

“Change Management”

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Organizational And Personal Change Management, Process, Plans, Change Management And Business Development Tips

Here are some rules for effective management of change. Managing organizational change will be more successful if you apply these simple principles. Achieving personal change will be more successful too if you use the same approach where relevant. Change management entails thoughtful planning and sensitive implementation, and above all, consultation with, and involvement of, the people affected by the changes. If you force change on people normally problems arise. Change must be realistic, achievable and measurable. These aspects are especially relevant to managing personal change. Before starting organizational change, ask yourself: What do we want to achieve with this change, why, and how will we know that the change has been achieved? Who is affected by this change, and how will they react to it? How much of this change can we achieve ourselves, and what parts of the change do we need help with? These aspects also relate strongly to the management of personal as well as organizational change.

See also the [modern principles which underpin successful change](#).

Refer also to [Psychological Contract theory](#), which helps explain the complex relationship between an organization and its employees.

Do not 'sell' change to people as a way of accelerating 'agreement' and implementation. 'Selling' change to people is not a sustainable strategy for success, unless your aim is to be bitten on the bum at some time in the future when you least expect it. When people listen to a management high-up 'selling' them a change, decent diligent folk will generally smile and appear to accede, but quietly to themselves, they're thinking, "No bloody chance mate, if you think I'm standing for that load of old bollocks you've another think coming..." (And that's just the amenable types - the other more recalcitrant types will be well on the way to making their own particular transition from gamekeepers to poachers.)

Instead, change needs to be understood and managed in a way that people can cope effectively with it. Change can be unsettling, so the manager logically needs to be a settling influence.

Check that people affected by the change agree with, or at least understand, the need for change, and have a chance to decide how the change will be managed, and to be involved in the planning and implementation of the change. Use face-to-face communications to handle sensitive aspects of organisational change management (see [Mehrabian's research](#) on conveying meaning and understanding). Encourage your

managers to communicate face-to-face with their people too if they are helping you manage an organizational change. Email and written notices are extremely weak at conveying and developing understanding.

If you think that you need to make a change quickly, probe the reasons - is the urgency real? Will the effects of agreeing a more sensible time-frame really be more disastrous than presiding over a disastrous change? Quick change prevents proper consultation and involvement, which leads to difficulties that take time to resolve.

For complex changes, refer to the process of [project management](#), and ensure that you augment this with consultative communications to agree and gain support for the reasons for the change. Involving and informing people also creates opportunities for others to participate in planning and implementing the changes, which lightens your burden, spreads the organizational load, and creates a sense of ownership and familiarity among the people affected.

See also the excellent free [decision-making template](#), designed by Sharon Drew Morgen, with facilitative questions for personal and organizational innovation and change.

Dawn Stanley's excellent [RISE Personal Change Model](#), a simple helpful 'how-to' framework for personal change, is also a very useful reference model for change of many other types.

To understand more about people's personalities, and how different people react differently to change, see the [personality styles](#) section.

For organizational change that entails new actions, objectives and processes for a group or team of people, use [workshops](#) to achieve understanding, involvement, plans, measurable aims, actions and commitment. Encourage your management team to use workshops with their people too if they are helping you to manage the change.

You should even apply these principles to very tough change like making people redundant, closures and integrating merged or acquired organizations. Bad news needs even more careful management than routine change. Hiding behind memos and middle managers will make matters worse. Consulting with people, and helping them to understand does not weaken your position - it strengthens it. Leaders who fail to consult and involve their people in managing bad news are perceived as weak and lacking in integrity. Treat people with humanity and respect and they will reciprocate.

Be mindful that the chief insecurity of most staff is change itself. See the [process of personal change](#) theory to see how people react to change. Senior managers and directors responsible for managing organizational change do not, as a rule, fear change - they generally thrive on it. So remember that your people do not relish change, they

find it deeply disturbing and threatening. Your people's fear of change is as great as your own fear of failure.

Responsibility For Managing Change

The employee does not have a responsibility to manage change - the employee's responsibility is no other than to do their best, which is different for every person and depends on a wide variety of factors (health, maturity, stability, experience, personality, motivation, etc). Responsibility for managing change is with management and executives of the organisation - they must manage the change in a way that employees can cope with it. The manager has a responsibility to **facilitate** and **enable** change, and all that is implied within that statement, especially to understand the situation from an objective standpoint (to 'step back', and be non-judgemental), and then to help people understand reasons, aims, and ways of responding positively according to employees' own situations and capabilities. Increasingly the manager's role is to interpret, communicate and enable - not to instruct and impose, which nobody really responds to well.

Change Must Involve The People - Change Must Not Be Imposed Upon The People

Be wary of expressions like 'mindset change', and 'changing people's mindsets' or 'changing attitudes', because this language often indicates a tendency towards imposed or enforced change ([theory x](#)), and it implies strongly that the organization believes that its people currently have the 'wrong' mindset, which is never, ever, the case. If people are not approaching their tasks or the organization effectively, then the organization has the wrong mindset, not the people. Change such as new structures, policies, targets, acquisitions, disposals, re-locations, etc., all create new systems and environments, which need to be explained to people as early as possible, so that people's involvement in validating and refining the changes themselves can be obtained.

Whenever an organization **imposes** new things on people there will be difficulties. Participation, involvement and open, early, full communication are the important factors.

Workshops are very useful processes to develop collective understanding, approaches, policies, methods, systems, ideas, etc. See the section on [workshops](#) on the website.

Staff surveys are a helpful way to repair damage and mistrust among staff - provided you allow people to complete them anonymously, and provided you publish and act on the findings.

Management training, empathy and facilitative capability are priority areas - managers are crucial to the change process - they must enable and facilitate, not merely convey and implement policy from above, which does not work.

You cannot impose change - people and teams need to be empowered to find their own solutions and responses, with facilitation and support from managers, and tolerance and compassion from the leaders and executives. Management and leadership style and behaviour are more important than clever process and policy. Employees need to be able to trust the organization.

The leader must agree and work with these ideas, or change is likely to be very painful, and the best people will be lost in the process.

Change Management Principles

1. At all times involve and agree support from people within system (system = environment, processes, culture, relationships, behaviours, etc., whether personal or organisational).
2. Understand where you/the organisation is at the moment.
3. Understand where you want to be, when, why, and what the measures will be for having got there.
4. Plan development towards above No.3 in appropriate achievable measurable stages.
5. Communicate, involve, enable and facilitate involvement from people, as early and openly and as fully as is possible.

John P Kotter's 'Eight Steps To Successful Change'

American John P Kotter (b 1947) is a Harvard Business School professor and leading thinker and author on organizational change management. Kotter's highly regarded books 'Leading Change' (1995) and the follow-up 'The Heart Of Change' (2002) describe a helpful model for understanding and managing change. Each stage acknowledges a key principle identified by Kotter relating to people's response and approach to change, in which people **see**, **feel** and then **change**.

Kotter's eight step change model can be summarised as:

1. **Increase urgency** - inspire people to move, make objectives real and relevant.
2. **Build the guiding team** - get the right people in place with the right emotional commitment, and the right mix of skills and levels.
3. **Get the vision right** - get the team to establish a simple vision and strategy, focus on emotional and creative aspects necessary to drive service and efficiency.
4. **Communicate for buy-in** - Involve as many people as possible, communicate the essentials, simply, and to appeal and respond to people's needs. De-clutter communications - make technology work for you rather than against.
5. **Empower action** - Remove obstacles, enable constructive feedback and lots of support from leaders - reward and recognise progress and achievements.

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6. **Create short-term wins** - Set aims that are easy to achieve - in bite-size chunks. Manageable numbers of initiatives. Finish current stages before starting new ones.
7. **Don't let up** - Foster and encourage determination and persistence - ongoing change - encourage ongoing progress reporting - highlight achieved and future milestones.
8. **Make change stick** - Reinforce the value of successful change via recruitment, promotion, new change leaders. Weave change into culture.

Kotter's eight step model is explained more fully on his website www.kotterinternational.com.

Related to Kotter's ideas, and particularly helpful in understanding the pressures of change on people, and people's reactions to change, see a detailed interpretation of the personal change process in [John Fisher's model of the process of personal change](#).

Ideas On Illustrating Change Management Issues

When people are confronted with the need or opportunity to change, especially when it's 'enforced', as they see it, by the organization, they can become emotional. So can the managers who try to manage the change. Diffusing the emotional feelings, taking a step back, encouraging objectivity, are important to enabling sensible and constructive dialogue. To this end, managers and trainers can find it helpful to use analogies to assist themselves and other staff to look at change in a more detached way.

On this site there are several illustrations which can be used for this purpose, depending on the type of change faced, and the aspect that is to be addressed. Here are a few examples, useful for team meetings, presentations, one-to-one counselling or self-reminder, particularly to help empathise with others facing change:

On the [Stories section](#) look at 'Murphy's Plough' (negative thinking = obstacle to change) and 'We've always done it that way' (not questioning need for change). Both good aids for understanding and explaining why people - all of us - find it difficult to change assumptions, conditioned thinking, habit, routine, etc.

Look also at the Monkey Story, as to how policies, practices, attitudes and even cultures can become established, and how the tendency is to accept rather than question.

Just as the state of '[unconscious incompetence](#)', needs to be developed into 'conscious competence' to provide a basis for training, so a person's **subjective emotion** needs to be developed into **objectivity** before beginning to help them handle change. None of us is immune from subjectivity, ignorance or denial. The lessons and reminders found in stories and analogies can help to show a new clear perspective.

[Aesop's Fables](#) section has other short and beautifully simple analogies useful for illustrating aspects of causing or dealing with change, for example (all on the Aesop's Fables section):

The Crow and the Pitcher (change being provoked by pressure or necessity)

The North Wind and the Sun (gentle persuasion rather than force)

The Lion and The Ass (enforced change - might is right)

The Crab and his Mother (lead by example and evidence - or you'll not change people)

The Miller, his Son and the Ass (no single change is likely to please everyone - everyone wants something different)

The Oak and the Reeds (the need for tolerance - changer or 'changees')

The Rich Man and the Tanner, (time softens change - given time people get used to things)

The Ass and the Mule (agree to reasonable change now or you can risk far worse enforced change in the future)

Job Reorganization, Task Analysis, Job Transfer Due To IT Development Or Outsourcing Etc

First see the [modern principles which underpin successful change](#). It's not always easy or perhaps even possible to consider matters at such depth, but try to if you can, or try to persuade others above in their ivory towers to think about the fundamental integrity of the situation, instead of short-term profit, or satisfying greedy shareholders.

There are various approaches to task analysis and job reorganization, whether prompted by outsourcing or IT development. Generally change process of this sort is pragmatic, and it's difficult to identify transferable processes, templates, etc. Examples of projects don't generally find their way into the public domain, although the likelihood is increasing of government project pdf's becoming available on the web as this sort of information is increasingly required to be available to the public. IT vendor case studies and trade journals of the IT and outsourcing sectors can also provide indicators of best practice or transferable processes. There are some useful software tools now available, which are helpful, especially if the change involves a high level of complexity and a large scale.

As a broad guide when managing this sort of change, these aspects are important for the process:

- Really understand and clarify mutual expectations about the level of detail and cost that the project requires. Sometimes it's possible to see it what you need on a table napkin. The organisational context, and other strategic drivers, personalities and politics are often more significant influences than the task analysis.
- If you are a consultant or project manager, agree expectations on a pragmatic basis. Agree the templates and systems to be used and the the level of report data required for the decisions to be made.
- Assume that the situation can be improved - it generally can be, so while it's essential to capture all activities based on current jobs, many of these can be absorbed, superseded, updated, etc., when you begin to look at the ideal situation ('blank sheet of paper') possibilities, so;
- A new overview analysis enables fresh unencumbered look at the whole, which suggests new and better ways of doing things. A flip chart and a few creative minds are the main pre-requisites. It makes a great [workshop](#) session and is good for creating ownership and buy-in for major change. It's a good process also to cascade down to departments to bring out ideas for improved processes and new ways of doing things.
- In terms of capturing all current processes and inputs, the individual job analysis templates need to enable jobs to be broken down into sub-tasks, and elements within sub-tasks.
- This is a tricky one, and not practicable in certain X-Theory cultures, nevertheless, be aware of the high probability of upsetting people whose jobs are threatened by change and try to develop a way of anticipating and reducing damaging fall-out. Treat people at risk with the respect they deserve and avoid keeping them in the dark - involve threatened people wherever possible so they can see what's happening and why. If possible encourage the executive team to take the same humane approach, and try to establish counselling and support resources if none exist already.
- Analyses are more helpful if they identify critical vs essential task elements - this will help you to help the decision-makers to be more pragmatic (not least because by applying pressure to some of the 'essential' elements will reveal them to be habitual dispensable or traditional replaceable elements).
- Flow diagrams identify subtask linkage (inter and intra), variation and chronology.
- Behaviour needs identifying aside from processes.
- Standards, performance tolerance, % reliability, etc., should be indicated in task analysis as applicable to the sub-task or activity concerned.

Other Points About People And Change

Strong resistance to change is often rooted in deeply conditioned or historically reinforced feelings. Patience and tolerance are required to help people in these situations to see things differently. Bit by bit. There are examples of this sort of gradual staged change everywhere in the living world.

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[The Psychological Contract](#) is a significant aspect of change, and offers helpful models and diagrams in understanding and managing change - potentially at a very fundamental level.

Also, certain types of people - the reliable/dependable/steady/habitual/process-oriented types - often find change very unsettling.

People who welcome change are not generally the best at being able to work reliably, dependably and follow processes. The reliability/dependability capabilities are directly opposite character traits to mobility/adaptability capabilities.

Certain industries and disciplines have a high concentration of staff who need a strong reliability/dependability personality profile, for example, health services and nursing, administration, public sector and government departments, utilities and services; these sectors will tend to have many staff with character profiles who find change difficult.

See the personality styles page to help understanding about different types of people.

Age is another factor. Erik Erikson's fascinating Psychosocial Theory is helpful for understanding that people's priorities and motivations are different depending on their stage of life.

The more you understand people's needs, the better you will be able to manage change.

Be mindful of people's strengths and weaknesses. Not everyone welcomes change. Take the time to understand the people you are dealing with, and how and why they feel like they do, before you take action.

Business Development Driven Change

Business development potentially includes everything involved with the quality of the business or the organization. Business development planning first requires establishing the business development aims, and then formulating a business development strategy, which would comprise some or all of the following methods of development.

- sales development
- new product development
- new market development
- business organization, shape, structure and processes development (eg, outsourcing, e-business, etc)
- tools, equipment, plant, logistics and supply-chain development
- people, management and communications (capabilities and training) development
- strategic partnerships and distribution routes development

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- international development
- acquisitions and disposals

Generally business development is partly scientific, and partly subjective, based on the feelings and wishes of the business owners or CEO. There are so many ways to develop a business which achieve growth and improvement, and rarely is just one of these a single best solution. Business development is what some people call a 'black art', ie., difficult to analyse, and difficult to apply a replicable process.

Fast Changing Environments

Planning, implementing and managing change in a fast-changing environment is increasingly the situation in which most organizations now work.

Dynamic environments such as these require dynamic processes, people, systems and culture, especially for managing change successfully, notably effectively optimising organizational response to market opportunities and threats.

Key elements for success:

- Plan long-term broadly - a sound strategic vision, not a specific detailed plan (the latter is impossible to predict reliably). Detailed five years plans are out of date two weeks after they are written. Focus on detail for establishing and measuring delivery of immediate actions, not medium-to-long-term plans.
- Establish forums and communicating methods to enable immediate review and decision-making. Participation of interested people is essential. This enables their input to be gained, their approval and commitment to be secured, and automatically takes care of communicating the actions and expectations.
- Empower people to make decisions at a local operating level - delegate responsibility and power as much as possible (or at least encourage people to make recommendations which can be quickly approved).
- Remove (as far as is possible) from strategic change and approval processes and teams (or circumvent) any ultra-cautious, ultra-autocratic or compulsively-interfering executives. Autocracy and interference are the biggest obstacles to establishing a successful and sustainable dynamic culture and capability.
- Encourage, enable and develop capable people to be active in other areas of the organization via 'virtual teams' and 'matrix management'.
- Scrutinise and optimise ICT (information and communications technology) systems to enable effective information management and key activity team-working.
- Use workshops as a vehicle to review priorities, agree broad medium-to-long-term vision and aims, and to agree short term action plans and implementation method and accountabilities.
- Adjust recruitment, training and development to accelerate the development of people who contribute positively to a culture of empowered dynamism.

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'Troubleshooting' Tips For Investigating Apparent Poor Performance

If you are ever give the job of 'troubleshooting' or investigating (apparent) poor performance, perhaps in another location or business belonging to your own organisation, or perhaps as a consultancy project, here are some simple tips:

Actually 'troubleshooting' isn't a great word - it scares people. Use 'facilitator' or 'helper' instead. It sets a more helpful and cooperative tone.

On which point, you could well find that the main issue will be people's resistance and defensiveness to someone coming in to their organisation do what you are doing. When you overcome that challenge, then you can start comparing what's happening with what the organisation sets out to do (mission, values, goals, priorities, targets, key performance indicators, processes, measures); how the people feel about things (staff turnover, retention, morale, attitudes); and how customers and suppliers feel about things too (actually go out and visit customers, and ex-customers particularly).

You must observe protocols very diligently - introduce yourself properly to people and explain who you are and what you are doing. Don't assume that your task gives you the right to be secretive, or to have access to anyone or anything without permission. Ask for help. Ask for introductions. Ask for permission. Be polite and courteous. Respect people more than you would do normally, because they will be sensitive, understandably so.

Look at the [Sharon Drew Morgen facilitation method](#), which helps with the style and approach you should use. You must aim to help, enable and facilitate discovery and clarity, not work in splendid isolation, as an outsider, who's come to 'sort things out'.

And then be led by the people there as to what can be improved. You should adopt the role of a researcher and enabler rather than a problem solver.

Plan lots of questions that will help people to tell you how they feel about things - customers and staff and suppliers - and what they think can be done to improve things.

Avoid asking 'why' unless they're really trusting you and working with you. Used early, 'why' puts people on the defence and you'll not find out anything.

Look at the [customer relationship materials](#) as well - customers will tell you what's best to focus on, and will give you an early opportunity to facilitate some improvement responses. Also look at the [employee motivation survey material](#).

It's likely that you'll have to write a report and recommendations afterwards, in which case try wherever possible to involve the people in what you say about them. Let there

be no surprises. Be constructive. Accentuate the positive. Be straight and open with people.

Enjoy the experience. Be respectful and helpful to people and they'll be respectful and helpful to you.