

Organisational adaptations for change management of an omnichannel strategy in a pharmaceutical company

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Abstract

Change has become a constant in life and in business. Legislation changes, markets evolve, competitors acquire new capabilities; and with this maintaining a competitive advantage has become increasingly difficult. To capitalise on potential opportunities presented, the pharmaceutical company Sanofi has decided to transition the country sales models in Europe to a regionally managed Go-to-Market (GTM) omnichannel strategy. The aim of this research was to determine the organisational adaptations required for the change management of an omnichannel GTM strategy.

An exploratory qualitative approach was adopted, collecting data through online interviews from a purposive sample of thirteen experts from both inside and outside the organisation, and content analysed with Nvivo software and manually to identify common themes. Key findings from the study identified that the critical factors for implementing a strategy change lie within the areas of stakeholder management, context and environment, communication, performance management, and change management; while organisational adaptations are needed within the areas of communication, organisational alignment, performance system, and agility. Managerial implications were provided through a suggested Project Analysis Framework, which was developed from the findings, to guide the change management required.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Change has become a constant in life and in business. Businesses must constantly evolve to adapt and meet challenges, which can arise from changes in technology, regulations, new competitors, or

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underlying economic trends, among other factors. Change takes many forms and typically involves meaningful shifts in perspective. Failing to do so could lead to stagnation or failure (Warner, 2006; Miller, 2020), and with this maintaining a competitive advantage has become increasingly difficult. However, some changes may provide a benefit to a company because they may have a better positioned portfolio for it. This has been the case for Sanofi, a multinational pharmaceutical company with an extensive product portfolio, and to be able to capitalise on these potential benefits they have decided to transition the country sales models in Europe to a regionally managed Go-to-Market (GTM) omnichannel strategy. A change of this magnitude has various aspects to be taken into consideration; consequently, there is a high probability of failure.

Sanofi, a company celebrating its 50th anniversary, was created with a heritage of hundreds of worldwide companies and a rich history of healthcare innovation, from the 18th century up to the present day (Sanofi, 2023). The company is organised into business units and functions at various levels, including Corporate, product Business Units (e.g. General Medicines, Consumer Healthcare), and regional (e.g. Europe) and local or country operations (e.g. France). The focus of this research is on the Hypertension (HTA) product line of business within the Europe Region, where HTA is defined as having high blood pressure. The market value for branded products serving this segment was US\$ 1 269m in 2022, but while there are significant growth opportunities with increasing demand, the current market share of Sanofi has declined due to the introduction of generics and to customers switching to competitors' brands. To capitalise on growth opportunities, Sanofi has decided to invest more on the digital channel to reach its customers, and initiate an omnichannel strategy as its GTM to create a seamless customer experience.

1.2. Problem Statement

Setting up a successful omnichannel strategy requires a mentality shift from the traditional 'defined goals strategic approach' used in pharmaceuticals historically. This highlights a human resource requirement that also needs to be taken into consideration when implementing a change to this type of strategy (Medical Marketing, 2023). Additionally, since this strategy is set up as a regional operating model, alignment between top leadership and country management structures is a key factor for success. Considering that the perception of success comes from a diverse environment, it is important to maintain the 'big picture' perspective and understand that there are trade-offs to be made with local strategic options (Högström, Gustafsson, and Tronvoll, 2014).

All these factors with their complexity are part of the reason that two-thirds of all strategies fail in execution (Sull, Homkes, and Sull, 2015), and only one in ten large company CEOs achieve their growth targets (Moore, 2008).

However, little research has been conducted in the GTM strategies in the pharmaceutical markets. Consequently, the problem statement is to identify the organisational adaptations required to move to

a GTM strategy for a pharmaceutical company to address declining market share, while establishing the critical success factors for implementation of a strategy.

1.3. Research Objectives

To address the research problem, the research objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To determine the critical factors for implementing an omnichannel strategy.
- 2) To assess the organisational adaptations needed for a successful change management implementation.

This paper is structured as follows: an initial introduction to the research, a literature review identifying the prior studies against each of the research objectives, the research methodology employed, the results and findings of the qualitative analysis, the managerial implications, and the conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the research.

2. Literature Review

This section covers a background to organisational change and change management, then reviews prior studies for the two research objectives.

2.1. Organisational Change and Change Management

Organisational change refers to the actions businesses take to adjust a component of their structure, which may include culture, processes, underlying technology or infrastructure, corporate hierarchy, strategy, or another critical aspect (Miller, 2020). This is critical for organisations to adapt to macroenvironmental and other changes (Handley and Levis, 2001) to ensure their long-term survival. Organisational change, particularly requiring technology, requires a fundamental shift in how organisations work and how people behave (Braun, 2023).

Change management is the process of guiding organisational change to fruition by renewing its direction, structure, and/or capabilities, from the initial stages of conception and preparation through implementation and resolution, with the objective of better serving the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers (Todnem, 2005; Miller, 2020). Change management models are designed to function as guides to help navigate difficult transitions and guide teams towards acceptance, while maximising the Return on Investment (ROI) (Sharma, 2022). There are a number of change management models that have proven effective (Sharma, 2022), which include: (1) Lewin's 3-Stage Model of Change; (2) The Deming Cycle; (3) The ADKAR Model (Prosci model for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement); (4) the McKinsey 7-S model; and (5) Kotter's Theory. A comparison of the various elements to review for each of the models is given in Figure 1:

Figure 1 - Elements or Factors to be reviewed for Change Management Models

	Lewin's	Deming Cycle	ADKAR	McKinsey 7-S	Kotter's Theory
Elements/Factors to Review 1	Current business process and information flow	Opportunities and Implementation Plan	Communication and Reasons for change	Structure	Need to change, its reason and solution (change)
Elements/Factors to Review 2	Feedback and Quick Wins	Test Pilot results and adjustment plan	Change leaders, root cause of resistance, possible adjustments to plan	Strategy	Multiple leaders' opinions, ideas, and support.
Elements/Factors to Review 3	Rewards Plan, Training and Feedback	Possible failure and success points	Training needs and plan	Systems	Change management plan
Elements/Factors to Review 4		Change Plan Management Metrics	Coaching, Practical Training and Performance	Skills	Vision of the change, employees' concerns, transparency
Elements/Factors to Review 5			Enthusiasm, Motivation, and feedback	Style	Identify barriers, resistance and fatigue
Elements/Factors to Review 6				Staff	Employee motivation and reward system.
Elements/Factors to Review 7				Shared Value	Goals and Training session.
Elements/Factors to Review 8					Continuous training, feedback and support

Source: Sharma (2022); Malik (2022a); Jain (2019); Malik (2022b); Malik (2023); Malhotra (2019); Forbes Council (2022); Hussain et al (2018); Dudin et al (2015); Wong et al (2019); Talerico (2022); McKinsey & Company (2008); Tang (2019); Pollack and Pollack (2015).

With Lewin's model, a company can understand its current processes and the level of employee involvement and knowledge, which is a critical factor for an omnichannel strategy. The Deming Cycle could be used to perform a test pilot and generate a draft for a larger rollout, which can then be evaluated by the ADKAR model, expanding into Kotter's Theory. In the case of the McKinsey model, it allows the business to understand and align its resources and capabilities, which are primary requirements for an organisation's existence, and to determine to what extent it has what it needs to achieve its goals (Gokdeniz, Kartal, and Komurcu, 2017).

2.2. Omnichannel strategy implementation

Omnichannel is a business strategy aimed at providing a seamless shopping experience across all channels, including in-store, mobile, and online. This can involve offering the same inventory, pricing, and promotions across all channels, or providing a unique experience depending on how customers choose to interact. With coordination between channels, customers are allowed to switch without encountering any roadblocks (Oracle, 2023).

There are a variety of channel formats for a company to reach its customers. Omnichannel strategies involve using the most appropriate channels to attract and engage healthcare professionals (HCPs),

creating a seamless and fluid customer experience (Humphries, 2022). Within the pharmaceutical segment, face-to-face interactions have been the preferred method for many years, leading the industry to lag behind other sectors in terms of digital experiences (Chaffey, 2021). Due to strict regulations and the complexity they entail, digital marketing approaches were not widely adopted in the industry. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, pharmaceutical companies have been forced to focus more on digital marketing (Kaiponen, 2021).

To manage multi- and omnichannel distribution, an organisation must find the specific metrics that facilitate reliable analysis, especially since every channel behaviour could be different. No single metric or even two or three metrics are likely to inform managers what they need to know about their channel performance. Marketers must carefully construct a portfolio of metrics that tell them what they need to know and when they need to know it, including information about channel coverage, the contributions and performance of all partners in the ecosystem, and the sustainability of those partnerships (Ailawadi and Farris, 2017).

To set up correctly the process of implementing a new strategy, it is important to have a concrete action plan to manage critical factors, which are reflected in Table 1 (RO1).

Table 1 - Summary of Critical Factors for Implementing Strategy

Critical Factors	Sub-Factors	Key References
Stakeholder Engagement	Employee Participation	Warner, 2006
Context and Environment	Clarity in Objective	Chan et al, 2022
	Clarity in Context	Chaffey, 2021
	Detailed Organisational Assessment and Resource Mapping	Matthes et al., 2019 Humphries, 2022
Communication	Communication Style and Preferences	Azoev, Sumarokova, and Butkovskaya, 2019
Performance Measurement	Performance Metric (Clarity on what is being rewarded)	Ailawadi and Farris, 2017
Change Management	Clear Change Management Plan	Matthes et al., 2019
Other Factors	Customer Journey Map	Kaiponen, 2021
	Use of Analytics on commercial Model	Ailawadi and Farris, 2017
	Distribution Channel Management	Braun, 2023

	Cost Structure	Handley and Levis, 2001
	Pricing Strategy	Miller, 2020

2.3. Organisational adaptations for implementing change management

In a rapidly changing environment, which can stem from technological advancements or shifts in customer behaviour, adaptation to changing circumstances is fundamental for survival (Dainty and Kakabadse, 1990). To assure its future, organisations must be able to quickly adapt and evolve to meet these changes (Braun, 2023). A successful adaptation requires the organisation to be restructured to accommodate innovative technologies, capabilities, and ways of doing things. Although official procedures within an organisation are essential, it is equally important to consider the unofficial ways of getting things done as well, as they can often have a greater impact on how people behave (Braun, 2023).

If omnichannel is considered an integrated communication plan, then the organisation should adapt its communication style with customers and employees. This means understanding their needs and motivations and developing models to engage with them effectively, considering their fears, triggers for change, and communication preferences (Braun, 2023). By taking a customer-centric approach that also understands employees, organisations can better incentivise and engage with them, delivering outcomes that work for both the business and the individual (Braun, 2023).

A critical component for successful implementation is the rewards system used. For instance, when organisations want employees to change the way they work, and it is noticed they are not doing it, it must be determined whether it is due to individual failure or a failure of the system. Performance management is one such system that needs to be considered (Braun, 2023). If the organisation is going to be adapted, the performance culture should support execution by recognising other things such as agility, teamwork, and ambition (Sull, Homkes and Sull, 2015).

In the case of omnichannel, learning is necessary, and failure exists in this process. A requirement for a mentality shift generates resistance, and within the first efforts, a lot of adjustments must be made (Sull, Homkes and Sull, 2015). To avoid failing, managers should face a major obstacle that is a lack of agility. They end up not seeing opportunities, not mitigating threats, or lose sight of the overall strategy (Sull, Homkes and Sull, 2015). As a manager, you need to have the right focus and understand where failure occurs and which are the compromises that can be done to achieve overall success (Moore, 2008).

Managers need structure not only in the coordination of the imperatives but also in the structure of the process used to adapt to changing circumstances. Here companies must create flexibility, and instead

of reallocating resources when needed, they should consider a fluid allocation of funds, people, and focus (Sull, Homkes and Sull, 2015).

All these adaptations to the organisation are to allow change to happen and then be able to manage it. These adaptations (RO2) normally occur within communication, performance systems, organisational alignment, and the organisational level of agility, while maintaining a customer-centric approach towards considering employees, as shown below in Table 2.

Table 2 - Summary of Organisational Adaptations

Critical Factors	Sub-Factors	Key References
Communication	Styles and Preferences	Azoev et al, 2019
	Feedback (Comprehension of Understanding)	Moore, 2008
Performance Systems	Performance Measurement (Rewards)	Ailawadi and Farris, 2017
	System Flexibility	Braun, 2023
	Risk of Excessive Emphasis (Execution Impairment)	Sull et al, 2015
Organisational Alignment	Official and unofficial way of doing things	Braun, 2023
	Between functional areas and Objectives	Olson, 2022
	Transition Function or Change Management Team	Moore, 2008
Agility	Organisational Agility	Braun, 2023
	Managerial Skill	Moore, 2008

To manage these difficult transitions there are change management methodologies that can be used to support the organisation. There are five popular models that can be used for this, but there is a crucial step to perform before setting any of them, and that is the change assessment diagnostic check.

Once the diagnostic check is completed, then a change management model should be used. Since there are different models, and each of them has a different focus, it is important to understand the pros and cons of each so they can be performed based on the needs of the company.

Consequently, once the strategy change is implemented, the next requirement is to evaluate the performance of the strategy. The measurement should include elements in distribution, customer

engagement, and employee satisfaction metrics, besides financial metrics such as gross margin and profit. There is also a need for the appropriate overhead resource allocation, which must be aligned with the business goals. The expectation is to create customer loyalty, and decisions taken are data-driven decisions to better support achieving the set goals.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research approach and strategy

As there is relatively little research on organisational adaptations for GTM strategies in the pharmaceutical industry, an exploratory approach was adopted (DeCarlo, 2018), utilising a qualitative strategy with an inductive methodology (Bell et al., 2022) and a cross-sectional approach (Wang and Cheng, 2020).

3.2 Population and sampling

The study population comprised individuals involved in organisational change and change management. Participants were selected based on specific criteria identifying their expertise in change management. This is also known as non-probability purposive sampling (McCombes, 2019; Nikolopoulou, 2022). Thirteen (13) participants were targeted, seven (7) Sanofi employees with extensive experience in organisational change and transformation, and six (6) change management experts from outside the organisation, identified through the Henley Business School alumni.

3.3 Data collection

All the participants were formally invited via email to participate in online in-depth interviews, which were conducted utilizing Zoom videotelephony platform. The conversations were recorded with the permission of the interviewees as stated on the consent form they had previously signed. The research instrument was a semi-structured interview schedule to probe the research objectives relevant to this study. The interviews were initially transcribed using Zoom's audio transcription tool. To ensure accuracy, the author manually reviewed and validated the recordings.

3.4 Data analysis

The data gathered was analysed using NVivo software to identify common themes through pattern coding (Hilal and Alabri, 2013; Nowell et al., 2017). These themes were then manually compared against the findings from existing literature to confirm if they corresponded to such prior research or added new insights to the body of knowledge, enabling the development and presentation of key findings and recommendations.

3.5 Research criteria

For quantitative research, the issues of validity and reliability are critical. However, for qualitative research, it is important to ensure trustworthiness in data collection and analysis (Nowell et al., 2017; Connelly, 2016). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Enworo, 2023), Trustworthiness is achieved by addressing Credibility and Transferability (supports internal and external Validity respectively), Authenticity and Dependability (supports Reliability), and Confirmability (investigates Objectivity).

Credibility and Transferability

To increase credibility and validity of the results, the data obtained were cross-checked with the literature reviewed to ensure alignment with the theoretical ideas, or to complement them. Regarding transferability and reliability, as LeCompte and Goetz (cited by Bell, Bryman, and Harley, 2022) recognise, it is impossible to replicate a social scenario. However, by replicating demographic research with a similar role adopted by the original researcher, it can be comparable.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability involves adopting an audit approach to ensure that complete records are kept within all phases of the research process (Bell, Bryman, and Harley, 2022). In this research, dependability is achieved by maintaining the raw data of transcripts and recordings, which provide links to each question and the corresponding literature review. Confirmability, on the other hand, pertains to the level of confidence that the research study's findings are based on participants' narratives rather than researcher biases, and this can be validated by reviewing the transcripts and raw data gathered.

Additionally, all topics presented were developed with market insights to avoid issues with organisational confidentiality. Furthermore, ethics clearance was obtained from Henley Business School prior to gathering data.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Participant Demographics

Of the 13 participants, seven work in Sanofi while the other six are from outside the organisation. Ten of the participants had international change management experience, while nine had digital change management experience. All the participants had at least 5 years of change management experience, with a mean of 15 years. These demographics indicate that the profile of the participants met the requirement for the necessary expertise to provide insights.

4.2 RO1: Critical Factors to implement a strategy change

The content analysis of the responses revealed a number of themes which have been classified into different themes and sub-themes, as illustrated in Table 3, and discussed below with supporting participant comments:

Table 3 – Interview Findings on Critical Factors

Themes	Sub-Themes
Stakeholder Management	Employee = Customer
	Organisational Alignment (Reducing Resistance and Silo Behaviour)
	Sponsorship or Leadership Buy-in
	Staying in Power
Context and Environment	Clarity in Context, Environment and Organisation Assessment
	Clear Objective and Vision (Strategy)
	Explaining the rationale
	Connection between Strategy and Operations
	Resource Commitment
Communication	Clear, detailed and On Time
Performance Management	Definition of success
	Focus on what is being measured
	Simple method with time for benefits to materialise
Change Management	Specialised Team
	Clear Governance

4.2.1 Stakeholder Management

Employee = Customer

When analysing requirements from an organisational perspective, the focus must shift from customers to the employees, since “*change management is more about the people and changing the organisation at a cultural level*” (P1). “*The focus is on the people; if it doesn’t work on the people level, it is not worthwhile*” (P7). This needs to include all employees across different levels, “*since it is going to have a major impact and the people who are participating in that entire process should be taken into consideration*” (P3).

Organisational Alignment (Reducing resistance and silo behaviour)

Implementing a change of this magnitude involves different stakeholders which translates to working with different areas and interests. The alignment here is crucial since changes are “*very much influenced by the environment and are made by people*” (P9). This reduces resistance and silo

behaviour, since if objectives, views and ways of working are aligned, it is easier to manage the change and identify possible gaps. Also, having this alignment and clear view “*allow us to include detractors and supporters, so we can correctly mobilise the wider stakeholders*” (P11).

Sponsorship or Leadership Buy-in

To mobilise the wider stakeholders, there must be a sponsorship. “*The leadership buy-in is what maintains the momentum because, while they are happy that things are being delivered and realised, everything is good*” (P13).

Staying in Power

To maintain the sponsorship, there is a need to ensure a way for the project to “Stay in Power” because “*on the senior level, well across the board, across most middle management and above, most people do not stay in a job longer than two to three years. So, the new person comes and changes the program, since they may have a different idea of what success looks like*” (P6).

4.2.2 Context and Environment

Clarity in Context, Environment and Organisational Assessment

It was highlighted by participants that this is one of the steps that companies often do not address properly, where it is essential to understand what type of change is needed. Having the clarity on where it stands (organisational assessment), the path to follow can be defined, as per the additional four critical factors described below.

Clear Objective and Vision

To successfully mobilise people and/or resources, a clear objective and vision of where to go and how the process should be is needed. “*An organisation needs to be clear on the 'As Is' or Point A and have a clear perspective of where it wants to Go or the Point B. The way to go from Point A to B, or the bridge then becomes the strategy. To achieve this, there is a series of operations and resources needed with a commitment to it.*” (P4).

Explaining the rationale

Explaining the rationale of the change allows people to assimilate and correlate better with the change, consequently reducing resistance. By having a logical structure to the line of thought, employees may better understand each step of the change and their role on it. Explaining is “*the reason for the change, what is in it for the organisation, what is in it for individuals and the big question mark of why this is a good idea and why are we doing it?*” (P7).

Connection between Strategy and Operations

There needs to be an assessment of the organisation and its resources, and a connection between the strategy and operations. “*If there is no link between the new strategy and the current operations, the*

correlation of what is about the change is lost, so people may not put the same interest since it can be perceived as something that does not affect them” (P12).

Resources Commitment

As highlighted by the McKinsey (2008) 7-S Model, it is important to have clarity and alignment of the systems and structures that the company possesses to understand what needs to be adjusted, and to allocate the appropriate resources for execution. *“There are a lot of change proposals, but a lot of times organisations are not willing to put their hands in their pockets to fund the necessary resources, whether that is IT systems or whether that is people. Bringing expertise costs, you need the money to then be able to deliver that strategy” (P2).*

4.2.3 Communication

Communication needs to be meaningful according to the styles and preferences of the employees, and in addition, needs to be “Detailed and On Time”. If is not clear or the timing is incorrect, *“you are leaving people in limbo and then the rumours start, which is very energy-consuming for the company. If you are more transparent and can show the Achilles' heel of the plan and workable solutions, you can avoid failure” (P7).* With this is created *“trust in the process that would bring necessary change” (P9).*

4.2.4 Performance Management

Definition of Success

The participants highlighted that it is important to understand what success looks like. When designing change, often time is dedicated to targets, but *“we do not really spend a lot of time talking about success. Even though there are outcomes, they become metrics normally associated with finance. But questions like: How do we measure the outcome, if we believe this team would be more efficient, how do we measure efficiency? Is it a reduction in the number of pushbacks we get from regulatory authorities? We are not particularly good at defining success” (P5).* *“Knowing how to measure the outcome is what maintains people invested on the change” (P2).*

Clarity on what is being measured

Once the success is defined and a metric to compare against is defined, it is important to understand what behaviour is being measured. As noted by Braun (2023) the organisation needs to understand what is being measured to validate that *“the performance is not going against the employee’s interests and targets that he has already received” (P2).*

Simple method with time for benefit to materialise

The method for measuring should be concise and simple, and even though it will vary for what is being measured, it should account for a learning curve; otherwise, it will never be reachable and/or

people may not relate to it, consequently the performance will decrease. *“Having multiple objectives creates unnecessary complexity, unless you are talking about different hierarchical levels where the objective of the higher level is to ensure that the lower objective is followed”* (P7). It is *“better to have one main objective and then have three KPIs linked to it, maximum”* (P9).

4.2.5 Change Management

A common mistake that organisations make is confusing change management and program management. This leads to having the same people who are responsible for setting up the program, also running the program, then following up on the implementation and evaluating its performance (judge, jury and executioner analogy).

- *“Change Management is a profession, and people need to be trained and experienced to deliver it. Rather than somebody doing it as a secondary duty, you know you have your main job, and you have given this as an extra thing to try and deliver as well as what they are meant to be doing”* (P3).
- It is important *“to segregate the operations and the change itself, not only because different skill sets are needed but because the issues that can arise from those areas are different and need to be tackled differently”* (P6).
- *“Once you have the change management teams clear, then you need to have clear governance. Governance within the operations but most importantly the governance on the change itself”* (P4).

4.3 RO2: Organisational Adaptations needed for successful Change Management Implementation

The content analysis of the responses revealed a number of themes which have been classified into different themes and sub-themes, as illustrated in Table 4 below, and discussed below with supporting respondent comments:

Table 4 – Interview Findings on Organisational Adaptations

Themes	Sub-Themes from analysis
Communication	Flow alignment
	Coherence: Strong Messaging and Perception
Alignment	Alignment on functional areas and objectives
	Ripple effect measurement
	Avoidance of Company Blindness
Performance Systems	Should quantify the benefits
	Includes feeling Dimension
	Flexible measurement system

Agility	Hiring Process (Soft Skills versus knowledge)

4.3.1 Communication

Flow Alignment

An adaptation is to have a clear flow alignment. Understanding where the information comes from, validating that all levels are included and correctly feed into the system is what will allow to have timely adjustments when needed, and evaluate the perception of the change with the employees. When a strategy is proposed it is normal to expect a top-down approach, but there needs to be also “*from the ground up that this change is happening and how. Middle managers and senior managers upwards need to be saying the same thing. You cannot have any voices of dissent to the lower grades talking the lower staff because... they may just dig their heels in and make sure that they make it as difficult as possible to deliver the change*” (P8).

Coherence: Strong Messaging and Perception

Once the design of the strategy is finalised, the dissemination of the change must be clear and concise, it needs to deliver a strong message, while maintaining a positive perception of the change with the members of the staff. Communication is what creates trust in the process since “*It is not necessarily about a discussion on about what is right, or what is wrong, but it is more of what is the message of the program*” (P10). It is about ensuring “*that you have a coherent message. Have a clear methodology and communicate with the rational that this happens unless there is a particularly good reason not to do it. Be professional about it*” (P7).

These findings are consistent with the literature, including integration of all channels (Azoev et al., 2019), consistency (Kaiponen, 2021), ensuring understanding (Sull et al., 2015), and adapting style to employees (Braun, 2023).

4.3.2 Alignment

On functional area and objectives

To ensure a harmonised way of working, the change plan must have an alignment on objectives considering all the functional areas, otherwise things may be left out of consideration. “*Many organisations tend to get things done in a particular way. Classically, you run the business through hierarchical control by managers and trust relationships. Among these relationships, there are embedded established ways to manage tasks which are done on a regular basis to keep the business running. With change, you have different relationships and different dynamics*” (P9).

Ripple Effect Measurement

This ripple effect is not always accounted for beforehand and can be quite disruptive. Therefore, it is important to have flexibility in systems and functions to accommodate them as they arise, and realign the project and the modus operandi. *“When finance sets up an automation, they do not inform HR. Why would they, right? But when the automation is implemented, it changes a job description, and the person can either accept or reject the new role. If the person leaves, there is a tax impact with severance pay. So, in just one process, we have HR, Tax, and Legal impacts due to a change in process. Moreover, the change in roles can also alter the nature of the work and may reduce the size of one team in favour of another”* (P12).

Avoidance of Company Blindness

The resistance to change may come from fear of the unknown impact of the result, and because *“people are used to do things the same way”* (P10). When the structure undergoing change has people that have been in the company for years, there is a company blindness effect since they may not see a way to do things differently. Therefore, it is important to bring people from other companies even and from different industries to participate, and ensure that the vision of the project is followed. *“Having a fresh set of eyes helps avoid ‘company blindness’ and helps maintain the change perspective, as the person is not accustomed to the prior way of working”* (P13).

4.3.3 Performance Systems

Quantify the Benefits

The performance must be quantifiable and not only referring to financial figures. It could be *“freeing time in the agenda, getting fewer rejections from authorities, fewer complaints by users, better satisfaction scores, more happy faces as feedback; it just needs to be something that can be said, ‘This is it.’”* (P12)

Include the Feeling Dimension

Participants highlighted the importance of measuring the *“Feeling dimension, meaning the employee feeling and satisfaction, as this ensures the longevity of the change”* (P3). Ultimately *“if it is involving people, then the efficiency of change and its impact on the people's psyche should be measured”* (P6).

Flexible Measurement system

The system needs to have enough flexibility to be adapted, which allows not only for the ripple effect, but to adjust and reward performance correctly since the change will generate additional adjustments. *“There needs to be flexibility to account for changes that have been foreseen or not, it could be with a positive or negative effect. For example, if the behaviour plan was to grow 5% but the sales grew 25% the performance is different; and, if the plan was to grow 35% and the team only grew x% due to a new regulation that appeared, then it not fair to penalise them”* (P11).

4.3.4 Agility

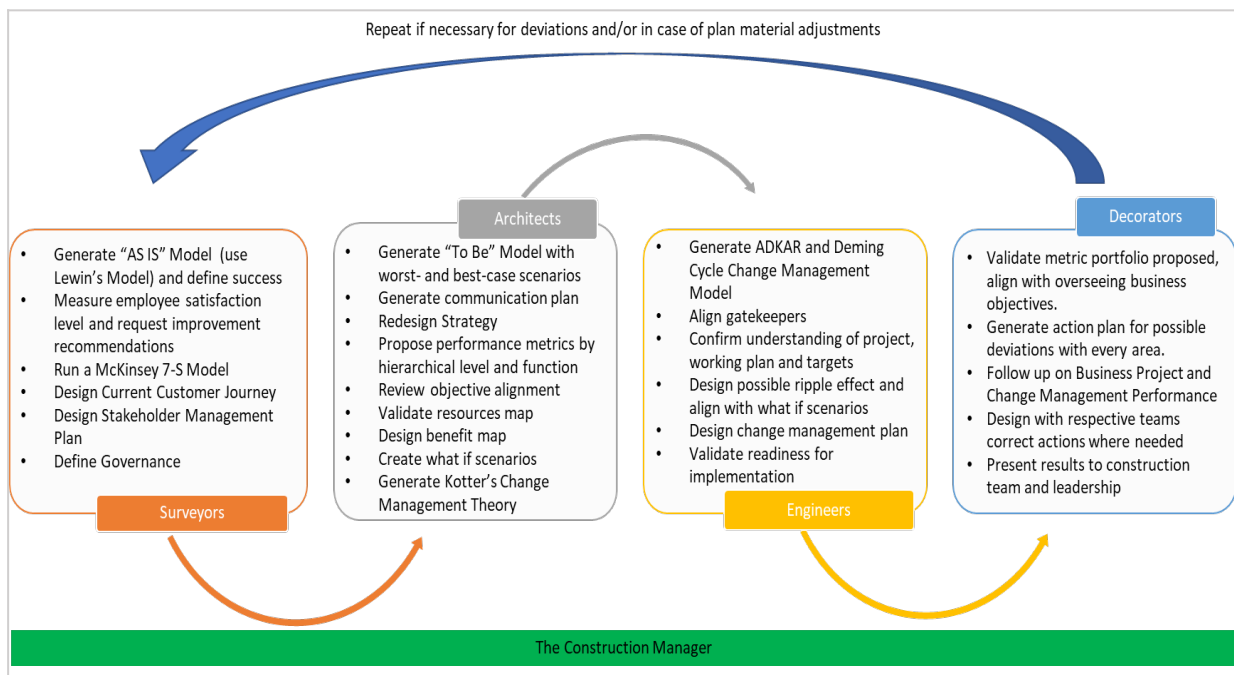
Even when prepared in detail, a change in strategy will bring unforeseen changes. To be able to deal with this the organisation needs to be agile so it can adapt to the changes and have room to incorporate additional ones. Having an agile organisation means that there are agile people to run it. To have this, sometimes even the recruitment policies need to be reviewed since “*hiring people with agile mentality, is looking for a soft skill and they may not fill 100% the job description*” (P1).

5. Managerial Implications

The managerial implications have been developed from the critical factors and organisational adaptations identified in the literature and in this study. To ensure a successful change in GTM, it is recommended that Sanofi reviews its current plan to ensure that all critical factors are taken into consideration and that the necessary organisational adaptations are in place. Having a correctly designed and sound plan helps minimise the probability of failure in a strategy change.

To enable this process, “The Project Analysis Framework” has been created, as shown in Figure 2. It consists of separating the project into four different areas, all aligned with different change models or topics that address specific concerns of each area, allowing for redesign where needed. For illustrative purposes, this framework is presented with the analogy of building a house, since as a project it can have a similar approach.

Figure 2 – Project Analysis Framework



The Construction Manager

The first step is to select a "Construction Manager," who is the regional product manager and the project lead. The main responsibility of this role is to oversee the entire project and maintain alignment between the different areas. This person serves as the face of the project and oversees recruiting of the staff and ensures that the necessary knowledge is in place. It is advisable for this individual to have extensive knowledge in the industry. While it is preferable for this person to be from outside the company, being from outside the European Region should suffice to avoid company bias. Additionally, in terms of reporting lines, it is advisable for the Construction Manager to report to the Senior Leadership Team.

Once this role is determined, the construction of the new house can commence, following the respective stages described below.

Surveyors

As indicated by its name, this group is responsible for examining the land. Here, all the foundations of the project are set up, stakeholders are mapped, and project team roles are defined. It is advisable, due to workload and simplicity, to split responsibilities between consultants from the partner agency and Sanofi employees.

Here, the effort involves not only understanding everything the company has but also determining if it can be used in the project and identifying any limitations. Budget allocation and ownership of each point are discussed, and in the event of proposed changes, it is decided who should be consulted and who has the responsibility and accountability of making the decision. This allows for mapping and commitment of resources to the project.

This is where the definition of success is generated in conjunction with stakeholders and the leadership team. With this and an agile organisational behaviour, adaptation regarding alignment and communication should begin to take place.

Architects

While the foundation is being laid down, the architects are now designing the structure of the house. This is where the "To Be" is designed, the performance metrics are selected, and the communication plans are designed.

At this stage, there is a need to reevaluate whether the context and objectives are clear for all participants, so that once the rationale is presented to the wider organisation, everyone is aligned. Here, Leadership Buy-In should be concretised, and the reporting and communication lines should be finalised.

It is important at this stage to create different scenarios, both the best and worst-case scenarios, to ensure clarity in the working area, and the What-If scenarios in case there are changes to the structure,

to guarantee that the “Stay in Power” occurs. This could also start to provide visibility of possible “ripple effects”.

Engineers

Here, the change management is designed, and the readiness validation process begins. Once the understanding of the project is validated, the gatekeepers aligned, and the working plan is signed, construction starts.

During this stage, the focus shifts to the employees rather than the business. The architects validate that the business insights are followed, and sales are achieved. Meanwhile, this stage validates that the employees understand and are engaged, that the project is being managed correctly, and that resistance is being overcome. This is where agility is tested, and all critical factors should be revised to ensure completeness.

Decorators

The house is built, but finishing is required. Now it is time to connect the gas and electricity, paint the walls, and deliver the keys.

To be able to present the results to the construction manager, the teams, and the buyer (leadership team), the metrics should be validated, and plans to tackle deviations should be in place with a clear timeline on when to expect results.

It is important to ensure that the correct behaviour is being rewarded, otherwise, success would not be achieved.

Difficulties on Implementation

A downside to this implementation, as identified in the literature, is that it could be time-consuming. However, since the project is managed together with a consultancy firm, most of the changes/designs can come from their teams, while Sanofi manages the alignment, the internal negotiations, and supervises that the effort is correctly directed.

6. Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research

6.1 Conclusions to the Research Objectives

RO1 – Critical factors for implementing an omnichannel strategy

Table 5 summarises the critical factors that should be addressed when implementing the strategy, and compares the findings from the literature with the data gathered from the research conducted.

Table 5: Summary - Critical Factors for Omnichannel Strategy Implementation

Critical Factors	Literature Findings	Study Findings	Conclusions
Stakeholder Management	Employee Participation	Employee Participation (Employee = Customer)	Identified
	Organisational Alignment	Organisational Alignment (Reducing Resistance and Silo Behaviour)	Identified
	Sponsorship	Sponsorship or Leadership Buy- In	Identified
		Staying in Power	New Insight
Context and Environment	Clarity in Objective	Clear Objective and Vision (Strategy)	Identified
	Clarity in Context	Clarity in Context, Environment and	Identified
	Detailed Org. Assessment and Resource Mapping	Organisational Assessment	
		Commitment of Resources	Partially
		Explaining the rationale	New Insight
		Connection between Strategy and Operation	New Insight
Comms.	Style and Preferences	Consideration for Styles and Preferences	Identified
		Clear, Detailed and On Time	New Insight
		Program Message (Benefits and downsides)	New Insight
Change Management	Clear Change Management Plan	Specialised Team	Identified
		Clear Governance	Identified
Performance Measurement		Definition of success	New insight
	Clear Metrics and Clarity on what is being measured	Clarity on Metrics	Identified
		Time for benefits to materialise	New insight
Other Factors	Customer Journey Map		Partially
	Use of Analytics on commercial Model		Partially
	Distribution Channel Mgmt.		Partially
	Cost Structure		Partially
	Pricing Strategy		Partially

The Critical Factors highlighted in this study broadly correlated with those identified in the literature; however, there are seven new insights from this study. Within the Stakeholder Management category, there is ‘Staying in Power’, referring to continuity in the project leadership during the change management project. In the Context and Environment category, there are two new insights ‘Explaining the rationale’ and ‘Connection between Strategy and Operation’, identifying the necessity to include staff in the project and understand their integrating roles. In the Performance category,

‘Definition of success’ and ‘Time for benefits to materialise’ were identified as new insights, emphasising the importance of metrics and the time frame required for effective change.

RO2 – Organisational Adaptations for successful change management implementation

Table 6 consolidates the organisational adaptations for successful change management implementation, comparing the prior research to the findings from the study.

Table 6: Summary - Organisational Adaptations Needed

Critical Factors	Literature Findings	Study Findings	Conclusions
Communications	Styles and Preferences	Mindfulness of Style and Preferences	Identified
	Feedback (Comprehension of Understanding)	Flow alignment	New Insight
		Strong Messaging and Perception	Identified
Alignment	Official and unofficial way of doing things	Alignment on functions and objectives	Identified
	Between functional areas and Objectives		Identified
		Ripple effect measurement	New Insight
		Avoidance of Company Blindness	New Insight
Performance Systems	Performance Measurement (Rewards)	Should Quantify Benefits	Identified
		Includes the feeling dimension	Identified
	System Flexibility	Flexible System	Identified
	Risk of Excessive Emphasis (Execution Impairment)		Partially
Agility	Organisational Agility	Flexibility on Systems and Functions	New Insight
	Develop Skills	Hiring Soft Skills	Identified

The adaptations identified in the study broadly correlate with those highlighted by the literature; however, five additional insights were included. In the category of Communications, ‘Flow alignment’ was highlighted, which refers to having a clear alignment between functional areas and hierarchical levels. Two new insights were identified in the ‘Alignment’ category: ‘Ripple effect measurement’ and ‘Avoidance of company blindness’, referring to additional changes triggered by the original change, and the challenge of company bias due to entrenched practices. In the Agility category, ‘Flexibility on systems and functions’ was identified, referring to the requirement to manage the unexpected consequences of change and its subsequent effects for successful strategy change.

6.2 Contributions of this study

As a consequence of the confirmation of factors and the new insights that were highlighted in the tables relevant to the findings against each Research Objective, there are a number of theoretical

contributions that have been made. The practical contribution has been highlighted in the Managerial Implications for organisations.

In addition, the utilisation of several change management models have guided this research, and provide further applications of these theories to research. In particular, a number of these have been incorporated in the development of the Project Analysis Framework, such as Lewin, McKinsey 7-S, Kotter, ADKAR, and Deming's framework.

6.3 Limitations and Further Research

The main limitations of the study are the limited non-random sample size of thirteen participants, and the qualitative approach adopted for the research strategy, which consequently leads to non-generalisability of the results of the study to the population. Further research could be conducted on a larger sample size, and using a quantitative approach to test the results. In addition, a longitudinal study could be conducted after a change management intervention to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of organizational adaptations.

Furthermore, the Project Analysis Framework created is designed considering a project that has a conceptual phase started, but it could also be used to create a new strategy plan from the beginning once its feasibility is assessed, as it can provide a holistic view of how to manage an organisational change of this magnitude. This framework should be further researched and tested in other organisations and industries.

Finally, more work should be done on the performance measurement part and its specific metrics under each element that should be assessed so that its correlation and effectiveness to the general project can be evaluated. Since this is a critical point often highlighted in the business world, specific research in this area can add immense value.

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