LEADING CHANGE

Rotary

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Description

Have you ever introduced a new initiative at an organization and tried to build support for it? Have you known that you needed new technology at work, and had to explain to others what it would mean to them?

Every organization must adapt and evolve to stay effective and relevant, but change isn't always easy. In this course, you'll learn the basics of how to manage change, including how to succeed in leading it, how to assess people's readiness to make changes, how to plan for change, and how to respond to any resistance.

CONTENT

Change is constant

Successful organizations constantly change. They do so to become more efficient, meet new goals, or improve their customers' experience. Whether or not you were one of the people who called for change, you may be asked to implement it. Leading any change, large or small, can be intimidating. The good thing is that implementing change isn't the job of just one person — it's a team effort. Managing change successfully means supporting people through it.

Change leaders guide people through the transition from where they are to where they need to be — which means getting people to think or act differently.

What is a change leader?

Implementing change well requires a leader, or a group of leaders, to promote the benefits of the change and help others through the process. Many types of leaders can do this, and they can do it in several ways.

Consider the attributes of successful leaders of change:

- Change leaders have a vision. They see a future in which the organization is more successful, more efficient, or more effective — and they have ideas about how to make that happen.

- Change leaders connect people, build teams, and encourage collaboration across traditional boundaries. They think in terms of the organization, not themselves.

- Change leaders can motivate and inspire people and help others succeed.

- Change leaders are strong communicators. They can explain the benefits of adopting the change and how it will affect people.

- Change leaders are organized and detailed in their planning.

- Change leaders are empathetic. They can understand what their team members are feeling or experiencing, which helps them make better decisions for the group.

These are only a few characteristics of someone capable of leading people through a transition. Consider which attributes you have. Which are your strengths? Which could you improve upon?

Are you ready to lead a change in your organization? If so, start by thinking about the people that you'll be supporting. In the next lesson, you'll learn how to assess their readiness for a transition.

Assessing People's Readiness for Change

Are we ready for change?

A change leader isn't transforming an organization or company but reorienting the attitudes and behaviors of people. To do this well, leaders need to address the personal and emotional changes that people experience when they need to adapt to new ways of thinking or acting.

The desire to make changes must be shared by more than just the people at the highest levels of the organization. Progress and growth happen only when people at all levels agree that they want change and are ready to shift how they do things.

People approach change in different ways. Some like to be the first to own the newest piece of technology or to adopt new ideas. They can be great champions for change and help an organization move closer to its goals. Others are less ready for change. They might be wary about how it might affect them.

Ask yourself: Am I ready for change?

Think about how you approach change. How would you assess your own readiness?

Change is exciting!
I am an early adopter and find the prospect of change to be energizing. I can often inspire others to embrace new ideas.

If I'm motivated, I adopt new ideas
I might hesitate, but when I understand how I will benefit, I'm likely to support the change. I won't be the first one to adapt, but I will eventually.

I do not adopt change easily
I'm wary of new initiatives and generally prefer that things stay the same.

No matter where you are on the spectrum, you'll have to work with people who are more — and less — ready than you are. Being aware of your own readiness for change can improve the way you approach each member of the team.

Are you generally reluctant to adopt change? As a leader of this initiative, you'll empathize with those who are fearful or nervous. Help them see the vision of the plan and how they'll benefit from it, and encourage them to stay positive.

Are you an early adopter? You might need to begin at a slower pace than feels natural to ensure you don't leave anyone behind. Remember to be patient with those who are struggling. Tap into your enthusiasm to excite others.

Are you somewhere in between? Great! Empower the early adopters on your team to build enthusiasm among the group. Remind the more reluctant people of the positive outcomes that you are working toward and reassure them that you'll support them during the process.

How do you determine whether others are ready?

Now that you've thought about how you react to change, how do you gauge that for other people? Dan S. Cohen, the author of "The Heart of Change Field Guide," offers four steps. Click each box to explore them.

Listen and learn

Gauge the group's feelings. This is an opportunity not only to get data but also to build support. When you ask people for input and they respond, they feel like they have a role in the process.

Identify barriers to success

Cultural, organizational, and political barriers that could stymie the plan need to be discovered and resolved early in the process.

Talk to everyone

Talk to people at all levels of the organization, not just leaders. Entry- and mid-level employees often understand the problems and needs of the team because they interact directly with your members and customers.

Expect pushback

It's human nature to resist change. Try to determine early who may be reluctant, when that hesitance might occur, and why. Being realistic about what to expect will help you make a plan to address any reluctance or resistance more effectively.

After you determine how ready people are to change, you'll have a better idea of where to focus your efforts while you implement the changes.

Planning for Change

A model for planning for change

Even great leaders need to plan how they'll implement a change. They need to ask: What results am I hoping for after we've made these changes? How do I want my team to feel at the end of this project? What makes a change successful?

Understanding the elements of a successful change, and what might happen if any element is missing, is a necessary before you proceed with the change.

Introduction

Many different models can help you plan for a successful change. We'll consider one with six key elements to promoting an acceptance of change: vision, collaborative commitment, skills, rewards, resources, and an action plan.

Element 1

Vision

Describe why the change is necessary and how things will work after it's implemented. Emphasize the organization's values and how the change will benefit various groups.

Consider:
- What will be different when the change is completed?
- Will people do new things to make it work?

Element 2

Collaborative Commitment

Ask people at all levels of the organization for input. Create teams to collect data and help refine the vision and action plan.

Consider:
- How can I help people feel committed to the vision?
- How can team members contribute their skills, talents, and knowledge?

Element 3

Skills

Determine what skills are needed to implement and sustain the change.

Consider:
- Do people in key positions have those skills?
- If not, how can they learn those skills?
- What support or training can we offer?

Element 4
Rewards
Promote the benefits of embracing the change.

Consider:
- How to answer those who ask, "What's in it for me?"
- What incentives can we offer?
- What activities can we plan to encourage people?

Element 5
Resources
Develop tools and resources to support the change.

Consider:
- What tools will help team members the most?
- How will we make these resources available?
- Who will be available to support and encourage people?

Element 6
Action plan
Separate the change into small, manageable steps.

Consider:
- What steps will we take to implement the change?
- How will we talk about the change with members, employees, and customers?
- How can we make implementing and adopting the change as easy as possible?

Summary
As you plan for change, consider incorporating
each element — vision, collaborative commitment, skills,
rewards, resources, and an action plan — in the process
to increase your chances of success.

Why do some changes fail?
When you incorporate each element of the change plan, you have a better chance of succeeding. Leaving out any element makes the process more difficult, and eliminating more than one may also eliminate your chance of success. Click each element below to see what may happen without that item.

VISION	COLLABORATIVE COMMITMENT	SKILLS
If you don't explain your vision clearly, people may be confused about the purpose of the change, which could lead to an incomplete or failed implementation.	People might not commit to a change if they feel that they weren't included in the planning or implementation.	If people lack the skills they need to make the change, anxiety about their lack of knowledge or expertise can lead to resistance.
REWARDS	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN
People may be slow to adopt the change if they don't see the benefits of embracing it.	A lack of resources makes it difficult for people to learn what they need to know. That can cause frustration and resistance to change.	The change you are trying to implement may not get started at all if you haven't thoroughly planned for it.

Moving ahead with your plan

Even when you take all of these steps, it's possible you'll find that not everyone is committed to the changes. In the next lesson, we'll examine some reasons people may resist the change and how you can respond productively.

Encountering Resistance

Even when change is what's best for your organization or team and you work hard to plan for it, it's possible that not everyone will adapt easily. Some people may make raise objections or make negative comments about it, or even threaten to leave the organization. What do you do to overcome this resistance?

Start by thinking about why some people might resist the change.

Why? If someone doesn't see the need for the change, they might resist adapting. They might feel things are working fine as they are.	**It's all moving too fast.** If a change is imposed too quickly, without time for people to get used to new ideas or think of ways to adapt, they may resist the change entirely.	**I have questions.** You might believe that your vision and action plan are clear to the people you've asked to help implement them. But people still might not fully understand what you're asking them to do or who can help them succeed.
Can I do it? Resistance to change can be rooted in fear. If people aren't certain that they can keep up with new requirements or processes they might reject the whole vision.	**No one asked me.** Some people resist change because they don't feel they were included when the vision was being developed or when decisions were being made.	**It' hard.** Change is not easy. Bringing about significant change can often temporarily increase work for people who already feel overshelmed.

An empathetic leader can implement a plan for change effectively and still make sure that team members are heard and included. If you take time to listen to people from all levels of the organization and involve others in your planning, you'll discover potential resistance early and will be more able to overcome it and succeed.

Status check

In the next lesson, you'll apply what you've learned and practice with some scenarios about how to respond to resistance. Before that, review the information you'll need to use in those situations. Check off each action that you've completed in this module. If you missed anything or want to review, return to the previous lessons before you continue.

- [ ] Thought about what characteristics someone leading a change should have
- [ ] Assessed how ready for change people in your organization are
- [ ] Learned one method of planning a change that focuses on six key elements
- [ ] Examined the possible effects of eliminating one or more of those elements
- [ ] Considered why some people might resist change

Responding to Resistance

Read comments from people who are resistant to change and decide which element of your plan for change might help you address the problem.

Question 1
"The new vision will change what I do in my current role. I don't know how to do the new job that is expected of me."
- ○ Skills
- ○ Rewards
- ○ Action plan

Question 2
"Everyone who presented in that meeting about the future of our organization is new here or is a hired consultant. I've worked here for 23 years. You'd think that someone would have asked me."
- ○ Collaborative Commitment
- ○ Rewards
- ○ Action plan

Question 3
"I agree that our organization could benefit from making some changes, but the goals seem too broad, and maybe even too big. How are we going to accomplish all of this?"
- ○ Skills
- ○ Resources
- ○ Action plan

Question 4
"I already work extra hours almost every week. Now I have to add all these new tasks into my schedule? What's in it for me?"
- ○ Vision
- ○ Action plan
- ○ Rewards

Question 5
"We were all promised new smartphones to access this new app, but the ones for my department were delayed and I can't use the new online system on my old phone. How am I supposed to access this new app now?"
- ○ Collaborative Commitment
- ○ Resources
- ○ Rewards

Question 6

"What is the point of this change? Things are fine the way they are, and I don't understand why we should go through all of this."

    ◯ Skills
    ◯ Vision
    ◯ Rewards

Q01 Answer: Skills

Providing people with the skills they will need to succeed during and after a transition can give them confidence and help them prepare for what's ahead.

Q02 Answer: Collaborative Commitment

Involving team members in the process by ensuring that they have the opportunity to contribute ideas and expertise can increase their long-term commitment to the change.

Q03 Answer: Action plan

Plans for change, especially ambitious ones, may seem difficult to accomplish. Change leaders can break the plan into more manageable steps and communicate them with everyone involved. Those small steps will feel more feasible and will help move people toward the vision of the plan.

Q04 Answer: Rewards

Change must be a team effort, and this often means that every member must contribute more time and effort to bring about the change. A leader can offer rewards and recognition to help each member feel valued during this process. Try asking people how they like to be rewarded, because everyone is different.

Q05 Answer: Resources

How will your team members find the information they need? Who will they ask for help? Where can they review the action plan? A leader should think ahead to what people might need and then offer resources such as information, tools, and people to support them. A lack of resources can be frustrating, even for motivated people working hard toward new goals.

Q06 Answer: Vision

When a leader can clearly explain how things will be different when the change is made, people can see its benefits. If the vision isn't clear or isn't clearly explained, people may not understand its value. The vision should take care to address how the organization will retain its values or beliefs amid the change.

Lesson 6

Ready to Lead

Change within a business or organization can be difficult, but it can also be an exciting time for people to learn and discover new skills.

By implementing the six key elements of change planning — vision, collaborative commitment, skills, resources, rewards, and an action plan — you'll position yourself for success.

Most important, by focusing on the people in the organization, you'll not only lead a successful change — you'll also build a stronger team.

Sources:

- Biech, Elaine. Thriving Through Change: A Leader's Practical Guide to Change Mastery. Alexandria, Virginia: ASTD Press, 2007.
- Cohen, Dan S. The Heart of Change Field Guide: Tools and Tactics for Leading Change in Your Organization. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2005.

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A Model for Change Planning

Vision	Collaborative Commitment	Skills	Rewards	Resources	Action Plan
Describe why the change is necessary and how things will work after it's implemented.	Ask people at all levels of the organization for input.	Determine what skills are needed to implement and sustain the change.	Promote the benefits of embracing the change.	Develop tools and resources to support the change.	Separate the change into small, manageable steps.
Consider: • What will be different when the change is complete? • Will people do new things to make it work?	Consider: • How can I help people feel committed to the vision? • How can team members contribute their skills, talents, and knowledge?	Consider: • Do people in key positions have those skills? • If not, how can they learn those skills? • What support or training can we offer?	Consider: • How to answer those who ask, "What's in it for me?" • What incentives can we offer? • What activities can we plan to encourage people?	Consider: • What tools will help team members the most? • How will we make these resources available? • Who will be available to support and encourage people?	Consider: • What steps will we take to implement the change? • How will we talk about the change with members, employees, and customers? • How can we make implementing and adopting the change as easy as possible?
What to do: • Collaborate on a vision statement. • Engage other leaders and members in group meetings. • Communicate in different ways to reach many audiences.	What to do: • Create teams to collect data and help refine the vision and action plan. • Invite team members to contribute their ideas and expertise.	What to do: • Determine what skills people need and if they are missing any. • Provide training and share the best practices, with examples and lessons you learned. • Offer workshops to give team members practical experience.	What to do: • Hold contests that encourage participation. • Recognize those who are adapting to the change. • Plan activities and events that build the team.	What to do: • Write an FAQ that people can consult. • Create how-to guides for new processes. • Have experts or coaches provide guidance.	What to do: • Make a formal plan. • Create a list of all of the steps. • Agree on what will constitute success. • Gather and share success stories.

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Vision	Collaborative Commitment	Skills	Rewards	Resources	Action Plan
If you don't explain your vision clearly, people may be confused about the purpose of the change, leading to an incomplete or failed implementation.	People might not commit to a change if they feel that they weren't included in the planning or implementation.	If people lack the skills they need to make the change, anxiety about their lack of knowledge or expertise can lead to resistance.	People may be slow to adopt the change if they don't see the benefits of embracing it.	A lack of resources makes it difficult for people to learn what they need to know. That can cause frustration and resistance to change.	The change you are trying to implement may not get started at all if you haven't thoroughly planned for it.

NOTES:

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WE'RE BUILDING THE FUTURE OF ROTARY

A bold plan, for and by People of Action

Rotary is charting a new course to a stronger, more effective and vibrant future. At the center of the effort is our Action Plan: a multi-year strategic roadmap that will help us become the Rotary we want to be—and the Rotary the world needs us to be. The Action Plan builds on the remarkable capabilities we've developed in our own professional lives and careers, and it plays to our strengths as leaders, as clubs, and as a global community of people of action.

To create our plan, we looked at data, membership projections, and emerging social trends. And we listened to Rotarians, Rotaractors, and others who shared their hopes for the future of Rotary and told us we needed to:

Be more nimble and open to new ideas and faces, so we can evolve along with demographic and social changes

Gather and use data more rigorously to improve programs and make a lasting impact on humanitarian needs

Capitalize on new technologies and provide more enriching, engaging, and accessible experiences, so more emerging leaders will connect through Rotary

We assessed what it would take to move from where we are now to where we want to be. Our Action Plan is ambitious—and achievable.

The Action Plan's Four Priorities

PRIORITY 1

INCREASE OUR IMPACT

PRIORITY 2

EXPAND OUR REACH

PRIORITY 3

ENHANCE PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

PRIORITY 4

INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO ADAPT

Want to know more?
Take action with us to help create Rotary's future.
Visit rotary.org/actionplan to get started.

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