



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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## CHANGE: TO BE ACCEPTED WITH OPEN ARMS RATHER A THING TO BE RESISTED

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### ABSTRACT

*The only thing which is constant in this world is change. Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future. Change is dynamic and alarming thing and has to be managed positively, so that employees give their proper support and the positive goals are worked towards with enthusiasm. Despite the need for and pressure to change, any change initiatives in organizations are often met with resistance. So it becomes a challenge for the management to overcome resistance to change and manage it effectively. The global pressure on organizations to stay competitive initiates this demand. Typically the objective is to maximize the collective benefits for the people involved in the change process and minimize the risk of failure of implementing the change. At the much offset, change is so uncomfortable for any person that it seems this is the end of the life or why this happens to "me" only. For any person to flexible enough to absorb the change, it is the mental transition i.e. inner strength to not to get weaken by change but let the change be that fire which will bring best out of one. Another important thing to let change bring in us is to control the reaction we give to it and control the change rather than change controlling us. There are different ways one can handle changing situation.*

### KEYWORDS

Change, dynamic, implementation, management, transition, and risk.

### INTRODUCTION

Change is part of life. Its not the change that do you in, it's the transition. Change is not same as transition. Change is external whereas transition is internal. Change Management is a structured approach to shifting /transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. It is an organizational process aimed at helping employees to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment. The various forms of changes that can happen in an organization are:

- A) Mission changes
- B) Strategic changes
- C) Operational changes
- D) Technological changes
- E) Changing the attitudes and behaviors of personnel.

Organizational change should begin with a systematic diagnosis of the current situation in order to determine both the need and capability to change. Change is situational, the new site, new boss, new team, the new policy etc. but transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Unless transition occurs, change will not work. But still there is resistance from the people to resist it as most of the people prefer predictability and stability in both their personal lives as well as professional lives. Typically those situations are avoided by the people, which involve some kind of risk or increase stress, threaten their self interest and upset order. This resistance or avoidance of the situation continues and at times increases also, till they realize the benefits of change or perceive the gains to be worth more than risk or threat to their self interest. Leaders should anticipate resistance to any change effort, prepare for it and make special efforts to assess and deal with individual reactions to change. The job of the leaders was still more difficult in situation where some change has to be initiated on job front or any new policy in the system. I remember, once there was a colleague of mine who was laid off. He said with an agitated tone, "I knew this was happening. I could see the writing on the wall four years ago." Being considerate to him and feeling the pain at being laid off, only one thought crossed my mind, as he carried off his tirade. The thought that clicked me was, if he was able to see this coming for four years, what the hell he was doing all this while? He sat and waited for four years to have his fate decided for him. He chose not to change and sadly he was changed. He could have upgraded his skills or looked for job change instead of cursing or praying.

It is rightly said that, "Change happens. Though most of us cannot control the change that happens to around us but we can surely control the way we respond to it." It is easier said than done. Most of the people are very quick to point out others resistance to change but generally fail to admit or recognize their own change resistance.

Here a big question comes to the mind is that Is Change necessary? Why do many of the people amongst us resist change? A common observation regarding the same is that some people call change a continuous process and progress and cherish & celebrate the improvements it brings. There is other segment, who curses the same changes and long for same good old days. Here I remember old days of my elementary school, where once a guy came in to talk about the future. He said that there will be so many changes in our way of living and we would not be carrying any money in our pockets and there will be new system of exchanges. We all thought he was crazy. How can we get rid of money? What is this new system of exchange? He is just flaunting. Many years later, I never carry cash. All the money and purchases are made through cards or online payments through net. He was right. It was if it happened overnight? Change will occur and sometimes it happens faster than we expect. The same change brings about different responses. A simple conclusion can be drawn from this that there are two kinds of people in this world. "Those who bring about change, drive change or at worst accept it graciously and those who yearn for predictability and stability. The latter are the ones who are likely to be sitting themselves up to be victims of change.

There are **SIX PHASES** of **PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL CHANGE**:

1. **Anticipation:** The waiting stage. They really don't know what to expect, so they wait, anticipating what the future holds.
2. **Confrontation:** People begin to confront reality. They realize that change is really going to happen or is happening.
3. **Realization:** Post change. Realizing that nothing is ever going to be as it was once again.
4. **Depression:** Often a necessary step in the change process. This is a stage where a person mourns the past. Not only the change has been realized intellectually but also efforts are being made to comprehend it emotionally as well.
5. **Acceptance:** Acceptance of change emotionally. Although still you are some reservations but they are not fighting the change and have started looking for the benefits at this stage.
6. **Enlightenment:** In phase 6, people accept the new change. For many the old ways became like "how we managed dear" without this change. In short, they feel good about the change and accept it as the status quo from here forward.

An important thing to note here is that, different people have different rates of speed to pass and accept the different stage of change process. One person can be more comfortable and flexible to accept the change and may require just a month or so to reach phase 6 while other may take longer time, may be 12 months to complete the same process. More complexity arises from the fact that this cycle is not linear. In simple words, a person doesn't necessarily complete phase 1 through 6 in order. It's a jump like situation. A person may go from phase 4 to phase 5 and then back to stage 2. This makes it more difficult to ascertain that how long a change will take to be implemented.

Let's take an example of implementation of some new software in an organization. If the management initiates and implements the change, but employees feel that the same was not needed (i.e. they are not aware of the fact that any change is required), then the reactions will be such like:

- "This is mere time wastage."
- "We were not informed before what's going on"
- "Why change? Everything is working perfectly fine"
- "If it isn't broke, don't fix it"

Everybody's natural and initial reaction to change is to resist it, even in the best circumstances. Awareness of the business need to change is a critical ingredient of any change and must come first. Under the same situation, discussed above, if the need for the change was well explained before to the employees that the new software is to meet the needs of the customers and the old one will not be supported by the vendor also then the reactions could be:

- "How soon will it happen?"
- "How will I be impacted by the same?"
- "Will training be given to all for how to use it?"

Moving one step more forward, assume we made all the employees aware that the change was required, but employees have no desire to participate or support the change. Then the reactions will as follow:

- What's good for me in it?"
- I doubt whether they are really serious about it."

Now, here, you will be labeled as inflexible, unsupportive and difficult by individuals in your organization. The tables have turned and you have become the target of the emotional response from the organizational members. They may take this as your lack of initiative or vision and consider you as pessimistic. So the change model gives us its two critical components: **AWARENESS** and **DESIRE**.

## 5 WAYS TO HANDLE CHANGE

As not all changes are sudden, and most of the changes that happen in our lives, professional or personal front are slow and can be predicted with not much difficulty. A well known saying comes to my mind at this point is, "Ghost of the crisis yet to come and is predictable as the summer sun rising at 6 a.m." so we have to skill ourselves to sense the same. There are most popular 5 ways to handle the change. They are as follows:

- Getting used to it:** It is much easier to embrace the change and enjoy its ride. As change is bound to happen, so why to cry for same and look for its advantages or merits and enjoy it. Who had though our life would have been much easier and technical 10-15 years down the line. The change from typewriters to Computers and still further to laptops and iPad; change from carbon paper to Xerox machine, change to digital cameras etc. All these things are the positive changes and now we are so used to it.
- You must control it and not allow change to control you:** Being proactive with change allows you to be the part of the process and create change. If you fight change, you are bound to be thrown anyway, but if you embrace it you are able to gain a better handle over it. You can help it to move in right direction and right pace too and moreover then the transition through change is much comfortable also.
- Focus:** during the change process, two things should be kept in mind- focus on one area at a time and relax. Although, change is bound to make you panic as if you are losing complete control over it. At this stage of change, multi-tasking will be of no use during the change process. All we need at that point is focus or goal set for one by one, area wise.
- Cherish and enjoy your success:** Momentum is great friend at each step when we are dealing with change. One should always cherish even the small achievements instead of waiting for the end to celebrate. If we celebrate along the way, it will keep us moving forward and achieve better results.
- Helping others through their change process:** one of the best ways to learn how to handle change is to learn by helping others through change. If you are able to support and cheer for other people, during their phase of change in their lives, relationships, etc., you will realize and achieve what it takes to accept a change, in addition to this learning one also develops good personal relationships with the people through your support.

## CONCLUDING WORDS

Continual growth process prepares us for change. It is not a miracle or a tablet to be taken for a day or so. It is similar to preparation for the final exams. We know well in advance they are coming, or they are bound to come, so with daily practice, self-discipline and good preparation, there is no need to cram for the big event. Even for the professional lives, the leaders must develop proper attitude towards resistance to change and realize that it is neither good nor bad. It is just a matter of one's way of thinking. Infact, resistance can serve as a signal that there are ways in which efforts should be modified and improved. There is no better way to minimize resistance to change than to involve those responsible for implementing it and those affected by it.



JUST WHEN THE CATERPILLAR THOUGHT THE WORLD WAS OVER, IT BECAME A BUTTERFLY.

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- Transitions: Making sense of life's changes. By William Bridges. ISBN 0-201-00082-2. [www.perseusbooks.com](http://www.perseusbooks.com)

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