



A quick guide to change management

Change management is one of the most common challenges in the current corporate reality



Why does change management matter?

Change management is vital to mitigate risks and increase likelihood of a successful transformation for the organisation.

Organisations with lots of legacy systems are frequently in a continuous process of change, creating the risk of change fatigue as new structures are put in place.

Equally, young enterprises might struggle without effective change management as they grow from a flexible, agile small business into the one that would benefit from standardisation of processes.



DATA POINT:

Research from Willis Towers Watson found that highly effective change management and communication made a company 3.5x more likely to outperform less effective industry peers.



5 Top Tips:

1.

Build a strong vision.

A strong vision;

- Creates energy- it generates an excitement, a compelling spirit, and a powerful level of engagement.
- Provides perspective- illuminates the purpose. Employees see themselves as part of a larger whole and they see where they fit in. Day-to-day activities have more meaning.
- Supports empowerment- gives everyone assurance that they share direction and values.
- Sparks creativity- a big picture is now in front of everyone's eyes.

2.

Engage stakeholders

Identify the people who will be most affected by proposed changes and get them invested in the project. Be sure that they are willing to support the change.

3.

Listen and empathise

Get feedback. Spend time understanding emotional barriers to change. Help others find any positives – change cannot be landed with a negative.

4.

Communicate, communicate, communicate

Use town halls, emails, newsletters, intranet sites, videoconferencing, live demonstrations, coffee and cakes to share visions for change with as all employees.

5.

Don't forget about money

Transformation needs include budget provisions for change management. You cannot simply expect it to happen for free.



Change management at every level: Shifting the reputation of IT

Change management is not something reserved for big tent pole projects. It is a constant reality in businesses, and leadership needs to recognise that small changes like a new team member or manager could be more consequential for employees than a company-wide project.

Leaders should work to stamp out an unproductive approach “us vs. them”

Moments of change can be a great opportunity to establish your department’s reputation.

You should always be thinking about how best to connect with people around you.

Key Advice:

- Don’t waste your time on elements which are outside your control – focus on what you can influence and control.
- Take into account the different angles people have on an issue to drive lasting and impactful change.
- Introduce coaching to develop change management capabilities

DATA POINT:

According to the Harvey Nash Tech Survey 2019, there is a leadership crisis in the digital and tech space, with just 20% of employees feeling that leadership is very effective in creating a vision and strategy for their organisation.



Effective sponsorship

An essential part of successful change is making sure you have the right people on board to implement it. The change manager is not there to push through the change. He/she facilitates the change.

An active and visible primary sponsor is important to lend energy and charisma to a transformational project. They create a high profile for the change, motivate and inform others about the change's value. Related projects are then driven forward by a cascading coalition of supporters.

3 Top Tips:

- Be aware that a very senior primary sponsor may not be able to commit enough time. Have another sponsor who will be with you all the way through.
- Find change ambassadors within the middle management and make sure that they are empowered to facilitate the change.
- Build a change champion network to drive engagement and to encourage ambitious employees to distinguish themselves – organise events to highlight exceptional performers.

DATA POINT:

Research by Prosci found that 72% of respondents with an “extremely effective sponsor” met or exceeded their objectives. This compared to just 29% for those with a “very ineffective sponsor”.



People centric programme rescue

There are many routes to success. The huge amount of change theories out there should be treated as descriptive – not prescriptive – approaches to management. Indeed, there is no one reason why a transformation programme might fail. The most common threads include people not buying into where the organisation is going, individuals feeling consumed about what is expected of them, and people simply feeling unloved and undervalued.

Vigilance is needed for negative behaviours during change that might lead to ‘plots’ erupting like people being disrespectful and making unprofessional jokes in moments of fear; these behaviours risk sabotaging change and must be overcome to reach a productive environment where people can safely challenge, rethink and succeed.

When you are running a change programme, consider the full range of behaviours present in the

people involved. Some will have their job just for the pay cheque, others will be looking for a deeper sense of self-actualisation through their job. Only when you take into account all these different perspectives will you be able to build a composite engagement strategy. This is best achieved by constantly listening to concerns from every level of the organisation, laying the groundwork for effectively delivering the change.

Key Advice:

- Let people voice their recommendations and get negative emotions out.
- Always be mindful of of resources you have– organise the change around that.
- Carefully manage third party delivery by setting up contracts in line with change, establishing work they can be autonomous over and where direct accountability is needed.
- Establish objectives and measures for both the business and people who are working on the change – be prepared to potentially remove individuals who don’t deliver.



Managing complex change

Key Advice:

- **Get people committed to the project early on**, and call out those who fail to do so.
- **Pilots** can be effective here to transition people who perform one particular service in waves.
- **Engage in functional requirements** to get to grips with what the business really wants.
- Communication has to be non-stop, and **must not end on launch. Build a communication loop with employees**, perhaps through an internal online forum where people can ask awkward questions and comment.
- If you fail to get sponsorship for the change, **ask the hard questions**: is it still worth doing, is it producing a positive impact?

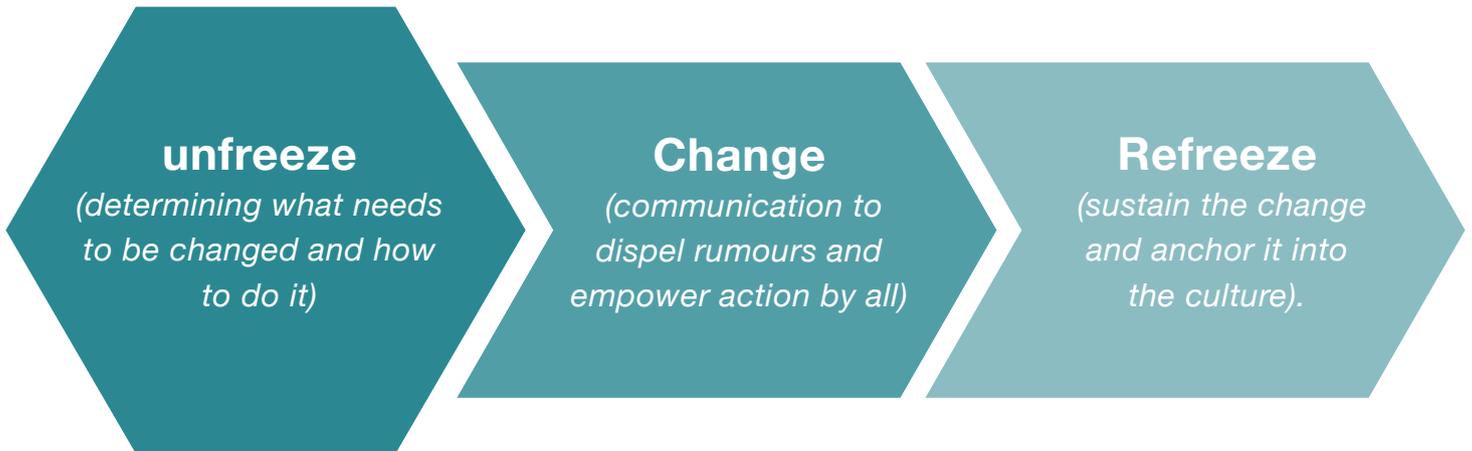


Change methodologies

Whether as a general guide to best practice or a more direct checklist to follow throughout the process, the host of change methodologies are there to help you find the best plan for your business' needs. It should be noted, however, that ticking off steps is not enough, and change leaders must inject every transformational project with drive and passion to ensure success.



Lewin's change model



The limited structure of this model is ill-suited for heavily legislated environments. However, it is ideal for agile, small projects

5 steps to successful transformation

- 1.** Anticipate what people are going to think/feel
- 2.** Design
- 3.** Engage
- 4.** Act (deliver and communicate on the changes)
- 5.** Sustain



ADKAR (Prosci)

Awareness
(communicate the reason to change to relevant people)

Desire
(build momentum behind change by addressing fears and justifying benefits of change)

Knowledge
(build up training)

Action
(new governance framework and adjust process)

Reinforcement



Three fundamentals of change management

When starting a change project, always go back to basics

1.

Start with the project name, crafting something that fits with the mission, vision, and culture you are in – naming can be a great formative moment to build engagement.

2.

This is followed by setting out the purpose (why we are changing), particulars (what is changing), and people (who will change). Asking why is particularly important to establish a powerful vision for a moment of change, producing an inspiring way forward that has clarity, simplicity, and clearly relates to the strategic goals of the organisation.

3.

Focus on the key tenet of change management: constant communication. Strive to be innovative. Break through the noise with powerful material such as leaflets, surveys, and immersive workshops. Crucially, only this hard work will lay the groundwork for someone to transform from another cog in the machine into an enthusiastic agent of change.

DATA POINT:

Statistically a message needs to be repeated five times to register with an individual, and it takes an average of 3 weeks to learn a new habit.

