Change Agent Roles Worksheet

In the process of change, people play different roles. For those who are trying to initiate change, being able to anticipate the roles people play helps the process flow more smoothly. This worksheet is designed to help you identify those roles. This is a first step in developing a change strategy.

The table below lists possible roles people might play on the left side. Space is left for you to add roles that you observe. The vertical column has space for you to write the names of people involved in the change process. Mark for each person the roles that might apply to them. The back of the sheet gives definitions for the roles.

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Role Definitions

- 1. **Catalyst**-Those who initiate a change process and help the process to proceed to the desired end.
- 2. **Process Helper-** Those who join in to help other people in the change process communicate with one another.
- 3. **Solution giver** Those who are able to quickly offer creative solutions once they see the problem.
- 4. **Resource Linker-** A person who is aware of resource material-people, books, seminars, training experiences- and is eager to share that knowledge with others.
- 5. **Innovator-** Those who are most likely to adopt a new idea and experiment with it before his/ her colleagues do.
- 6. **Ally-** Those who silently or vocally share the concerns of the change agent. They may form part of the group that initiates change later.
- 7. **Potential Ally** Those who with some effort at recruiting are likely to join with you in initiating change.
- 8. **Compatibility Person-** One who can work with you as a change agent without creating stress or strain.
- 9. **Key Informant-** A person who has access to strategic information and gives it to the change agent in time for him/her to use it advantageously.
- 10. **Maintainer-** Those who are good at sticking with something, applying it systematically and conscientiously, until it works.
- 11. **Formal Leader-** Those who are in the structural chain of command, holding roles that are recognized as decision making roles by the organization.
- 12. **Influential-** Those key persons to whom others turn for new ideas and fresh directions or approval of the same.
- 13. **Gatekeepers-** Individuals who hold key strategic positions with respect to the flow of new ideas and information.
- 14. **Vocalizers** Those who will speak up about their feelings/ ideas concerning the situation. They can be for or against the change.
- 15. **Public Relations Linkers-** A person who has the ability to create or influence the public image of the change situation.
- 16. **Defender or Resister-** Often the critic of innovation. They defend the system the way it is. They may resist change due to vested interest in the system.
- 17. **Faction Leader-**A leader of a group that has a vested interest.

The above definitions are from a handout produced by Dr. Robert Clinton of Fuller Seminary for his class on Implementing Change. The original author was Havelock.