

CHANGEOSITY INSIGHTS | JANUARY 2023

CHANGE: HOW TO MAKE IT STICK

By Sally Mitchell-Wolf & Krysta Fox

Leaders can Supercharge Change Projects by
Using the Right Change Management Approach



changeosity
Creating Better Leaders. Creating Better Organisations

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Multi Food Co's new CFO was worried. He had quickly discovered that Jamal, the CEO who had been at the helm almost since the founding of the company, was not open to change. With a team of 500 across multiple countries, several manufacturing facilities, and ambitious goals, there was a need for a lot of change. Reviewing the strategy pack for a board meeting revealed a fragmented strategy, a disconnected leadership team and a decision-making structure based on the unilateral directive of the very softly spoken CEO. Then, during the meeting, every suggestion for change was met with a resounding reason why not. There was no room for no real input or debate from the leadership group, and no desire to seek the opinions of the wider organisation. The deflating realisation that the hoped-for changes were a pipe dream settled upon the CFO. Help was needed.

CHANGE IS HARD

Did you make any New-Year Resolutions for 2023?

Or does the anecdotal evidence and, perhaps, personal experience of just how many resolutions don't 'stick' leave you disinclined to join in the enthusiastic cacophony of family, friends, and colleagues declaring their resolutions during the festive season?

However compelling the reason, or inspiring the imagined new reality, achieving change is not easy.

Every parent can share stories of changes being resisted, especially if imposed or dictated. Leaders, although likely not be prompted by discussion about where a teen's

dirty clothing is placed, friends chosen or an impending change of school, also encounter challenges in, and resistance to, implementing change, despite us all being and working with 'adults'.

Indeed, research indicates the failure rate of change initiatives sits in the region of a very sobering 70%!

This is not because of a failure in understanding by leadership of the need for a change, nor due to a lack of vision of the outcome. Typically, it's a failure in execution which results in an unsuccessful initiative. (McKinsey, n.d).

Organisational change happens at an individual level and every individual impacted will need to do something differently for change to succeed.

OLD HABITS DIE HARD

Resistance to change is a natural, human reaction.

The truth is that people like to stay in their comfort zone and as, we are reminded yearly, toward the end of January or early February, 'old habits die hard.'

Even when the goal of a process is an organisational level change, the fact is that change happens at an individual level. For a process, system or organisation to change successfully, every individual impacted will need to do something differently.

A robust framework for managing change includes processes for identifying and addressing barriers, including resistance, or barriers, to change.

The reasons for such resistance are complex and may not even be directly related to the specifics of the change being implemented. Fortunately, knowledge from the disciplines of psychology, social sciences, and business management, mean those reasons along with ways to identify and address them are well understood.

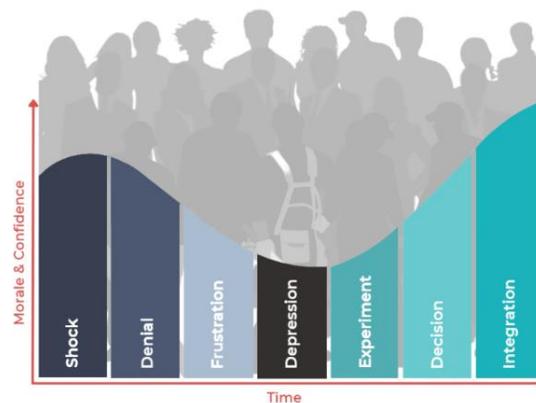
Consequently, in today's context, often described as increasingly fast paced and changing, both leadership and other stakeholders

have a range of models available to assist in anticipating and identifying the causes of resistance.

The best of these are supported with tools to guide individuals and organisations in their unique process of making desired change successfully.

A widely recognised example of such models, and one which helpfully reminds us that change is not only a technical and logistical organisational process, but a personal and potentially emotional one, is the Kübler-Ross Change Curve .

Kübler-Ross Change Curve



Also known as the 'stages of grief' this model was introduced by, and named after, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her 1969 book called 'Death and Dying'. She worked with people who were terminally ill.

Despite its narrative, anecdotal basis sometimes being negatively critiqued for over-simplification when describing the very personal

experience of death-related grief (McVean, 2019) and alternatives having subsequently been postulated (Tyrell et.al, 2019), the model has been found to be valid and helpful in a range of situations involving significant change, including business contexts.

Although simple and acknowledging that the journey along the 'curve' will differ among individuals, the Kübler-Ross Curve remains a model in which leaders of change do find insight and guidance when structuring communications and addressing resistance to change.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT: 'THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK'?

It might seem like the latest leadership buzzword and trend, however, Change Management is a leadership skill set *and* a competency which had been developed and evolving for over 80 years.

The name seems reasonably self-explanatory. 'Change Management' is about managing change at the individual and organisational level.

However, not all approaches are equal. Nor are they all equally successful. Thus, the goal of this article is to provide some insight into the specific concepts and approaches the consultants at

Changeosity have found to be most effective when working with family-owned businesses and SMEs to implement change, and why these are the tried-and-true models we use.

ORIGINS

Physicist and social scientist Kurt Lewin introduced an early, cornerstone model for what is now termed 'Change Management' in the 1940's. His was a model of a three-stage process which some readers may be familiar with.

Lewin used the analogy of organisational change being like changing the shape of a block of ice for his 'Unfreeze – Change – Refreeze' model.

'Unfreeze' involves accepting change is necessary and working to break down existing status quo. An understanding of what needs to change and why is developed and key people to involve are identified and engaged. The 'why' of the change is framed in a compelling message and communicated in a manner that remains open to addressing concerns.

The second stage of Lewin's model, 'Change', recognised that change creates uncertainty and people



require time to begin to participate proactively.

Continued communication to 'dispel rumours' is required at this stage.

'Refreeze' is the final stage of Lewin's model. Its focus is on creating stability which helps people and the organization to internalise or institutionalise the changes. Celebration of achievements in this stage has the goal of building confidence and enabling energy and focus to return to performing.

“ I remember discovering, a year after the fact, that a process change had silently reverted! No one seemed responsible. That experience reinforced for me that monitoring and ongoing support after implementing a change is critical!

Krysta Fox – CEO & Founder Changeosity

Lewin's model is referred to as 'cornerstone' because many of the concepts and issues it touches on continue to be key aspects of best practice Change Management today.

Indeed, many of the elements of each of the stages appear in other more evolved models now in use.

One significant learning since Lewin's time is that a change, once implemented isn't 'set and forget'. Thus, early developments from here added a fourth stage involving monitoring while others have moved to conceptualising change as a continuous cycle .

Consequently, when considering the implementation of change, leaders today find themselves presented with a plethora of models that have emerged from Lewin's cornerstone. And as often happens when theorists engage in conceptual discussions, the number, sequence and elements of stages vary in what are often competing models.

Additionally, in the process of theoretical and conceptual development of models, it's not uncommon that the terminology being used is adopted from one model to the next.

Sometimes the 'same' term is used to name a different concept or identify an element which has a nuance of difference which is not immediately apparent from other uses.

Thus, leaders looking for guidance when faced with implementing change can find themselves faced with the "3 C's", "4 Principles", "5 Key Elements", "The 7 R's", "Change Equations"... and the list goes on!

MANAGING CHANGE: DIFFERENT APPROACHES

A helpful distinction to make at this point is that models and resources which exist to support understanding and implementing change fall broadly into two types.

There are those which tend to focus on the technical aspects of change, with attention to logistical requirements, meeting budgets and targets, and so on.

Then there are those which position Change Management as being about the people who *are* the organisation.

This is encapsulated in the following definition, provided by the creators of the Prosci (*pro-skee*) Methodology:

Change Management is about identifying impacts and planning to support the individual people, who are, collectively, the organisation, to change.

Fundamental to a Change Management mindset of this latter type is that the identifying and addressing the needs, concerns (fears, even) and potential of the people involved is central to implementing change successfully.

While technical and logistical aspects of change do need to be considered, planned for, resourced and implemented, it is now widely recognised that a significant contributor to that 70% fail rate, is a failure to begin and end the process with the people creating and impacted by that change.

Effective and successful change ultimately rests on each employee behaving, and doing their job, differently.

CHANGEOSITY'S 'GO-TO' CONCEPTS & MODELS

The concepts and models which the consultants at Changeosity find most powerful include Kotter's Principles and '8 Steps' as well as the Prosci Method, including the ADKAR model.

Now, as tempting as it might be to reinvent history, our Changeosity values means we are just gonna 'come clean' here.

Like many people and organisations, we got good at something, in this case Change Management, and *then* we discovered why.

Our first discovery was that we had been delivering most of the actions and fulfilling the conditions underpinning Kotter's concepts. We

just didn't know, at the time, there was a framework we could follow!

Once it was discovered, Kotter's model became an insightful planning tool that gave us a checklist for greatly elevating the probability of successful change.

KOTTER'S 4 PRINCIPLES

A leading thinker on Change Management and transformation, Emeritus Professor John Kotter of Harvard Business School has shared and developed what is referred to as 'Kotter's 8 Steps' since the mid 1990's.

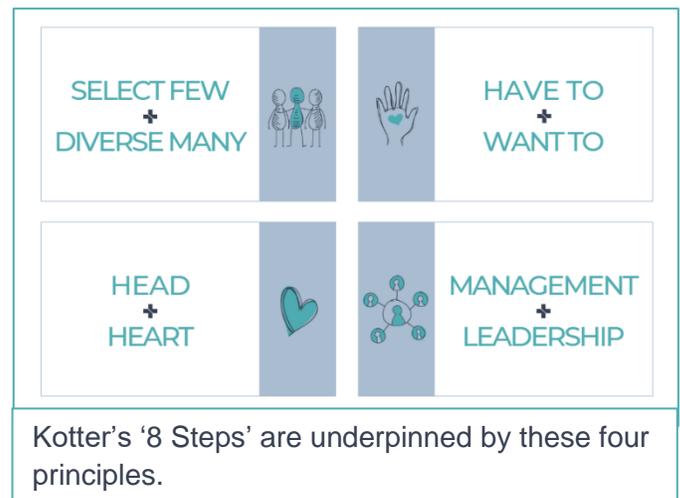
These steps are underpinned by four principles:

Select Few + Diverse Many interrogates the dichotomy of change directives coming from a 'select few', versus understanding and engaging with what everyone impacted needs to effectively implement change.

Have To + Want To highlights the importance of inviting people across the organisation to be involved so they are invested in the improvements and eager take the steps needed to implement—and sustain—the change.

logic, data and reason while 'heart' appeals to how people feel and what they desire. Successful change and transformation requires both inspiration and communication.

Leadership + Management connects to the view of Change Management leadership as being a *skill* and a *competency*. Effective leaders require technical skills to manage projects, plan, oversee deliverables as well as Leadership competencies which include emotional skills to communicate vision, inspire action and empathize with concerns.



While Kotter's 4 Principles remain constant, the '8 Steps' can today be a reference to one of two related but alternative processes, selected depending on purpose.

CHANGE WITH KOTTER'S 8...

The efficacy of his 'Leading Change' 8-Steps Process, shared in a variety

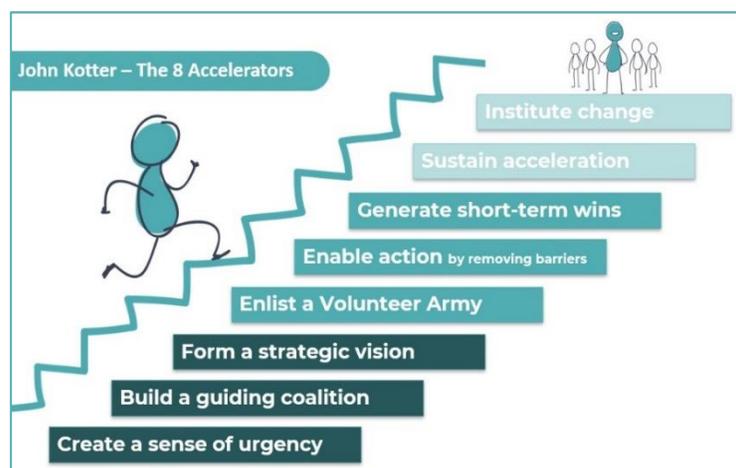
Effective and successful change ultimately rests on each employee behaving, and doing their job, differently.

Head + Heart calls for balance, pointing out that 'head' appeals to

of formats including a book published in 1996, has been widely and successfully demonstrated, attracting accolades and awards. This has contributed to cementing its place in the leadership and transformation landscape.

The original 'Leading Change' 8-Step Process, which the team at Changeosity successfully applied for a number of years, has now been clarified as best suiting a context where leadership, operating in a traditional hierarchy, drives 'episodic' change in a sequential, linear way with a small, powerful core group. (Kotter, 2021)

2014 saw the introduction of an 'enhanced' 8 steps, referred to as the '8 Accelerators'. In contrast to the 8 Steps Leading Change, this process has the objective of establishing a flexible and nimble network within the organisation which functions in conjunction with a traditional hierarchy. (Kotter, 2021)



Here, a cross-silo network embedded within the organisation has the capacity to run the 8 steps concurrently and continuously, quickly identifying opportunities and completing initiatives.

Realising the 8 Accelerators process and network outcome, resulting in a cultural transformation within the organisation, takes long term vision and leadership and years to establish. However, it is a process that the consultants at Changeosity have found very fruitful and rewarding for a range of clients in different sectors and at varied stages of their business growth.

During one major digital change project we facilitated, guided by Kotter's 4 Principles, we invited the entire 100 plus team to actively participate in the design, development, and implementation as much, or as little, as they wanted.

We accommodated everyone who wanted to be involved, and most did! What people lacked in skills, initially, they made up for with enthusiasm and motivation. For that organisation, for their 'volunteer army', to be able to use Kotter's terminology in the process, was highly effective.

Ultimately, adoption rates were sky high because most of the users were also the innovators and builders.

Further, we learnt the power of using a checklist/audit approach. Checking, for example, 'do we have a guiding coalition'? If 'yes', following up by asking 'what's our evidence'?. Do they have a clear term of reference? And so on, through each of the 8 Accelerators.

That was only one of several experiences which contributed to Kotter's 4 Principles and 8 Accelerators now being part of Changeosity's go-to concepts and models.

JEFF HIATT AND HIS PROSCI METHODOLOGY

Informed by his background as an engineer and broad experience leading restructuring and improvement of business processes for Bell Laboratories in the US and Europe, Jeff Hiatt founded Prosci Research in 1995.

The organisation focuses exclusively on Change Management with the knowledge and repeatable, scalable method and tools for "managing the people side of change" (prosci.com, n.d.) shared through several books authored by Hiatt, in addition to consultancy and training services.

Although endorsed and implemented by some of the largest and most successful companies globally, the method is genuinely

scalable and equally applicable to family-owned and SMEs.

Like Kotter's, the Prosci Methodology, or 'Prosci' for short, is a structured and intentional approach to Change Management.

Prosci provides a framework to prepare, equip and support individuals through the changes to their jobs.

As with all the theories, models and approaches the consultants at Changeosity find most powerful, Prosci has a dedicated focus on mobilizing adoption and usage, supporting holistic and successful change.

ADKAR AT THE CORE

At the core of the Prosci Methodology is ADKAR.

Sharing some of its heritage with the aforementioned Kübler-Ross Change Curve, and arising from Hiatt's early research to "align traditional change management



activities with project goals and results” (Prosci, n.d. b), ADKAR is about the individual in relation to change.

It is an acronym created from the elements:

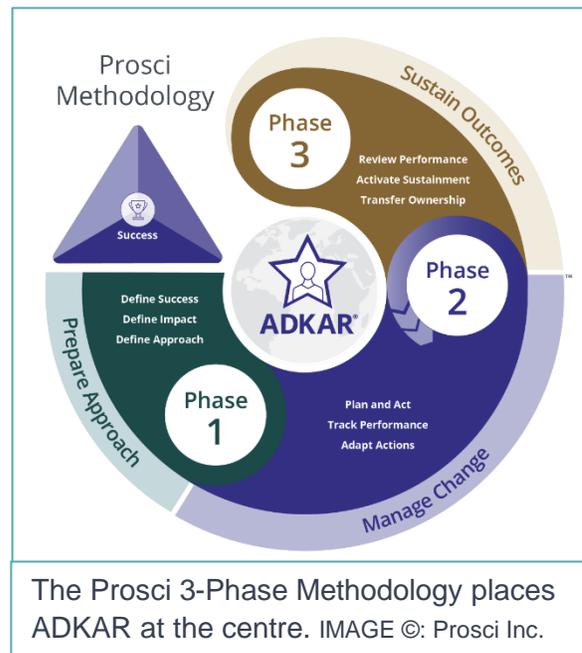
- Awareness (of need)
- Desire (to participate)
- Knowledge (of how)
- Ability (to implement skills behaviours)
- Reinforcement (to sustain change)

Rather than an employee being perceived as uncooperative or difficult, ADKAR and the supporting tools available, facilitate managers in connecting to personal motivators for those individuals and identifying how barriers can be removed or minimised.

“We now accept the fact that learning is a lifelong process of keeping abreast of change. And the most pressing task is to teach people how to learn.

Peter Drucker
Management Consultant, Educator & Author

Further, using the lens of ADKAR reveals not only gaps in a process and helps diagnose why change is not going well, providing both, “key concepts that influence successful change and actionable insights for implementing these concepts” (Prosci, n.d. b).



The Prosci 3-Phase Methodology places ADKAR at the centre. IMAGE ©: Prosci Inc.

Thus, the model enables “leaders and change management teams to focus their activities on what will collectively drive individual change and produce organisational results.” (Prosci, n.d. b)

THE PROSCI METHOD

The Prosci Methodology is one of the more recent additions to our Changeosity toolkit.

We recognised that, while we usually achieved project sponsorship and had Change Management covered, we needed to focus on giving change leaders better project management skills and tools. Prosci is great for this!

The Prosci Change Triangle, which expresses the critical

interrelationship between Change Management, Leadership / Sponsorship, Project Management and Success, also reminds us, as consultants, to keep the balance.

With ADKAR at its core, the Prosci Method is composed of three phases:

- Prepare Approach
- Manage Change
- Sustain Outcomes

Phase One, **Prepare Approach**, is about positioning the change for success through developing a customised strategy with the sponsorship and commitment necessary. Success, impact and approach are clearly defined.

Phase Two, **Manage Change**, is the implementation of change using adaptable plans responsive to tracking, with the goal of moving individuals and the organisation through the transitions described by ADKAR.

Phase three, **Sustain Outcomes**, is where the value of the change is realised through activities to ensure change is adopted, ownership of change is transferred and the organisation is prepared and committed to sustaining the change.

Not only does this methodology present a powerful and detailed

linear change process, it also includes tools to identify and develop the characteristics successful Change Leaders:

- ability to build coalitions and inspire trust
- strong communication skills
- emotional intelligence, understanding of resistance to change

Within the process, key linear steps exist to avoid common mistakes such as sending employees on training related to an anticipated change before understanding what barriers and gaps in knowledge exist. Time to practice and bridge 'knowledge-to-ability gaps' is also emphasised.

Such aspects are key to the 'stickiness' and success of change because they help overcome our physiological programming that so often sees us reverting to our old habits and ways of doing things.

The long term result is embedding a network within the organisation with both the skills and competencies for identifying opportunities and needs for change

“ In the final analysis, change sticks when it becomes the way we do things around here.
John P Kotter

and effectively implementing those being part of the organisational culture, scalable as the organisation grows.

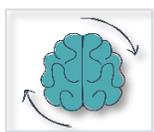
At Changeosity, one of our areas of expertise is in facilitating change programs where the client's employees are the change/project leaders. We work with them to support, guide, and provide the tools and follow up to make change work.

For organisations and individuals wanting to discover and build on their personal leadership competencies, several pathways exist. The ability to drive change and resilience can be developed through individual coaching and assessments such as a Change Agility Assessment. These are also an enriching processes which enhance leadership and skills for leading Change Management.

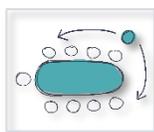
Dubai based EER has grown dramatically, won awards, and increased employee satisfaction in a matter of a few years. The EER leadership team embarked on a comprehensive change management program over a three-year period, implementing a range of initiatives from forming a guiding coalition through a non-executive board, to involving all employees in vision setting through surveys and regular townhalls. Getting team members involved in change initiatives even when they don't yet have the skills, along with 'ringing the bell' to celebrate wins has compounded the success of the changes made sustaining the drive through continuous measurement and performance reflections. EER demonstrates that a good change management program, comprising multiple initiatives, results in significant financial improvement and efficiency gains. Every year since, has been their best year yet.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

It's not uncommon for very large organisations to invest in having a team of experienced, certified change management specialists in-house. But expert knowledge and experience is not solely the purview of Fortune 500 companies. The team at Changeosity are passionate about supporting family-owned businesses and SME's in learning, transforming and successfully creating change. If you are ready to explore how we can help you and your people grow, contact us!



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