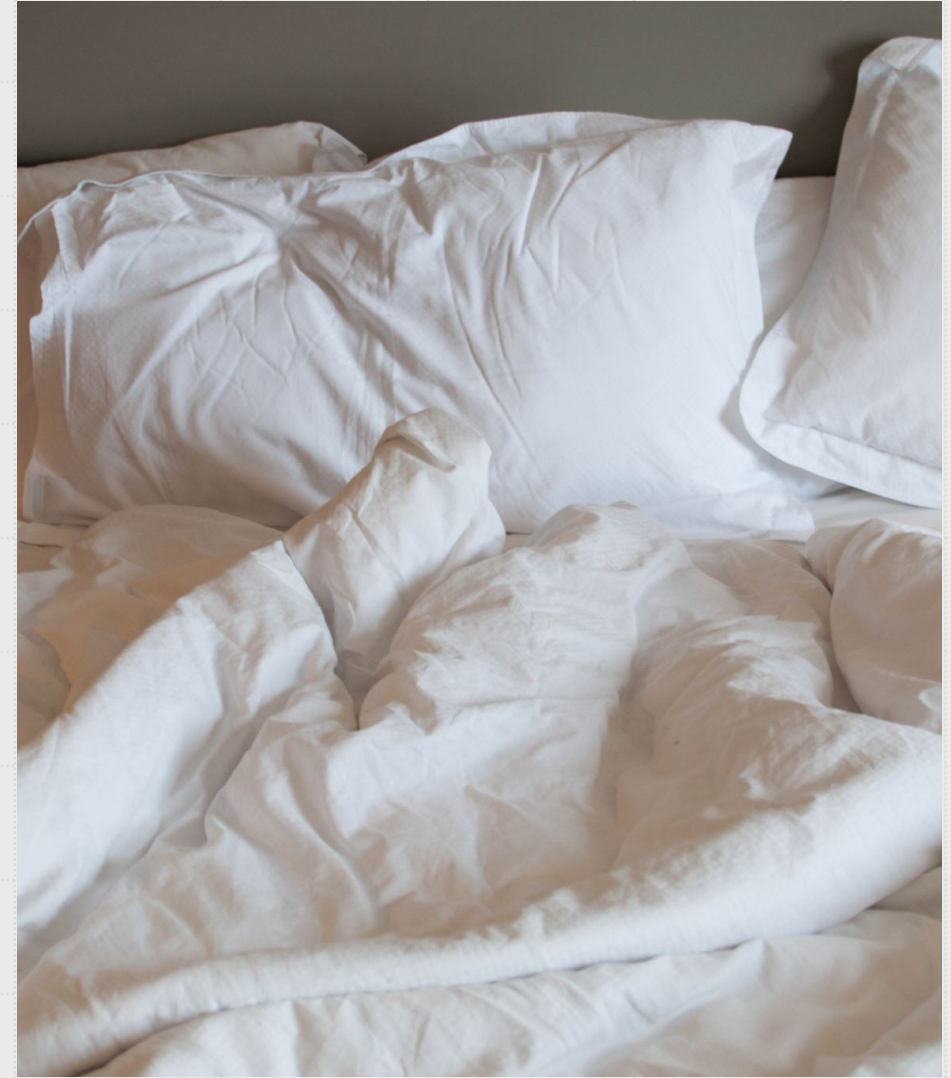


Beyond the Mattress

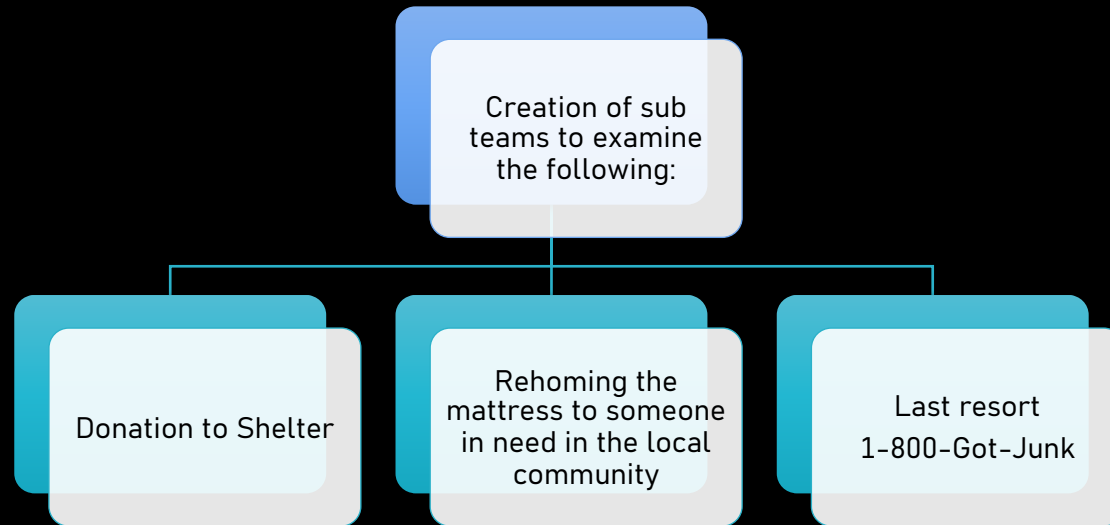
ORGL 620: Leadership Project

Background

- When I participated in founding a mattress company in 2014, we started the company with an eye on the desire to make an impact in our community. Through our 30-night trial, we provided customers the opportunity to give the bed a try. If they were not completely satisfied, then they could return it with no questions asked.
- The challenge with the returns were what to do with the mattresses upon the return. While many of these gently used mattresses were still in great condition, state laws would prohibit the donation of a mattress.
- The challenge fell directly upon me as I had leadership oversight of our customer service team to handle what to do with the mattress upon return
- Through cross-functional collaboration we worked together to bring process solutions to challenge.
- The leading of this project helped me imagine during my Organizational Leadership studies, how I could execute a broader program to bring to rural communities



Action through Collaboration



Methodologies Used

Systems Thinking

- Formulating the Challenge
- Identifying the Variables
- Drawing Consumer Behaviors

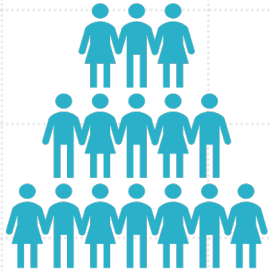
Development of the Change Team

- Direction (Project Charter)
- Goals
- Tasks
- Rewards
- How to work together (Communication)
- Authority on each team

Initial Goals and Objectives

- **Social Impact**
 - Representing our donating one mattress for every ten sold
 - Collaboration with Shelters
 - B-Corporation Mission and Values
- **Operations**
 - Creating of Specific Mattress for Shelters
- **Finance**
 - Monitoring return mattress percentage
 - Monitoring fees associated with 1-800-Got-Junk
- **Technology**
 - Creating an integrated platform to help our customer service teams
- **Customer Service**
 - Survey Deployed to Customers
 - Ease of Returns
 - Why returning
 - Referral to Shelters
- **PMO Office**
 - Creation of Project Charter
 - Managing feedback loops and project timelines
- **Executive Office**
 - Project Champion

Team Outcomes



Met weekly and shared their outcomes

Operating in Red, Yellow and Green colors, we were able to demonstrate what was on track and the roadblocks associated with our desired outcomes.

Through process mapping and feedback loops, we used agile approaches to our methodologies and make decisions faster.



Fulfilling our Mission to obtain B-Corp certification with our donation program

Team Learnings

We were not able to create a platform for customers to connect with us and their own community through mattress placement

We achieved only our minimum outcome which was our desire for B-Corp certification

While processes were improved, we were still dependent on a human to execute and were resource constrained during the times of our highest mattress sales



Leadership Learnings

This project was during the beginning of my MA journey, and I would have deployed further learnings gained over the past months. I alone cannot make change and it is critical to bring the team with me on the journey.

I approached this project for a top down versus a bottom-up process. In hindsight, I would have played a more hands off role empowering the customer service team to produce a solution to streamline their own process

I chose an executive champion for the project that was conflicted in time and resources from their team to reach our desired outcomes. Basically, the project continued to be in start and stop mode with only achieving our minimums

Community Impact

Community

- By leading aforementioned project, I never saw realized my own personal goal and objective for the mattresses which was:
 - **Place as many mattresses as possible in homes where they can benefit people in need**
- I started out wanting to create a space or technology platform to connect people together with doing good and making an impact in their own community. Bringing goods and services needed for individuals and families in need.
- What I discovered over my case study journey over the past twelve weeks, led me to the greater PERSONAL impact. While I wanted to create ease of use for the masses, ended up not being the possible solution in the case studies



Current Solutions of Donations and Giving

Facebook
(Marketplace, Private Groups, Shelter Pages)

Instagram

GoFundMe

Faith Based Organizations

Corporations

Schools

Word of Mouth

What is Wrong the Current Solutions?

- **Nothing. If people know where to go and ask or give help these are great solutions**
 - Each current solution has their own unique advantages and disadvantages
- **I observed the following with my research and interviews:**
 - In rural settings, people have less connectivity
 - Less awareness of how to ask for help
 - Stigma associated with asking for help
 - Pride associated with asking for help
 - Individuals wanting to help with people in their community do not know how to go about it without offending the person, making assumptions or giving anonymously



Case Studies

Case Study #1 – The roof

Opportunity

An elderly couple were in desperate need of a roof. They had contacted many local providers in their community with no response using the traditional methods of phone, google and websites. The local family and friends became involved to get them connected them with someone. The family needed funding for the project and could have benefited from local support.

Solution

By word of mouth the family was connected to an Amish roofer who does not utilize technology. The communication as delayed via quotes sent via mail and visits to the farm to finalize the plan of action. The family will get a new roof

Change Leadership Learnings

As a change leader be open to see and see again. I held a bias that everyone had access or wanted access to technology, and this would have been their preferred communication method. Not everyone has access for various reasons. The involvement of change leaders in your local community is powerful and the impact you can make on the people around you is profound. Be present in the moment and to those things happening around you. There are ways to impact change in the lives of the people around you.

Case Study #2 – The Mattress

Opportunity

A customer purchases a mattress from an online company that delivers mattresses to your home in box with a 100-night trial. After the customer sleeps on the mattress, they want to return the mattress. However, the customer is from a rural area where mattress pick-up is not readily available.

Solution

The customer calls the mattress company and expresses their desire to return the mattress. There are no shelters in the area that are registered or aware of the need of a mattress. The customer indicates they know of a family in need and partner with the customer service agent to donate the mattress to family resulting in a positive impact in the community and less landfill waste

Change Leadership Learnings

As a change leader, think beyond the box. Think how your action can cause a reaction for good and bad. By using problem solving skills, you can make an impact on lives, even if it is one. When you purchase a product, look for companies that align with your values and ask how you can make impact.

Case Study #3 – Small Shelter

Opportunity

A small local shelter needs volunteers. The shelter leaves a number and does not return the call resulting in the caller to become disappointed that they do not feel valued and are not needed.

Solution

If you are not satisfied with the reply, look for a way to communicate with the other organization or person. Drive to the shelter, reach out on social media, see if there is a connection to someone that you know and learn more about the needs of the organization.

Change Leadership Learnings

I am challenged on my own change leadership journey to be patient and listen and not become frustrated from my own perceptions of unresponsiveness. By understanding the dynamics of this small shelter, I learned the amazing impact they have on lives – one at a time. Assume positive intent. It turns the person was no longer with the organization. Seek to understand.

Case Study #4 – International Non-Profit

Opportunity

I spoke with an international non-profit that was seeking teams to come to their location to learn about the local community, learn about how they can impact a community and long-term support of the community. However, they were having challenges spreading the word through their initial outreach programs (friends, faith-based organizations, social media outlets and newsletters). They were also having challenges getting goods to to their international organization.

Solution

The power of testimonials from previous teams that experienced the local community, as well as the connection to an organization can be a powerful catalyst for change. While all of their previous outreach initiatives bring awareness, until someone wants to experience this on their own then it is not the right time.

Change Leadership Learnings

Your passion is not everyone else's passion. As a change leader, it is important to connect with your teams to understand their own individual passions and nurture that inside of the them. If you are are change leader implementing social impact in your own organization, bring along those on your team to embrace your passion while supporting theirs.

Case Study #5 – Home Health Care

Opportunity

I shared with a nurse my vision for helping others by connecting them through an app. While the nurse felt this was an excellent idea, they thought it could be useful for nurses and home healthcare providers. Being on the frontlines of family dynamics and needs, they do not have a solution to partner with agencies outside of state and federal. While visiting homes, they see what the patient needs.

Solution

This solution was a challenge because of confidentiality. It reminded me to care for our friends and family.

Change Leadership Learnings

Be bold. By connecting with others in frontlines service-oriented professions, they know of opportunities to help you become involved in helping others anonymously. There are many people that have no one in their lives to be there for them in a time of need.

Case Study #6 – Teachers

Opportunity

I shared with two teachers the idea for the app to connect people with kids that needed tutoring, items for school and mentoring. While again, they thought it was a good idea federal and state agencies prohibit them from sharing with people needs of students. This is especially challenging when parents are not around or not actively involved in the student's life.

Solution

This solution was a challenge because of confidentiality. There are many teachers that take care of their students with exceptional needs daily and need support. Ask teachers you know if they have a student or family of student in need.

Change Leadership Learnings

The changes that we make in the lives of children have a lasting impact on their life.

What I learned



TECHNOLOGY IS NOT
ALWAYS THE ANSWER



CREATING PERSONAL
CONNECTIONS HAVE
LASTING IMPACT



IT IS OKAY TO FEEL
GOOD ABOUT DOING
GOOD



THE IMPACT OF
COMMUNITY IS
POWERFUL AND LIFE
ENRICHING



BE AWARE OF YOUR
PERSONAL IMPACT ON
OTHERS

Change Leadership Impact

Course Manifested Learnings

- **ORGL 506:
Leadership and Diversity**
 - This class connected the past project with my desire to create an app. I was reminded that in change leadership it is critical to be insightful of my own bias and the inclusion of others. The deeper I dug into my app idea the more I realized the power of connectivity is within me and the team and community I serve.
- **ORGL 515:
Leadership and Human Potential**
 - This class helped me connect my foundational learnings and tools of design thinking, appreciative inquiry, and action research. I reflected on my initial project on how I tackled the challenges of the mattress returns and the importance of empowering the team to produce the solution.
- **ORGL 518:
Transforming Leadership**
 - We are all capable of being transformative leaders whether it is with a team, a tool, a community or inside of us. We all have the power of change. The commitment is lifelong, and the process is a journey of unrelenting self-awareness, reflection, and correction. It requires open and honest transparency with others and with oneself in the pursuit of continual learning and dialogue. I learned with my project the power of reflection in the process of the change and not to assume you know the answer or the outcome.
- **ORGL 600:
Foundations of Leadership**
 - I learned that focusing on the conditions for authentic dialogue and the importance of leading with love throughout change is vital to the impact of the team. The philosophy of Ignatius has become clear to me throughout this journey that it is exactly that and not a destination and is now embedded in me as my purpose rather than just a subject matter of knowledge and corporate KPIs. As a change leader, I will always seek to include a way that whatever I do impacts for the good the community in which I serve

Course Manifested Learnings

- **ORGL 610:
Communication & Leadership Ethics**
 - My reflections on how I led the process of the change with the project, reminded me the incredible importance of communication as a leader. What I do and say matters, and how my actions and voice directly affect others. It is critical that as a leader I lead with influence instead of authority (by position or title).
- **ORGL 615:
Organizational Theory & Behavior**
 - I used reflections on the learnings from the on the dynamics of a group and the impact I make on a group. I also incorporated the importance of empowerment among EVERYONE in a group. Continuing to build muscle in communication, relationship and conflict were key reflections for me.
- **ORGL 620:
Leadership: Seminar**
 - Using the launch from the previous project, I was able to revisit a desire to create a tool to connect. The research, learnings and reminders of how I can impact was powerful and reignited my desire to personally get involved with organization and issues that matter to me.
- **ORGL 605:
Imagine, Create, Lead**
 - This class again challenged me to reflect on my own bias of outcomes and solutions for a perceived problem. I was challenged by my interviewees of looking beyond technology and into the heart of how things can change.
- **ORGL 516:
Relational Dynamics and Organizational Development**
 - This course connected my project through the research, theory, models, and practice (praxis) field of Organizational Development (OD). I was reminded as how as a leader I can support other leaders, as mid-level managers through a process change.



Change Leadership Impact

Through a personal connection, leading with heart and in love, we can all make a difference