

Managing Change

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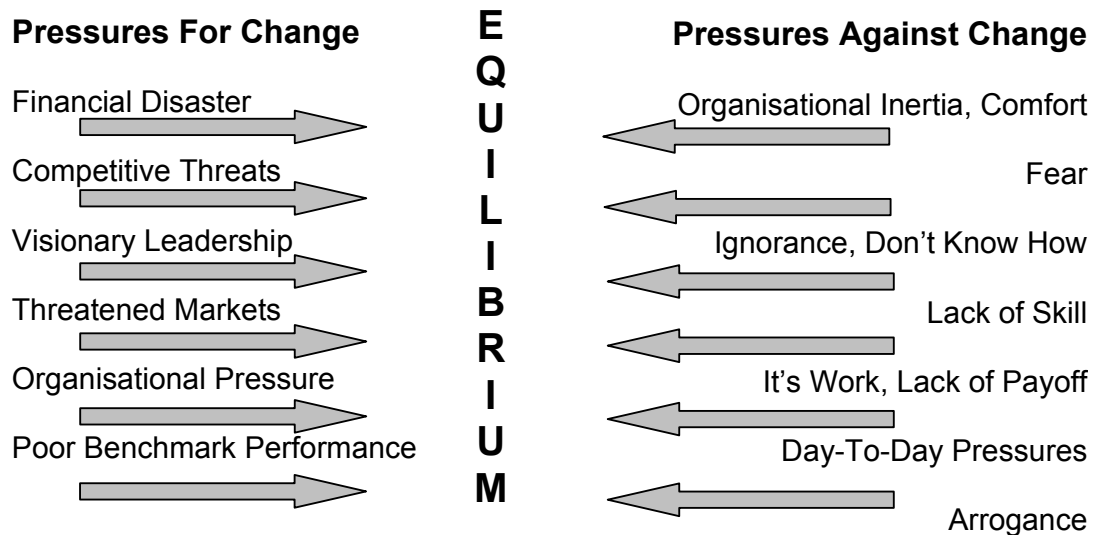
Lewin's Change Model

Kurt Lewin described the need for individuals to “unfreeze” behaviours before they could change. To unfreeze, an organisation needs to overcome those forces which are holding it in place and reinforce those forces which can move it ahead. Once freed from those restraining forces, the group is then able to make the desired change. When the change has been implemented, the organisation must then reapply or “refreeze” forces to ensure the change remains in effect over the long term.



Fogg's Strategic Change Model

Fogg built on Lewin's basic model and applied it to organizations. He identified there are forces which can both drive and restrain organisation's from making changes.



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Forces Which Drive Organisational Change

1. *Financial Disaster*: impending or current which forces a rethinking of business structures
2. *Competitive Threats*: either immediate or anticipated (who will be eating your lunch in 5 years?)
3. *Visionary Leadership*: which “sees” the challenges of the future business environment and is determined to meet it
4. *Pressure From Below*: focused on specific issues of local concern, it can force change upward
5. *Recognition of Poor Performance*: impossible to ignore, impelling leadership to examine reasons and seek solutions
6. *Threatened Markets*: which must be recognised and dealt with if the organisation is to survive

Forces Which Resist Organisational Change

1. *Organisational Inertia*: working from our comfort zones. Change disrupts established norms and routines – what we do and how we relate to one another
2. *Fear*: of the unknown, of being held accountable for results; of losing personal power; or prestige; etc...
3. *Ignorance*: of the external pressures that are driving change; of time and effort it takes to effect change; of how to do what is necessary; of interrelated roles in the change process; lack of information of management expectations
4. *Resistance*: to the extra paperwork and analysis; the physical, emotional and mental effort required to effect lasting change, particularly with individuals and organisations already suffering from the stress of change
5. *Perceived Lack of Payoff*: immediate or future; financial, psychological, or positional; the WIIFM factor (What’s In It For Me)
6. *Time*: additional time requirements on top of day to day running of the business, especially with organisations where resources are already stretched thin
7. *Arrogance or Cynicism*: an insular attitude, either toward management (we’ve tried this before, but it didn’t work or management didn’t follow through); or toward the market (we have a superior product and are unassailable in our business)

Adapted from:

Lewin, K. et al (1958) Group Decision and Social Change, in E.E. Maacoby et al., Readings in Social Psychology (3rd Ed), Holt Reinhart and Winston, New York.

Fogg, C.D. (1994) *Team Based Strategic Planning: a complete guide to structuring, facilitating and implementing the process*. American Management Association: New York.

Kubler-Ross Cycle of Change

Change is not an “organisational” event – it is something that happens to individuals and has an impact on each person in the organisation. The bigger the organisation, the more difficult it is to quickly get everyone over the changes and back on track focusing on the customer and the product. This change model is based on the Kubler-Ross grief cycle originally used in counseling the terminally ill, but since expanded to explain many life-changing events.

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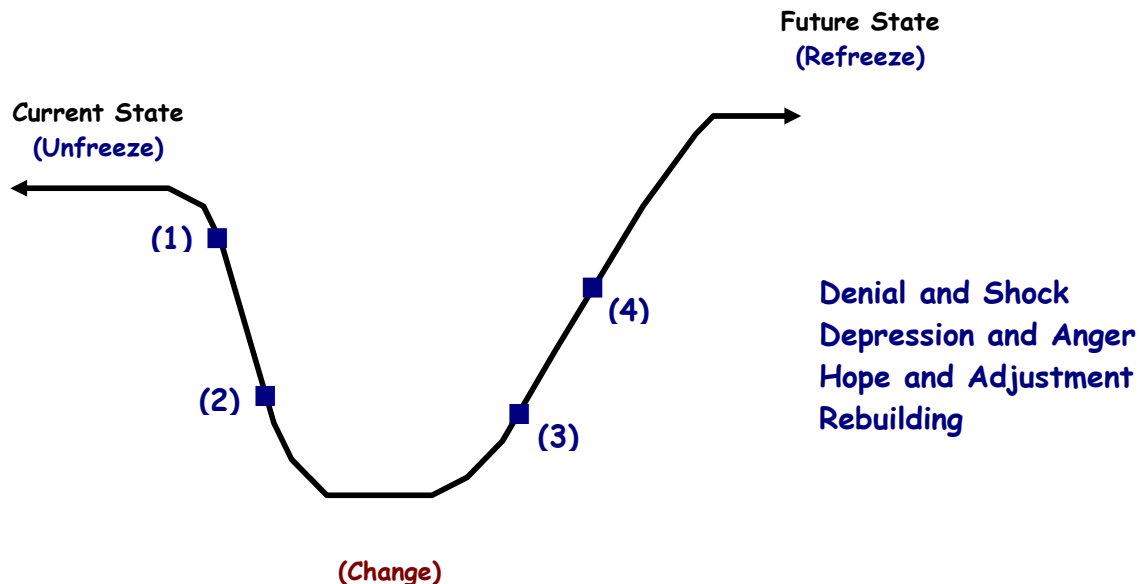
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You must manage and come to accept the change yourself first, only then can you help others through the process. The question is not if each employee will go through the cycle, but when, for how long and to what extent. Everyone progresses through these four stages at their own pace and in their own way, some manage it more easily than others and some don't ever make it.

Most managers are skilled in telling employees what to do, but telling employees about the change process only sets off the first step in the journey. It is a journey that once started, must be seen through to its conclusion – there can be no turning back. Make certain that this change is necessary and you know exactly what you want:

- Consult widely with stakeholders before you begin
- Articulate the new vision, strategies and desired outcomes
- Set up an effective change management structure
- Identify what you must do to “unfreeze” the organisational constraints that are keeping you in your current state

Cycle of Change



1) Denial and Shock - Tell Them

To manage change effectively, you must be prepared to give advance notice and clear expectations regarding your desired changes. In the initial weeks, you must be available and accessible to others to repeat the desired change and its rationale. How many times do you repeat the message? As often as it takes to get it across. All members of the change team must have the same vision for the future and explain it in the same terms to minimise confusion and doubt.

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At first, employees will choose to not believe the message. If the change team is successful in conveying its message, this will be followed by a realisation that the change is inevitable and the shock that it will impact directly on them.

2) Depression and Anger - Listen and Explain

Employees become angry and depressed that their work life is changing and that they will have little if any control over these changes. If you make the mistake of trying to change the message or reverse the changes at this point, it usually creates more confusion, more anger and more despair and deepens the negative impact further. What helps people out of this stage is:

- Asking questions
- Listening to concerns
- Empathising with their concerns
- Constantly explaining the vision and its significance

Depression and resistance to change are normal and to be expected. The worst thing a manager can do is to isolate themselves from their employees, ignore or trivialise their concerns. The more reluctance or resistance you display, the more your employees will resist the changes you are trying to implement.

3) Hope and Adjustment - Ask and Involve

You must clarify each person's new role and their required new norms of behaviour. This is seldom a quick and clean process, but takes time and commitment from both the employees and management. Leaders must be persistent in implementing, correcting and improving the changes as the new organisation unfolds. Find ways to gain maximum involvement, identifying the WIIFM (What's In It For Me) for each employee. Their involvement in this stage of the change process is essential to building hope and commitment. Engage them in determining "how" the changes should be implemented - "what" needs changing should have been determined collaboratively prior to starting!

4) Rebuilding - Direct

To build a critical mass that "freezes" the changes in place, you need to set new goals (SMART ones) based on the outcomes you desire. Careful attention must be made to review and adjust actions and goals to ensure they are achieved. "Pick low fruit" – achieving and celebrating early successes so that employees can see a clear payoff from their efforts. Make a special effort to review the journey, how far you have come and the special efforts of those who have made it possible, your employees.

Adapted from:

Kubler-Ross, E. (1969) *On Death and Dying*, MacMillan, New York.

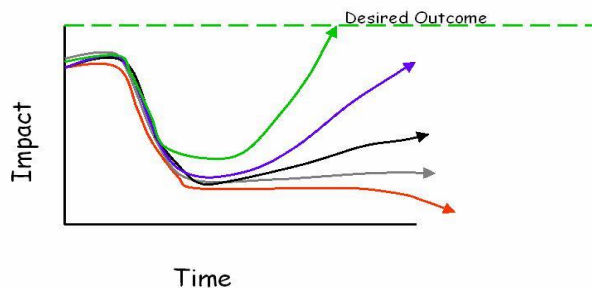
Lynn, Joanne; Harrold, Joan (1999) *Handbook for Mortals: Guidance for People Facing Serious Illness*, Oxford University Press, London.

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Effective Leadership

5 Change Outcomes



Visionary Leadership
Serious Effective Leadership
Mediocre Management
Going Out of Business

It is a myth that employees and organisations resist change – people will support change if they see it is in their own and the organisation's best interest to do so. The most successful change programs will always meet these two criteria:

- 1 They are in alignment with both employee and organisational values
- 2 They create real financial value for the organisation

It is inevitable that everyone will go through some sense of loss associated with stages 1 & 2 in the Change Cycle (Denial, Shock, Depression, Anger). The more value employees see in the change process, the more willing they will be to support it.

However, the length of time you spend at each stage and the successful negotiation of stages 3 & 4 (Hope, Adjustment, Rebuilding) are dependent upon successful leadership of the change process. Effective leadership throughout the change process is not an option – it is absolutely essential.

For more information on how to effectively implement change programmes within your organisation, contact CoWorking Solutions directly.

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