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DOMINANT LOGICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE MODELS AND THEIR PARADOX BLIND SPOTS

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Completing a change program does not establish that new practices endure. An IT team may complete training while retaining workarounds; a delivery dashboard may improve while service reliability deteriorates. These hypothetical examples raise a diagnostic question: which evidence can change the managerial response when an initiative stalls?

This paper proposes a compact typology of nine change logics and their possible blind spots. Its unit is the model-in-use: the explanation, evidence standard, and intervention given priority in a particular initiative. Priority is necessary for action. Exclusivity arises when evidence concerning another necessary demand cannot revise decisions. The proposed contribution is a diagnostic comparison of such exclusions, rather than a ranking of complete models.

The comparison uses selected literature on mobilization, goals, planned change, readiness, alignment, adaptation, technology, culture, and paradox [1, principles 1-12; 2, p. 523; 3, pp. 1-3; 4, p. 72; 5, p. 21; 6, pp. 34-35; 7, p. 404; 8, pp. 16-18; 9, pp. 381-382; 10, p. 2]. The nine categories organize this bounded comparison; they are not an exhaustive classification. Each distinguishes a focal contribution, a proposed sign of exclusive use, and a demand requiring further inquiry. Categories may overlap within one initiative. No systematic review, organizational observations, or independent coding are reported.

A paradox involves demands that are contradictory, interdependent, and persistent [9, p. 382]. A gap between activity and outcome alone does not meet this definition. Table 1 identifies possible blind spots, not verified paradoxes; their status requires contextual evidence.

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Table 1

Selected change logics and diagnostic blind spots

Logic and source	Useful contribution	Possible blind spot under exclusive use
Activity / campaign [5, p. 21]	Mobilization and coordinated action	Completion displaces inquiry into enduring practice
Goal / KPI [4, p. 72]	Explicit performance criteria	Target achievement obscures unmeasured outcomes
Process / governance [5, p. 21; 6, pp. 34-35]	Sequencing and stabilization	Method compliance blocks necessary revision
Readiness / adoption [3, pp. 1-3; 10, p. 2]	Individual capability and collective commitment	Adoption scores obscure substantive objections
Alignment / system fit [2, p. 523]	Relations among organizational components	Coherence is pursued without examining useful differences
Agile / adaptive [1, principles 7, 11-12]	Feedback and local learning	Local gains obscure cross-team dependencies
Technology / capability [7, p. 404]	Attention to tools and their use	Deployment substitutes for changes in work practices
Culture / identity [8, pp. 16-18]	Assumptions and continuity of meaning	Shared language substitutes for enacted change
Paradox [9, pp. 381-382]	Engagement with competing demands	Naming tensions substitutes for accountable decisions

Source: Authors' conceptual interpretation of [1, principles 1-12; 2, p. 523; 3, pp. 1-3; 4, p. 72; 5, p. 21; 6, pp. 34-35; 7, p. 404; 8, pp. 16-18; 9, pp. 381-382; 10, PDF p. 2]; proposed risks of selective use, not demonstrated defects of the cited approaches.

These labels capture selected emphases within broader approaches: Kotter includes vision and cultural anchoring [5, p. 21], while the balanced scorecard combines performance perspectives [4, p. 72]. Agile principles include technical excellence and sustainable work [1, principles 8-9]. Orlikowski explains situated technology use, rather than endorsing deployment-led transformation [7, p. 404]. Weiner addresses collective change efficacy, whereas ADKAR concerns individual change [3, pp. 1-3; 10, p. 2]. The classification concerns what managers privilege in use, not what these sources necessarily omit.

In IT change, local autonomy and cross-team coordination may constitute a persistent tension because delivery depends on both. Resistance to standardization may reveal neglected local requirements, but it may also reflect resource shortages, distrust, or private interests. Neither resistance nor poor performance establishes paradox neglect.

For future inquiry, single-logic exclusivity denotes a decision rule that discounts complementary evidence. Paradox neglect denotes failure to recognize or address a contextually established contradictory, interdependent demand. Measuring both through the same generic "ignoring alternatives" items would make their relationship circular.

Unaddressed interdependent demands may leave practical dependencies unresolved and reduce perceived performance. Managers willing to consider both demands may reopen an exclusive diagnosis before those dependencies are overlooked. These arguments motivate the following untested propositions.

P1. Within initiatives where a paradox has been independently identified, perceived single-logic exclusivity is positively associated with perceived paradox neglect.

P2. Perceived paradox neglect is positively associated with change fatigue, ritual compliance, or declining use of new practices, assessed as separate outcomes.

P3. Paradox neglect statistically mediates a negative association between single-logic exclusivity and perceived change performance.

P4. Managers' willingness to consider both interdependent demands weakens the positive association between single-logic exclusivity and paradox neglect.

P5. Exclusive use of different logics is associated with different outcome profiles; whether any symptom distinguishes a particular logic remains an empirical question.

P1-P4 concern neglected demands, including those overlooked during superficial paradox labeling; reflective discussion without execution is a separate implementation risk. Testing requires a specified initiative, distinct measures, matched levels of analysis, and rival explanations. Cross-sectional mediation cannot establish temporal causality. P5 requires comparative evidence, rather than assigning fatigue or gaming to a logic by definition.

Managers can use the typology to examine which evidence currently changes priorities, resource allocation, or ownership, and which evidence is heard without affecting action. For a technology rollout, this means assessing actual work practices alongside deployment milestones. Where demands conflict, managers must first distinguish a persistent paradox from a solvable implementation problem.

The typology supports inquiry into how exclusive framing can obscure organizational purpose and current or emerging identity. Expert assessment and comparative case analysis can examine whether the proposed exclusions capture distinct managerial problems. Category boundaries, the proposed relationships, and their relevance to sustained adaptation remain untested.

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