

# MANAGING CHANGE: THE PRIVATE UNIVERSITY SECTOR IN CYPRUS, OPERATIONS WITHIN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT. A CASE STUDY

Simona Mihai YIANNAKI\*

## Abstract

*Our case study attempts to show the manner by which change has been introduced and dealt within the Business School of a private Cypriot University, the European University Cyprus. Then it tries to demonstrate if the success of the change process has its roots in the history of the organization and its representative strategies as per the theoretical framework of the literature review. Out of the main study results it emerges that it is the trust placed on the organization by the management, the staff and the student body that can bring high standards of education to the change process along with the acceptance for process and embedded innovation. At the other end, there are still strong drawbacks that hinder change management to its full positive results. These reside mostly in the inequalities, the social contract issues and keeping promises.*

**Keywords:** *Change Management, Business Administration, Higher Education, Case Study*

## Introduction

Organizations worldwide are confronting with more turbulent, more demanding times and shareholders, less time to act and more astute “customers”, hence many are restructuring their business to meet at least these challenges. The only question mark is on how much time and change dependent are such requirements and which is the sustainable effect foreseen on the education industry as a whole.

Sustainable growth in private business has always relied on the restructuring of the business strategies utilized and on the recovery of the investment and consumption markets. As this latest crisis was an over-consumption- overspending- overleveraging related one, the way to tackle such sustainable growth requires focused socio-economic and financial skills, but in essence, the long term indirect engine is the continuous adaptation to change in all sectors of the economy and now more than ever, in the education system reformation.

In this perspective, the private Universities sector in Cyprus is now operating within a very competitive and highly regulated European environment. The existing private Universities have acted under a much simpler college type organizational structure and have had to face the inevitable changes brought about by a new economic environment. The fact that since 2004 Cyprus has become a member of the European Union has changed the general setup of the problem, since nowadays more than 53% of students study in the EU. (Cyprus in the EU Scale, 2008.)

Within this general context, private Universities had to develop and adapt to the new demanding regulations that govern the operations of a university teaching and research type

---

\* Assistant, Ph. D., MBA, Programme Coordinator for Banking and Finance, Department of Accounting, Economics and Finance, European University Cyprus [www.euc.ac.cy](http://www.euc.ac.cy) (e-mail: [S.Mihai@euc.ac.cy](mailto:S.Mihai@euc.ac.cy)).

institution and continue to be self reliant and economically viable. At the same time, change was inevitable, while circumstances continue to produce new challenges.

In the our case study of the oldest private Universities in Cyprus, the European University Cyprus (EUC) the human resources seem to have been re-developed, sound personnel policies adopted, proper manpower planning implemented and assessment and a conscious policy revised to improve work and management at all levels. These have been important factors that have contributed to its success story. However, the effects of change are still affecting everyone in their daily activities. Therefore proper change management skills are imperative, if all mismanaged it could have disastrous effects. Also, since change becomes pertaining, managers in this industry need to strive to find new ways to understand it and act in an optimum way.

Our case study attempts to show the manner by which change has been introduced and dealt with and then to demonstrate that the success of the change process has its roots in the history of the organization and its manpower. It is the trust placed on the organization by the management, the staff and the student body that can bring high standards of education to the change process.

The paper is drawn under a case study and event study methodology combined with exploratory research since the moment of the accreditation of EUC in 2008 till 2011. We plan through this study to capture and integrate people's perceptions, behaviour, cognition or knowledge and creative ideas in the way they have faced change in their environment and then propose a pattern for dealing with concrete change management problems and actions to prevent potential activity disruptions.

Altogether, our study also tries to collect and present information related to the way EUC has dealt so far with current change management issues, especially value changes at its strategic level. Additionally, the study wants to raise the need to know how to handle appropriate ways of correct and wrong application of change management in the industry.

Last but not least, the study aims at redesigning a conceptual framework encompassing strategic and practical aspects emerged from the data analysis that can help managers of other European Private Universities deal in a better and sustainable way with such phenomena.

### **1. Literature review and the research theoretical framework- responding to the power of change**

Be it a large or small organization of any particular industry, the first thing one must understand about dealing with change is that it is a continuous process rather than a status quo. Change implementation difficulty relates mostly its communicating vessels effect. Blaise Pascal proved in the seventeenth century that the pressure exerted on a molecule of a liquid is transmitted in full and with the same intensity in all directions. Meaning, if you change something in one area, it affects other areas triggering thus changes in those areas too. This is to say that change is a continuous process, mostly cyclical ( Lawrence *et al.*, 2006), that needs adjustment at any of its phases and various types of leadership control, strategies and behaviour.

Also, no matter the organization, change may be applied at different levels, which have different power to force change themselves. These levels are considered in our research to include the most important 4P's:

1. The people at work, first, as they are the main trigger for change due to their changing nature, second due to their active role in implementing. Changing people offers the least amount of change leverage, due to its actual "impossible task" character to be achieved in a certain timeframe. Bureaucratic systems are designed to work in the way they do, not

considering who does the job. One needs to change the culture of those people, but this is a long, slow process that seldom pulls change back through the system.

2. The *processes of work* determines how work is performed. Changing work processes is important, but it won't force change anywhere else-in fact, it is hard to change work processes without changing the organizational structure and administrative systems of an institution.

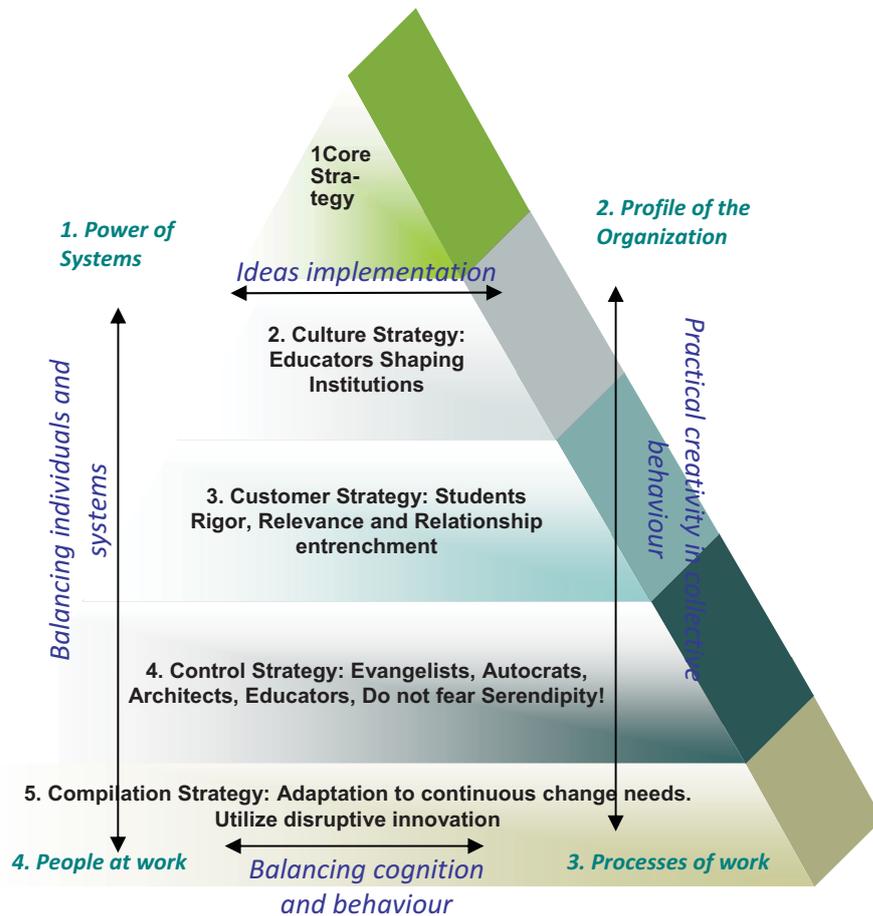
3. The *power of system* within which the organization functions, including the support system or the administrative one. If you change the education system, you can force change in every institution within it. Systems control their organizations through their administrative systems-budgeting, personnel, procurement, accounting, auditing and the like. Hence changing these administrative systems also creates remarkable leverage.

4. The *profile of the organization* level. Learning organizations have been described in reverential terms like employees' paradises, good management practices, socialistic models and workplace democracies etc These organizations provide working environments where the employees and management together reflect on all decisions, resolve all differences, if any, through mutual dialogue, and open communication systems resulting in high levels of *trust, co-operation and commitment* on the part of the employees which enables generation of learning. (Akella, 2008). Universities are close to be this type of organization that is however still constrained by the system's rules and incentives, as well as its administrative systems. One can change much within an organization, mostly if one can put up some flexibility from the administrative systems. But, clearly one has little influence to force change in all Schools within the University, due to the diverse panoply of needs.

Either public or private education institutions, due to their publicly originated system in certain countries, have some basic building blocks of organizational structure. This structure must relocate itself from a bureaucratic to a more entrepreneurial model. Such a model would include five basic strategies that have power over change implementation. We have named them as the "five C's":

1. The Core Strategy. Creating clarity of purpose for University reform.
2. The Culture Strategy. Changing employees' habits, modus operandi, hearts and minds.
3. The Customer Strategy. Making Universities accountable to their customers.
4. The Control Strategy. Pushing control down from the top and out from the center. Do not fear serendipity though.
5. The Compilation Strategy. Creating a set of actions for performance measurement and responsibilities.

Fig. 1. The Research Theoretical Framework (Source: Authors' research)



Our theoretical framework creates under a 5Cs format of strategies, a pyramidal non-vertical relationship concept that is supported by the interactions among the 4Ps presented above. In our framework, the bond between the 5Cs and the 4Ps resides in:

- Ideas implementation, (when it comes to implementing the system's requirements into the profile of the organization)
- Practical creativity in collective behaviour is necessary both ways when designing the University profile to match the underlying processes of work, as well as restructuring these processes in order to redefine a new organizational image.

- Balancing cognition and behaviour at both individual and group level is know-how and skills related double way of accommodating people in the new processes of work, as well as tailoring such processes for the people's needs.
- Balancing individuals and systems (when trying to fit systems in for people and when accommodating people's need into the system).

To be strategic in restructuring such institutions one must get leverage as high in the system as possible and one must change as many of the fundamental construction blocks (the 5C's) as possible.

By creating a clear purpose and decentralizing power are major changes, for example-but without compilation for performance they are barely sufficient. If the five 5C's represent the central levers for restructuring, then how do they work?

### 1.1 The Core Strategy

The core strategy focuses on steering, not rowing-making policy and setting direction rather than producing services. It involves three basic approaches.

*The first* is removing what does not add to the purpose of the University-by abandoning it. This move offers to the decision makers the clarity of purpose they need to manage effectively.

*A second* approach is uncoupling steering from rowing and compliance from service functions. Separating these roles into distinct organizational units with separate missions can enhance the quality and effectiveness of both steering and rowing. The British and New Zealanders, which are relatively far from the Cypriot education system, have done this systematically, at both the national and local levels. It has helped these two countries achieve enormous improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of their educational systems.

*A third* core approach is to clarify the aim by creating new steering mechanisms. This is a specific move in the American educational system. In Cyprus, steering functions tend to be concentrated in the hands of a few people rather than in elective bodies. But elected bodies like the Academic Senate, the Board of Directors, have great difficulty thinking and acting strategically.

There are, however, ways to get around this. When adopting long-term outcome goals of the University, then these are translated into medium- and short-term outcome goals, which then translates into output targets for other Schools and departments. EUC has created a highly visible body representative of stakeholder groups in the community, under the new EUC brand name. It has set long-term goals, which may act as benchmarks, and it measures progress and reports to the all stakeholders including to the community.

While all educators must play key roles in changing mentalities, the burden is even greater for those in leadership positions. Leaders must respond to change appropriately and show others the way. They must take University staff on challenging journeys that the staff often would not take on their own by creating room for creativity and innovation and releasing any other constraints in their activities.

By nature, researching and teaching is a creative work and a liberal individualistic one. Those who try imposing systems in this industry will not perform well at all. Besides, people like to feel comfortable and do not want to disturb authorities for the sake of being themselves protected. In such case, no development is possible.

### 1.2. The Culture Strategy

teaching staff from the field from various organizations that used to be exposed to high pace of change, it proves more effective and less time consuming rather than doing it otherwise.

In most public or highly stratified organizations, accountability flows up the chain of command. This strategy is the weakest of the five C's in terms of implementation and transparency. However, it is a key component of the pyramid that must be fine tuned when implementing change. The other C's will coerce changes in the culture-but they will not always create exactly the culture reformers want. At some point in the change process, all successful implementers discover that they must deliberately work to change their employees' habits, *modus operandi*, hearts, and minds.

One approach that creates the most leverage is to change what people do. If one creates new experiences and new behaviour, new thinking will come in. Available tools include interactive strategic planning, job and role rotation, internships and externships, cross-walking and cross-talking (e.g., interdepartmental or inter-schools task forces), and contests.

Dealing with people's emotions has leverage because emotions are far more powerful than ideas. You can do this by celebrating successes in outcomes, processes and initiatives and honoring failures; creating new symbols; setting up new rituals; team building; and investing in your employees and their physical and virtual work space.

The final approach to working the culture lever is what we call "charming minds".

Some leaders develop new mental models by involving their staff in the creation of mission statements, in the vision processes, and in articulating their beliefs, values, and assumptions. Others use systems models to create familiar understanding of the way things work and how changes will be successful.

Frequent barriers with these strategic levers are related to:

- elected authorities/managers who play politics when leadership is needed;
- resources that are stuck in narrow line items;
- staff rules that eliminate the flexibility employees need to produce changes;
- unions that see their role not as asserting employee's welfare and principles, but as maximizing their connections;
- the intricate array of stakeholders in the existing system.

For sure, there are ways around these various barriers to better serve stakeholders' needs, but they are not easy, they need to be "worked-out."

### 1.3 The Customer Strategy

The first best way to change private higher education institutions is to make it accountable to its customers. In terms of customers we have considered students, academic and administrative staff.

When we talk about "customer needs" and stakeholders in education, we come across a lack of consensus for the student as customer concept (see Eagle and Brennan, 2007 vs. Svensson and Wook, 2007). Trying to advance our theoretical framework, we utilize concepts from relational theories, acknowledging that higher education is largely a private good and this essentially "makes the student the customer in the higher education process" (Eagle and Brennan, 2007, p.48).

Related to the internal customers, the academic staff, several countries in the EU including Sweden, Australia and the UK have gone as far as considering compulsory teacher training for lecturers. Some countries, (eg Norway), are currently implementing such a policy. We are not suggesting a similar policy but the acknowledgement that, if you 'train higher education teachers to teach, they will do a better job than untrained ones' (Trowler and Bamber, 2005: 80). Also if you train key leaders in change management and use The most prevailing way to achieve goals that are important to the customer is by creating customer choice. If customers can choose the service providers they prefer-the flow of money follows their choices-then the institution that serves them must be accountable for satisfying their needs.

The second approach is quality assurance. One can set "customer" service standards and require Universities to meet them or offer their customers some form of redress.

However, in order to use the customer strategy, one has to listen to the both internal and external customers, using surveys, focus groups, interviews, rating systems, complaint tracking systems, etc. Although necessary, this is not sufficient to enforce change. The University management may find out what the customer wants, but it may not be willing to go through the pain of the changes required to carry it through for the sake of "push" rather than "pull" and avoiding serendipity (Hagel *et al.*, 2010).

In terms of the change application for Universities at their most "visible customer" level (i.e. the student) the Rigor/Relevance Framework further presented in Fig. 2.below (Jones, 2008) may prove an interesting view point knowledge-related. It uses four quadrants that represent levels of learning.

On the Knowledge axis, the framework defines low rigor as Quadrants A and B and high rigor as Quadrants C and D. On the Knowledge axis, Quadrant A represents a basic understanding of knowledge per se. Quadrant A is named "Acquisition" because students gather and store parts of knowledge and information.

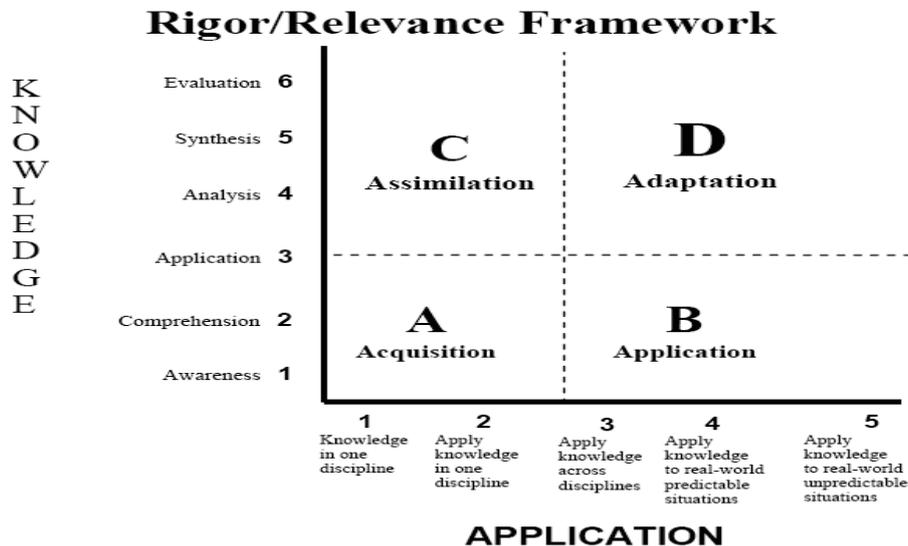
Quadrant C, "Assimilation," represents more difficult thinking, yet still knowledge for its own sake. In Quadrant C, students extend and refine their acquired knowledge to be able to use it automatically and routinely to analyze and solve problems and to create unique solutions.

Quadrants B and D represent actions or high degrees of application. In Quadrant B, "Application," students use asked to solve problems, find solutions, and finalize work.

In Quadrant D, "Adaptation," students have the competence to think in complex ways as they apply knowledge and skills they have acquired to new and unpredictable situations. Students create solutions and take actions that further develop their skills and knowledge.

Knowing that students need a rigorous and relevant curriculum taught in a climate of positive relationships is an important step in school reform (Jones, 2008, pp 7), while the same way of thinking can be applied to other "customers "of the University.

Fig. 2. Rigor/ Relevance framework Source (Jones, 2008, pp 5)



However, Jones (2008) matrix misses a control unit and measure and constant rethinking of the necessary double loops and feedback types necessary in learning and managing the process of learning and change, issues that we further discuss.

#### 1.4 The Control Strategy

The control strategy pushes considerable decision-making power down through the hierarchy and at times out to the community. It transfers the form of control from detailed rules and hierarchical instructions to shared missions and systems that generate accountability for performance. But what is performance for Universities: knowledge towards students, developing life-long learning skills, creating employability, generating academic knowledge, developing a great name worldwide, increasing shareholder's value no matter what?

We have suggested three approaches in tackling this strategy:

- Organizational empowerment moves control down to organizations by loosening the grip of the central administrative structures, such as budget, personnel and procurement systems that are run under equalitarian terms.
- Organizations then use employee empowerment to push decision-making authority down to those with front-line knowledge. Finally, some re-inventers use a third approach, called community empowerment.
- They shift control from the University towards the community, empowering community members and other organizations to solve their own problems and take responsibility of their actions.

In terms of control tools, Private University managers and academia are open relatively reluctant in using the Internet, in the sense of not letting it change exclusive knowledge management practices.

Implementation of Internet had been adjusted to acceptance of intranet and fostering communication among personnel for academic, managerial and supporting roles. It wants to exploit the advantages of online communication without letting such communication challenge its expertise model. But one cannot have it both ways. One cannot participate in a medium fundamentally developed around the concept of ingenuousness if one insists on a closed model of know-how and knowledge control, such as the above mentioned frame: the intranet.

In terms of managerial control over the teachers Unions and vice versa, one cannot act towards major changes unless it offers that “little something” gradually. Teachers’ Union negotiations with the management should not be “over the bush”, but transparent and with advancements based on concrete propositions and adjusted upon European benchmarks and accomplishments. In this respect, control pressure from the Union should be made from a third party/ consultant involved both in the negotiations process as well in drafting terms and conditions. The Union is always a tool for auditing and maintaining University regulations and system of work down to people.

### **1.5 The Compilation Strategy**

Creating a compilation of strategies and using consequences for performance is probably the most powerful lever in the reformation tool kit.

There are three approaches to working this lever:

- When appropriate, the greatest impact of this strategy can be achieved by using enterprise management: putting the University in a competitive market, making it dependent on its “customers” for its revenue, and letting it sink or swim based on how well it serves its customers. There is nothing like competition to force rapid change. This approach is only appropriate for services that should be paid for directly by their customers, but not for the academic and research work, where competition should come in terms of services and stimuli offered to “internal customers”.
  
- A second approach is called controlled competition. If you cannot put the University in a market you can often create competition through competitive contracting, by using "market testing" approach. As a paradox though, when a British University introduced a certain innovative programme, another American University won the funds in their own country on the same idea. The same thing can happen internally in Cyprus, when private universities compete in coping each others programmes instead of being innovative, searching for blended learning techniques, become innovative and focused on developing student’s creativity (MihaiYiannaki and Savvides, 2010) and diversity both in curricula development and in course delivery. Eventually, utilize disruptive innovation, a term of art coined by Clayton Christensen (2010), that can be introduced as a process whereby simple application of creativity related programs and change management for the bottom of a market can then relentlessly moves ‘up market’, eventually displacing established competitors.
  
- The third approach is performance management. If you cannot use competition, you can measure results and create incentives or rewards for those who accomplish them. You can use tools such as performance awards, performance pay, performance-based budgets, and gain-sharing to create incentives for high performance at both students and staff members’ levels.

## 2. Research methodology

The qualitative approach has been chosen by the research team as it provides an inventory of in-depth data with higher information content that cannot always be anticipated at the outset of the research process.

The significance, in particular, of qualitative methodology is also in the fact that it enables a contextual and social placement of gathered information, includes the process, causal and related nature of phenomena, and does not study and acquire, respectively, the data separately from other accompanying phenomena. Similarly, it allows for the acquisition of the so called “concealed” contents, which can easily escape the classical positivistic approach. Finally quantitative research often restricts experiences that are so crucial to ‘attitudes/opinions’ which is the focus of this research.

As the moderator can challenge and probe for the most truthful responses, supporters claim, qualitative research can yield a more in-depth analysis than that produced by formal quantitative methods.’ (Mariampolski, 1984).

These interviews contain standardized instruments that emerge from the literature review and the research theoretical framework grouped primarily on the categories of 5Cs;s and 4Ps.

Also the purpose of the interviews was to discuss the importance of enhancing change adaptation, change behaviour, response to change and acceptance of change within the University/Business School. Upon the obtained results, the paper has identified the main barriers and constraints related to change introduction in the Business School as well as has improved the research framework.

The main data collection instrument, the semi-structured interview was initiated with 4 of the members of the University and Business School authorities, managers and chair persons. Analysis has been conducted in the spirit of the Miles and Huberman’s (1994) approach, manually and mechanically. The manual part has included traditional analytical methods such as introducing marginal remarks and memos within the transcripts and then producing a one-page summary with key points for each semi structured-interview. At this stage, analysis was conducted in search of relationships and patterns.

Coding, for both instruments, was a combination of pre-coding and open coding. The pre-assigned codes were derived from the literature and the study’s objectives. Open coding was carried out during analysis, both at the manual and mechanical level.

Following the culmination of the above procedures, the research team was able to describe the current situation and isolate the knowledge, training, coaching and attitude deficiencies which needed to be addressed and included within change management recommendations part. However the results of the project provide an excellent opportunity for the future expansion of the topic idea at European and International level.

### 2.1 Research Results Interpretation

Table 1. The Pathologies of Changes and EUC management response:

Organisational Imbalance	Change Pathology	Management responses
Over-reliance on individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too many evangelistic and autocrats</li> <li>• few architects and educators</li> </ul>	Creativity without learning	-No creative culture implemented, nor efforts in this way undergone till the settlement of change.

Over-reliance on systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too many architects and educators</li> <li>• few evangelistic and autocrats</li> </ul>	Institutionalisation without creativity	-Overreliance on MIS, without understanding its role in the general strategy, fear of regulators, but positive feedback from them.
Over-reliance on thinking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too many evangelistic and educators</li> <li>• few autocrats and architects</li> </ul>	Ideas without implementation	-No initiative follow up, despite medium to high level of novelty acceptance, advertising is seen in a heterogeneous way.
Over-reliance on doing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too many architects and autocrats</li> <li>• few evangelists and educators</li> </ul>	Change without strategy	-Strong focus on customer strategy without innovation, but based on diversification, which may lead to control, quality and time management issues.

Source: (Lawrence *et al.*, 2006, pp.65, and research results)

Table 2. The Research Framework synthetic results

Strategy Analysis	Research Results
1. The Core Strategy. Creating clarity of purpose for University reform.	Clarity recognized at managerial level in both form and content, but the strategy of change is very diversely seen.
1. The Culture Strategy. Changing employees' habits, modus operandi, hearts and minds.	Culture is not identifiable yet at managerial level. Initial stage of shaping organizational culture due to lack of specialized continuous training and human resources allocation. All is based on trust and on existing people's capabilities.
2. The Customer Strategy. Making Universities accountable to their customers.	Very diverse opinions on customer strategy, approach and education, as well as regarding supporting issues and processes.
3. The Control Strategy. Pushing control down from the top and out from the center. Do not fear serendipity though.	Very tall organization, with limited power of action at bottom level, lacking serendipity support and liberty of action regarding investments in people, systems and processes.
4. The Compilation Strategy. Creating a set of actions for performance measurement and responsibilities.	Balanced compilation strategy, yet with missing parts affecting the overall change results, especially linked to management of resource allocation and lack of HRM transparent policies.

Source: Respondent's results based on author's semi structured interview as in Appendix 2.

### 3. Emerging recommendations for how to change in business schools

The following eight components have been identified to identify the more specific actions that schools must take to achieve rigor, relevance, and relationships. These eight are not sequential, but all must be addressed if schools are to prepare students adequately for their future. The aspects of the living system model should be reflected through each of these components.

1. Be guided by a Common Vision and Goals through the Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships framework. Everyone must be committed to shared goals to measure success, and personnel must have the same viewpoint as to what is the main goal of the University.

2. Be ready to avoid the pathologies of change in the University, by knowing well its imbalance, where is the vision and mission and the next following steps.

3. Give power to Leadership Teams to Take Action and Innovate. Leadership does not reside in a single position, but reflects the aptitudes and attitudes of all personnel, as role models, who take action and improve through effective learning communities.

4. Notify decisions through MIS and budgetary liberty. The entire University reform is a continuous process guided by a well-developed data structure based on several measures of student learning. There is a need for quality data to make fast decisions about curriculum, instruction materials and methods as well as assessment. But, there is a need for separation of budgetary issues for better providing incentives to staff development, trust, commitment and bonding.

5. Adopt effective Instructional Practices for lifelong learning. More than excellent marks, successful instructional practices include having a broad range of strategies and tools to meet the needs of diverse learners in all disciplines and grade levels.

6. Make Clear Student Learning Expectations, letting though in innovation and creativity. When clarity takes place in explaining students what they are expected to learn, they meet with success in improving student realization, but also if creative incentives and modus operandi are enforced.

7. Address Managerial Structures and Processes. Managerial structure should be determined by instructional needs. Only after a comprehensive review of instructional practices should schools begin to address managerial issues such as school schedules, use of time, unique learning opportunities, school calendars etc.

8. Monitor Progress/Improve Support Systems. Highly successful programs recognize the need to monitor student progress on a regular basis. Successful higher education institutions use formative assessments in an organized, deliberate, and ongoing way to monitor student advancement. More, they use this data immediately to adjust instructional methods and adapt to meet student needs.

9. Redefine and reinvent process on an ongoing basis and assure quality without copying models, but basing them on ethical standards and organizational culture. High-performing schools realize that success is a continuing and ever-changing course of action. This step in the process, in fact, should refresh the process and cause University/ Business School leaders to consider new challenges and search potential solutions and successful practices internationally, find benchmarks and assure quality.

### **3.1 Deliverables from managing change in our research and case study**

The following three form the core still pending deliverables of our managing change framework at Universities/ Business School level:

- (1). Aim for rigor, relevance, and relationships, inspiring trust,
- (2) Begin with the end in mind, and look at the open non-vertical pyramidal cluster of strategies, allowing open innovation and creativity in process, content and form.
- (3) Consider Universities an organism that links the above strategies with the 4Ps through its 4 borders.

### **Conclusions**

This research has produced a theoretical framework backed by a case study where change management was interpreted in terms of semi-structured interviews and event methodology results for the European University Cyprus for the period of 2008-2011. We can conclude that this framework proves to be valid in the conditions and that a series of 10 principles result as conclusions to our research study.

These principles give improved detail to the practices that one needs to focus on when implementing certain changes at in higher education institutions:

1. Decide with data, not intuitions. True data-driven achievement involves much more than simply reacting to “low-test” scores. The choice of what and how much to change must be based on data that shows what the world beyond the Business School expects graduates to know and be able to do, but also what is ethical to know and do.

2. Enlist passionate people who glimpse opportunities. Leadership is one of the keys to success. That leadership is started and designed by a main leader, but is not restricted to a single individual. Successful Universities thrive with models of team and shared leadership.

3. Develop staff through professional and personal learning, training in managing change, and conflict. A staff team that functions as a professional learning community comes together for learning within a supportive community. At the same time conflict, which in times of change is inherent, should not be a threat to cooperation, nor needed to be resolved rapidly and permanently (Huczynski and Buchanan, 2001), but rather in a correct and just manner.

4. Inspire innovative instruction and engagement. Just as standards and tests do not constitute a curriculum, high-performing Business Schools recognize that curriculum is not instruction. The idea is to play the game on the uniqueness of each student and become a student centered organization. Prioritize the curriculum, as less is more. Teachers need to engage in a clear way to help differentiate among curriculum topics that are essential for all students and those that are only nice to know.

5. Make good use with the community to form true partnerships based on keeping the promise and thus enhancing trust. Community and business partners bring many benefits to a University and especially to Business Schools in terms of learning, teaching, sharing, financial support and not least employability.

6. Hold teams accountable for learning results. Good leaders not only set powerful visions and high expectations, but also follow up to make sure staff implement approved practices.

7. Know your “customers”, know your strengths. Business Schools need to find ways to customize instruction by fully understanding the culture, prior experiences, learning styles, backgrounds, and interests of its all “customers”. At the same time they have to offer various success paths without distorting the most performing ones who are already implemented and have proven unbeaten. Rather than holding instructional approaches constant and putting up with different results in student accomplishment, multiple pathways create different alternatives for students to acquire the same learning.

8. Measure learning by know-how. Many Business Schools need to reexamine grading policies both at the school and classroom levels to ensure that student achievement measurement results in students being graded on proficiency rather than seat time.

9. Compel to high expectations. Business Schools that establish high expectations for all students and provide the support necessary to achieve these expectations have high rates of academic success. High expectations have to be a way of life and drive daily behaviors and actions.

10. Foster positive relationships to close the loop rigor/ relevance/ relationship. Strong relationships based on trust and commitments are decisive in students carrying out thorough work. Students are more likely to make a personal vow to engage in rigorous learning when they know teachers, parents, and other students actually care about how well they do.

## References

- Akela, D, Learning Organizations. *Global Business Review* 8, No. 1, . (2007):13-28.
- Cyprus in the EU Scale *Statistical Service of Cyprus*, November ( 2008), [http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/FDFB10D5496A1686C225723700362C99/\\$file/CYPRUS\\_IN\\_THE\\_EU\\_SCALE\\_2008.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/FDFB10D5496A1686C225723700362C99/$file/CYPRUS_IN_THE_EU_SCALE_2008.pdf?OpenElement) ( accessed January 29th, 2010)
- Christensen, Clayton. *Disruptive Innovation* [http://www.claytonchristensen.com/disruptive\\_innovation.html](http://www.claytonchristensen.com/disruptive_innovation.html) (2011)
- Garcia A., Sternberg P. *Sociodrama: Who is in your Shoes?*( Praeger Publishers 2000),
- Hagel J., Brown J.S., Davidson L., *The Power of Pull: How Small Moves, Smartly Made, Can Set Big Things in Motion.*Publisher: ReadHowYouWant, July 2010.
- Huczynski, A., Buchanan, D. *Organizational Behavior: An introductory Text.* Financial Times ( Prentice Hall.2001)
- Johnson Mark W., Christensen Clayton M., Kagermann Henning. *Reinventing Your Business Model.* *Harvard Business Review*, Dec 01, 2008.
- Johnson, R. & Johnson, D. An Overview of Cooperative Learning. In R. Villa & A. Nevin (Eds.) *Creativity and Collaborative Learning: A Practical Guide to Empowering Students and Teachers.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing, 1994.
- Jones, R.D. *The Process of Change —Why Change, What to Do, and How to Do It*, from Chapter 3 of *Leading Change in High Schools*, International Center for Leadership in Education(2008), <http://www.leadered.com/pdf/Process%20of%20change%20white%20paper.pdf> (accessed on January 10, 2010)

- Knowles, M. *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species* (3rd ed.). (Houston: Gulf 1984),.
- Lawrence, T.B., Dyck, B., Maitlis, S. and Mauws, M. The Underlying Structure of Continuous Change, *The MIT Sloan Management Review*, Vol 47.No. 4. Summer 2006. [http://www1.sauder.ubc.ca/Faculty/People/Faculty\\_Members/Maitlis\\_Sally/~media/Files/Faculty%20Research/Publications/Maitlis-Paper-StructureContinuous.aspx](http://www1.sauder.ubc.ca/Faculty/People/Faculty_Members/Maitlis_Sally/~media/Files/Faculty%20Research/Publications/Maitlis-Paper-StructureContinuous.aspx) (accessed 8 January 2010)
- Mariampolski, H. The resurgence of qualitative research. *Public Relations Journal*, 40(7), (1984):21-23.
- Mihai-Yiannaki, S and Savvides,S. Creativity in business schools-post financial crisis implications. *3<sup>rd</sup> EMRBI Conference*, Nicosia 4-5 November 2010. Forthcoming in the *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, Emerald.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M.. *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: (Sage 1994).
- Morgan, G. *Images of Organizations*. (Sage Publications. 1997), Inc. Osborn A. *L'imagination constructive: „Principes et processus de la pensée et du Brainstorming“*, Paris, (Dunod 1971),1 – 357;

#### APPENDIX 1. RESEARCH SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW BASE

The Interview questions are valid for the period 2008 to 2010.

The questions “how much” have been scaled from 1 to 5. (Where: 1. is very little, 2. little, 3. some, 4. significant and 5. very much.)

1. What is your opinion about change at University level in general?
2. How much has the education environment changed for the past two years?
3. Which are the areas of change needed in the University? (Name at least 3 areas).
4. Where do you see your University coping best with change?
5. What are the most difficult tasks in this respect?
6. What are the three things you would change first now?
7. Have you benefit of training in change management?
8. How can the University improve service to its stakeholders?  
A. Students; B. academic staff; C. administrative staff; D. the community
9. How much does money help you in managing change?
10. What financial aids you consider in implementing change?
11. Would a specific strategy that is known to everyone help you in implementing changes? Which is this one?
12. How much uncertainty you think is acceptable when implementing change, if any from a scale of 1 to 5?
13. How much planning do you use when implementing change in general and how much you use for this case?
14. Do you involve your team in implementing change?

- a. Yes, why? To what level/ which areas? And how many of all your team members? Do you allocate extra members for this?
- b. No, why?
15. How much of change do you consider in your core strategy?
16. How much change you allow in controlling the business?
17. How much have you changed in your department/ area?
18. How much budgeting do you do when implementing change?
19. What are three budget items you consider necessary but had not really thought about prior to this year's change and where would you cut this budget for this year?
20. How much you want to change the believes of your personnel? If so how much you think you have changed their believes?
21. How much you want to change the believes of your students? If so how much you think you have changed their believes?
22. How much creativity from your staff do you allow when implementing change?
23. Do you consider change at advertising level and publicity of your University and by which means?
24. Do you consider change in the pricing, what prices would you use for students fees (promotional, skimming, etc)?
25. Do you consider change in the type of customer niche and which would be this one?
26. Do you consider change in the offerings of products? And to what degree of diversification?
27. Do you consider change in the relationship with your partners (business ones) and other organization? How do you think this would this affect your future business?(How do you keep them happy?
28. How much importance you give for free interchange of ideas?
29. How much leadership you think is required in times of change for your University?
30. How much novelty do you think is acceptable for your University?
31. Do you think is good to follow the market or follow your own strategy?
32. Have you reconsidered changing the goals set up two years ago?
33. What are you most important performance indicator for your Institution?
34. The human resources have had to be re-developed, sound personnel policies adopted, proper manpower planning implemented and assessment and a conscious policy adopted to improve management at all levels. How did you achieve this in your area?
35. Regarding research / (your department) area what was the biggest change you (want to be) implemented?
36. Are you satisfied with the achieved change strategies implemented at your University?

APPENDIX 2. RESEARCH SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Question	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4
	change is inevitable, represents a continuous process, we have to learn from it, available to all academics and the society	very important, especially in the light of changes in the EU in higher education of the Bologna process framework.	under the factor of change as a positive promotor regarding the transformation from college to university status there was a need for rapid change.	it is a fulfillment of the strategy of the Ministry of Education of Cyprus, one of the axis of the strategy of Cyprus for education and health for the next 5 years
	very significant in the private university area, less in public ones, in order to conform to legislation, internal procedures	in the private higher education yes a lot, but much in education in general	It has changed subsequently for more than 2 years. It has been expressed in process and procedures to be a university relevant and pertinent to the University status.	The university environment has changed a lot. Level 4 to accommodate students at each stage of the strategy.
	teaching, research, administration, strategic development, change of bureaucratic procedures	quality assurance, development and implementation of international qualifications frameworks with 3 cycles, lifelong learning	overall university culture, autonomy, the research factor	culture of the people and instructors, systems and procedures, infrastructure (MIS)
	teaching, because research is at its early stage and so is administration	quality assurance and ECTS	in research and cooperation with other universities or established academic networks	procedures we start coping with problems at MIS, infrastructure
	assessment, find out new changes in the teaching methods, quality is very difficult to assess, how you assess only students' evaluations, faculty assessment is difficult and is done subjectively by students, peer review being done only during the first year and not later on.	got everyone involved	the adaptation of university culture in both administration and academic personnel	culture is very difficult to change due to resistance to change and systems
	Schedule, too many things to do at the same time for the requirements of others, the system that we have, reducing the teaching load, changing mentalities, which is a long term process	more development of quality assurance, lifelong-learning, social inclusion, social responsibility in the community, capturing older graduate in catching up with their studying	comply with the University Charter, as the operations of schools and departments, mentalities	It is very difficult to change things, try to change the attitude of instructors to see themselves as faculty members for 24 hours in this job, to do continuous research oriented institution and in teaching in class
	Only during my studies it was part of my subjects	Continuously, due to the evolution in various areas in the Higher Education.	yes, when this training is not instrumental oriented services	very difficult to convince and get accepted
	a) reorganising the advising service, hire professional people just for that, b) by not overloading them, c) should reorganise their MIS, d) increasing contacts with them	a. further enhancement of students Centre approach, b. more opportunities for development, c. more opportunities for development, d. give also programmes that serve university employees, private and public, municipalities.	a. by establishing a constant and perpetual feedback process and procedures, B. establish proven respect of academic outcomes, c. by providing regularly training and management and university oriented culture issues, d. Be again in constant and perpetual communication with community, an open locus for discussion and activities, collaborative type of projects that are of paramount importance for the community	a. see students as clients, adapt all services to be student oriented, to care, continuous monitoring and academic feedback of students, b. developing academic staff, give them opportunities to undertake research and more time for doing that, c. training and developing career paths, proper procedures, d. create research centres to solve problems of communities, respond to community needs through expertise and faculty members
	they are rare for private universities, just funds from private enterprises	grants from outside society, state budget, in research and infrastructure	by allocating special budget for managing change oriented culture	money in terms of training and required research, not so important, but needed in bringing MIS, infrastructure supports
	Change has to be small and continuous, because it can upset people, it should be planned and agreed, no change without asking them and complete buy in.	the SMART objectives we develop every year	interactive communication based on reciprocity	should be communicated to everybody. But people have resistance to change and it is set by law anyway and the University Charter
	5, 5	5, 5	5, 5	4, 4
	a. Yes, all over, programmes, courses, ECTS.. It depends on the time, only all or only coordinators, administrative staff also. Yes in some cases.	a. Yes, all areas. No allocation of extra staff.	a. research. It depends on the project. The whole university	a. 4, 5. all, yes people from outside the school
	4	4	3	4
	2	2	4	4
	4	4	3	4
	4	4	3	4
	exceptional items, conferences research, publications. I cut publications off	add more development advantages and introducing new motivation.	very centralised, it cannot work this way	nothing
	4, 2	3, 3	4, 4	5, 2
	4, 2	3, 3	4, 4	2, 2
	3	3	4	5
	essentially it has to increase, improve, consider more possibilities, mainly media and organisation events, conferences organised by the university and abroad.	toward academic nature	yes, this is done through needs and oriented culture advertising	I do not believe in advertising here, only in word of mouth and given results of students and to community
	In new courses, promotional price for new courses makes sense	they are ok	no idea.	no, just promotional pricing for new programmes.
	It is not feasible, the target market is given	give them more attention to some countries that were not before in it is Ok. It is not fully controlled. There are significant changes in the programmes made.	no idea.	yes, professional experience, executives
	3/ new programs, adult learning seminars and professional studies relationships are evolving, intensity networking, studying their needs, satisfy their needs for graduate training and senior staff training.	satisfy their needs as well	accommodate balance I consider the community perceptions towards our university is higher, and we got to serve it, this affects positively and forms of our synergism.	yes, high diversification
	5	5	4	5
	5	5	4	5
	4	4	3	4
	follow the strategies that follows market strategy	follow the market	what is to follow the market. No, we serve community needs not the market	follow the market is the boss
	yes	no, but further enhance them	yes, definitely in order to adjust processes and regulations	yes
	students retention, no of new students	service to the students in their activity and the overall image of the University	service to the community, students ans state of art research	number of students, research of faculty members
	to praise the employees achievements, no material items though	involvement of the people and encouraging initiatives	not applicable	2, did not achieve, just a little
	1. encourage colleagues to carry out research and meeting. 2. provide the time to do that.	get more faculty members involved in the research and teaching. Attracting more grants and financial support for the university	A new research policy that will affect the whole operation of the university and codification of all research performances.	involve faculty members more
	moderately, not fully. It has to be recognised the need for investment, yet the university is not yet ready to invest in research, teaching and MIS	yes, so far so good. Significant level	to an extended part yes	not really, level 2