Leading change

"The way to get good ideas is to get lots of ideas and throw the bad ones away".

Linus Pauling

"The world fears a new experience more than it fears anything. Because a new   experience displaces so many old experiences ….The world doesn't fear a new idea. It can pigeon-hole any idea. But it can't pigeon-hole a real new experience"

D.H. Lawrence

"Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everybody gets busy on the proof".

J.K. Galbraith

"It should be borne in mind that there is nothing more difficult to handle, more doubtful of success, and more dangerous to carry through than initiating changes in a state's constitution. The innovator makes enemies of all those who prospered under the old order, and only lukewarm support is forthcoming from those who would prosper under the new. Their support is lukewarm partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the existing laws on their side, and partly because men are generally incredulous, never really trusting new things unless they have tested them by experience".

Niccolo Machiavelli 1513 – The Prince
(Translation: George Bull, Penguin, 1961)

"The overall aim of managerial work is to create public value…"

Mark Moore, author of Creating Public Value

"The manager, in today's world, doesn't get paid to be a *steward of resources*, a favoured term not so many years ago. He or she gets paid for one and only one thing – to make things better (incrementally and dramatically), to change things, to act – today".

Tom Peters co-author of 'In Search of Excellence'

What is change leadership?

Successful Change Leadership is about getting individuals and groups to do things differently, to change the way they behave and to implement the changes associated with new systems and processes. Any transformation programme will create significant organisational and individual change challenges.

Staff will quickly realise that their roles and responsibilities are going to change significantly, and that job shifts may result. It is vital for the leaders managing the change to understand the human dynamics of change and to take account of these in their planning and implementation. This task is particularly challenging as people respond both on a rational and emotional basis.

The recent work of Kotter and Cohen (see separate handout) shows that a "people-driven" approach to dealing with the challenges is required for truly successful change results. They contrast this with the more traditional approach to change, which emphasises analysis and thinking as the key factors involved in delivering change. With this approach the focus is on providing people with an analysis of the current position and the benefits of change. Information is gathered and analysed, reports are written, and presentations are made. The expected result is that the information and analysis will change people's thinking and, in turn, these new thoughts will lead to changed behaviour or will reinforce changed behaviour.
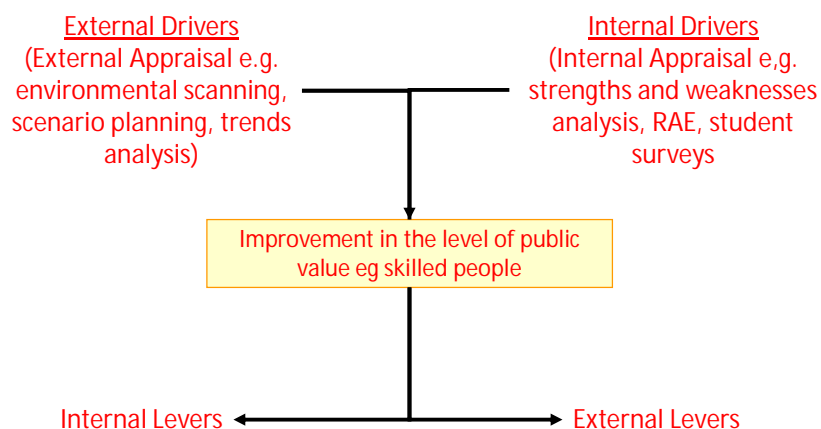
A people-driven approach focuses on helping them to see and feel the change. Compelling, eye-catching, dramatic situations are created to help others visualise challenges and solutions. This visual connection means that seeing something new hits people on a deeper, emotional level. This helps reduce emotions that block change and enhance those that support it. As a result emotionally charged ideas change behaviour or reinforce changed behaviour

In the most successful change cases, individuals have a sense of passion. On the other hand, where change is less successful, individuals tend to intellectualise the change.

How do leaders create additional public value?

Firstly, leaders need to be aware of, and utilise, the internal and external levers that are available in a given situation for driving forward change. Then they need to get people focused on what the organisation does and how it can produce social outcomes more effectively and efficiently. Finally, the change initiative should be outcome-focused and concerned with how people can do things differently to produce more, or better, results. A useful approach here is to connect together value chains internally and externally so that the concept of genuine customer service can be replicated throughout the organizations operations and relationships.

Change levers for improvement

External Drivers
(External Appraisal e.g. environmental scanning, scenario planning, trends analysis)

Internal Drivers
(Internal Appraisal e,g. strengths and weaknesses analysis, RAE, student surveys

Improvement in the level of public value eg skilled people

Internal Levers ← → External Levers

| Potential internal change levers	Potential external change levers
- reframe & develop the corporate values/philosophy/culture - investigate and alter information/knowledge management systems - explore and re-frame the 'psychological contract' *(see separate handout)* - development new skills (e.g. inter-personal/technical/professional and relating to improvement tools and techniques) - alter the organisational structure (e.g. who reports to whom, how decisions are made, which decisions are made where, re-visiting roles and responsibilities) - review what is measured (bearing in mind that 'what you measure is what you get') - change organisational objectives/corporate strategy – overall & by function/unit - develop management teams in the required change-related skills - identify and re-design key work processes. - develop systems/procedures/channels for dialogue (internal & external communication strategies) - listening and responding to the voices of users, wider communities, partners, staff and other key stakeholders - review and develop reward/recognition systems (formal and informal) - influence the Research & Development agenda/develop Evidence-based practice - integrate the change objectives into training and development strategy, and performance management processes - create new policies and practice guides for better corporate coordination, resource use and resource generation - improve strategic & service planning.	- create 'living' whole system strategies - redesign inter-agency processes - establish new 'joined-up' units/structures - adjust organisation roles & responsibilities - audit what gets measured by external stakeholders (bearing in mind that 'what you measure is what you get') - join up information and knowledge systems - audit and develop organisational strategies - Cross-fertilisation of professional knowledge – e.g. through mentoring, job exchange, joint training - tackle 'partnership blight' - agree the 'rules of engagement' - join up budgets - additional & core funding - review internal protocols for management recruitment, promotion and development - review staff training and development overall - technical & interpersonal - establish joint arrangements for engaging with partners and other external stakeholders - develop new forms of joined-up leadership: - encourage openness and learning - media confidence - discourage parochialism - increase understanding of other services/professions - be wary of being risk averse - create joint appointments between agencies - harness diversity in all senses.

Getting the whole system into the room

Working with individual responses to change

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' work on the Transition Curve is now well-known. Being an effective change manager means understanding our own and others' reactions to change, and recognising that individuals start the process at different times, often experience different shaped curves and take different amounts of time in transition. Handling change effectively as a leader means responding in different ways at different stages to different people's reactions. What leaders do affects the shape and length of the curve for each person.

The Transition Curve
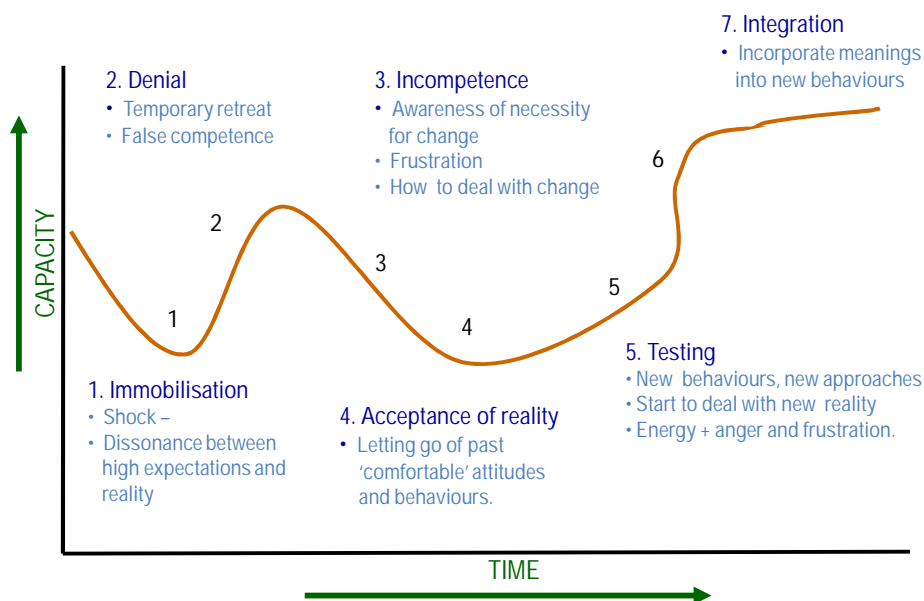
What becomes crucial is how leaders use this model to take action to support people through their own reactions to change.

Transition – reactions and actions

	Typical reaction	*Management action*
Numbness & denial	shock feeling overwhelmed mismatch between expectations and reality withdrawal minimisation of change building up defences activity without achievement	inform individuals of change ensure they understand it will happen explain what to expect give them time to take it in arrange a planning session
Depression & acceptance	self doubt, anger, blame depression, frustration fear, uncertainty powerlessness & hopelessness beginning of letting go of the past sense of 'I will survive this' what next?	acknowledge feelings listen, encourage to talk support
Testing & searching for meaning	uncertainty, confusion and excitement new behaviours high energy – some frustration organise into categories shift towards understanding palpable sense of a new future finding an easy fit (more testing)	lead planning sessions set short term objectives focus on priorities provide training
Integration	people start working together cooperation & collaboration positive attitudes understanding is internalised new behaviours become natural positive frame of mind – shaping the future.	establish vision set long term goals team building

Behaviours that help oneself….

- Try to take one transition at a time
- Avoid blaming or punishing yourself
- Watch for 'mental loops'
- Think about what is happening
- Treat yourself
- Make decisions when you have to – avoid overload or being pushed into decisions
- Assert your need to take things slowly
- Make lists – download your thoughts
- Remember – time does help
- When you are ready – start building a new future
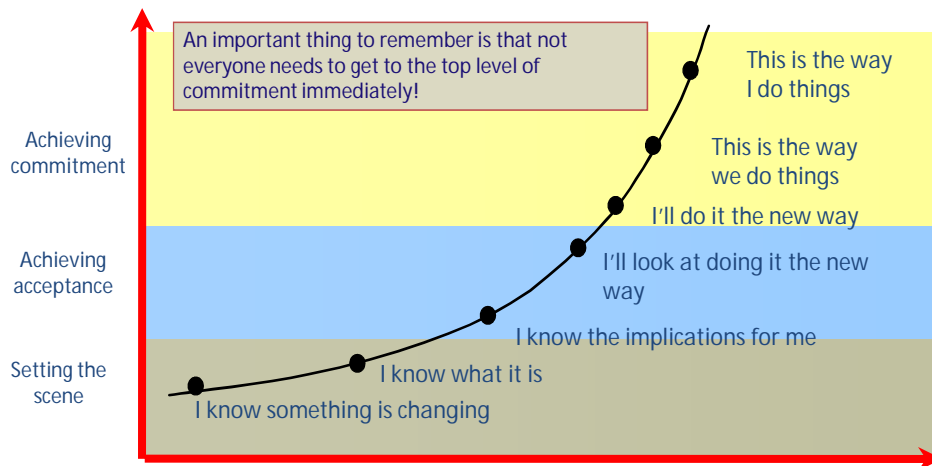
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The Commitment Curve

Different stages of change that people go through for sustainable transformation

Achieving commitment

Achieving acceptance

Setting the scene

An important thing to remember is that not everyone needs to get to the top level of commitment immediately!

This is the way I do things

This is the way we do things

I'll do it the new way

I'll look at doing it the new way

I know the implications for me

I know what it is

I know something is changing

Tips for managing resistance to change

There are 4 main sources of resistance to change: cognitive, ideological, psychological and power-driven. Managing these is at the heart of all stakeholder management.

How to recognise the signs of cognitive resistance…

- Will say: "The organisation is changing on a continuous basis"

- Do not see themselves as resisters to change: "I'm right, you're wrong; why don't you change?"

- Fight passionately with rational arguments

- Attack and destroy diagnosis or action plan by engaging in endless debates

- Persistent – depending on the change leader's credibility

Hints on managing cognitive resistance…

- Listen with an open mind to arguments presented

- Incorporate valid and compatible points in refined diagnosis or course of action

- Work at broadening the support for the diagnosis

- Enlist credible spokespeople

- Help senior management arrive by themselves at a compelling diagnosis and vision of the future

- Get "resistors" to make small commitments

How to recognise the signs of ideological resistance…

- Believe that the proposed change violates successful fundamental values

- Are nostalgic about the past success of a great institution

- Adapt with difficulty to change of "centre of gravity"

- Senior and middle managers with long tenure; can be very pervasive throughout the organisation

- Suffocate the change initiative through inertia, delays and moral advocacy

- Challenge the legitimacy of the change leader and of the whole

- Prevail if legitimacy of the change leader is at stake

- At their peak as soon as the vision becomes public

Hints on managing ideological resistance…

- Reformulate organisational strengths to fit the new direction

- Anchor your change in forgotten historical values

- Make the new values positive, engaging, uplifting

- Use symbolic skills but be ready to remove resisters

How to recognise the signs of psychological resistance…

- Attached to status quo

- Show low tolerance for ambiguity

- Mistrust the change sponsor / leader

- See the cost of the change initiative more than the benefits

- Have low confidence concerning their ability to implement the change initiative

- Experience personal insecurity (job security, morale) related to the change initiative

- Deny: "It's not going to happen!"

- Prominent at the implementation of the broad agenda for change

Hints on managing psychological resistance…

- Increase the perceived risk of maintaining the status quo

- Provide a vision, a business concept, to help people detach from the status quo

- Make clear "what's in it for me"

- Propose "role models"

- Stretch goals and performance expectations

- Make people participate in diagnosis

- Communicate the right information to the right people at the right time using the appropriate media

- Build in rewards for desired behaviours

- Show commitment to fairness and address concerns and questions

- Create ceremonies and rituals for early successes

Hints on managing power-driven resistance

- Build support with the senior executive group

- Increase your understanding of the "influence map"

- Increase management participation

- Use surveys and focus groups

- Bring high potentials on board, they may be subsequently given key roles in the new organisation

- Promote and hire people who are supportive and have the skills required by the new organisation

How to recognise the signs of power-driven resistance…

- Anticipate reduced status, authority and autonomy

- Could be misinterpreted as cognitive or ideological "resisters"

- Usually in the management ranks

- Over-compliant, passive-aggressive

- Take over change programmes, propose a "more effective" strategy

- Marginalise strategic initiative irrelevancy

- Prominent during the implementation of the action plan

What makes an effective change process?

Leading change effectively involves leaders taking responsibility for communicating about the future, as far as it can be known, and being clear about people's roles through and beyond the change process. Communication is a continuous process, involving dialogue about the change – not, for example, a "one-off" briefing about the key points. Leaders need to be visible and proactive, and continually create an awareness of the need for change. In maintaining an important and necessary focus on the future, leaders should be careful not to devalue or undermine the successes of the past. The world may have moved on requiring a new and different approach from the organisation – "rubbishing" the past and people's achievements to persuade them of the need for change is liable to undermine commitment to a new future.

People need time to disengage themselves from the past and think through how they can contribute to the future. Recognising their professionalism and integrity, and mobilising their expertise and experience for a renewed purpose can help in this process. Quick wins and symbolic actions and events can also help people to feel valued through the change process and see tangible results for their efforts.

OPM's 4-box model of change

Based on extensive experience of working across a range of public services OPM believes that there are 4 pre-requisites for successful change. Firstly, for change to happen there needs to be pressure in the system driving things to be different. This pressure can take many forms – government policy, additional or limited resources, service user feedback etc. – but if it is absent, the change initiative is liable to fall to the bottom of people's "to do" lists.

The second pre-requisite is a clear, shared vision for the change – a picture of the future that people can understand and work purposely towards. Without a vision the change programme will probably fizzle out after a period of time because people are not clear about where they are heading.

Change processes require resourcing, so the third factor is the capacity of the organisation to actually make the change happen, for example, people's expertise and experience, finance, facilities and equipment. There may, of course, be a need for some of these resources to change, for instance, new skills may be needed for the change to be a success. With inadequate capacity people are likely to become disheartened and frustrated, which in turn will undermine progress.

Finally, successful change requires clarity about actionable first steps – the initial actions that people need to take to get the change process moving. Without this clarity even very committed people may struggle and the change process will become haphazard and subject to false starts and cul-de-sacs.

Pre requisites of change

- Who feels the pressure?
- How to get the people who need to change to feel the pressure?
- Is the pressure sufficient and maintained?
- Surface problems v underlying causes?
- Can you introduce discomfort into the current system?
- What mindsets are used to make sense of it?

- Whose capacity; which individuals, groups; what types of capacity - professional, personal, change?
- Who assesses capacity? Who needs to recognise gaps?
- What do capacity problems tell us about workable change strategies?
- What mindset lay behind analysis?
- Resources: money, time, staff, equipment, facilities?

PRESSURE	**CAPACITY**
VISION	**FIRST STEPS**
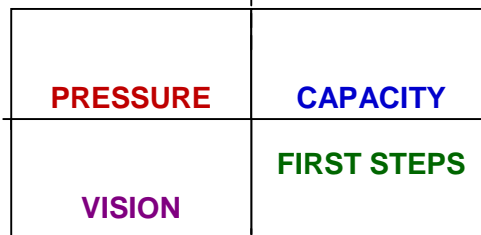
- Whose vision?
- How is it developed?
- How wide/ narrow?
- - what does it include?
- How aspirational (contrast with present) is the vision?
- What mindset lies behind the vision and how it is expressed?

- How are these chosen?
- Are there quick wins?
- What will work?
- Where to start?
- Who needs to be involved?
- How can we learn as we go?
- What mindsets underlie the analysis/ decisions?

Sources:

P. Kotter & D. Cohen, *The Heart of Change – Real-life Stories of How People Change their Organisations*, Harvard Business School Press, 2002

E. Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, MacMillan, 1969

Further reading:

M. Fullan, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, Jossey-Bass, 2004

M. Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*, Abacus, 2000