Facilitating Organization Change: Lessons from Complexity Science (J-B O-D (Organizational Development))

Edwin E. Olson, Glenda H. Eoyang
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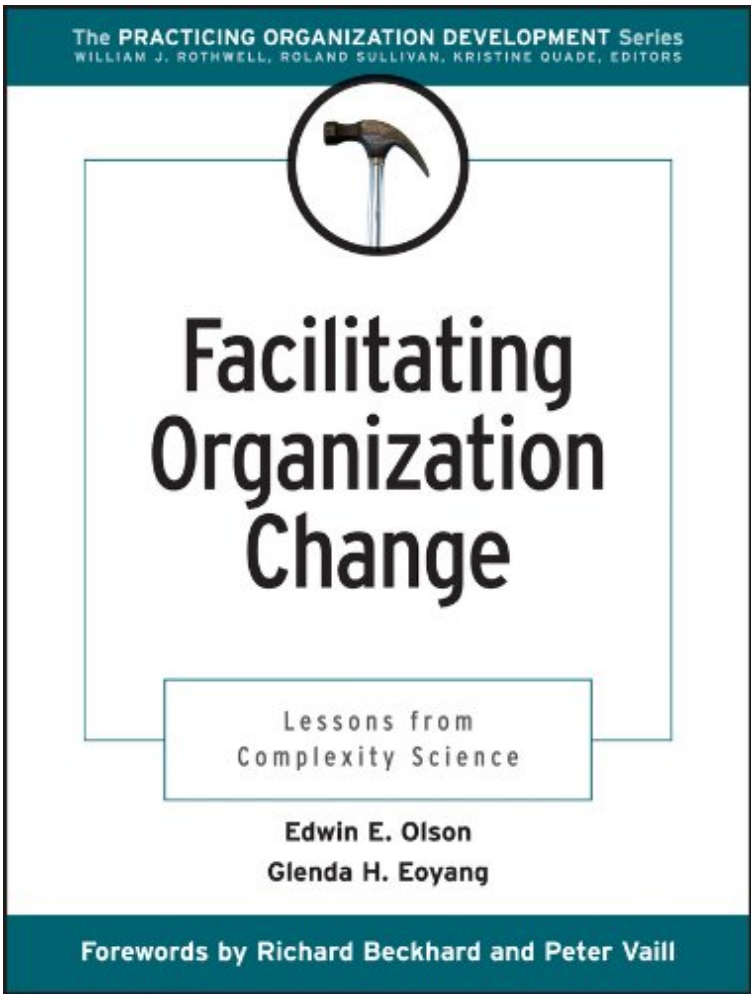

#1015261 in eBooks 2008-03-11 2008-03-11File Name: B00194CLJO | File size: 29.Mb

Edwin E. Olson, Glenda H. Eoyang : Facilitating Organization Change: Lessons from Complexity Science (J-B O-D (Organizational Development)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Facilitating Organization Change: Lessons from Complexity Science (J-B O-D (Organizational Development)):

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A little bit of complexity ChangeBy Rene Gonzalo Rivera MendezThis book explore the ways and difficulties about change organization in a systemic perspective. It's very incisive and gabe some tools and advices too.42 of 43 people found the following review helpful. practical book about promising org. change approachBy Coert VisserThis is an interesting book about an approach to managing and changing organizations, which is quite different from traditional change approaches: complexity theory. You might

think: "Ah, here we go again.... Is this just the next new management hype, destined to be forgotten soon?" I don't think so. I think complexity theory is to be taken a bit more serious than that. What is it? It is a rapidly developing theoretical framework that describes and explains fundamental processes of complex adaptive systems, like organizations. What is a complex adaptive system? The authors of this book, Edwin Olson and Glenda Eoyang, explain that in a complex adaptive system, a multitude of different players (called agents) held together by some cohesive force (called a container) and constantly interacting with each other in all kinds of ways (these interactions are called transforming exchanges).The self-organizing nature of human interactions in a complex organization leads to surprising effects. Small actions, events and interactions can lead to dramatic outcomes affecting the whole system. Human interactions in complex systems lead to so-called emergent properties, which are features of the system that the separate parts do not have. (For example, brain cells don't have consciousness, but the human brain does). All of this explains why it is often impossible to understand let alone predict or control events and developments. This is a rather big departure from the traditional view, which tends to see organizations as understandable, predictable and ... controllable!Then how exactly is the complexity theory approach to change management different from the traditional approach? Ed Olson and Glenda Eoyang summarize the main features of the CAS approach to change as follows: 1) Achieve change through connections between agents (instead of trying to control the change top-down), 2) Adapt to uncertainty (instead of trying to use predictable stages of development), 3) Allow goals, plans, and structures to emerge (instead of depending on clear and detailed plans or goals), 4) Amplify and value difference (instead of always directly focusing on consensus), 5) Create self-similarity (instead of difference between levels), 6) Regard success as a matter of fit with the environment (instead of focusing on one dimensional success measures).It's hard to accurately summarize in a few words what's in this book. So, if you're organizational development consultant, perhaps you'd better read it yourself. What you will find is that the book is a nice mix of theory, case descriptions and practical tools which (some of which are very nice and handy). I think this is the first book that makes complexity theory so practical.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Vice PresidentBy Pen NameVery clear and understandable regarding a complex issue. It helps apply the theory of complexity and chaos to the real world.

Looking for a highly effective alternative to traditional change models? Finally, an alternative to traditional change models-the science of complex adaptive systems (CAS). The authors explain how, rather than focusing on the macro "strategioc" level of the organization system, complexity theory suggests that the most powerful change processes occur at the micro level where relationship, interaction and simple rules shape emerging patterns. * Details how the emerging paradigm of a CAS affects the role of change agents * Tells how you can build the requisite skills to function in a CAS * Provides tips for thriving in that new paradigm "Olson and Eoyang do a superb job of using complexity science to develop numerous methods and tools that practitioners can immediately use to make their organizations more effective." --Kevin Dooley, Professor of Management and Industrial Engineering, Arizona State University

"The authors offer a comprehensive alternative to traditional change models" (Quality Progress, June 2002)