Change Management

“Organizations that fail to change are sure to fail.”
Robert Kreitner, 1995

Introduction

All of us have experienced change to some extent in our lives. There is an old saying that the only thing we can consistently count on is the fact that things will change. In today’s world, this is especially true for the occupational therapy manager, who must see departments through periods of change.

Change management involves contending with numerous elements. Practical needs must be addressed, especially in health care, where change can involve modified regulations and requirements that must be implemented into daily procedures. There is the “task” component. Additionally, there are other aspects of change, many involved with interpersonal dynamics. These involve communicating change elements, preparing individuals for change, addressing emotional reactions to change, dealing with resistance, and including people in the change process.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine change, address some of the issues unique to occupational therapy, and explore strategies that individuals and occupational therapy (OT) departments can use in adapting to change.

Skills You Will Apply

Leadership

A recurring theme throughout this chapter will be that of looking ahead and seeing the possibilities in change. Maintaining an ethical stance and holding one’s values are also critical in the