creating new business streams designed to create new revenue. This was recognised at the top of the organisation, was pushed by *the firm*'s executive and supported by partners nationwide.

The firm's ranking amongst the 'big 4' national professional services firms was a point continually communicated internally with the desire to 'move up the ladder' being emphasised. Being a professional services firm that deals primarily with finance, the communication of current market position as well as growth objectives was emphasised to staff using financial data wherever possible. The key message was: *the firm* would not achieve desired growth (20% growth targets) without innovating into new services. This message was communicated and reinforced by partners and directors in a coordinated 'sell' program to employees.

Concept and design

The firm set out to transform the work environment at the deepest level, to essentially change *the firm*'s DNA. This required a comprehensive strategy, accompanying structure and subsequent activities in an innovation program framework in order to achieve this objective.

The program incorporates five strategic elements that are integral to ensuring sustained success (compare also section 5.1):

1. Defining the strategy for innovation and its performance based outcomes. This was about aligning their innovation goals with their overall business strategy and seeking to embed a sustainable innovative capability into the organisation.
2. Building a sustained process for translating ideas into value consistently and over time. Redesign processes to define and refine the idea pipeline. This included decisions around which criteria would be used for progressing ideas through to the next stage, how would ideas be prioritised, and how they could be funded.
3. Implementing a governance and funding model for supporting and delivering innovation.
4. Driving a cultural change and communications plan for engaging, educating and rewarding staff (to be explained in greater detail in section 5.5).
5. Implementing the value based tools and templates to measure and report through on innovation to monitor and manage the innovation process.

Implementation

Implementation of *the firm*'s innovation program began in mid-2004 with the mentality that 'everyone is an innovator' and so employees were empowered to seek new innovative solutions for their customer's business problems. Innovation at *the firm* starts from inside the company and is firmly based on a culture that encourages people to explore innovative ways of thinking and different perspectives for solving business issues. As such, capturing the 'hearts and minds' of *the firm*'s employees was seen to be crucial in the success of the program.

Crucial to the implementation phase was the involvement of volunteers ('many voices

and hands make lighter work'). Staff members had to be willing to contribute to a process of personal and professional change. The foundation for building innovation capability inside *the firm* was the formation of a team comprising partners and directors who had gone through workshops to gain their support for the program. This team, before the commencement of the innovation program involved representatives from all areas of *the firm*. The workshops also seeded the network of volunteers known as Innovation Champions. The voluntary community of innovation mentors draws from across *the firm*'s industry groups and regions, and help to inspire and motivate employees to participate in the process. Champions support employees to generate innovative ideas and participate in a process designed to select winning ideas and then develop them into business cases.

The firm strategically involved many levels of involvement but focused its efforts across three paradigms with objectives within each:

1. The Individual

- Recognising individuality
- Encouraging internal entrepreneurs
- Inviting the individual to contribute and to make a difference
- Attracting talented individuals
- Fostering passionate entrepreneurship
- Pushing innovation creates an environment where talented individuals choose to work there and so assist recruitment objectives

2. The Team

- Using the power of combining individual intellect and talent across the firm
- Forming teams that cut across hierarchies and business units
- Creating 'tribes' of participants who work together

3. The Organisational level

- Redefining traditional relationships between customer, supplier and even competitor
- Pushing the boundary of the organisation to blur the boundaries between organisation, networks and supply chains
- Bringing in other organisations to create a network

Post-implementation

The innovation program is an on-going concern where continual improvement and fine-tuning is sought. The firm's commitment to the creation of an innovative environment is seen in their continued investment in the program with human and capital resources. Their commitment to this corporate direction requires them to continually seek a better return on investment from the program and thus involves continued dedication.

Most of the activities outlined in the change management process above are conducted within *the firm* in the continuation of the innovation. This further reinforces the commitment to innovation within the organisation.

New ways to engage and motivate employees are continually sought and are achieved

through innovation promotional campaigns, recognition of innovation activities in performance reviews and being an ever-present issue raised in team meeting and appearing in the inbox and intranet of employees.

Post-implementation activities can also be seen in the continual monitoring of *the firm*'s idea pipeline through the idea management software by the Innovation team and Executive as well as the objective to recruit those with proven talent in innovation or are keen to work in an innovative environment.

There has also been a process of continuous improvement based on feedback obtained from participants in the program. Some examples of the minor post-implementation changes include;

- New types of workshops and ideation sessions, such as morning "EyeOpener" sessions that introduce edgy new thinking (e.g. Serious Games, Social Media, Data Visualisation)
- An upgrade of the idea management software to the Innovation Academy – a platform that encourages learning and collaboration as part of the ideation process
- The rollout of social media tools such as Yammer to promote further internal communication and collaboration
- Changes in the funding and project management approaches – such as the creation of "microfunds" which shorten the time needed to get funding and eliminate bureaucracy from the approval process
- Helping teams that receive funding develop rapid prototyping skills
- Reward programs based on collaboration and participation metrics
- Development of a "FastTrack Innovation Challenge" program which takes students from top Australian universities through a semester-long journey from ideation through prototyping to business case.

Furthermore, the strategic context for the program has been refined and aligned with *the firm* wide strategy to drive from being a vendor to becoming an advisor, but ultimately acting as a shaper of business and policy. Figure 4 shows the articulation of the central "strategy" circle within the Innovation Framework discussed at the start of the section.

Innovating in our country	**Shaper of innovative vision** Creating advantage and eminence through supporting positive transformation of our nation's innovation culture.
Innovating for our clients	**Advisor with innovative solutions** Demonstrating a consistent ability to think more creatively about our clients' issues.
Innovating for our firm	**Vendor of innovative services** Becoming more relevant to our clients by consistently providing unique, inspiring and market leading services.

Fig. 4. The firm's Innovation Strategy

5.3   Applying the theoretical framework to *the firm*'s innovation program -Phases of change for employees explained

The source of the change within *the firm* to a more innovative culture was centred on the need to engage and involve staff in a fun, interesting and hand-on way. The innovation program's premise is that 'everyone is an innovator'. In *the firm* they like to say that the company gives its employees permission to play in the innovation space.

The process of innovate change was considered such a high priority that it is a Key Performance Indicator for all employees. A thousand employees attended workshops during the initial phase of the program to develop innovation skills whilst a system of rewards and recognition celebrate their achievements.

In respect to the 'phases of change for stakeholders' axis of the ADKAR model, the following activities were observes:

Awareness

Top-level partner ownership was seen as critical for the change to an innovative culture: "Innovation starts at the top," said the Head of Innovation and Managing Partner of Consulting in the Asia Pacific region. "It is important that the leaders in the business are committed and understand how critical innovation is to increasing the bottom line and competitiveness in the marketplace. With targets in mind this 'vision' needs to be consistently communicated across the whole business with everyone's role clearly outlined".

The vision for the innovation program was created and is subsequently updated annually at the Partner and Director annual forum therefore engaging all senior within *the firm*. The firm embarked on an all-inclusive innovation training program for its top leaders to clearly communicate what innovation is, and is not.

Desire

Desire to be part of the program was driven through a number of key initiatives. The creation of firm-wide innovation 'champions' to encourage and support participation and keep up the momentum in developing ideas and getting them to market was seen as crucial for the creation of a desire to change.

The firm engaged an 'internal sell' to introduce the innovation concept to employees and the need for *the firm* to become more innovative to achieve growth targets. This was achieved through presence at monthly meetings, posting articles of *the firm*'s intranet, novel promotions and competitions as well as the launch of the Innovation Week concept. It was also achieved through the fact that the senders of the messages on innovation within *the firm* came from the very top (executive level) and partners. The active participation in the program by partners was an example of leading from the front to which many of *the firm*'s employees willingly followed.

"It is important as a manager to provide the senior sponsorship necessary to drive ideas through organisational barriers," says the consulting director and partner of *the firm*.

Further, by recognising innovation performance by individuals in their performance review, *the firm* gave employees the incentive to involve themselves in their program.

Other mechanisms for the recognition of 'early adopters' of the innovation program were also created. These will be elaborated on further in section 5.5.

Knowledge

The establishment of a knowledge-base in respect to innovation was required to ensure employees felt empowered to be involved in the program. The emphasis firstly was to build a knowledge base within individuals. Individuals were then also engaged using teams that allowed the mixing of employees across different business units in order to create a shared learning environment. Some of the knowledge building activities included:

- Innovation training courses were made available to employees at all levels of the organisation
- Individuals were given a one week 'innovation immersion' through Innovation Week activities. This included seminars on innovation, speakers from experienced innovators and hands-on involvement in innovation activities
- Articles on innovation were posted on internally accessed intranet
- Specific coaching and/ or mentoring was provided to those submitting ideas through the Innovation Acceleration Team

Ability

A further ingredient seen as crucial for acceptance was to have the required resources available to the innovation program. The resources were in the form of:

- Financial resources – not just in terms of funding the program's management but also in terms of funding the ideas through either dedication of chargeable hours or indeed through financial investment in a business concept.
- Tools and materials – These elements were crucial for facilitating the creation and development of ideas which were primarily managed through the 'innovation zone'. The idea management software created an online (although internal) access point for inputting, developing and collaborating on ideas.
- Access to mentors and experts – 'Entrepreneurs in residence' and Innovation Acceleration Team provided personal coaching to selected employees in order to increase their innovation abilities.
- Time – Through the creation of an innovation week, the firm prioritised time for employees to focus their efforts on innovation. Further, employees were given small challenges by the CEO to complete during work hours.

In the promotion of the innovation program, there was an emphasis placed on utilising fun and interesting methods for encouraging participation in the innovation program. The fear of change and the actual process of innovation was broken down through inclusive, hands-on activities designed to engage employees.

Reinforcement

The firm ensured that reward and recognition was given for participation in the innovation program as well as for relevant innovation successes. This included:

1. Recognition for idea contributions
   - Partner & staff KPI of 2 idea contributions per annum
   - Idea contributors recognised at mid-year and end-of-year review times
2. Rewards for approved ideas
   - Quarterly award winners for top 3 ideas voted by Innovation Council members ($250 Red Balloon gift voucher)
   - Annual award winner ($5,000 toward a course of winner's choice) announced at Partners' Conference
   - Recognition for Innovation Champions
   - Annual award for greatest volunteer announced at annual Partners' Conference
   - Innovator of the Year Award announced at annual Partners' Conference.

A transparent system for accountability was established in the creation of the idea management software. This enabled *the firm* to track who had participated in the program and how often. Those who were not involving themselves in the innovation program through the Innovation Week events or through the idea management software were encouraged by partners to participate through team meetings, personal emails and personal attendance at events.

Improvements to the program were, and still are, continually sought as are new activities and methods to get employees in the program. A process of experimentation, rework and improvement is undertaken to fine tune the program. Further, those involved in the innovation groups are continually rotated to keep fresh faces and ideas in the process.

5.4   Applying the theoretical framework to *the firm*'s program - Structure of involvment

The voluntary Innovation Groups were used as a method for getting acceptance and involvement from employees across *the firm*. The groups involved key partners and directors within *the firm* as well as inviting relevant external parties into the innovation forum and included:

- Innovation Executive - 5 member Steering committee for innovation
- Innovation Team - 6 resources devoted to program strategy, idea generation, idea execution, communications, R&R, performance, learning
- Innovation Council - 20 Partners who review new ideas and sponsor approved ideas
- Innovation Champions - 30 volunteers from service lines and geographies who promote innovation at local level
- Innovation Acceleration Team - 3 resources providing specialist skills in market analysis, project management and technical development.

Using the ADKAR model the following figure defines the involvement of those within the organisation at the various stages of the change process for stakeholders (the darker the background color, the higher the involvement).
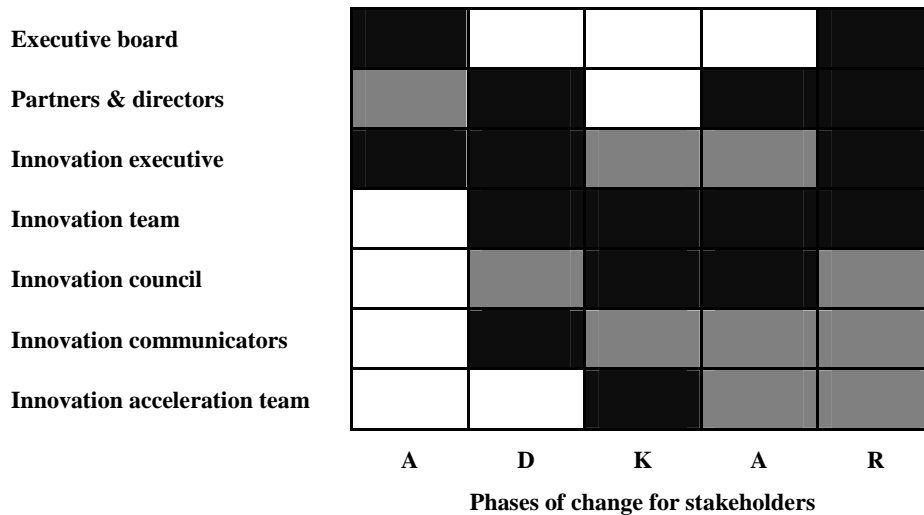

Fig. 5. Involvement of *the firm*'s partners and innovation staff

5.5   Specific communication activities undertaken in the change management process

Internal promotional activities

The firm undertakes extensive internal and external communication for its innovation program to ensure acceptance, garner involvement and win support and reinforce the innovation agenda to become part of the company DNA.

Internal innovation campaigns

The 'Innovation Week' (innovation challenge and ideas festival) is the major vehicle for the promotion of innovation within *the firm*. Innovation weeks are run 3-4 times throughout the year with client as well as internal challenges. Innovation is promoted to all employees through regular events, competitions and integration in the performance review process. In the spirit of creative play, the CEO issues employees with various competitive challenges such as a "100-day race" broken into 20-day laps: every 20 days the staff had to do something innovative with a client and come back and record the story. Further activities during the week include:

- Breakthrough Cafes and Innovation Lounges – Informal environments to 'play in the innovation space'
- Innovation workshops
- Group problem solving around specific themes
- Presentations from innovators
- Competitions for idea submission.

The Innovation Team has also run campaigns around particular themes deemed to be significant future problems confronting society e.g. a "Sustainability Week" was launched in 2007, where 500 new ideas relating to sustainability were submitted to the zone in one week. A program was also run for an international air carrier within *the firm* to obtain relevant ideas for their business improvement.

"EyeOpener" sessions are also run every month where internal and external innovative leaders are invited to explore cutting edge topics. These events are invite-only, with invitations given to top innovators and participators in firm-wide events and collaboration networks like Yammer.

Reward & recognition

Reward & Recognition is tied to innovation. Performance reviews include consideration of innovation program participation. Reward within *the firm* is structured as mentioned in the reinforcement section in section 5.3.

Internal publications

The firm's internal publications ensure that innovation themes are regularly seen by employees. The publications include: an internal newsletter published monthly with specific success stories; Intranet - Innovation success stories are regularly published on *the firm*'s intranet. In 2009 the Innovation Academy was launched, which provides regularly updated video content and blogs on innovation topics.

Idea management software

The firm's idea management software supports the entire program to funnel ideas through an idea pipeline. The firm created an innovation tool that would allow staff to submit ideas, collaborate on them and track their progress in a transparent way. The software encourages sharing of ideas and 'innovation lab' atmosphere where the power of many was leveraged and provides suggestion for improvement of ideas. In 2009 the software tool became a part of the Innovation Academy and the software was updated to take advantage of web 2.0 technology and enhanced collaboration.

External promotional activities

The firm also committed considerable time to promoting its commitment to innovation as a further means to stimulating not only internal interest in the innovation program but also external interest. This had the benefit of attracting interest from current and potential clients as well as attracting talent to *the firm*. Like most professional services firms, *the firm* is susceptible to a high employee turnover so *the firm*'s commitment to innovation is seen as point of differentiation in attracting employees. External interest in the program was fostered to further reinforce internal interest and involvement.

External publications (media releases, white papers and newsletters)

- Corporate brochures promoting the firm's innovation capabilities
- Many media releases to major newspapers, magazines and other publications
- A bi-monthly electronic publication focusing on innovation (external newsletter)
- White paper publications.

Innovation leadership

The firm seeks to take a leading role in business circles in respect to the topic of innovation and external recognition of efforts through a number of methods:

- Innovation partners and directors are sought after presenters in government and business circles for conferences, summits and roundtables
- The program is frequently used as a business case study by business foundations, innovative think tanks and government reports on innovation
- The innovation leadership is also regularly profiled in major media in articles about innovation
- The firm frequently facilitates summits on innovation and future topic
- The program resp. the firm won various awards on firm innovation.

Sponsorships

The firm also engages in the following sponsorships to further sustain its commitment to innovation:

- Australian Innovation Festival 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
- Australian Business Foundation
- Innovation Leadership Summit – in conjunction with University of Queensland, Business Review Weekly
- Australian Innovation Leadership luncheon series 2006-2010.

6   Discussion

In this paper, it has been sought to bring clarity to the difficult topic of how to affect real change within a large organisation in order to create an innovative environment. Using the case study of a large professional services firm, and their transformation using a combination of structure, strategies and activities, by itself creates a useful insight into a 'best practice model'.

It has been explained that simply using communication methods by themselves may not have been enough to create significant innovation change within *the firm*. However by using communication as the centre-piece for an all-encompassing change project, one which combined a 'change project process' with a specific focus on the 'phases of change for employees', could provide an appropriate strategic framework in an innovation setting.

In respect to how a large organisation could create a more innovative environment using a strategic innovation program, some generalised models have been created below based upon the experience of *the firm*, for use by other practitioners and to create a point of discussion.

The question of "*what process could be followed?*"

Using the case study, the following model has been developed to highlight the nature of the change management process in respect to the creation of an innovation environment. It reflects, like the ADKAR model itself, the need to develop the X and Y axis of the ADKAR model simultaneously. That is, to work through the phases of change of innovation project at the same time as advancing through the phases of
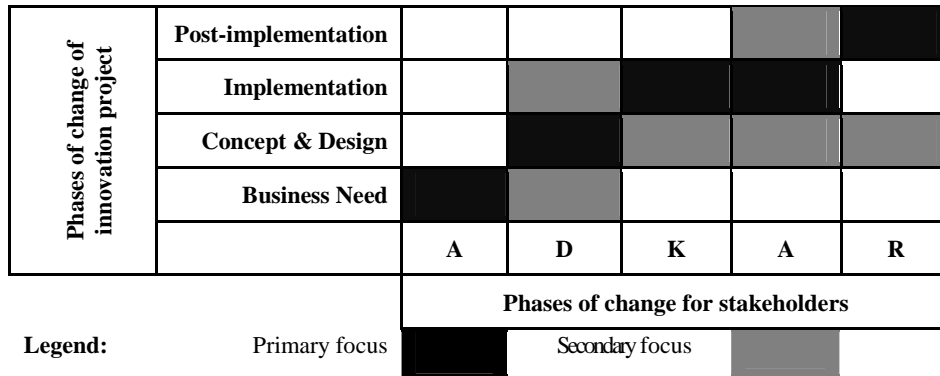
change for stakeholders.

Phases of change of innovation project		A	D	K	A	R
	Post-implementation				Secondary	Primary
	Implementation		Secondary	Primary	Primary	
	Concept & Design		Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
	Business Need	Primary	Secondary			
		A	D	K	A	R
		Phases of change for stakeholders				

Legend: Primary focus ■　　Secondary focus ▨

Fig. 6. Change process

The question of '*who could be involved?*'

The following model highlights the possible involvement of key players within the innovation change management process.
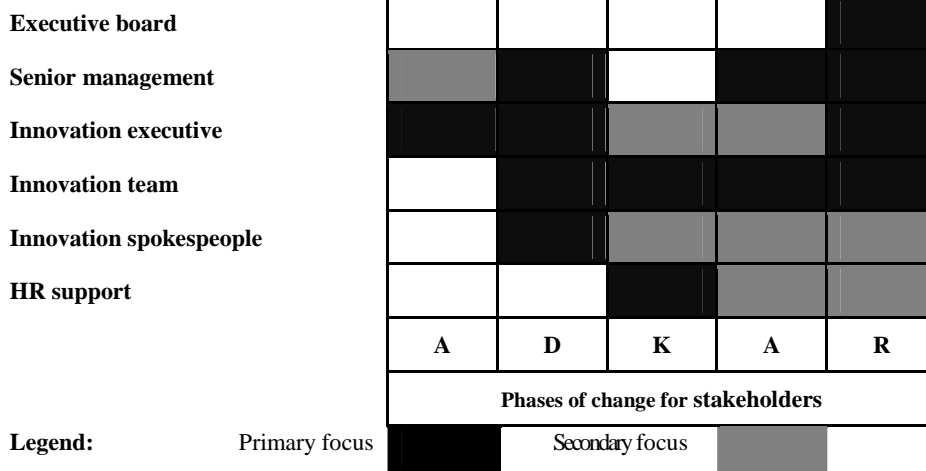
	A	D	K	A	R
Executive board					Primary
Senior management	Secondary	Primary		Primary	Primary
Innovation executive	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Primary
Innovation team		Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Innovation spokespeople		Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
HR support			Primary	Secondary	Secondary
	A	D	K	A	R
	Phases of change for stakeholders				

Legend: Primary focus ■　　Secondary focus ▨

Fig. 7. Key player involvement

Answering the question of '*how might the innovation initiative work in reality?*'

Owing to the need to continually build interest and involvement in the program and the need to seek continual improvement, the phases of the innovation change project need to be continually revisited. This works in a cyclical rotation where the program regularly seeks to move employees through the ADKAR phases of change for employees. This is especially true for those stakeholders new to the organisation.

Today, the "permission to innovate" is well established within *the firm*'s core culture. Nearly all cultural programs activities include some aspect of innovation. The next challenge is to raise the bar. The firm's executive now believes everyone has not just the right, but the "responsibility to innovate." This means that simply conducting "business as usual" is unacceptable. The firm's partners and employees are being

asked to constantly challenge the assumptions behind current offerings and look for un-addressed needs that clients are facing. Their objective is to develop relevant, qualified problems that require innovative solutions. These problems are then presented as challenges to *the firm* as well as to a wider network of innovators, with the ultimate goal of generating ideas that are directly align with *the firm*'s strategic priorities and market needs.

Changing the culture from "right to innovate" to "responsibility to innovate" will require a full ADKAR cycle as well. At the time of writing *the firm* is entering the Desire phase – awareness has been generated through nearly a year of internal campaigns and conversations; now partners need to desire the change. This is being accomplished by setting a central KPI for service lines to generate 30% of their revenue from new or substantially different offerings. This KPI simply cannot be achieved without a sustained commitment to innovation. The revision of the innovation strategy is being structured to ensure that *the firm* will have the knowledge and ability to innovate at the level required to achieve that target. Reinforcement will occur when bonuses and profit shares are tied to performance against the 30% target.
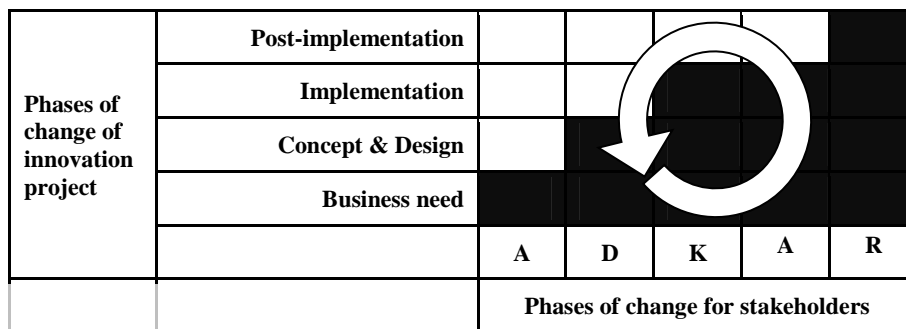
Phases of change of innovation project	Post-implementation					
	Implementation					
	Concept & Design					
	Business need					
		A	D	K	A	R
		Phases of change for stakeholders				

Fig. 8. Continuous innovation program improvement

7   Conclusion

This article considered the question of how large enterprises can address the need for innovative products, services, processes and business models by creating a more innovative organisational environment. The novel contribution of this paper is in the use of the ADKAR change management model in order to establish an innovation program within a large organisation. The ADKAR model allows strategic consideration of not only how an innovation environment can be created in a project sense but also how change can be affected at the stakeholder level with particular regard to marketing and communication elements. Innovation, it is said, occurs at intersections of people, industries, competencies and cultures. This paper sought to intersect a strategic change management model with the introduction of an innovation program within a large organisation. This intersection sought to create a new perspective in the process of innovative change within large organisations.

The paper sought also to highlight practical steps and activities as used by *the firm* in their quest for altering their firm's culture by instituting a firm-wide innovation

program to create a more generic and useable model. In detailing the successful innovation program of this particular firm and the steps taken to ensure key stakeholder acceptance and participation, the reader will receive practical relevant knowledge. It finally sought to provide a framework for the management of the entire process of innovation organisation change.

Managerial and theoretical implications. A *managerial implication* of this paper is that developing the culture of an organisation to be more innovative could benefit from a change management approach. By mapping the development of a successful example, this paper illustrates that understanding the innovation process, in combination with an understanding of change management can result in higher success. The paper also illustrates that multiple levels of the organisation need to be involved in this process to ensure successful transition. Finally, proper communication addressing different topics during the change management process supports the change process. *For theory*, the implications of the paper are that there could be a relationship between change management and innovation development of organisations meaning that change management literature can play an influential role in innovation studies. In this context, the innovation process therefore becomes more prominent in building innovation literature.

Limitations. While this paper provides significant insights into organisational innovation, change and growth, the findings should be considered in the light of two significant limitations. First, it has to be kept in mind that the findings are based on one single case study. Second, a potential author-bias resulting from the authors' (prior) involvement in the organisation has to be acknowledged. Therefore, more rigorous testing is needed to confirm or disconfirm the findings presented (validity and generalisability).

Future research. Further recommendations for future research are as follows: First, future research is needed to determine the transferability of the innovation program shown to SMEs, other industry sectors, or other countries. Second, future research is required in order to investigate whether or not, and if so, how the various internal and external stakeholders have to be approached differently. Lastly, investigating further successful innovation programs and outlining their specific structures, strategies and activities would be of high value for enlarging the knowledge base on how to generate organisational growth through innovation.

Acknowledgements

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