

Review of Selected Readings on Organizational Change

Langley, G.J., Moen, R.D., Nolan, K.M., Nolan, T.W., Norman, C.L., Provost, L.P. (2009). *The improvement guide: A practical approach to enhancing organizational performance, second edition.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

While this book was not directly intended as a book about change it is in fact just that. Improvement by definition means change. An overview of the *The Model for Improvement* is introduced by the authors. This simple model has served as one the guiding frameworks for healthcare improvement efforts. Coupled with a Plan-Do-Study (PDSA) Cycle, it is based on three fundamental questions:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know that a change is an improvement?
- What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

The model is designed to be flexible and used in a variety of setting to inform plans for continuous improvement. In addition the book addresses common misconceptions and misuses of the model as well as explains the efficiency of its trial-and-learning methodology.

One beauty of this book is that the notion of “improvement” is often more palatable to people than the notion of “change.” Colleagues find a discussion of how something can be improved to be compatible with what professional people do all the time.

Atchinson, T.A., & Bujak, J.S. (2001). *Leading transformational change: The physician-executive partnership.* Chicago, IL: Health Administration Press.

This book explores ways physicians and executives can collaborate to improve human performance. The authors suggest that **building mutual trust and respect** is essential for any organization to succeed. Further, the book provides a unique model for managing change that reconciles the business aspects of healthcare with the values at the heart of medicine. The developmental sequence of the model is as followed:

- leadership drives corporate culture;
- when there is a strong corporate culture, personal investment can create a team spirit;
- and once there is a powerful sense of team,
- managing change will lead to intangible qualities.

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Barney, B.M., & Getz, I. (2009). *Freedom Inc.: Free your employees and let them lead your business to higher productivity, profits, and growth*. NY: Crown Business.

The authors propose that **leaders must create a trusting environment** to liberate the potential of its employees. They suggest that the **secrets of successful businesses are based on trust, nonhierarchial, liberated environments**. In order to build such an environment leaders need to:

- 1) Stop telling and start listening to their employees, and remove all the symbols and practices that prevent them from feeling intrinsically equal.
- 2) Start openly and actively sharing your vision of the company so people will feel ownership.
- 3) Stop trying to motivate people. Instead, focus on building an environment where people feel empowered and self-directed. This freedom will cultivate internal motivation.
- 4) Lastly, stay alert. In order to keep the organization free, the leader must become the culture keeper. In other words, the leader must keep their eye on sustaining an environment that will help their employees to grow.

Rosenberg, R. (1998). *Breaking out the change trap: A practical guide for organizational change*. Raleigh, NC: Banbury Press.

This book introduces the *Organizational Maturity* model. The author urges that “to achieve success in any change initiative, the degree and level of change must be geared to the level of readiness of the organization; if not, there is a mismatch and the initiative is destined to fail.” The *Organizational Maturity* is designed to allow you to perform a diagnosis of your organization’s readiness for change and to guide you in selecting an approach for change that will have the greatest possible chance for success. There are five characteristics of high-performance organizations:

- Vision;
- Management Involvement;
- Employee Empowerment;
- Customer Focus; Process Base

and three degrees of readiness (Firefighting; Emerging; Total Commitment).

Kotter, J.D. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

This book provides the vicarious experience and positive role models for leaders to emulate. It identifies an eight-step process, called the *Leading Change* model, that every company must go through to achieve its goal, and shows where and how people are often derailed. Specifically, the author, John Kotter, summarizes creating major change in eight main stages. Each stage is associated with fundamental errors that tend to undermine efforts. In general, the first four steps help defrost a hardened status quo. Phase five to seven introduce many new practices, and the last stage grounds the changes in corporate culture that helps to make them stick.

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| 1) Establishing a sense of urgency | 6) Generating short-term wins |
| 2) Creating a guiding coalition | 7) Consolidating gains and producing more change |
| 3) Developing a vision and strategy | 8) Anchoring the new approaches in the culture |
| 4) Communicating the change vision | |
| 5) Empowering broad-based action | |

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Kotter, J.D. (2008). *A sense of urgency*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

A follow-up to the *Leading Change* model by John Kotter, this book discusses in detail how to create sense of urgency which is known to be the toughest step in his eight-step framework. This book shows how urgency must become a core, sustained capability of organizations.

In general, the author posits:

- 1) To facilitate change of any magnitude a sense of urgency must be high and complacency low.
- 2) The leader needs to keep the pulse of complacency of his or her organization. Complacency is common in organizations that have experienced years of prosperity. Future success of the organization may be stifled if complacency at the lower levels goes unrecognized.
- 3) A false sense of urgency, often driven by fear, anxiety, and frustration, creates a dysfunctional orientation that prevents people from taking advantage of key opportunities.
- 4) People mistaking false urgency for real urgency also creates problems and failures not unlike what would happen if they were surrounded by complacency.
- 5) Strategies to recognize false urgency and complacency that are known to plague organizations are presented in this book.
- 6) Keeping urgency up in an environment where a constant state of flux is becoming the norm.

Barger, N.J., & Kirby, L.K. (1995). *The challenge of change in organizations: Helping employees thrive in the new frontier*. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.

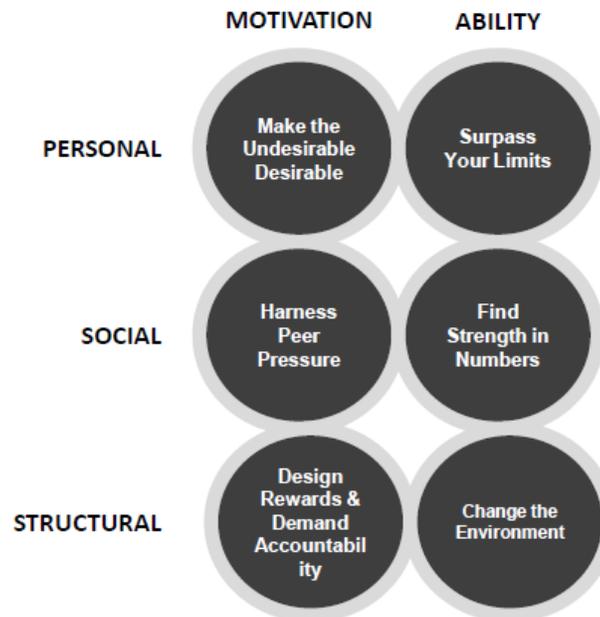
The authors are inclusive of all levels of an organization affected by change. The book provides practical tools for people at all organizational levels to function more effectively in what can sometimes be a chaotic and confusing work environment. The authors apply the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators (MBTI) to better understand how individual preferences contribute to making organizations more effective unit. They also use metaphors to illustrate organizational change.

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Patterson, K., Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., McMillian, R., & Switzler, A. (2008). *Influencer: The power to change anything*. NY: McGraw-Hill.

Offering examples of powerful influencers around the world, this book illustrates how leaders can identify behaviors and strategies used to leverage change initiatives. Authors depict six sources of influence using a model that subdivides motivation and ability domains. The model helps influencers to identify the type of motivation needed in order to cultivate change.



Quinn, R.E. (1996). *Deep change: Discovering the leader within*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Robert Quinn demonstrates the crucial importance of deep change as a path to self-understanding and the key to revitalization of the individual and organization. In order to transform from victims to powerful change agents, he claims the reader must begin to see themselves and their organizations in new and productive ways. It is divided into four sections that could stand alone as individual tools for change. However, read in its entirety the book explores the process of deep change and the development of internally driven leadership. In general the four sections explore:

- 1) The meaning of deep change;
- 2) The necessity to transform self before confronting deep change dilemmas found in the environment;
- 3) Insights in gaining a transformational perspective of the environment; and
- 4) Ways to find, develop, evaluate, and communicate a vision that will move others to their highest level of excellence.

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Quinn, R.E. (2000). *Change the world: How ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary results*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

As follow-up to *Deep Change*, Quinn informs his readers about the process of transforming human systems using principles inspired by teachings of Jesus, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. He introduces the *Advance Change Theory (ACT)* as four transforming strategies that can invoke change among individual relationships or entire organizations. Each strategy is increasingly difficult to achieve. Below is a general overview of each stage:

Level 4: The Transforming Strategy (ACT)

Method: Transcend Self; emphasis on emerging reality

Level 3: The Participating Strategy

Method: Open dialogue: Emphasize on relationship

Level 2: The Force Strategy

Method: Leveraging Behavior; emphasis on authority

Level 1: The Telling Strategy

Method: Rational persuasion: emphasis on facts

Bridges, W. (1991). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing.

The author makes a very clear distinction between “change” and “transition.” *“It is not the changes that do you in, it’s the transitions. Change is not the same as transition. Change is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external; transition is internal (page 3).”*

The author provides tactics to help your team transition through stages of change. The book is organized in four parts: 1) identifies common struggles that organizations face, 2) offers practical approaches to addressing these struggles, 3) offers ways to deal with constant change, both personally and at the organizational level, and 4) by using a test case, illustrates how tactics can be implemented.

Blanchard, K., & Britt, J., Hoekstra, J., & Zigarmi, P. (2009). *Who killed change?* NY: Polvera.

Blanchard and associates provide a step-by-step guide to help evaluate the health of your organization’s change initiatives, and suggests best practices for enabling and sustaining change. The book gives readers specific areas in which they should look for roadblocks in their change initiative.

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| 1) Environmental culture | 7) Budget |
| 2) Commitment | 8) Trainer |
| 3) Sponsorship | 9) Incentive |
| 4) Change leadership team | 10) Performance management |
| 5) Vision | 11) Accountability |
| 6) Plan | |

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Bennis, W.G., Benne, K.D., Chin, R., & Corey, K.E. (1976). *The planning of change, third edition*. NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.

This textbook highlights seminal theories in the change literature. Published in the mid-70s, the third edition brought together some of the most current conceptualizations of utilization and change processes of the time. It also added to the knowledge based regarding the diagnostics and intervention aspects of planned change.

Heath, C., Heath, D. (2010). *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard*. NY: Random House, Inc.

Switch asks the following question: Why is it so hard to make lasting changes in our companies, in our communities, and in our own lives? The primary obstacle, say the Heaths, is a conflict that's built into our brains. Psychologists have discovered that our minds are ruled by two different systems—the rational mind and the emotional mind—that compete for control. The rational mind wants a great beach body; the emotional mind wants that Oreo cookie. The rational mind wants to change something at work; the emotional mind loves the comfort of the existing routine. This tension can doom a change effort—but if it is overcome, change can come quickly. In order to bring about change, the Heaths suggest that you need to do three things: Direct the rider, motivate the elephant and shape the path. The Heath brothers derived their analogies about change from Jonathan Haidt's book, *The Happiness Hypotheses*.

Haidt said that our emotional side is an Elephant, and our rational side is its Rider. The Rider, perched atop the Elephant, holds the reins and seems to be the leader. The Rider's control is precarious, though, because he's so tiny relative to the Elephant. Anytime the 6-ton Elephant disagrees with the direction, the Rider is going to lose. He's completely overmatched.

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Jaffe, D.T., Scott, C. (2003). *Mastering the Change Curve Facilitator Guide*, 2nd Edition. King of Prussia: HRDQ.

The following two summaries offer practical strategies for addressing “self” and “leader” issues for each stage in the *Change Curve*.

Mastering the Change Curve – Self

Denial

- Take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, actions...your attitude toward the change.
- Evaluate your attitude...why do you feel the way you do.
- Change your attitude by changing your thoughts (i.e., “play” the opposites game).
- Work on getting the right perspective: look at the whole picture; look at the problem; take a close look at yourself; take a long, close look at the people who are successful in embracing the change; look at the possibilities the change presents.

Resistance

- Turn your negative self-talk in positive self-talk.
- Focus on what you can achieve, not on what you can't (or think you can't).
- Think about/analyze the reason for your resistance.
- Ask questions to determine if your reasons are founded.
- Decide what you are not willing to change (i.e., your values).
- Write down what you will hold on to, no matter what, and think about why each item is on that list. Once you do that, everything else should be open to change.

Exploration

- Try different/new approaches to accomplishing a task or achieving a goal.
- Learn from mistakes.
- Ask questions.
- Stay focused on the vision/mission/goal.
- Approach the change/change process in “chunks”, it won't be so overwhelming.
- Focus on the skills you bring to this “new way of doing things”.

Commitment

- Celebrate successes – yours and others.
- Focus on what actions/behaviors helped you through the change.
- Identify specific actions you will take for the next change to help make the transition smoother.
- Identify challenges you encountered and how you will overcome them “the next time”.

Mastering the Change Curve – Leader

Denial

- Communicate clearly, simply and often WHY the change is necessary and the consequences for the organization of not changing.
- Acknowledge and respect that some will see the change as a loss (loss of identity, status, control, expertise achieved over time, etc.).
- Provide as many details as possible, including time-lines (sends the message This is Happening).
- Provide information on the change process itself (how the change was decided on, how it will be evaluated, and the time table for the change).
- Provide a clear picture (as clear as possible) of what things will be like after the change.
- Ask people to share their thoughts/feelings about the change. Don't try to defend, just listen.
- Deal "head-on" with any negative aspects for the organization, department, or individual.

Resistance

- Understand and respect that change is an emotional issue for people, not an intellectual one, and that once they accept that the change is going to happen the first question will be W.I.I.F.M. (what's in it for me).
- Get to the root of the resistance.
- Allow people time to grieve and to vent frustrations.
- Continue to communicate the "why" of the change.
- Ask for their ideas, get them involved, and incorporate as many of their ideas as possible.
- Provide the resources necessary to make the change happen.
- Continue to communicate the change vision.
- Breakdown the change into manageable pieces.
- Remove as many barriers as possible.
- Remind people that they didn't always know how to do what it is they do now; that you know it will take (and will plan for) training/ learning curve if new skills are required.
- Help people understand how their skills will transfer.
- Talk about what isn't ending.

Exploration

- Encourage people to try out new ideas, to be creative.
- Communicate progress of the change initiative, keeping the change vision in the forefront.
- Set milestones and celebrate reaching them.
- Anchor the changes into existing processes/create new processes.
- Ensure that people continue to have the time to practice new skills.
- Continue to involve people in how the change is implemented.
- Be open to different ways of accomplishing goals.

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Commitment

- Celebrate successes, including working through the change initiative.
- Provide information/details on how their efforts and their work have moved the organization toward the change vision.
- Solidify the changes so that they become the “new way of doing things”.
- Spend time discussing what worked in getting through the change, what didn’t, and what to focus on/do/do differently for the next change.

HOW TO MAKE A SWITCH

For things to change, somebody somewhere has to start acting differently. Maybe it's you, maybe it's your team.

Picture that person (or people).

Each has an emotional Elephant side and a rational Rider side. You've got to reach both. And you've also got to clear the way for them to succeed. In short, you must do three things:

→ DIRECT the Rider

FOLLOW THE BRIGHT SPOTS. Investigate what's working and clone it. [Jerry Sternin in Vietnam, solutions-focused therapy]

SCRIPT THE CRITICAL MOVES. Don't think big picture, think in terms of specific behaviors. [1% milk, four rules at the Brazilian railroad]

POINT TO THE DESTINATION. Change is easier when you know where you're going and why it's worth it. ["You'll be third graders soon," "No dry holes" at BP]

→ MOTIVATE the Elephant

FIND THE FEELING. Knowing something isn't enough to cause change. Make people feel something. [Piling gloves on the table, the chemotherapy video game, Robyn Waters's demos at Target]

SHRINK THE CHANGE. Break down the change until it no longer spooks the Elephant. [The 5-Minute Room Rescue, procurement reform]

GROW YOUR PEOPLE. Cultivate a sense of identity and instill the growth mindset. [Brasilata's "inventors," junior-high math kids' turnaround]

→ SHAPE the Path

TWEAK THE ENVIRONMENT. When the situation changes, the behavior changes. So change the situation. [Throwing out the phone system at Rackspace, 1-Click ordering, simplifying the online time sheet]

BUILD HABITS. When behavior is habitual, it's "free"—it doesn't tax the Rider. Look for ways to encourage habits. [Setting "action triggers," eating two bowls of soup while dieting, using checklists]

RALLY THE HERD. Behavior is contagious. Help it spread. ["Fataki" in Tanzania, "free spaces" in hospitals, seeding the tip jar]

(One-page overview of the book *Switch* from: www.switchbook.com/resources)