

CHANGE

*How To Turn Uncertainty
Into Opportunity*

by

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Foreword

When I was a salesperson just starting out in my career, I serendipitously overheard Andy Cindrich, a coauthor of the book you're about to read, facilitating a strategy-execution session in the conference room next to my office. He said:

"Here's the challenge leaders have. They've been thinking about a strategic decision for months before they breathe a word of it to anyone outside their core leadership team. They've looked at the data and the numbers, they've hashed out the risks and benefits, and they've gotten themselves to the point where they're willing to bet a lot on it.

"Then they call their team or company together and announce the change. They're passionate about it, they're excited about it, and they might even communicate it effectively in the moment. They leave that presentation thinking, 'We're on our way!'

"Then they metaphorically board a plane to fly to their next meeting, and when they reach cruising altitude going six hundred miles per hour, they look out their window and can't believe how slowly people on the ground are moving. And when the leader lands, they immediately fire off emails, saying, 'This is going to take the organization in an entirely new direction—what's the problem?'

"What the leader failed to realize is that the people on the ground were tethered to that plane and were also moving six hundred miles an hour, colliding with each other, trying to adjust to the new speed, and struggling to balance what they used to do with what they now need to do. And that's hard work!"

As Andy taught, you can develop a strategy that looks perfect on paper, but sooner or later, you will be confronted with the responses and emotions of the actual human beings who will implement that change.

Two decades later, when I was serving as president of FranklinCovey, we lived out this phenomenon as an organization. In our case, the change was the result of a proactive decision to upend our business model and undertake a massive digital transformation. Things weren't going poorly for us; in fact, we were already doing better as an organization than we'd done in a long time. But our prescient CEO at the time, Bob Whitman, believed there was a better way to serve our customers: by transitioning to a digital-first subscription model. And if that proved to be true, it was going to be much better for our clients and our organization—including our people.

I was tasked with testing out the model with a subset of salespeople and clients, and results quickly proved the idea viable. But it was not an easy decision, as a public company, to transform our business. We needed to address literally everything: what we sold, the way we sold, the way we engaged clients, the financial model of the company, how we recognized revenue, how we accounted for our sales, how we went to market... in one way or another, it all had to change!

As we tackled those challenges, we knew that if we couldn't capture the hearts and minds of the people, the change would fail. Our job as leaders was to help everyone in the organization see that while we didn't have answers to every question, ultimately this was going to be the right thing for them and for our customers.

This is the very leadership challenge Andy was describing! Whether you're rolling out a strategic initiative or dealing with an externally imposed crisis, it's easy to forget that it's going to take your people more than one meeting or one presentation to get to the same level of comfort, buy-in, and excitement that you, as the leader, have for what's about to happen.

We often think leadership is about having the "big idea." But the idea is just the starting line. Leaders need a willingness to confront reality, adjust, get input, adjust again, and bring people along. That's the real work of leadership.

During our own change initiative, we were no exception. Some of the

most influential opinion leaders in the company said, “I don’t want to do this. I’ve been successfully doing my job for two decades, and you’re going to come in and mess all that up?” (I know because they called me directly!) As an organization, we were in and out of what this book calls the Zone of Disruption frequently—sometimes multiple times a day. At the same time, we benefited from having a culture filled with incredible people who were already steeped in the principles and practices of resilience, trust, and collaboration from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, *The Speed of Trust*, and other bodies of work that are central to what we bring to the world. As a result, our cultural strength gave us a leg up on the change, and we pushed through to the Zone of Innovation relatively quickly—and the benefits of the change began to materialize.

We had all kinds of fits and starts and, thankfully, our clients hung in there with us. Our people recalibrated and innovated in ways we couldn’t have foreseen at the beginning. Most importantly, our clients, people, and investors were truly better served as we began to form deeper and longer-term partnerships with our clients and engage with them in more lasting and comprehensive ways.

So why FranklinCovey and why this book? Why listen to us after the millions of gallons of ink that have already been spilled on the topic of leadership and organizational change?

Fundamentally, it’s because we believe that we have a unique understanding of the underlying principles, practices, and behaviors that drive effective behavior change at scale—and we know how to enable organizations to marshal all that human energy to get aligned and rolling in the same direction in support of the strategies the organization needs to achieve. This is something we’ve been doing for forty years. We are the behavior-change company. And at its core, every strategic initiative, every change you go through, is accomplished through a change in human behavior.

We’re checking the box that you’ve come up with a brilliant plan—whether it’s to achieve better results or to deal with a change you never asked for. But that great plan will live or die based on what the people in your organization or team do. Whether they buy in or not. Whether they go on the journey or not. Whether they reinvent themselves and the way they

work to make it happen... or not. As my friend Andy pointed out, having a great idea puts you at the starting line. The real work of leadership is what you do next.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul Walker
CEO, FranklinCovey
April 2023

Introduction

When Mick Jagger opened the door, Charlie Watts, the Rolling Stones' drummer, punched him in the face so hard he fell flat on the table behind him. The usually mild-mannered Watts then calmly turned around and walked back to his hotel room.

Why such an act of aggression? Jagger may have been one of the greatest rock and roll front men of all time, but he miscalculated the emotions of change. He hadn't learned (or had forgotten) that unwanted and unexpected change can tap into our most primal fight-or-flight instincts. Even a calm, unflappable English drummer could lash out—and did—when the ego-driven Jagger announced he'd negotiated a huge deal for *himself* with a slew of solo albums to follow. That act of betrayal, followed by a late-night harassing phone call from Jagger, was more change than Charlie Watts could take. A knock at the door was followed by a right hook, and Jagger fell into a platter of smoked salmon and nearly out of the hotel window.¹

Eventually, the Rolling Stones patched things up and continued their streak of best-selling hits. While we're not advocating Charlie Watts's choice in handling the situation, we recognize it would be a mistake to underestimate how humans are wired to react when faced with the threat of change. We've written this book to provide leaders with the mindsets, skillsets, and toolsets to lead their teams from simply reacting to change, to opting in and taking ownership of it. In the chapters to come, we'll present a framework for how change unfolds as a predictable process and how leaders can increase their team's capacity to both implement and leverage the benefits of change. After all, FranklinCovey's mission of *enabling greatness in people and organizations everywhere* is essentially a mission about change. Whether we're developing exceptional leaders, instilling the habits of effectiveness, building an inclusive and high-trust culture, or providing a common execution framework tied to

“Wildly” Important Goals, change is at the heart of how people live, work, and achieve individual and collective “great purposes.”

As four authors, we’re unabashed about our passion for and expertise in helping clients successfully navigate change. It begins with a recognition that the most effective change leaders choose to invest their time in their people over following a process. Leaders who begin with this mindset can more easily move beyond rote change-management practices to building increased change capabilities in those they lead.

The most effective change leaders choose to invest their time in their people over following a process.

Over the past four decades, we’ve vetted our framework by working in the trenches with executives, mid-level leaders, and frontline employees to support various forms of change across numerous industries. The topic of change has helped shape the focus of our professional lives, and we’ve gathered more than a few stories along the way.



Curtis Bateman

Change Is a Platform for Helping Others

It all began on a trip through Eastern Europe in the late '90s. I was working with one of our business partners, and we were discussing the need for individuals, organizations, and teams to have more tools and best practices when it came to change. We realized people needed a way to see the change journey like a map so they'd know where they were and what was ahead. With my

business partners, I jumped to the whiteboard and sketched the initial vision for what later became FranklinCovey's Change Model (I know, nerd alert—who “jumps” to a whiteboard to draw a modified J curve?). Together, we sketched several years' worth of clients' successes and failures and teased out the common patterns that stalled or accelerated their progress during their change trajectories. What emerged over years of diligent study, reflection, and recalibration was a change model my experienced and talented coauthors and I will present and explore in this book.

Prior to our whiteboard “masterpiece,” I'd spent the first dozen years of my career working in software and had the opportunity to collaborate with publishers all over the world. I was working at

a boutique tech startup, and after landing our first big international client, I moved to Europe to ensure a successful implementation of our solution. We built a team of consultants, trainers, technical specialists, and salespeople. The software we sold to publishers became the backbone of their operations, including customer service, finance and revenue recognition, marketing, and fulfillment. Consulting with clients to implement our technology put me on the front row of large organizational change. Oh yeah, and very much on the front row of *personal* change as well, as my wife and I uprooted our family and moved halfway around the world. Best decision we ever made, and we've done it multiple times since.

In the ensuing twenty years, I've had the privilege of being involved in many significant change initiatives across complicated systems, technologies, and processes, and what I really learned is that change is fundamentally about... *people*.

This people-first insight eventually led me to the world's most trusted leadership company, FranklinCovey. I saw an opportunity to move our experience and ongoing change work into an organization with a much bigger stage—one with the potential to help everyone find more success with change. And that's a *why* that drives me to this day.



Marché Pleshette

Change Promotes Growth

One of my favorite adages in life is “Stop looking at your past... it's not where you're headed.”

I've always felt a bit uncomfortable, and sometimes even paralyzed, at the onset of change, until I first gain clarity about why I'm in it; second, understand what I can and can't control about it; and third, make clear decisions about how I will move forward. What I've found over time is that I'm rarely guaranteed success at the outset of a new venture. But I've learned that success in any undertaking is far more promising when there's a planned process, a support system, and a focused and positive mindset for the journey.

My passion for people led me to the most fitting careers—professional development and personal coaching. They have given me the opportunity to support others in growth, improvement, and the accomplishment of goals. For someone who was so resistant to change personally, it's ironic that I found myself essentially in the business of change. In the most rewarding way, my career has not only helped others, but also helped me to consistently grow, improve, and reach

higher goals myself.

While crisscrossing the world for several decades, working with FranklinCovey's diverse client base, I've become certain that change is a process of adjusting to something different or new and causes many of us to be fearful. And that's normal for all of us at some level. It's when fear hijacks our confidence and paralyzes our individual momentum that the potential upside of change falls short. This book is designed to help you, as a leader, guide your team past such fear and embrace the opportunities that await.

My greatest change, personally, came when I was twenty-four and I lost my father to a fatal car accident. I saw my dad, as many daughters do, as the greatest. He was such a source of wisdom, provision, encouragement, thoughtful conversation, and joy. I counted on him for almost everything! He taught me about life, business, and greatness, but I wasn't deeply listening to the responsibility part of our conversations, because I subconsciously thought he'd be there all my life.

The first several months without him were empty—emptier and more hopeless than I'd ever experienced. While going through the grieving process, I had to decide to accept both the loss and the opportunity to grow. I took on the things he'd originally done for me, often having no idea what I was doing with some of the business matters... but I learned. I became more self-sufficient and wiser in handling personal issues as well. Where I would ordinarily have called him to ask advice about a relationship or a big decision, I began to test the wisdom of my own insights and move through the natural fear of this massive loss in my life. I became more independent and found I was far more capable than I'd imagined I could be. The comfort of his presence in my life had created such a safe space, I hadn't leaned into the potential of my full growth. I would rather have had a different kind of growth spurt than losing my dad, but it was a pivotal point of enlightenment for me about change. Even now, I still miss him; but he would be so proud of the empowered and mature woman I've become.

Among those of my brilliant coauthors, my voice throughout the book is one that reminds us of the human spirit that is so much a part of change. Whether our change is personal, professional, organizational, or societal, it's our sense of self, our identity, our character that gets refined through the change process.



Andy Cindrich

Change Can Spur Greatness

As a twenty-nine-year-old high school principal with some staff who had taught longer than I had been alive, I led an amazing group of teachers, coaches, and students in turning our struggling school around. In just a three-year period, we were able to change the culture, improve academic performance, and establish winning traditions in several sports. At the outset, I knew

I had to shake things up—people were too comfortable with the way things had always been at the school. We disrupted everything from the bell schedule and homecoming traditions to the way we collected gate receipts at football games and how the staff interacted with students. I also helped two teachers find opportunities more suited to their skillsets. That didn't sit well with the teachers union, who ultimately pressured the school board to move me out (known to the rest of the world as getting sacked). They didn't fire me outright but moved me into a new role where I split my time between two school districts, serving as the school community-resource director before moving back into the classroom and working with at-risk students. A reduction in force in the spring of my fifth year left me with a newborn baby, with a house under construction, and without a job too late in the year to find another as a school administrator, so I had to reinvent myself—*fast!*

I pivoted to instructional design, training development, editing, and even web development and search-engine optimization. My biggest client was FranklinCovey, and after a series of serendipitous events, I ended up as a full-time FranklinCovey consultant, helping clients with strategy execution, leadership development, and personal effectiveness. This gut-wrenching, unanticipated, and unwanted change is one of the best things that ever happened to me.

In my three-thousand-plus days of engagements as a FranklinCovey consultant, I've seen the pain of people who get stuck—whether from a new boss, the grief that follows the untimely death of a loved one, a faith crisis, the bitterness of divorce, an empty nest, or the struggle of navigating organizational change. I've seen my children's friends get stuck after high school graduation, and I've seen clients get stuck when unanticipated change throws them off their game plans.

If you've noticed a theme, it's getting "stuck." Organizations and smart, well-educated, talented leaders and individual contributors all get stuck in change. My personal mission calls me to help people get

unstuck, to reinvent themselves in the face of adversity, and to find their own greatness. This often means experiencing unanticipated value and joy from change. I recognize that change is essential to progress—whether as an individual, in a marriage or partnership, in business, in school, as a community, as a society, or even collectively as stewards of this world.



Christi Phillips

Change Is Universal and Predictable

Change is probably the main theme of my personal life, and it very easily has become a theme of my professional life. When I was eight years old, my parents came to me and my siblings and told us that they were moving our family to Africa from Texas. But before we got to Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), we had to move to Georgia for six months, then France

for another six months. I didn't like any of that, but it didn't matter—it all happened anyway.

I eventually came to love moving from one place to another, and even missed the changes when my family settled back in Texas. Change, in the form of living in unfamiliar places, had opened me to new people, new learnings, and new paradigms. I eventually learned that I could choose to embrace such change or resist. I believe this insight gave me an edge that other people my age, without the benefit of such drastic and early change in their lives, simply didn't have.

For the last fifteen years of my professional life, I have functioned as a change agent, both formally and informally. I helped lead a large healthcare organization through the implementation of an electronic medical records (EMR) system—an experience both delightful and hard. I also took ten long years to complete a dissertation on employee engagement. It, too, was a change experience filled with both joy and pain.

Shortly, Curtis is going to introduce you to a parable about a ship, its crew, and their perilous river journey. When it comes to change, the waterfall in this parable represents the initial disruption of change. We stress the inevitability of plunging over the river's edge—whether accidental, imposed, or chosen—just as I was taken over such a change waterfall early in my life. As a reader, you may find that the waterfall and resulting journey works for you as a metaphor, particularly if you can envision a change story as a fantastical adventure. Or the whimsical waterfall may be difficult or challenging, if you prefer more

literal translations of hard-hitting business-like change. The thing that is common about the parable you'll find in Chapter One is that, for nearly all of us, it represents the emotional plummet and heightened chaos, personal or professional, slight or significant, that change brings. My goal in giving you this early spoiler is to set you up, regardless of which kind of literary preferences you have or what kind of reader you are, so you can, in the best tradition of any useful parable, ascribe to the waterfall the meaning that flows from your life, experiences, culture, context, and more. In other words, make it yours.

This book emphasizes the people side of change, which, thanks to the work on grief—the emotional reactions to loss (certainly a kind of change)—presented by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in the 1980s,² we understand is universal and predictable. I know that FranklinCovey isn't the first player in the sandbox to talk about the people side of change, but we've built upon that foundation to offer a simple and relatable model to reconceptualize how to self-manage, to take others through change, and maybe even learn to enjoy the ride.

We've each come to change through a different lens: Curtis as a change expert with over two decades of working both at the highest levels and in the trenches; Marché as a professional-development consultant who has coached hundreds of leaders through personal and professional change; Andy as a leadership and effectiveness expert and an accomplished change practitioner who provides consulting services to executives and organizations; and Christi as a PhD in human resources development who has served as the lead change agent for an immensely complex healthcare change initiative, among other change-related projects. We've experienced change from many perspectives, across diverse organizations, and from all parts of the globe, and our collective experience has validated two premises we'll explore further in this book:

- ♦ Change follows a pattern, and leaders can benefit greatly from a framework we call the Change Model.
- ♦ Because change is always a human endeavor, the most effective change leaders prioritize the needs of their people over strict adherence to a process.

The promise of this book is that it will teach you, as a leader, how to turn the uncertainty of change into opportunity (and build your team's capacity

to move through current and future changes more effectively). That may feel like a daunting challenge, especially if you're in the middle of a change disruption. But take heart. The perfect antidote to change's complexity is a model that is clear and simple to understand. And so, by way of introduction, let's start with our parable...

CHAPTER TWO

Getting Started

W elcome back.

Now that we've spent some time with the captain and crew of the good ship *Results*, chances are their change story feels familiar in many ways to experiences you've had with change. Maybe your ship is teamed a little differently, your waterfall higher or lower, your cliff more gentle or jagged—but you've likely experienced a smooth start, a disruption, a decision, a climb, and an opportunity for more.

And let's be clear, as a leader, every time your team is at the bottom of the waterfall, it's creating cost for the organization—when your technology implementation falls short, when your new compensation model lands with a thud, when a new leader joins and relationships are strained—and you can add your last (or current) change to the list. Whatever that change happens to be, the faster you can lead your team out of the ravine, the faster those costs dissipate and even turn into new opportunities.

We'll be returning to *Who Rocked the Boat?* throughout the book. First, let's overlay our fictional story with one that almost sounds like fiction but is drawn from real life. Suspend your judgment, because although the story is true, you're going to frequently wonder how any of this could have happened in the last decade.

In 2012, a real estate investor closed on the purchase of an apartment complex. Unsurprisingly, the transaction came with a lot of paperwork. But this one came with one extra set of documents: a class-action lawsuit from the HOA of the property.

Why? Residents of the apartment couldn't get their pizzas delivered.

Now, this may sound like a trivial indictment, but there was more to it. The apartment building, which had no phone lines or cell service, was gated

with a security system. Any visitor had to push an intercom button designed to connect to the nonexistent land lines. When the system was reconfigured to route to the residents' cell phones, this also didn't work, as none of the residents could get service from within. Consider some of the ramifications:

- ◆ The pizza-delivery person arrives. You don't know anyone's at the gate, and the pizza is subsequently returned and never eaten (at least by you).
- ◆ An online retailer delivers a package. That lava lamp you've been anxiously waiting for, which requires your signature, never finds a place on your bookshelf.
- ◆ Your date arrives to pick you up. They think you've stood them up, as you don't answer the intercom and your cell phone goes straight to voicemail.
- ◆ Your grandmother comes to visit. She's left wondering what kind of ungrateful grandchild allows an old woman to be left out in the cold.

Not great when it comes to receiving visitors and deliveries. But the lack of cell-phone service meant no *outbound* calls from the residents as well. Suffering a cardiac emergency? Do your best to crawl outside with your cell phone in hand and *then* dial emergency services.

Thus, the class-action lawsuit.⁴

That's the backstory; now, the change. Enter Adam Rubey and Chad Ballard, who specialized in high-end residential automation, lighting, and audio. Their investor client asked them to take on the challenge and solve the issue, even though this was far outside their expertise as they were used to configuring single-family homes but weren't familiar with this apartment's older (and useless) system. Adam and Chad chose to go over the waterfall and change what they did in their business.

First, they tried many of the available off-the-shelf products, but those failed. Then, they tried a few custom solutions, but nothing worked. After a good deal of trial and error and more than one setback, they eventually created their own solution, combining their engineering know-how with familiar hardware, and developed a configuration that worked. Success! Residents could now get their pizzas. They could call that date for a second chance. They could bring Grandma in out of the cold! Adam and Chad had saved the day, making the long climb up the cliff and out of the ravine. The residents

were happy, the investor was happy, and no more lawsuit. End of story.

Or at least it could have been.

Adam and Chad made it to the top and they could have been satisfied with simply getting back to the way things had been. But instead—like *Minimize* in the parable, who said, “Makes me wonder what else we could do”—they grew curious. They contemplated whether owners of other commercial buildings faced similar problems and could use their newly acquired expertise. And it turned out, they could. Shortly thereafter, the company Illuminati Labs was born, specializing in making all kinds of commercial buildings cell-phone-friendly. Chad and Adam used their newly acquired “change muscle” to try something new—to be curious, to explore, to innovate. Like the crew in our parable, they found their *Results* took off in a new and exciting direction.

Such a positive outcome doesn’t surprise us, since Chad and Adam replicated much of what made the captain and crew turn their change from uncertainty into opportunity. We’ll explore this further by introducing the Five Common Reactions to Change and the Change Model.

The Five Common Reactions to Change

There are five common reactions to change:

- ◆ Move
- ◆ Minimize
- ◆ Wait
- ◆ Resist
- ◆ Quit/Quits

As you’ve likely noticed, those are the exact names of the crew members in our parable. And while it may be tempting to label these reactions as “good” or “bad,” the reality is that each comes with its own strengths and weaknesses. There is no single “best” way to react to change—it’s all about context. Even Quit/Quits is not an inherently wrong choice—some change

There is no single “best” way to react to change. It’s all about context and choice. Each reaction may be right in any given context.

waterfalls plummet into shallow pools lined with jagged rocks, so jumping off the boat and swimming for shore can be the right call (although, in business, that's generally the exception and not the rule). It would be a mistake for leaders to view change as a black-and-white set of problems with a precise set of dos and don'ts to follow. The inherent complexity of change requires a thoughtful approach and a steady, skillful hand on the wheel.



Curtis Bateman

How We Identified the Five Common Reactions to Change

Over the many years I've consulted and worked with organizations, leaders, teams, and individuals on how to navigate change, I often found that people were surprised by others' reactions to change and didn't know what to do with their own. Leaders and their teams needed a way of talking through change; they needed

a common language to communicate and understand each other.

So in our consulting, after we observed how people reacted to change, we identified common reactions and created a shared, nonthreatening language around these reactions—a language people can use to communicate safely how they feel about change.

Our primary lens in this book is focused on business organizations, but we have found that the common reactions to change can be observed in all kinds of contexts, including personal lives, families, sports, academics, the military, and many more.

Originally, we started with *Move*, *Minimize*, *Resist*, and *Wait*, but that was challenged some years ago when I was giving a keynote to five thousand people. I asked the audience to stand and engage in a change activity, only to notice a handful of people leaving the room.

Getting stuck in our own status quo can be as risky for us as anyone else.

They quit.

I realized that “walking out” and simply refusing to take part was another common reaction to change and something we hadn't included. Quitting can, and does, happen with regularity (the distinction between *Quit* and *Quits* is that one stays and refuses to engage, while the other leaves). This is happening with such regularity today that the term “quiet quitting” has become an increasing part of our

vocabulary, with employees choosing to do the bare minimum, taking a step back from all emotional investment and engagement in their work. Even our self-initiated change efforts, undertaken with the best of intentions and wellspring of motivation, can find us throwing in the towel (ever quit a diet?). So *Quit* became one of our change reactions. And who knows? With more time, we may come up with another. We are in the change business, after all, and getting stuck in our own status quo can be as risky for us as anyone else.

Keep in mind that the Five Common Reactions to Change are *not* personality types. A personality type is a psychological classification or typology about a *person*. A change reaction is a *behavioral* descriptor—a momentary “snapshot” taken at any point in the change process. Our reactions to change are fluid, influenced not only by the change itself but our culture, team dynamics, community norms, institutional standards, and other considerations. They may be automatic, but learning to adapt and manage them is an essential change and leadership competency.

A Deeper Look at the Five Common Reactions to Change

Let’s examine the Five Common Reactions to Change in more detail, considering the potential advantages and disadvantages of each.

Move

“Let’s go!”

Move has an impulse to charge quickly into action toward the new objective.

ADVANTAGES

- Avoids getting stuck in old ways
- Tries new things (often eager to do so)
- Stays motivated
- Tolerates high levels of risk, ambiguity, and uncertainty
- Energizes others

DISADVANTAGES

- May act too quickly
- Moves without getting “all the information”
- Leaves others behind
- Can lack credibility
- Can be overly enthusiastic and emotional about change

Minimize

“Just tell me what you want me to do.”

Minimize focuses on what's expected and tries to change as little as possible.

ADVANTAGES

- Focuses on what's necessary
- Avoids unnecessary disruption
- Tries new things to test them before fully committing
- Identifies efficient ways of getting things done

DISADVANTAGES

- Does little to change and subsequently gets little from it
- Has a lower commitment level
- Burdens the change efforts of others
- May be perceived as lazy

Wait

“Let me know when it's real.”

Wait does nothing immediately. They hesitate for a variety of reasons, including watching to see what others do first, delaying until they have more information or options, or holding back while prioritizing other things first. They often have history on their side as they've seen numerous changes fail—they've been rewarded for not moving forward.

ADVANTAGES

- Avoids the downside of risk
- Often asks great questions about change
- Considers the change thoughtfully rather than rushing into it
- Conserves resources
- Not whipsawed by failed changes

DISADVANTAGES

- Misses the upside of risk
- Adopts change slowly and only after others have changed first
- Slows the adoption rate of others
- Misses opportunities that benefit from quick decisions
- Reacts to external events rather than being proactive

Resist

“Why are we doing this?”

Resist dislikes the change and tries to prevent it or convince others to fight it, privately or publicly.

ADVANTAGES

- Tests the rationale behind a change initiative
- Seeks alternatives
- Asks questions that reveal potential obstacles
- Counterbalances an overabundance of enthusiasm
- Sees the potential flaws in how others react to change

DISADVANTAGES

- Impedes progress
- Creates conflict and/or power struggles
- Raises invalid concerns that take time and energy to resolve
- Dampens morale and enthusiasm for the change
- Fuels fear and uncertainty

Quit

"I'm not doing that!"

Quit stays in the organization, the relationship, or the situation, but gives up and refuses to engage with the change.

ADVANTAGES

- Offers an ongoing warning signal for potential obstacles
- Prompts leaders to provide better clarification and communication

DISADVANTAGES

- Causes disruption and uncertainty
- Creates drag on the organization and slows productivity
- Actively undermines leadership
- Negatively affects team morale and unity
- Forces others to work that much harder

Quits

"I'm outta here!"

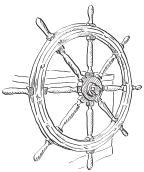
Quits is a variation of *Quit*. *Quits* leaves the team, relationship, or venture because of a change, choosing to pursue something different.

ADVANTAGES

- Allows the leader to conserve resources
- Relieves the organization of a fence-sitter—they've made their choice
- On rare occasions, "abandon ship" can be the right call

DISADVANTAGES

- Causes disruption and uncertainty
- Decreases the morale, unity, and productivity of the team they left behind
- Costs the organization/team to find workarounds and/or a replacement
- Forces others to work that much harder
- Others may consider quitting as a viable option



Captain's Corner

Managing Your Reaction to Change

Throughout the subsequent chapters, you'll find "Captain's Corners" such as this. They are tactical leadership guides for assessing important aspects of change and leading your team through change conversations. As such, they've been highlighted for quick reference, and we encourage you to use them as you implement change initiatives with your team.

As you learn to manage your own reactions to change, you'll be able to model and coach your team to do the same. Share the following steps for when you catch yourself having an automatic reaction to an unexpected or unwanted change:

1. Pause and breathe.
2. Label what you are thinking and feeling.
3. Ask: Is this reaction helping me or preventing me from making progress?
4. Focus on what you can control, both about the change itself and how you choose to react to it.

The Change Model

When navigating change, leaders benefit from having a model, so teams can visualize where they are now, where they want to go, and whether they're making progress. No matter the source of the change—self-directed, environmentally forced, or organizationally initiated—the Change Model helps assess whether you have the ability and stamina to make the change and whether your efforts will pay off in a positive ROI.

The *Who Rocked the Boat?* parable places our model in a narrative form, representing the consistent and predictable change pattern people and organizations go through. We've tested the Change Model with "boots on the ground" inside organizations around the world and validated it as both a predictive and a diagnostic tool for change. We've also used and benefited from the Change Model time and time again in our personal lives.



Christi Phillips

Addressing the Need for a Change Model

A search for academic papers about change shows that nearly a million articles have been published in the last ten years. I have taught and implemented at least four change frameworks as a change practitioner and studied the bulk of them along my path to a PhD in human resources. I find that parts of such frameworks can be useful, especially understanding the emotional

reactions to change (thank you, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross), and the need to identify defined steps (thank you, John Kotter), and learning to account for existing factors (thank you, McKinsey & Company). But the world of work is changing. As our work and social environments shift toward employing empathy and building agile teams and collaborative cultures, we need to understand what is happening with *people*, not just with change. This is where my friend Curtis Bateman started when building the Change Model.

Our model began with client conversations about what seemed to be a repetitive pattern of organizational change. This pattern was then tested with other clients: “Does this step make sense? Does it match your experience?” If a step matched the client’s experience, that piece was locked. If they said no, then it was changed. Getting the Change Model firmed up took several years of trial and error. Over time, four distinct zones emerged that overlay the individual and organizational change journey. These zones created clarity for all audiences to locate where they were in the change process and then identify common reactions and actions that can improve change success.

Change requires that people take time to surface their own experiences and beliefs relative to the ongoing change. The best leaders intentionally guide their team members to help them figure that out and work through it—that’s really the “management” part of change. But you don’t need a weeklong certification course or a PhD to get good at this. Just keep reading. I think this Change Model—my new favorite—is the best yet...

Just as one’s reaction to change is a momentary snapshot, the Change Model adds clarity at any given moment across a change initiative. We can further use it as a map to chart the way forward: anticipating key decisions, adopting new behaviors, and building a path toward innovation.

Time and Results

Consider the x (Time) and y (Results) axes that frame the model.



FIGURE 1: X and Y Axes of the Change Model.

The Change Model maps the results we get over time. It's tempting for leaders to see results as only financial, but they can include anything affected by change: morale, skills, confidence, productivity, engagement, time to market, health, leader-employee relationships, etc.

In the beginning, we experience a consistent, if not predictable, level of results. This was the River "Routine" in our parable, where the ship *Results* "moved at a slow but predictable pace. Everyone expected a smooth journey—the waterway was gentle, the scenery pleasant, and the skies clear and comforting."

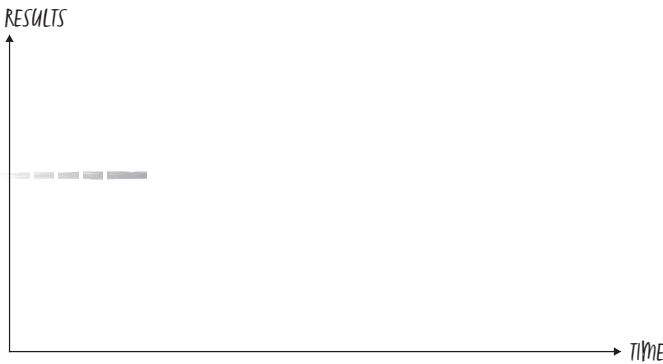


FIGURE 2: *The River "Routine."*

Then a change is introduced, and results take a hit. "The ship bounced and listed as it neared the crest of the waterfall. Awash in the roar of the falls, the spray of the water, and the rush of the wind, the crew was gripped by an onslaught of emotions as they plummeted."

One of the leader's goals through change is to shorten the duration of the initial stress and limit its negative impact on results.

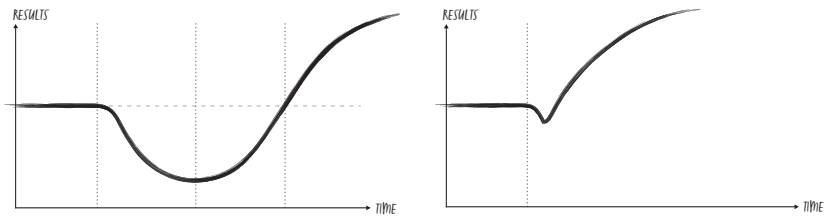


FIGURE 3: *Reducing the Depth and Duration of the Dip.*

Then there comes a time to decide to engage, when leaders and their teams commit to making the climb back to the level of results prior to the change. As our captain pointed out in *Who Rocked the Boat?*, “The waterfall wreaked havoc on our poor ship and left us bruised and broken, and now we need to work together to get back on course.”

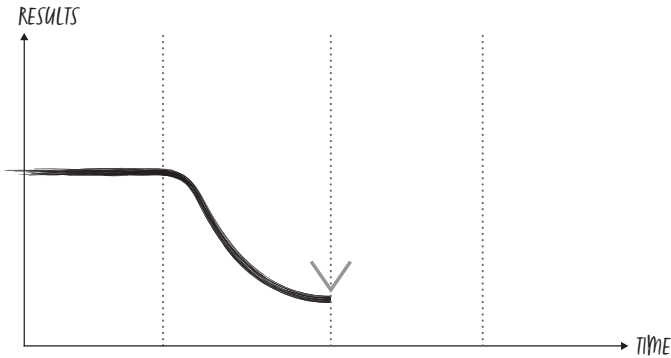


FIGURE 4: Choosing to Engage in the Change.

Climbing out is hard work and requires trying new things, enduring setbacks, and persisting in the effort. In the parable, the captain and crew found that “scaling the cliff had turned out to be even harder than the captain had predicted. But as long as the crew had worked together, step by step and foot by foot, they had gotten themselves out.”

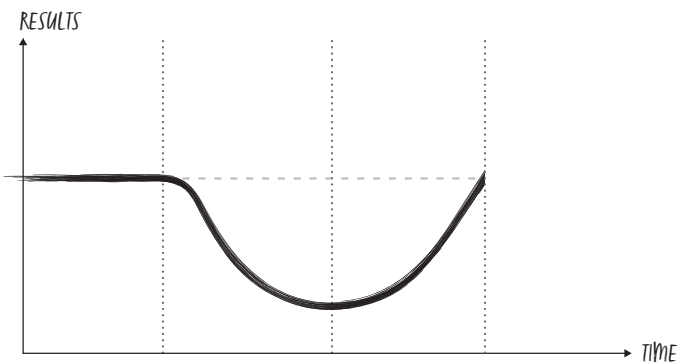


FIGURE 5: Climbing Out.

The change process can also result in a unique opportunity to innovate so that results climb even higher than before. In our parable, we describe it as,

“Sometime later, as the sun rested on the horizon, a new airship took shape. With its canopy and sails refashioned, boilers repurposed, and propellers realigned, the vessel rose into the air.” The “rising into the air” was an intentional way of expressing *Results* literally taking off because of the captain and crew’s curiosity and investment of energy and time.

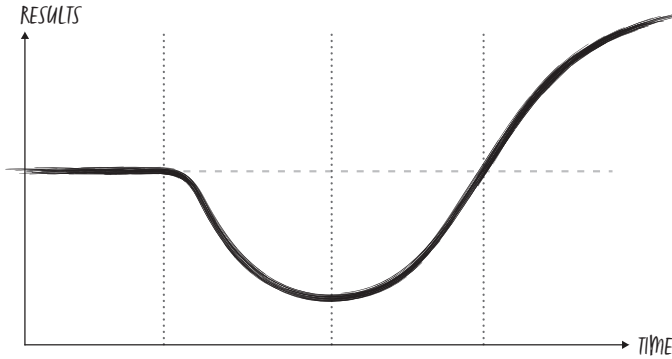


FIGURE 6: *Taking Off With Innovation.*

Many leaders try to pretend the dip doesn’t exist. They think of their change as only up and to the right. Of course, sometimes serendipity happens and change yields immediate benefits. But it would be naïve to rely on such an outlier as an effective change strategy.

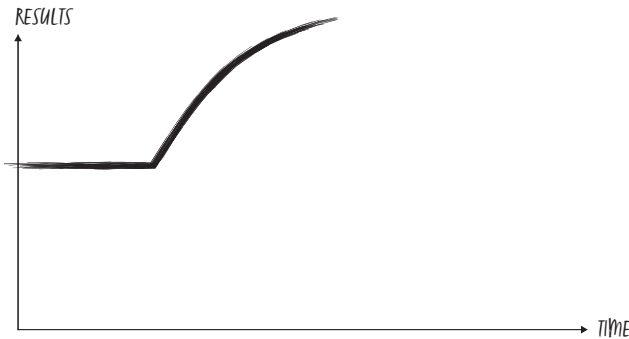


FIGURE 7: *Up and to the Right Is Rare.*

The Four Zones

Moving from the x and y axes of Time and Results, we next overlay the model with four distinct zones:

- ◆ The Zone of Status Quo
- ◆ The Zone of Disruption
- ◆ The Zone of Adoption
- ◆ The Zone of Innovation

CHANGE MODEL

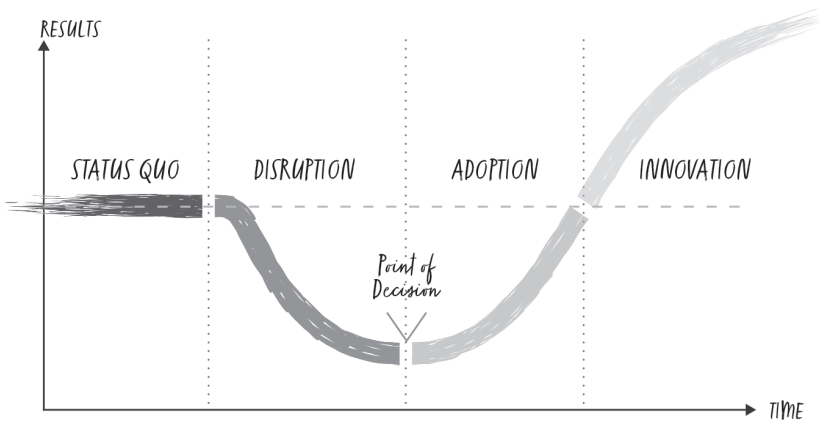


FIGURE 8: *The Change Model.*

In *Who Rocked the Boat?*, the four zones correlate with the status quo of the river, the disruption of the waterfall, climbing the cliff, and the adoption of new strategies through trial and error, with innovation—a new “airship”—at the end. Let’s take a high-level look at each zone before going deeper in subsequent chapters.

The Zone of Status Quo (Chapter Five)

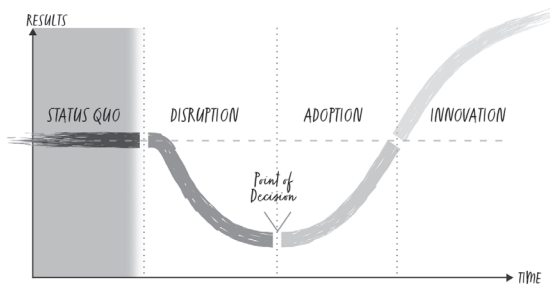


FIGURE 9: *The Zone of Status Quo.*

The Zone of Status Quo is what you experience before a change happens. Here, you are in a routine, and it's business as usual. Even if your routine is busy and stressful, it's still familiar. It can be difficult leaving the established behind.

Key Skill: Prepare

Those who are most successful at change prepare for it. They aren't content to try and avoid it or simply wait for it to happen. When change appears on the horizon—whether self-initiated or not—they can better navigate the impending disruption.

The Zone of Disruption (Chapter Six)

"The riskiest thing we can do is just maintain the status quo."

—Bob Iger, American businessman and CEO of the Disney Corporation

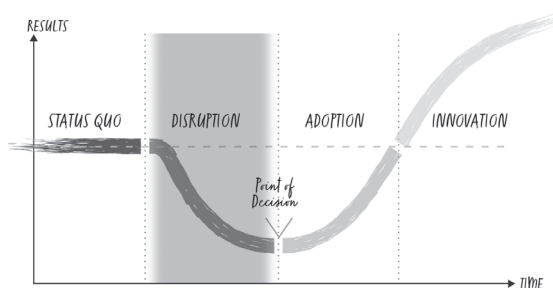


FIGURE 10: *The Zone of Disruption.*

As you plummet over the edge of the change waterfall, you enter the Zone of Disruption. Like the crew in our parable, it's easy to find yourself awash in chaos and ambiguity when results take a nosedive. Many of the things you were used to having can disappear, and what you were used to doing stops working.

Key Skill: Clarify

We can become stuck in the Zone of Disruption unless we clarify the impact of the change. Here we are concerned with three primary questions:

- ◆ *What's changing?*
- ◆ *Why is it changing?*

- ◆ How will it affect me?

Leaders can fight change insecurity with information, helping their teams commit to the change with greater confidence.

The Point of Decision (Chapter Seven)

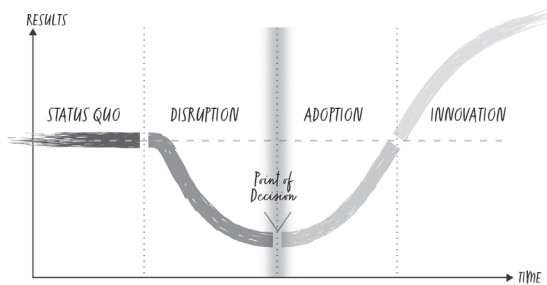


FIGURE 11: *The Point of Decision.*

The Point of Decision is a critical transition from the Zone of Disruption to the Zone of Adoption.

Key Skill: Commit

Here we use the clarity uncovered in the Zone of Disruption to commit to a choice: stay in the Zone of Disruption, with its lower results and lack of progress, or proactively own the change by taking action. We don't always get to choose whether a change happens to us, but we do get to choose how we'll respond.

The Zone of Adoption (Chapter Eight)

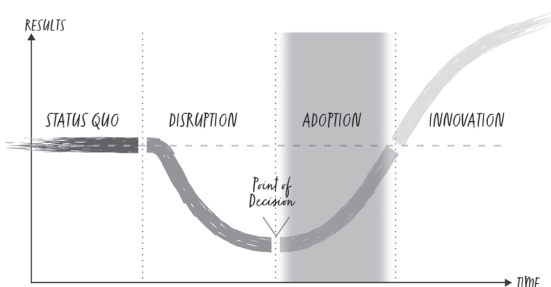


FIGURE 12: *The Zone of Adoption.*

The Zone of Adoption is where most change efforts die. But like the crew in our parable, you can learn new things as you make your way out of the dip.

Key Skill: Persist

In the Zone of Adoption, you're apt to get frustrated or be tempted to give up. Persistence is key as you scramble to the top, testing new tactics, learning from failures and setbacks, shifting your approach, and altering your thinking. It's this very struggle, as inefficient and painful as it may be, that lays the groundwork for future innovation.

The Zone of Innovation (Chapter Nine)

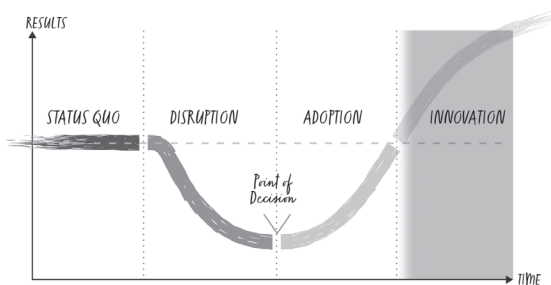
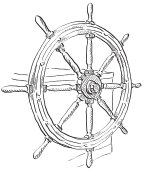


FIGURE 13: *The Zone of Innovation.*

The Zone of Innovation leverages the change experience you've earned so that new actions feel natural.

Key Skill: Explore

You've paid the price for innovation, and now you can leverage the investment on behalf of yourself and your team. In the Zone of Innovation, you explore new ways of thinking and doing, challenging assumptions and broadening your curiosity. Not all change needs or benefits from innovation, but one of the great benefits of change and following the model is taking stock of what could happen now that you've experienced new things, overcome significant challenges, and gained a new perspective on what you do.



Captain's Corner

Introducing the Change Model to Your Team

One of the first things you can do as a leader is introduce your team to the Change Model. Having a common metaphor and/or nomenclature helps ensure that everyone is “speaking the same language” when it comes to change. Once you’ve become familiar with the Change Model, there are several ways you can accomplish this:

- **Option One:** Hold a team meeting and set up a whiteboard (or build a visual presentation or other way of displaying the model). Use the content in this chapter to provide an overview of each zone.
- **Option Two:** Read the *Who Rocked the Boat?* parable in Chapter One aloud as a team.
 - Help your team understand and identify with the Five Common Reactions to Change. Keep in mind that each bullet is worthy of exploration and discussion. Don’t feel pressure to move through each bullet as quickly as possible. Take the time to unpack this with your team and help them focus on their own reactions, rather than those of others.
 - Ask each team member:
 - ◆ Which one are you? Are you introspective around your own change reaction or aware of the reactions of others: Move, Minimize, Wait, Resist, Quit/Quits?
 - ◆ Could you empathize with some of the crew more than others? Who felt most like you?
 - ∞ How is your reaction helping you make progress?
 - ∞ How is your reaction preventing you from progressing?
 - ∞ How can you choose to react differently if it’s holding you back?
 - ◆ How did the relationships between the captain and the crew come to make the change successful (or undermine its chances for success)?
 - ◆ Reactions to change can extend beyond the five most common reactions in the parable. What other reaction might represent you or someone you know when going through change? (Examples: Revolt,

who's ready to grab a torch and metaphorically burn the initiative to the ground; Fear, who is gripped by negative thinking and dread and will share it at every opportunity; Ambivalence, who is uncertain or unable to decide what course to follow; etc.)

- ♦ After exploring your team's reactions to change through the parable, use Option One to show how the parable follows the Change Model, and let your team know you'll be having more discussions about your current change in the days to come.
- **Option Three:** If you have the resources and interest to do so, purchase the stand-alone *Who Rocked the Boat?* book for members of your team. Invite them to read it independently and come to a team meeting to discuss how it applies to them individually, to the team, and to the organization. Because the book also introduces the Change Model, you can invite your team members to use it as a reference as you work together on your change initiative.
- **Option Four:** Use FranklinCovey's individual and leader training using the Change Model. Visit FranklinCovey.com to learn more.

How Leaders Create the ROI for Change

By learning how change works and utilizing the Change Model, leaders can reduce the dip in the change curve. They can reduce the duration and impact of the disruption, reap the benefits of the change sooner, and start preparing for the next inevitable waterfall.

As a leader, you can provide clarity in the Zone of Disruption and overcome obstacles in the Zone of Adoption as you give team members permission to try new things. This helps you reduce the time (x axis) you and your team spend climbing out (see Figure 14).

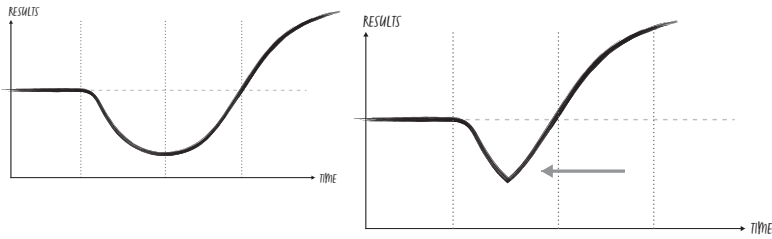


FIGURE 14: Reducing the Time Spent Climbing Out.

You can reduce the drop in results (y axis) by preparing people for the change in the Zone of Status Quo (see Figure 15). The more they know about an upcoming change and the more they can prepare, the less results will suffer when a change happens.

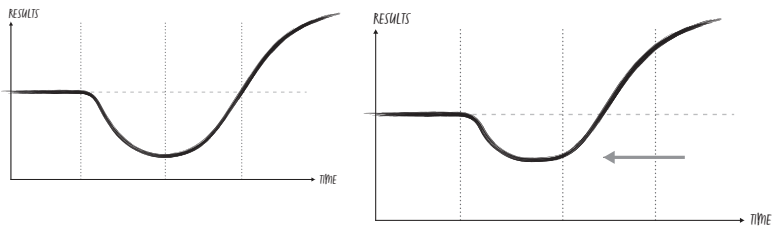


FIGURE 15: Reducing the Dip in Results.

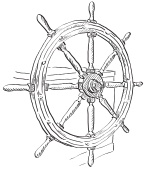
Does the dip in results ever go away? No. With change, there is almost always an impact on results. But as an effective leader, you can help your teams reduce the duration and the depth of the dip. And when you reduce the duration and depth of the dip, you lower the costs of the change and move more quickly to the outcomes you were looking for.

Change and Being the Captain

In *Who Rocked the Boat?*, the captain guided the crew through the difficulties they faced, helping them shift from lamenting about what was outside their control to focusing on what they could influence and how they could work together. The captain

Leading change is best accomplished by answering the question, How do I help my team succeed here?

demonstrated that leading change is best accomplished by answering the question, *How do I help my team succeed here?* versus issuing commands or simply leaving people to figure things out on their own.



Captain's Corner

Orienting Your Team to the Change

Leaders recognize that those involved in change need the opportunity to orient themselves to the new reality. They benefit from the space to consider and process what they believe and feel their part in the change will be.

To help orient yourself or members of your team, ask:

- Which zone are you in with the change? If you or they answer yes to a question, move to the next one. Your first no tells you where you are.
 - Are we in the Zone of Status Quo: Has the change begun?
 - Are we in the Zone of Disruption: Are you clear about what is changing, why, and what the change means for you (impact on work, responsibilities, personal life, etc.)?
 - Are we in the Zone of Adoption: Have you reached the targeted outcomes of the change?
 - Are we in the Zone of Innovation: Are you making the most of the change? Can you see opportunities emerge from the change besides the expected results?

If the change feels overwhelming, ask the members of your team:

- What about this change feels outside your control?
- What can you control?
- What opportunities might the change create?

The Experience and Mindset of Change

Change can elicit both biological and learned responses from those going through it. Because of this, a change leader is doing more than simply implementing “the new” as a series of tasks. Such leaders may

mistakenly feel their primary responsibility is to dictate what must be done, by whom, and by when, then hold the team accountable. But change involving humans—especially when unanticipated or unwanted—is considerably more complex. Effective change leaders understand and empathize with the ways their team members are experiencing change and adopt the necessary mindsets to lead them forward. These two areas are so critical, we've given each an entire chapter (Chapter Three, "How We Experience Change," and Chapter Four, "The Mindset to Lead Change"). It's been our experience that leaders often neglect these vital best practices and are tempted to jump directly to the Change Model. But as you'll see in the next two chapters, this preparatory work is essential to effectively leading change.

Effective change leaders understand and empathize with the ways their team members are experiencing change and adopt the necessary mindsets to lead them forward.



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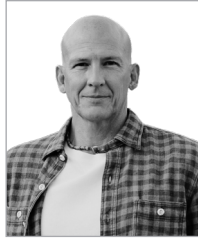
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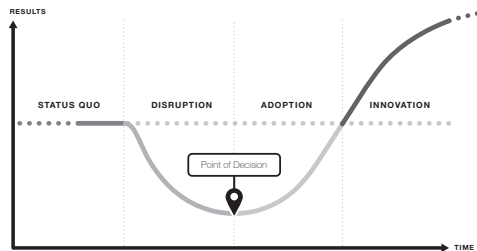
ALL ACCESS PASS

Change happens all the time, whether we choose it or it chooses us.

Yet, when faced with change, many organizations primarily focus on the process. Successful change takes more than that—**it's your people who make change happen**. And as people, we're wired to react to change to survive, which can make change feel difficult or threatening. Successful leaders engage their people in change, making it feel less uncertain and more like an opportunity.

Introducing Change: How to Turn Uncertainty Into Opportunity

When we recognize that change follows a predictable pattern, we can learn to manage our reactions and understand how to navigate change, both functionally and emotionally. This allows us to consciously determine how to best move forward—even in the most challenging stages.



Change: How to Turn Uncertainty Into Opportunity helps individuals and leaders learn how to successfully navigate any workplace change to improve results.

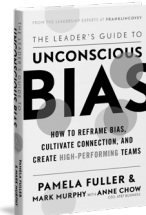
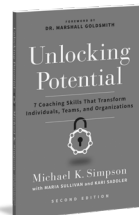
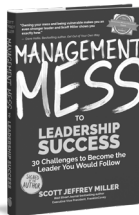
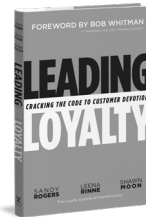
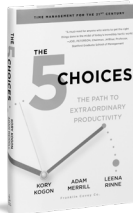
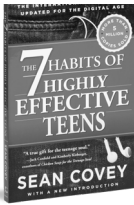
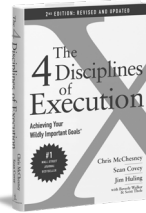
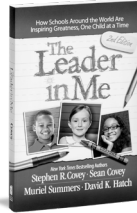
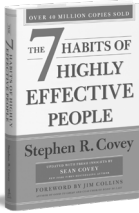
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