*Strategic Management*, 9e: Chapter 15 study guide

Checklist: Barriers to implementing strategic change

There are various ways of identifying the main barriers to strategic change in an organisation. There is no single list because the barriers depend on the strategic context. However, here is a possible list of some relevant questions:

Power issues

 Are there particularly powerful interests within the organisation? Are these individuals or networks of people? How do they wield their power? Who are members of such groups?

 Are the interests of any such power groups or individuals aligned with those of the organisation? Are such groups too powerful? What motivates them and what do they want?

 Have there been problems over resource allocation within the organisation? Do some groups or individuals feel that they have not received the right amount of support? Has this led to tensions?

Organisational issues

 Has the purpose of strategic change been carefully and fully explained? Especially the benefits as well as the costs?

 What are the communications channels within the organisation? What are the formal and informal channels of communication? Are they strong or weak and ineffective?

 Have informal as well as formal channels been used? What about internal communications channels like the internet? Company website? Other company methods like emails?

 Do people feel involved with change? Or has it simply been imposed (possibly for good reasons)? What are the implications of the methods used for involvement or lack of it?

Resistance to change

 Has the change been made in line with all statutory and legal frameworks and liabilities? What are the implications of this about further action?

 Has there been open or silent resistance to change? Are people very defensive? Or have they reacted positively?

 Have there been industrial relations issues? What form have these taken and with what degree of resistance?

 Have people welcomed the change? Or simply fallen back into past practice for defensive reasons?

Communications

 How has the change been communicated? Slowly over time or with a short, dramatic announcement? What are the implications of the method used?

 Has there been honest feedback on the change? Or are people so fearful of the change implications that they have hidden their comments?

Learning and innovation

 Are people learning in new ways? Are they coping with the changes? Or simply sticking to what has worked in the past?

 Have people stopped innovating because they fear for their jobs? Is innovation more generally under threat because of uncertainty?