

Day 2: Managing Transitions

Dorie Ellzey Blesoff
Consultant / Coach/ Facilitator
dorie@dorieLZblesoff.com 708-660-1280

A change will be sustainable if:

Condition 2.

It involves a critical mass of members and stakeholders of the organization in a meaningful way that allows them to develop their commitment.

Tool #2: Managing Transitions

LEVELS OF COMMITMENT

Commitment

Enrollment

Genuine Compliance

Formal Compliance

Grudging Compliance

Non-Compliance

Apathy

Managing Transitions

by William Bridges

- *Change* is situational--e.g., new process, new policies, new boss, new job, new system
- *Transition* is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation
- Change is *external*, transition is *internal*

Based on William Bridges' book, Managing Transitions,

New York: Perseus, 1991.

Change vs. Transition Management

Change Management

starts with
the outcome
--where we want to be



People Transition Management

starts with
wherever people
are



Key Points

- Unless people reorient themselves psychologically (i.e. *transition*) to the new situation, change will be less sustainable
- For this reason, people transition management must occur along with change management of the new systems/processes
- People will differ in terms of how fast (or slowly) they go through the transition, but everyone does go through it

William Bridges

People Transition Model

- *Endings*--letting go of where we are now
- *Neutral zone*--the in-between zone
- *New Beginnings*--new rules and new identity

A closer look at...

Endings

- Major issue is **LOSS** *of attachment, of influence, of structure, of security, of meaning, of relationships, of direction...* which requires **LETTING GO**
- A variety of emotions: *often shock, then denial, then anger, bargaining, sadness...*
- “WHY” questions: *Why us? Why me? Why now? What did we do wrong? Why weren't we told sooner? Is there a hidden agenda?*
- “Am I in or out?”

Endings





<http://debsgardens.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/transplanting-sedum.jpg>

What Leaders Can Do

Endings (see checklist in *Managing Transitions* p 37-38)

- **Acknowledge** losses simply and openly
- **Honor the past** -- mark the endings and allow people to “take a piece of the old with them.”
- **Sell the problem first** (vs. solution)
- **Expect a variety of reactions** and emotions and acknowledge them all as valid
- **Give people instruction**--repeat yourself

Learning Teams

Think of your situation (participant materials pg 11)

- Who is losing what?
- What leadership actions could you take?
 - Acknowledge
 - Something meaningful from the past

Neutral Zone



A closer look at the...

Neutral Zone

- People feel disoriented - in “limbo”, “between”
- Uncertainty and anxiety over the future--what is going to happen?
- Less productivity, less motivation, more sick days
- Rumors abound – people search for facts; answers are vague and unsatisfying to them
- Recreational complaining
- Innovation potential (no new rules yet)
- Experimentation and breakthrough possibilities



<http://www.bigtreetransplanting.net/images/FH000002.JPG>

What Leaders Can Do

Neutral Zone (see checklist in *Managing Transitions* p 54-56)

- **Explain** what the neutral zone is and validate people's feelings as normal
- **Strengthen** intragroup support and 2-way communication; set up transition monitoring team to keep feedback flowing upward
- **Admit** that you don't have the answers, but be optimistic and share information often
- **Involve** employees in temporary structures and in creating the design of "the new"
- **Focus** on what you can control and things you can do; be proactive
- **Consider** this an opportunity to innovate

Learning Teams

Think of your situation

Are you, or others, in the Neutral Zone?

- What leadership actions could you take?
 - Is there a sense of belonging to a group?
 - Is there a chance to try something new?

A closer look at...

New Beginnings

- Comfort, increasing acceptance and commitment to new vision; positive mood.
- New focus on task; improved productivity
- Increased clarity but continued concern about being successful in new environment or new role
- How do I fit in? What do I have to do?

New Beginnings





<http://www.veggiegardeningtips.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/kohl-rabi-transplant.jpg>

What Leaders Can Do

New Beginnings (See checklist in Managing Transitions p 73-74)

To make a new beginning, people need consistency, and the **4 P's**:

- **Purpose:** help people understand the purpose behind the changes
- **Picture:** help people imagine the future and how it will feel to be in it
- **Plan:** outline the steps and schedule in which people will receive information, training and support
- **A Part to play:** help people understand the role and relationship to others in the new scheme

Learning Teams

Think of your situation

- Is there an opportunity to use the 4 P's?

Purpose

Picture

Plan

Part to play

In summary...

Two Major Tasks of a Leader

- Ensure the development of clear goals and an effective implementation plan (change management)
- Ensure that employees transition psychologically from where they were to the new beginning (transition management)

Both tasks are critical for successful change.

Questions/Comments?

A change will be sustainable if:

Condition 3.

It is accepted into the culture and becomes part of the routines and practices on a daily basis and the organization grows in its capability to change.

TOOL #3: RESILIENCE AT
WORK

Homework

- Read and complete the Resilience at Work Questionnaire included in your participant materials. Answer questions on page 3 and score them on page 4 using the numbers from page 3.
- Complete the Reflection and Action Plan on page 8. Refer to exercises on page 9 for ideas.
- Optional copy into page 12 of your participant materials