

infokit

Change Management

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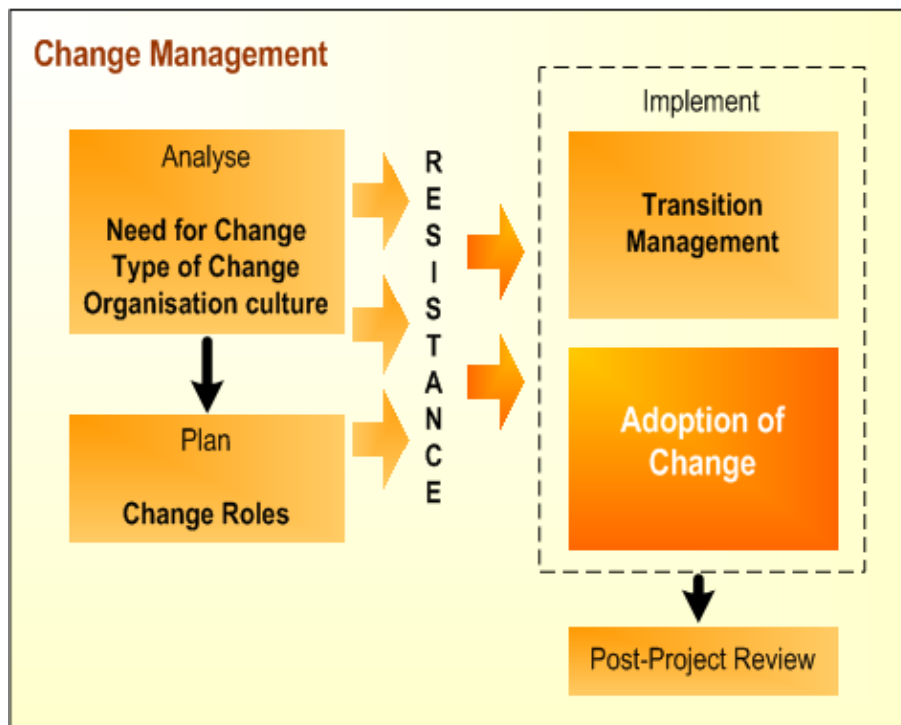
Change Management

Introduction

Change is endemic in the education sector. The pressures for change come from all sides: globalisation, government initiatives, doing more with less, improving the quality of student learning and the learning experience, and the pace of change is ever increasing. Living with change and managing change is an essential skill for all.

Change is also difficult. There are many different types of change and different approaches to managing change. It is a topic subject to more than its fair share of management fads, quick fixes and guaranteed win approaches. Finding an approach that suits you and your situation goes to the heart of being an effective and professional manager in the education sector. We hope that this resource will help you in this challenge.

The following diagram describes the general route through the materials in the Kit:



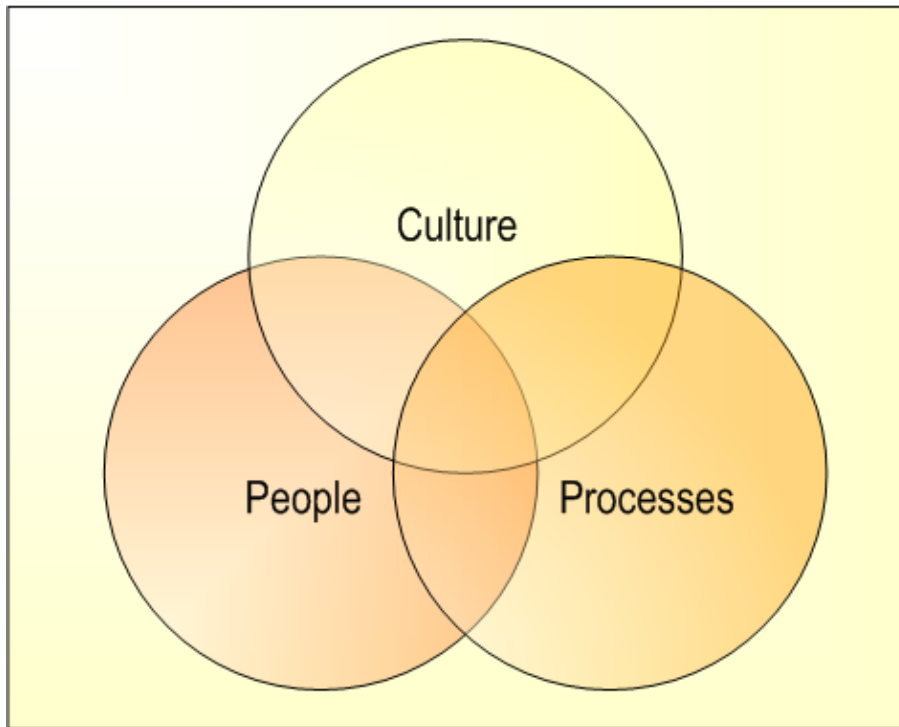
This infoKit was developed out of a HEFCE Good Management Practice Project led by the University of Luton entitled 'Effecting Change in Higher Education'. You can find out more about the project and its partners from their [website](#). The project team consulted widely on aspects of change in the sector and put together theories, approaches and tools that resonated with them and with those they talked to about their experiences of the practical difficulties of managing change.

The Luton 'Effecting Change' team summarise their findings by the following observations:

- There are no easy solutions.

- Adapt processes to suit the change intended.
- Change requires teamwork and leadership (and the two are related).
- Work with the culture (even when you want to change it).
- Communicate, communicate, communicate.

Change usually involves three aspects; people, processes and culture as shown in the following figure:



Often the emphasis has been on the processes – get the processes right and everything else will follow. In this resource we have attempted to redress the balance to acknowledge the importance of each aspect.

There are no easy solutions or quick fixes in the infoKit but we have attempted to give you some 'pathways' through the vast array of approaches and tools available by suggesting activities you may undertake at different stages of your change lifecycle.

This infoKit assumes you will be approaching your change activity as a project and we make frequent reference to the [Project Management infoKit](#) for guidance on a structured approach. We also reference the infoKits on [Risk Management](#) and [Process Review](#).

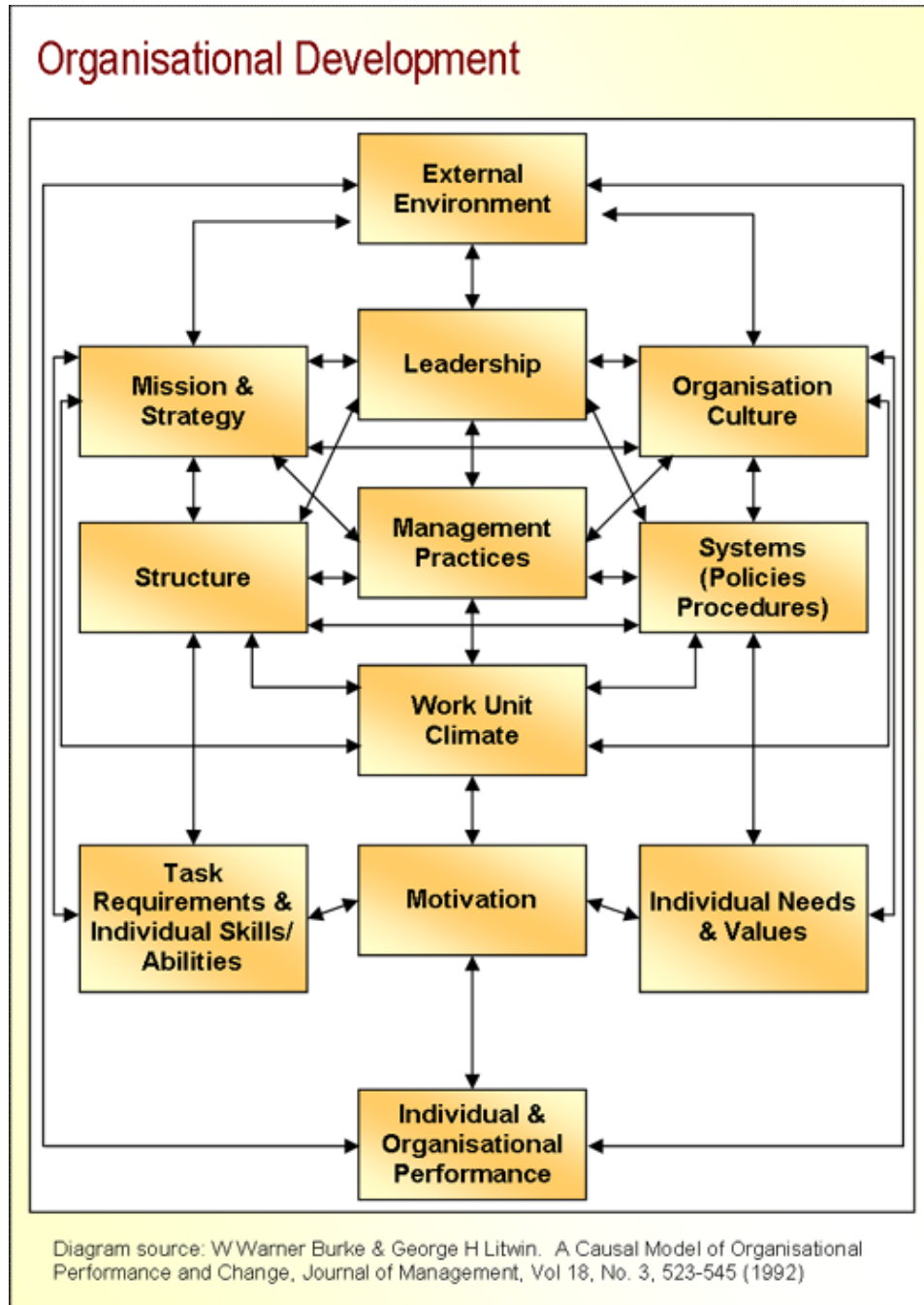
Theoretical Models

There are many different models and theories of change as change defies simple attempts to categorise and organise. The last few decades have seen a number of popular theories.

It is helpful to have a model or a framework within which to operate as this can help ensure that most aspects of the proposed change are considered. Which model best suits your circumstances depends in part on institutional culture and personal preferences and you will find that any of the models contain similar elements presented in slightly different ways.

Organisational Development

Organisational Development promotes the notion that a successful change is a planned change and that monitoring of internal and external influences needs to be conducted on a continuous basis. The diagram below shows some of the factors involved and the model proposes that there is an iterative process of diagnosis, involvement, further diagnosis, change, evaluation and reinforcement.



Already the situation is looking complex. We may be trying to effect a change at any level from individual to whole organisation. The Pugh OD Matrix considers some of the structural and contextual factors involved as a basis for moving forward.

The Organisational Development approach recognises much of the complexity of our organisations and the need for an iterative change process but is nonetheless based on a presumption that a cycle based on careful analysis and planning will deliver a predictable and logical outcome.

Complexity Theory

In reality change, especially large scale change, defies logical rules and simple management actions. Complexity theory and a view of organisations as 'complex adaptive systems', attempts to consider some of those realities and arguably provides a better model for change in an education setting (see for example Lewin and Regine (1999), Olson and Eoyang (2001)).

'Most textbooks focus heavily on techniques and procedures for long-term planning, on the needs for visions and missions, on the importance and the means of securing strongly shared cultures, on the equation of success with consensus, consistency, uniformity and order. [However, in complex environments] the real management task is that of coping with and even using unpredictability, clashing counter-cultures, disensus, contention, conflict, and inconsistency. In short the tasks that justifies the existence of all managers has to do with instability, irregularity, difference and disorder.'

Stacey (1996)

Stacey identifies the following propositions as the basis for complexity theory:

- All organisations are webs of non-linear feedback loops connected to other people and organisations by webs of non-linear feedback loops.
- Such non-linear feedback systems are capable of operating in states of stable and unstable equilibrium, or in the borders between these states, that is far from equilibrium, in bounded instability at the edge of chaos.
- All organisations are paradoxes. They are pulled towards stability by the forces of integration, maintenance controls, human desires for security and certainty and adaptation to the environment on the one hand. They are also pulled towards the opposite extreme of unstable equilibrium by the forces of division and decentralisation, human desires for excitement and innovation and isolation from the environment.
- If the organisation gives in to the pull of stability it fails because it becomes ossified and cannot change easily. If it gives in to the pull to instability it disintegrates. Success lies in sustaining an organisation at the border between stability and instability. This is a state of chaos, a difficult to maintain dissipative structure.
- The dynamics of the successful organisation are therefore those of irregular cycles and discontinuous trends, falling within qualitative patterns, fuzzy but recognizable categories taking the form of archetypes and templates.
- Because of its own internal dynamic, a successful organisation faces completely unknowable specific futures.
- Agents within the system cannot be in control of its long-term future, nor can they install specific frameworks to make it successful nor can they apply step-by-step analytical reasoning or planning or ideological controls to long term development. Agents within the system can only do these things in relation to the short term.
- Long term development is a spontaneous self-organising process from which new strategic directions may emerge. Spontaneous self-organisation is political interaction and learning in groups. Managers have to pursue reasoning by analogy.
- In this way managers create and discover the environments and the long-term futures of the organisations.

The general approach can be visualized using the Stacey agreement vs certainty matrix:

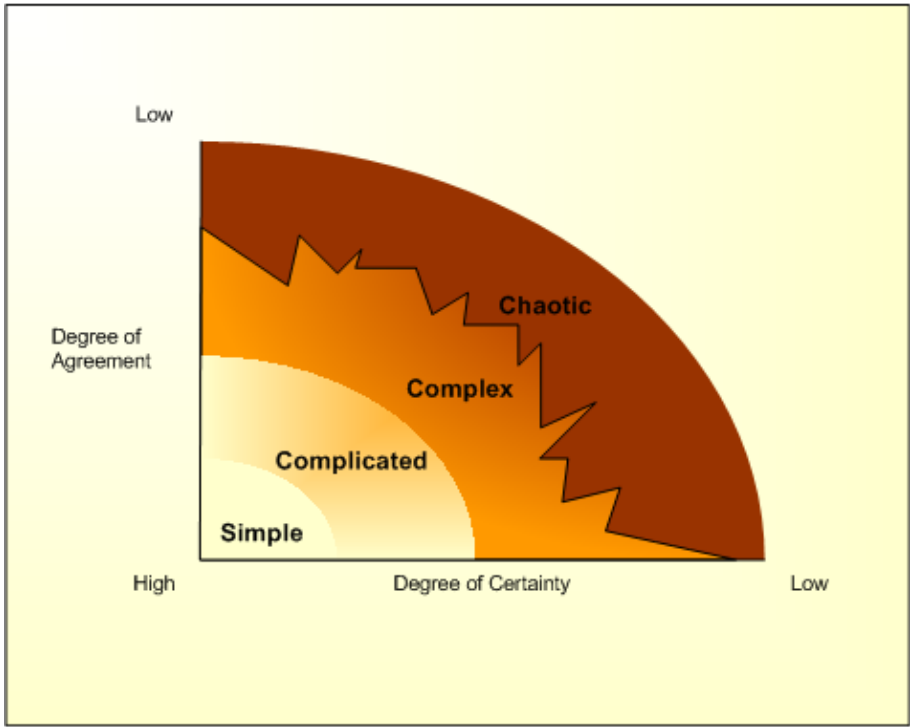


Diagram – based on Stacey Agreement vs Certainty Matrix

Traditional decision-making applies in the rational area of the matrix at the bottom left. The chaos area is the area to be avoided – the area of guess-work and randomness. However, much decision-making takes place in the area of complexity where there are many alternatives with differing degrees of predictability (and little certainty).

To operate in this area, it is argued, requires a different set of skills and alternative processes. In particular, it requires a high level of interaction amongst organisational agents – those involved in implementing change. Change here cannot be driven but must be fostered and supported.

Complex Adaptive System

Olson and Eoyang (2001) have compared traditional change to the Complex Adaptive System (CAS) model of change based on complexity theory.

Traditional	Complex Adaptive System
Few variables determine outcomes	Innumerable variables determine outcome
The whole is equal to the sum of the parts (reductionist)	The whole is different from the sum of the parts (holistic)
Direction is determined by design and the power of a few leaders	Direction is determined by emergence and the participation of many people
Individual or system behaviour is knowable, predictable and controllable	Individual or system behaviour is unknowable, unpredictable and uncontrollable
Causality is linear: every effect can be traced to a specific cause	Causality is mutual: Every cause is also an effect, and every effect is also a cause
Relationships are directional	Relationships are empowering

All systems are essentially the same	Each system is unique
Efficiency and reliability are measures of value	Responsiveness to the environment is the measure of value
Decisions are based on facts and data	Decisions are based on tensions and patterns
Leaders are experts and authorities	Leaders are facilitators and supporters

Having read this far you will no doubt recognise some of the key characteristics of your college or university environment. Hopefully you will be reassured to know that this is not unique. Others have to operate in similar situations and change, though difficult, is achievable. Olson and Eoyang have also set out some of the questions you need to be asking if you are to lead successful change in a Complex Adaptive System.

Leadership Role	Question
Set few specifications by identifying what needs to be addressed and leaving others to decide how to proceed	What minimum specifications will lead to productive outcomes?
Distribute control – empower others	How can I help? What do you need?
Generate a sense of urgency	What do we need to do to meet the deadline?
Monitor and regulate the pace of change	What's missing? What can't we ignore?
Set the organisational direction	Why are we here? What makes us unique?
Explore contradictions, encourage different viewpoints	How else might we think about this?
Accept a certain level of internal conflict and differences	What are you holding back?
Raise tough questions	What do you really think? Why do we have to do it like that?
Encourage diversity	Who else needs to be involved?
Scan the external environment	What are the innovations out there and how will they affect us?
Encourage feedback	How am I doing? How are we doing?
Link communities of practice	What professional networks do you use?
Loosen or tighten networks	Is information flow optimal?
Encourage learning	What are your questions? Where might we look for answers?

What Needs to Change?

Presumably you are reading this because you have identified a need for change in your organisation. If you have come to JISC infoNet then it is also possible that the change has to do with the use of information and learning technology within your organisation although the guidance given in this infoKit can be applied to any type of change project. Alternatively you may have identified a need to improve

some aspect of your business processes in which case the infoKit on Process Review can help you identify what needs to be done.

You may have already developed a Business Case for the change – if not you may wish to view specific guidance on developing a Business Case for a Change Project. Our Project Management infoKit provides a template for preparing a Business Case. You will need to be clear about how the proposed change fits in with your institutional Mission and Strategy.

Many of the tools used for Process Review can also be helpful at the stage of identifying exactly what you need to change and why. Listed below are a number of tools that may help clarify your thinking and allow you to define your project more accurately:

- **5 Whys** – helps analyse a problem
- **Assumption Surfacing and Testing** – challenges the 'inevitable and preordained' and might help you generate new ideas
- **Backward Planning** – can help generate a mind-set that the change can be done
- **Change Variables** – allows you to assess the impact of implementing the change to a greater or lesser extent
- **Clarimission** – can help you clarify and communicate your goals
- **Clariscope** – develops clarity about outcomes and generates ideas about how they can be achieved
- **Prioritisation Matrix** – helps you to take better decisions in a transparent way
- **7S Model** – allows you to see how changes in one area may affect others
- **SMART Targets** – will help you to monitor whether the desired results are being achieved

Types of Change

Understanding the nature of the change you wish to effect and the context in which you are working are important in determining an appropriate strategy. Entering uncharted change territory without some sort of route map puts you at an immediate disadvantage from the start. One of the first stages in charting the territory is to understand a little more about the type of change you wish to make (broadly where you want to get to and how you plan to travel).

There are a number of ways in which change can be categorised, most are related to the extent of the change and whether it is seen as organic (often characterised as bottom-up) or driven (top-down).

Ackerman (1997) has distinguished between three types of change:

Type of Change	Characteristics
Developmental	May be either planned or emergent; it is first order, or incremental. It is change that enhances or corrects existing aspects of an organisation, often focusing on the improvement of a skill or process.
Transitional	Seeks to achieve a known desired state that is different from the existing one. It is episodic, planned and second order, or radical. Much of the organisational change literature is based on this type.
Transformational	Is radical or second order in nature. It requires a shift in assumptions made by the organisation and its members.

Transformation can result in an organisation that differs significantly in terms of structure, processes, culture and strategy. It may, therefore, result in the creation of an organisation that operates in developmental mode – one that continuously learns, adapts and improves.

Planned versus emergent change

Sometimes change is deliberate, a product of conscious reasoning and actions – planned change. In contrast, change sometimes unfolds in an apparently spontaneous and unplanned way. This type of change is known as emergent change. Change can be emergent rather than planned in two ways:

- Managers make a number of decisions apparently unrelated to the change that emerges. The change is therefore not planned. However, these decisions may be based on unspoken, and sometimes unconscious, assumptions about the organisation, its environment and the future (Mintzberg, 1989) and are, therefore, not as unrelated as they first seem. Such implicit assumptions dictate the direction of the seemingly disparate and unrelated decisions, thereby shaping the change process by 'drift' rather than by design.
- External factors (such as the economy, competitors' behaviour, and political climate) or internal features (such as the relative power of different interest groups, distribution of knowledge, and uncertainty) influence the change in directions outside the control of managers. Even the most carefully planned and executed change programme will have some emergent impacts.

This highlights two important aspects of managing change.

- The need to identify, explore and if necessary challenge the assumptions that underlie managerial decisions.
- Understanding that organisational change is a process that can be facilitated by perceptive and insightful planning and analysis and well crafted, sensitive implementation phases, while acknowledging that it can never be fully isolated from the effects of serendipity, uncertainty and chance (Dawson, 1996).

An important (arguably the central) message of recent management of change literature is that organisation–level change is not fixed or linear in nature but contains an important emergent element as identified in the section on complexity theory.

Episodic versus continuous change

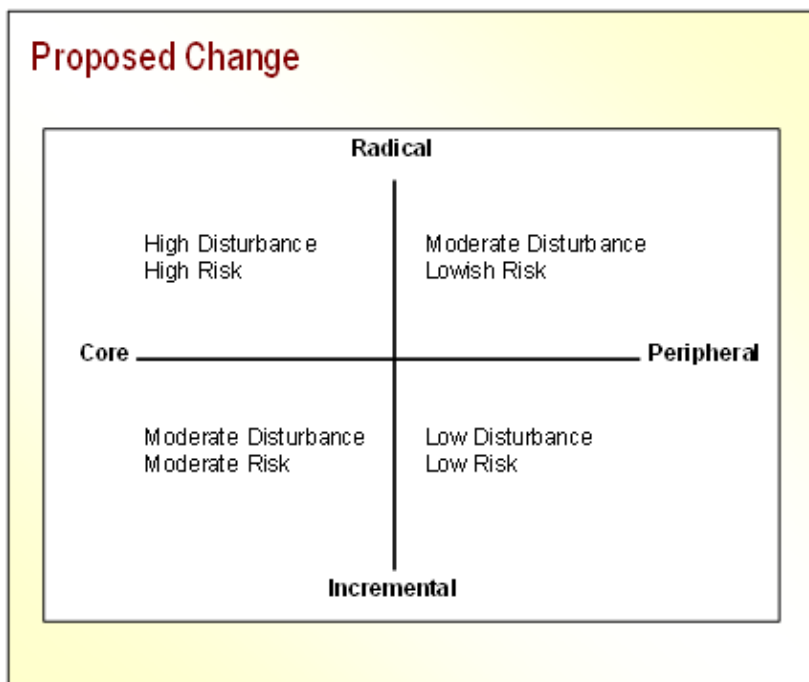
Another distinction is between episodic and continuous change. Episodic change, according to Weick and Quinn (1999), is 'infrequent, discontinuous and intentional'. Sometimes termed 'radical' or 'second order' change, episodic change often involves replacement of one strategy or programme with another.

Continuous change, in contrast, is 'ongoing, evolving and cumulative'. Also referred to as 'first order' or 'incremental' change, continuous change is characterised by people constantly adapting and editing ideas they acquire from different sources. At a collective level these continuous adjustments made simultaneously across units can create substantial change.

The distinction between episodic and continuous change helps clarify thinking about an organisation's future development and evolution in relation to its long–term goals. Few organisations are in a position to decide unilaterally that they will adopt an exclusively continuous change approach. They can, however, capitalise upon many of the principles of continuous change by engendering the flexibility to accommodate and experiment with everyday contingencies, breakdowns, exceptions, opportunities and unintended consequences that punctuate organisational life (Orlikowski, 1996).

Using these characteristics proposed changes can be placed along two scales: ***radical – incremental and core – peripheral*** (Pennington 2003) Plotting the character of a proposed change along these scales can provide a sense of how difficult the introduction of any particular initiative might be and how

much disturbance to the status quo it might generate. Radical changes to an institution's or department's core business will normally generate high levels of disturbance; incremental changes to peripheral activities are often considered to be unexceptional and can be accommodated as a matter of course, especially if the group involved has a successful past record of continuous improvement.



Culture

Having understood the type of change you wish to make the second part of charting the 'territory' is to understand the lie of the land (the culture and political environment in which you are travelling) which will help you avoid the steep climbs and major obstacles where possible and work with the lines of least resistance.

There are two aspects of the issue of culture and change. Firstly, the importance of working with the existing culture when seeking to effect any change; and secondly, how to go about changing the culture itself. Both require shrewd and effective leadership.

When asked 'what is culture?' staff in the sector subscribed almost unanimously to the common definition of culture as being 'the way we do things around here'. Culture involves both the explicit way of working – the formal systems and processes in place and how they operate, and the tacit level of operation – the informal and semi-formal networks and other activities that people employ to get things done and by-pass, subvert or seek to influence the more formal processes.

Culture provides the context for our working lives and defines the standards by which we expect to be judged and the processes and procedures by which we expect to be involved in the activities which affect us. When dealing with change it's important to recognise that different institutions have different cultures and that within institutions different areas and different academic subjects also have their own way of doing things – their own cultures. Larger departments will contain their own sub-cultures. Thus it is impossible to talk about a generic culture in post compulsory education.

Culture can be transmitted by:

- The philosophy of the institution – themes like equity and diversity, widening participation, striving for excellence in teaching; research reputation etc.
- The mission statement

- The criteria for evaluating and rewarding performance, job progression etc.
- The approach to change which is adopted
- The way in which leaders act

Culture is also transmitted in the informal history of the organisation that is shared in stories and legends about key people and events that have affected the organisation.

Organisational Cultures

The infoKit on 'Creating a Managed Learning Environment' pays a lot of attention to Understanding your Organisation and defines the following types of organisational culture:

Collegiate

- There is a dual structure of administrative and academic management which results in parallel committee structures which can act as a black hole for decision making.
- Unclear reporting lines and poor coordination, strong local cultures, agendas and identifiers.
- Academic status is perceived as higher than support or administrative functions.
- There are strong subject-specific allegiances with academics often feeling a stronger alliance to their subject area and external networks than the institutional mission.
- Decision making occurs through committees, which can be slow and lack cohesion.
- Activities tend to be driven from the ground, primarily linked to local interests.
- Classic structure of old universities particularly those with more of a research focus.

Bureaucratic

- Characterised by strong central management and top-down decision making.
- The hierarchy of control and decision making is clearly established in the administrative and management structures of the institutions.
- Management roles are clearly defined as career progressions, heads of department, deans etc are appointed through an interview process to tenured positions.
- Central management have strong control over the direction of the strategic priorities for the institution.
- Commonly found in FE colleges and new universities.

Innovative

- Institutions with flexible structures geared to respond and adapt quickly to external factors and influences.
- Strong culture of change and innovation with frequent changes in directions of activities and focus of interest.
- Often characterised by a matrix structure of responsibilities by both subject area and functional activity (where the latter will often be structured around the identified strategic priorities).
- Typically activities focused around particular projects and associated project teams.
- Characteristic of some new universities and colleges but also present within the old universities within the sub-structure of the institution through enterprise centres and research centres which are externally funded.

Enterprise

- More closely aligned to traditional businesses and industry approaches.
- Acutely aware of financial mechanism and processes and alert to external opportunities.
- Traditional management roles and structures with clear demarcation of responsibilities and

hierarchical decision making processes.

- Clear business objectives and plans based on detailed market analysis and needs.
- More common in America, particularly in some of the newer institutions which are focused on distance education.

This definition by Professor Grainne Conole can be mapped onto the work of McNay (1995) to identify some features of each type of organisation that are useful to consider when trying to implement change:

Factor	Collegiate	Bureaucratic	Innovative	Enterprise
Dominant value	Freedom	Equity	Loyalty	Competence
Role of central authorities	Permissive	Regulatory	Directive	Supportive
Handy's organisational culture	Person	Role	Power	Task
Dominant unit	Department/individual	Faculty/committees	Institution/senior management team	Sub-unit/project teams
Decision arenas	Informal groups networks	Committees and administrative briefings	Working parties and Senior Management team	Project teams
Management style	Consensual	Formal/'rational'	Political/tactical	Devolved leadership
Timeframe	Long	Cyclic	Short/mid term	Instant
Environmental fit	Evolution	Stability	Crisis	Turbulence
Nature of change	Organic innovation	Reactive adaptation	Proactive transformation	Tactical flexibility
External referents	Invisible college	Regulatory bodies	Policy makers as opinion leaders	Clients/sponsors
Internal referents	The discipline	The rules	The plans	Market strength/students
Basis for evaluation	Peer assessment	Audit of procedures	Performance indicators	Repeat business
Student status	Apprentice academic	Statistic	Unit of resource	Customer
Administrator roles: servant of...	The community	The committee	The chief executive	The client, internal and external

Some of those who have effected change in the education sector have noted a few lessons related to the culture:

- Lessons from the school sector
- Lessons from the tertiary sector
- Lessons from the HE sector

Change Audit

Having established what type of change you are intending to make and within what type of organisational culture you are operating you are now in a position to consider your overall strategy.

On the other hand you may already be doubting the feasibility/desirability of your plans. At this point it may be wise to review the Business Case for the change. Developing a business case is not necessarily a one-off activity. As with any project, if your change initiative is a large scale and lengthy project, you may need to review the business case at key points. Similarly you should be developing a Risk Log and Risk Management Plan that is regularly reviewed and updated.

This may also be a good point at which to reflect on previous change initiatives within your organisation to identify the approaches taken and consider the implications for your current project. One tool you can use to do this is the Change Audit.

Change Audit

Purpose

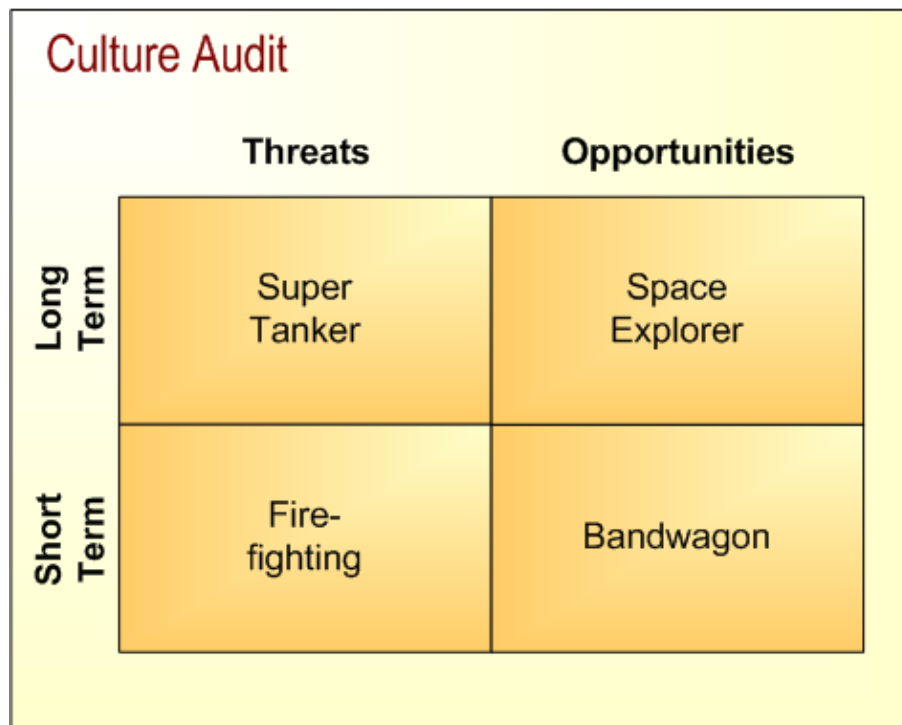
This tool uses two aspects of the standard SWOT analysis to examine aspects of the organisational change culture. Having an awareness of culture issues and how change has been handled in the past can help with the decision-making process about how to approach change.

Process

Consider a number of change initiatives in your institution and for each one identify whether it is characterised by:

- threats or opportunities
- a short-term or long-term view

Position each on a 4-quadrant matrix as shown below.



- Is there a concentration of change initiatives in any one quadrant?
- Have the changes been successful or not so successfully implemented?

Fire-fighting

Areas in the fire-fighting quadrant are always reacting to change and threats at very short notice and don't feel in full control of circumstances and actions.

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
Culture of change can help make change happen	Externally driven
Changes happen readily	Never run things long enough to fully embed them
	Change fatigue can set in
	High stress levels

Band-wagon

In the band-wagon quadrant you are always driven by external factors and the latest initiative.

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
Responsive	Externally-driven
Changes happen readily	Never run things long enough to fully embed them
Sense of 'Buzz'	Change fatigue can set in
Entrepreneurial	High stress levels
	Never have the opportunity to review whether what you do is effective

Super-tanker

In the Super-tanker quadrant change is slow and driven by external factors rather than by a sense of drive and purpose from within the organisation.

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
Change can be managed	Change is slow
Systems have time to react	Lack of responsiveness
	Unlikely to be able to respond to opportunities
	Fall behind competitors
	Enthusing staff about the need for change can be difficult

Space explorer

In the space explorer quadrant change is slow and driven by opportunities from the internal and external environment. This may seem like the optimum quadrant but it has its drawbacks.

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
Change can be managed and embedded	Change is relatively slow and some opportunities may be missed
Systems have time to react	Lack of responsiveness
Staff feel more in control	Is change taking us in the right direction – and quickly enough?

When considering a planned change in the light of this audit you might want to ask yourself the following questions.

- Which quadrant best describes the planned change as currently perceived?
- Is that the quadrant in which we really want to be operating?
- Do we need to make changes to the way the change initiative is perceived?
- What actions would support this?
- Who would be responsible for these actions?

Changing cultures

When reviewing your strategy to develop a desired culture change there are a number of actions that can be taken to change institutional culture. Some examples are given below.

To be more long-term:

- Set the style from the top.
- Reject some initiatives/opportunities – concentrate only on those changes

which are essential.

- Plan changes so that the chances of change-fatigue are more limited.
- Put structures in place to consider long-term planning.

To be more short-term:

- Develop a culture of change.
- Look for easy short-term gains.
- Set short-term goals – and monitor them.
- Advertise and reward changes and those involved.

To be more opportunistic:

- Have systems in place to reward innovation
- Have systems in place for environmental scanning – be aware of what's going on nationally and internationally.

To be more threat aware:

- Look at what your 'competitor' institutions are doing.
- Undertake benchmarking activities.
- Listen to the students and other stakeholders.

Change Strategy and Approaches

'Badly handled change can actually prove costly and devastating and actually move the institution backwards'

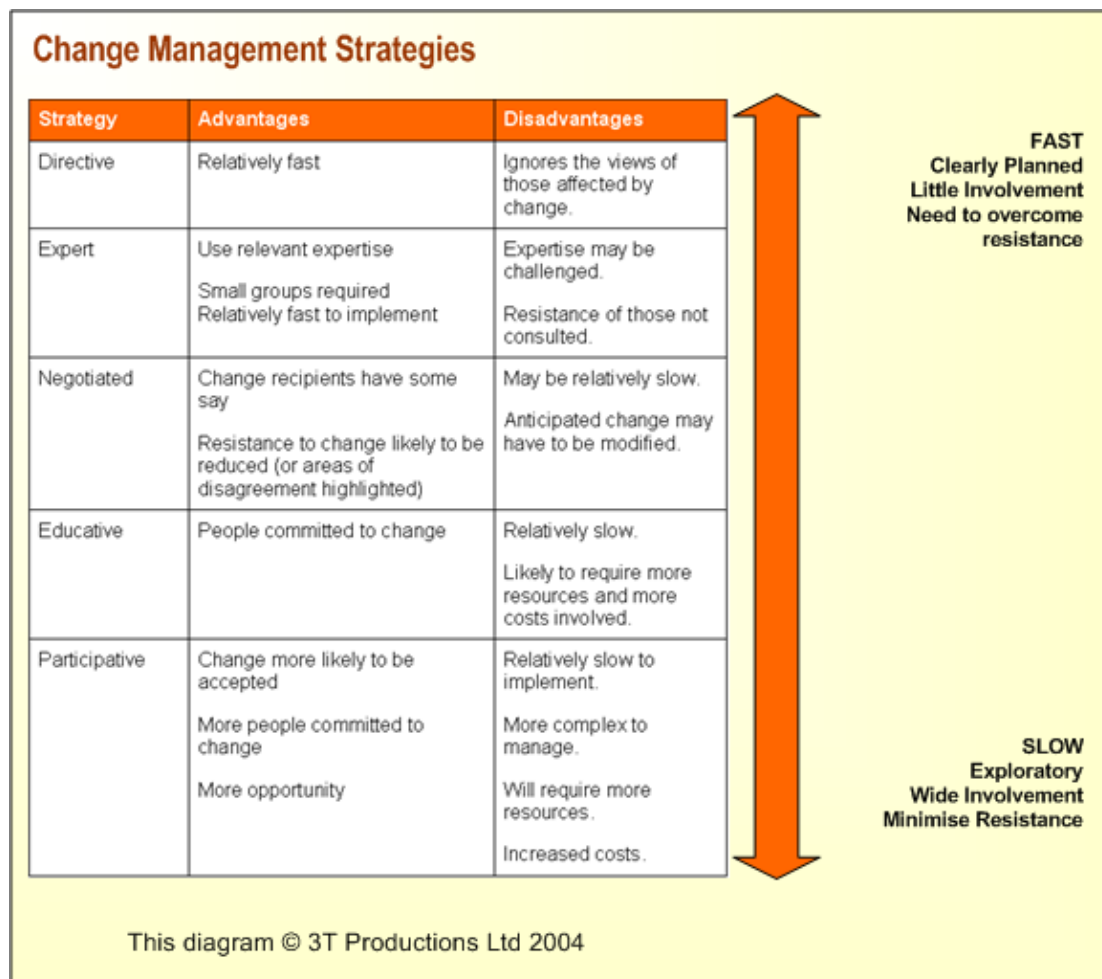
From Learning from a 'triple whammy' of change case study.

Five different broad approaches to effecting change were identified by Thurley and Wirdenius (1973) and summarised by Lokitt (2004).

1. **Directive strategies.** This strategy highlights the manager's right to manage change and the use of authority to impose change with little or no involvement of other people. The advantage of the directive approach is that change can be undertaken quickly. However, the disadvantage of this approach is that it does not take into consideration the views, or feelings, of those involved in, or affected by, the imposed change. This approach may lead to valuable information and ideas being missed and there is usually strong resentment from staff when changes are imposed rather than discussed and agreed.
2. **Expert strategies.** This approach sees the management of change as a problem solving process that needs to be resolved by an 'expert'. This approach is mainly applied to more technical problems, such as the introduction of a new learner management system, and will normally be led by a specialist project team or senior manager. There is likely to be little involvement with those affected by the change. The advantages to using this strategy is that experts play a major role in the solution and the solution can be implemented quickly as a small number of 'experts' are involved. Again, there are some issues in relation to this strategy as those affected may have different views than those of the expert and may not appreciate the solution being imposed or the outcomes of the changes made.
3. **Negotiating strategies.** This approach highlights the willingness on the part of senior managers to negotiate and bargain in order to effect change. Senior managers must also accept that adjustments and concessions may need to be made in order to implement change. This approach acknowledges that those affected by change have the right to have a say in what changes are made, how they are implemented and the expected outcomes. The disadvantage to this approach is that it takes more time to effect change, the outcomes cannot be predicted and the changes made may not fulfil the total expectations of the managers affecting the change. The advantage is that individuals will feel involved in the change and be more supportive of the changes made.
4. **Educative strategies.** This approach involves changing people's values and beliefs, 'winning hearts and minds', in order for them to fully support the changes being made and move toward the development of a shared set of organisational values that individuals are willing, and able to support. A mixture of activities will be used; persuasion; education; training and selection, led by consultants, specialists and in-house experts. Again, the disadvantage of this approach is that it takes longer to implement. The advantage is that individuals within the organisation will have positive commitment to the changes being made.
5. **Participative strategies.** This strategy stresses the full involvement of all of those involved, and affected by, the anticipated changes. Although driven by senior managers the process will be less management dominated and driven more by groups or individuals within the organisation. The views of all will be taken into account before changes are made. Outside consultants and experts can be used to facilitate the process but they will not make any decisions as to the outcomes. The main disadvantages of this process are the length of time taken before any changes are made, it can be more costly due to the number of meetings that take place, the payment of consultants/experts over a longer time period and the outcomes cannot be predicted. However, the benefits of this approach are that any changes made are more likely to be supported due to the involvement of all those affected, the commitment of individuals and groups within the organisation will increase as those individuals and groups feel ownership over the changes being implemented. The organisation and individuals also have the opportunity to learn from this experience and will know more about the organisation and how it functions, thus increasing their skills, knowledge and effectiveness to the organisation.

The five change strategies are not mutually exclusive and a range of strategies can be employed to effect change. Part of the skill of effective change management is to recognise what strategy/ies to employ, when, where and how to use them. Other issues such as health and safety, accessibility and union representation may also need to be taken into consideration when deciding what strategy to adopt.

The change management strategies and their main advantages and disadvantages can be summarised as follows:



You can probably already judge that some of these approaches are less likely to be successful than others in the education environment. Indeed we would take a more negative view than Lockitt as to whether the 'expert' approach could be applied to an IT system implementation especially where the system was to be used by, or impacted upon, the academic community. Key to this is the issue that 'those affected may have different views than those of the expert'. It would be overly cynical to state that we operate in an environment where 'everybody is an expert' because there may be very valid reasons why different stakeholders hold very different views.

'Don't try and make "one size fit all". Teaching staff are professionals and, once engaged, will come up with a wide diversity of ideas and approaches.'

Professor, Post '92 University

Change Roles

Any large-scale change initiative will involve summoning support for the changes from across the organisation. Staff may take on a number of different roles in relation to the change process. This section identifies these roles and their application in an educational setting (depending on the nature and scale of the change not all roles may be appropriate to any particular change).

It should be noted that the language of change management can itself be a barrier to effecting change within a college or university setting where change titles such as 'change agent' are not widely used and if applied are likely to meet with scepticism and some resistance. For example, calling Heads of Department 'change agents' may not meet with approval! The roles required to effect change will however exist in any successful change process. Sometimes it can be beneficial to use the terminology to clearly signal the need to change.

Whatever the language used, there needs to be a clear understanding of the key roles in effecting change; lack of clarity about roles and expectations is one of the biggest barriers to success. The roles are very similar to the roles of Sponsor, Manager and Champion involved in any project. Follow this link to find out more about project [Roles and Responsibilities](#).

In the education setting a change manager has to deal with a large number of individuals with potentially differing viewpoints and also with an equally large number of groups and committees. Follow this link to find out how [Responsibility Charting](#) can help you clarify the decision making process in your organisation.

Kings College London has produced a Check List and an Action Plan template for people planning and leading change. The [Check List](#) acts as a guide to undertaking an evaluation of your own competence in several key areas and developing an [Action Plan](#) for personal development.

Leadership

Before we begin to define individual roles it is worth saying a few things about leadership. Few would disagree that good leadership is critical to successful change but equally few will be able to define exactly what that constitutes in our environment.

There is a clear distinction between management and leadership. Management is a set of processes that keep a complex system running smoothly. Leadership defines the future and aligns people with that future. We often find that too much emphasis is placed on managing change and not enough on leading change.

Kotter (1995) has identified eight important steps in leading change. Although these derive from a business perspective and may require some translation, they have some validity for change in education, especially transformational change (for an exploration of the forms of change see [Types of Change](#)).

1. **Establish a sense of urgency:** examine market and competitive realities. Identify and discuss crises, potential crises or major opportunities.
2. **Form a powerful guiding coalition:** assemble a group with enough power to lead the change effort and encourage the group to work together as a team.

'It is important to try to encourage ownership of the change process by all senior managers as soon as possible and not permit them to leave driving the initiative to one department only.'

From Implementing a VLE at the Belfast Institute of F&HE: Changing the Culture Case Study

3. **Create a vision:** this helps direct the change effort. Develop strategies to support that vision.
4. **Communicate the vision:** use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies. The coalition has to lead by example.

'Disseminating good practice throughout the institution gets people excited about the proposed changes.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

5. **Empower others to act:** get rid of the obstacles to change. Change structures that undermine the vision, encourage risk-taking and non-traditional ideas, activities and actions.

'Going around barriers taught us a lesson or two about building alliances, capturing enthusiasm, empowering the right people and the effectiveness of rewarding change.'

From Changing Teaching and Learning Styles Case Study

6. **Plan for and create short-term wins:** plan for visible performance improvements, create those improvements and recognise and reward employees involved.
7. **Consolidate improvements:** use increased credibility to change systems, structures and policies that don't fit the vision, hire, promote and develop employees who can implement the vision. Reinvigorate the process with new projects, themes and change agents.
8. **Institutionalise the new approach:** articulate the connections between new behaviours and corporate success. Develop the means to ensure leadership development and succession.

'Success affects the culture of the institution too – the belief that we can replicate success boosts morale, and confidence.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

In public sector organisations in the 21st century, and certainly in colleges and universities, leadership is not something which is solely the prerogative of senior management. Aspects of the leadership of change may extend to any part and any level of the organisation and our discussion of change roles should be read with this in mind. Within 'old' universities in particular many Heads are appointed on a temporary basis. From a change perspective this has both advantages (for example, a fresh perspective) and disadvantages (lack of continuity, and a sense that everything is temporary and that staff can ride out any impetus).

Follow this link for some [Perspectives on Leading](#) in an Academic Environment.

Change Sponsor

Someone who has the authority, seniority, power, enthusiasm, and time to lead/carry through/oversee the changes. The change sponsor may not get involved with the day-to-day management of the change but should support and monitor progress. Usually he or she is a senior member of the management team given responsibility for effecting the change.

The change sponsor must ensure that the necessary resources are available throughout the change process and accepts ultimate responsibility for the successful change implementation:

- Agrees the change strategy and approach.
- Is an active champion and role model for the 'new reality'.
- Monitors and communicates change progress to interested parties.

Change Manager

Someone with the expertise to lead the change, and can act as a role model for the new reality. May be an experienced project or change manager within the organisation or, possibly, brought in from outside with specific responsibility for managing the change.

The change manager has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the change:

- Designs the change process, strategy and approach, and agrees these with the change team.
- Takes responsibility and manages the change progress on a day-to-day basis.
- Designs the communication strategy and contingency plans for the change.
- Monitors progress.
- Facilitates key events to build commitment for the change.
- Liaises up and down the organisational structure.

Change Agents

'The type of person that became a change agent was willing to experiment, ready to change, and had a good understanding of educational developments.'

From Changing Teaching and Learning styles Case Study

The change agents are those people that really make the difference implementing the change at a local level. This will depend on the nature of the change but the role often falls to middle managers because they have the influence and authority to make the change take place.

Care needs to be taken, as middle management shouldn't be treated as 'the meat in the sandwich' – effective change agents need to be dedicated to the change process and should be provided with the support and given time to adjust and accept the changes before they are to summon commitment from their departments.

Work needs to be undertaken to get commitment from this key group of staff when implementing change – they are the key to implementing change processes effectively.

Change agents are responsible for facilitating the change through:

- Gaining commitment for the changes.
- Facilitating evaluation activities.
- Monitoring and reporting progress of change.
- Consulting and identifying bottlenecks/sources of resistance.
- Disseminating lessons learned.

The following seven winning characteristics of the successful change agent is derived from a study of the implementation of change in higher education.

Has a sense of purpose

- Is fully aware of the need to change.
- Has a vision of what can be achieved.
- Is realistic about the scale and timescale for change.
- Is flexible about the means to achieve the change.
- Understands the change process.

Has the capability to Act

- Has leadership and interpersonal skills, with political awareness.
- Has a means to promote change (i.e. a role, a project, resources or influence).
- Has knowledge of the institution, its history and its influential characters.
- Develops the influential team.

Sells Success

- Ensures that early successes are achieved.
- Focussed on spreading successful practice.
- Has a communications strategy for selling success.
- Builds appropriate networks to facilitate communication.
- Understands others' priorities in order to offer them clear benefits.
- Offers support and encouragement, not another problem.

Is strategically connected

- Is well connected with sources of power and influence.
- Builds a critical mass of senior people or a senior champion.
- Ensures senior links will last and do not depend on one individual.
- Understands the senior management agenda and sells benefits.
- Makes the link between strategy and operations.
- Encourages senior people to learn by experience.

Is critically reflective

- Builds a non-threatening environment.
- Encourages learning from failure as well as success.
- Makes critical reflection a part of all plans and agendas.
- Promotes reflection at every level i.e. personal, team department, and institutional.
- Records important learning points so they don't depend on memory.

Builds supporting structures

- Ensures mechanisms are in place to continue the innovation and to spread it.
- Embeds the innovation by making it an important part of a wider strategy.
- Supports the innovation with appropriate resources for teaching and learning.
- Ensures that future innovation will also be supported and embedded.
- Develops processes to respond to the needs of institutional 'stakeholders'.

Is opportunistic

- Predicts and uses external and internal levers for change, including political forces.
- Makes use of all available resources, including students, employers and alumni.
- Notices and secures external funding which will support (not dictate) the change.
- Encourages innovation, for example with protected money for innovative projects.

Change Champion

These are the early adopters, colleagues who want the change implementation to succeed, and believe that the change will be beneficial to the Institution. The change champions will be members of staff affected by the change. They do not have to have management responsibilities.

The change champion will make an excellent change agent, but may not always want the excess work associated with the change. The change manager must decide how to make use and reward the enthusiasm and support of the change champions.

The change champions are the natural marketeers for the organisational change and act as catalysts for others. They will speak positively about the change, show that it can be done and support colleagues at an informal level. They give recognition when new behaviours are demonstrated.

Change Team

The group of staff charged with implementing the change – they must have the confidence of both the management and the staff affected by the change. They:

- Will be drawn from all areas affected by the change.
- Demonstrate commitment to the change (essential).
- Will need to be given the time and recognition to undertake the role.

'Making space for people to try new things is crucial when you are trying to effect change.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

- Support the change manager in undertaking his/her role and responsibilities.

It is critical that you get the right mix of people in the team and that you create the conditions for them to succeed. Follow this link to find out more about [Building the Project Team](#).

An overlap of roles is not uncommon – while acting as part of a change team, colleagues will most likely act as change participants as well making changes to their own practices. This can cause personal conflict, and create a risk to the change initiative. For example, a change agent, who would need to act as a role model, may initially have conflicting views about the change situation, and thus may find it difficult to fulfil the change agent role.

Change roles are often given to individuals with minimal consideration of the consequences. General factors to be considered when apportioning roles include:

- Getting the balance of the team right (representation of all areas affected, authority, experience, skills etc.)
- Providing sufficient time to undertake the expected roles.
- Meeting any training needs for the new roles.

Stakeholders and Change Participants

Change participants are all those affected by the change. They will need to know the reasons behind the change as well as the intended effect on them and their working practices. They come under the umbrella term of stakeholders but a change may also have stakeholders who are not directly affected. For instance the funding bodies or governors may have a stake in seeing that a change is implemented but the change may not have any immediate impact on their working practices.

You will need to undertake some form of Stakeholder Analysis to help you plan the change. Identifying the key stakeholders and their influence on the change as well as potential resistance will assist in devising a programme that will address their concerns and fears, as well as identifying and dealing with potential conflicts. Follow this link for a Stakeholder Analysis template.

The purpose of this analysis is:

- To identify those that will be affected directly or indirectly by the change.
- To assess their interest, resistance and support for the change initiative.
- To identify and find a means of resolving any conflicts of interest (which if left undetected or unaddressed, might jeopardise the success of the change initiative).
- To encourage stakeholder ownership and participation in the change initiative.
- To facilitate partnership and co-operation between your institution and its stakeholders.

The key stakeholders are those who can influence (facilitate or hinder) the success of the change project, in many cases these people will also be change participants. It is however a feature of our environment that academics can often act as 'indirect stakeholders' where they feel that proposed changes are not in keeping with their culture and values.

Having identified your stakeholders the next stage is to concentrate on the change participants and consider for each sub-group of participants:

- The barriers to change – what reasons will this group give for not wanting to change. This is usually the easy bit.
- The levers to change – what are the factors which this group might see as beneficial about the change?
- How you can communicate with this group so you can respond to concerns and reinforce the positive messages.
- Finally – what action needs to be taken to lower barriers, reinforce the positive aspects (or these will become forgotten) and to communicate this effectively with the stakeholder group.

For large scale changes it may be worth undertaking some focus-group work or similar to see whether your intuition is matched by reality in these areas.

Some aspects of how change participants are affected by major change is provided in the Transition Management section.

Influencing

This is a key skill that needs to be considered in the planning stages, when carrying out your stakeholder analysis, and needs to be taken forward as part of the change implementation. JISC infoNet has produced some guidance on influencing others.

Resistance to Change

Any change will have its proponents and its opponents. Preparation for change includes not only generating enthusiasm for the change process and working with the early adopters and converts, but being prepared to challenge and win-over the sceptics.

Undertaking a Force Field analysis is one way of analysing the driving and restraining forces for change.

Change can be seen by some people as devaluing their previous experience which may explain why younger people, who have invested less time and effort in learning the old ways find it easier to adapt to the new.

'A number of younger staff were actually quite keen to change, so we directly dealt with these individuals by appointing a number of people, whom we called change agents, in every department, across the university.'

From Changing Teaching and Learning styles Case Study

Thinking about the personal perspectives on change and preparing responses to the issues that might arise will help you to address concerns. In the initial stages of the development of proposals it can be useful to test your ideas with staff who are prepared to be more sceptical and act as a devil's advocate. This can help prepare for battles to come. To do so staff will need a safe forum in which to voice their concerns and work on the change.

Change is generally met with enthusiasm when:

- we propose the change
- we are involved in the design of the change
- we feel that our opinion/views are heard, and contribute to the new reality
- we benefit from the change
- the organisation benefits from the change
- the students benefit from the change
- the wider community benefits from the change
- we dislike the present status quo
- we are confident about our competence in the new context
- we trust/respect/like the person/group, proposing the change
- we can see the big picture and how the change contributes to it
- we are given support and time to adjust to the changes
- we are not expected to change too many things at the same time
- change is spaced
- we understand the reasons for the change
- we believe the change is important
- we believe the change is necessary

Change in education is met with confrontation when:

- we are not involved in the change design
- we feel that our opinion/views are not considered
- we do not see benefits for ourselves, arising from the change
- we do not feel the University would benefit from the change
- we do not feel the students would benefit from the change
- we do not feel the wider community would benefit from the change
- we like the present status quo

- We lack confidence about our competence in the new context
- we do not trust/do not respect/do not like the person/group, proposing the change
- we can not see the big picture and how the change would contribute to it
- we are not given support and time to adjust to the changes
- we are expected to change too many things at the same time
- change is not carried through properly
- we do not understand the reasons for the change
- there is no clarity about change aims and objectives
- we believe other things need changing more urgently
- we believe the time is not right for this particular change
- the degree of change is too great to be readily assimilated

Most major change processes elicit some or all of the following reactions:

- Initial disbelief – it won't happen!
- Anger – it won't happen if I can help it!
- Acceptance – if it's going to happen then I might as well do it!
- Accommodating new reality in – that works quite well and I wouldn't want to change it.

Dealing with resistance often requires challenging and changing colleagues' perceptions and beliefs – such changes are not easy to effect and the effort put in working through the barriers must be commensurate to the outcomes. However, large-scale change, especially cultural change, is likely to be more difficult to manage if the barriers are not addressed.

When estimated resistance is going to take a long time to deal with there are a number of strategies that can be adopted:

- Work with the early adopters and then move onto the main group of staff. Recognise that there will always be some staff who find difficulty in making the change and marginalise them by ensuring the majority are on board.
- Confront the sceptics head on.
- Return to the drawing board, are there other ways in which the outcomes can be achieved?

Transition Management

The notion of Transition Management as being a separate from, but related to, change management is largely the work of Bridges (1998). Transition is different from change and it is very often the transition that people resist – not the change itself. The transition needs to be understood and managed especially where the change is radical. Staff will be at different stages along the change curve and the emotional response to change needs to be recognised. Leaders of change should also consider their own transition.

Change involves a shift in the external situation it is about the events or circumstances which impact on and affect the organisation. For example, the new leader, changes in government policy, technology, student expectations, merger etc. Thus, change is typically outcome or results focused, in that organisational change is usually a solution to someone's perception of a problem or an opportunity.

Transition is an internal, three-phase psychological re-orientation that people go through as they come to terms with a change. It is a process, an inner experience not necessarily focused on outcome or results. It is timed differently from the external changes, and has less definition than the changes it accompanies.

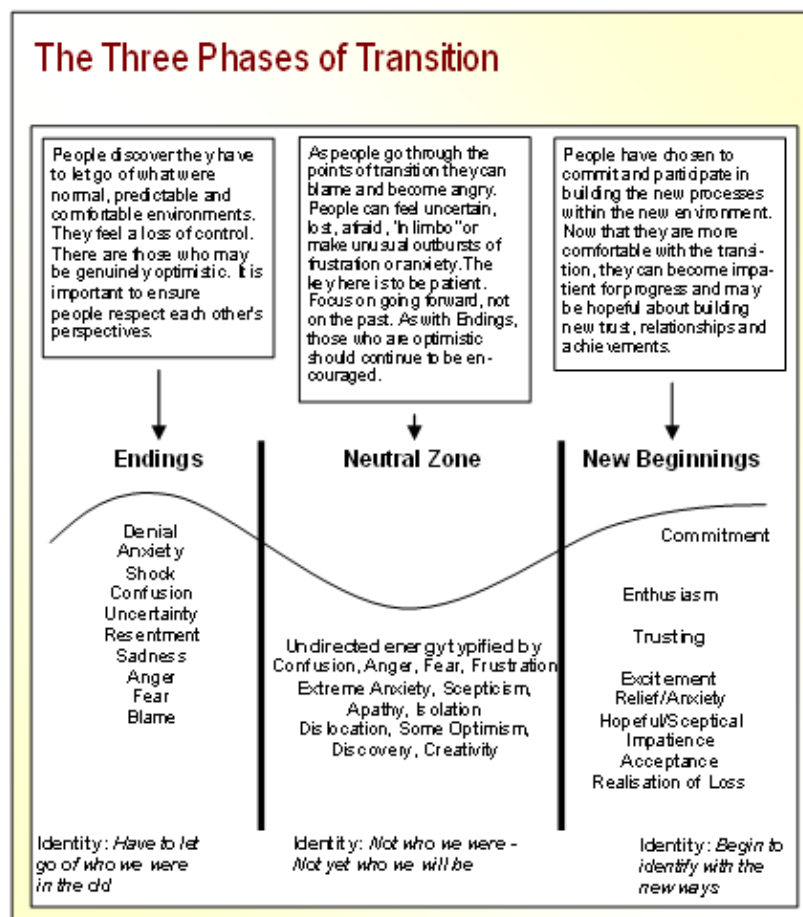
It's often transition not change that people resist. They resist giving up their sense of who they are, their identity as it is expressed in their current work. They resist the chaos and uncertainty of the neutral zone – the in-between state. They resist the risky business of a new beginning – doing and being what they have never done and been before. In order to effect change it is important to help people through the transition. Transitions associated with major upheavals might include major changes to roles and responsibilities, mergers of departments, schools or areas and, ultimately, loss of jobs.

There are three phases of the transition process:

- Endings
- Neutral Zone
- New Beginnings

The Transition Curve

The three stages of transition are shown in a Transition Curve and whilst this curve is over simplified, it is a useful tool for understanding the sorts of issues people might be facing during a change.



When managing change it's important to recognise that transition is an individual reaction. The role of managers is to help others through to new beginnings whilst maintaining the level of activity or service. Here are some points to bear in mind when assessing where people are on the transition curve.

- Some people repeat sections of the curve to best handle transition (there's no right or wrong sequence).
- People will exhibit different emotions depending upon the nature and number of changes

- occurring to them at the same time and their 'emotional intelligence'. This is normal.
- Realising where you and the people around you are on the curve will help you initiate appropriate actions and respond effectively.
 - Teams may travel the curve together but individuals will arrive at 'beginnings' at their own personal rate.
 - It's OK to be slow so long as you're moving and not stuck somewhere.
 - It's OK to be slow so long as you're planning on arriving sometime.
 - It's OK to be fast so long as you're tolerant and supportive of slower travellers.
 - It's OK to be fast so long as you honestly acknowledge your own 'endings'.

Understanding Endings

In the 'Endings' stage, staff may want to deny the existence of the initiative and other related change events. Their denial can move them to fear and uncertainty about the future. This diminishes their level of activity and readiness to deal with the accelerating pace of change as the process starts to impact on the organisation.

Staff may acutely feel the loss of the familiarity and security they felt in the organisation before this and other changes occurred. They are likely to be trying to reconcile or accept the fact that things will now be different from the way they have been. They will be trying to accept that they will have to let go of their current sense of identity in the organisation.

Follow this link for a checklist of actions to consider in the [Endings zone](#).

Understanding the Neutral Zone

The Neutral Zone or exploration stage is the time between the current and the desired state. Staff will be attempting to orient themselves to the new requirements and behaviours. During this time, they will be confused about the future and will feel overloaded with competing demands.

This can have a negative impact on activities. Because things can be chaotic at this stage, staff may question the status quo or the accepted way of doing things. It is important to note that with encouragement this stage can be a time of exploration that is ripe with creative opportunity.

Follow this link for a checklist of actions to consider in the [Neutral zone](#).

Understanding New Beginnings

The New Beginnings stage of the Transition Curve is that time when people are ready to commit to the new direction and the change. They feel secure in the new organisation and are ready to function as a significant contributor. This typically occurs as the initiative starts to achieve some of its desired goals.

Follow this link for a checklist of actions to consider in the [New Beginnings zone](#).

Emotional Responses

'It can be a bit scary... I think managers should come clean on it and say it will be a bit scary and if they don't and say 'Oh no it will be fine' there will be people who will be sitting there and thinking 'Oh no they are saying it should be fine and I am scared to death so there must be something wrong with me' and there will be managers who are scared too.'

Head of Support Department, Pre '92 University.

'I thought it sounded exciting but was also filled with horror at the thought of it becoming part of my working life. I had so many questions about how it would work and not do me out of a job.'

Hair & Beauty Therapy Tutor, FE College, on implementation of a VLE

In a transition there are emotional responses to the losses that people experience because of the changes. This is normal but often these responses are taken by others as signs that the change is being resisted. Those leading change need to recognise these emotions in others and themselves, and develop ways to manage their own emotions and assist others to manage theirs. Unmanaged, these responses may undermine the changes and have personal consequences.

This process has been likened, psychologically, to the grieving process.

'I think you can follow it back if you want to bereavement and all sorts of things like that. Saying that you cannot move through bereavement and become creative at the other end till you have got hold of what the loss means.'

Head of Support Department, Pre '92 University.

Everyone deals with such major changes in their own way but we can identify a number of stages that staff might go through.

- Shock and Denial
- Distrust
- Anger and Guilt
- Depression, Anxiety and Stress
- Regret

For a discussion of each of the stages together with some typical views from those who have experienced such a process follow the link to [Emotional Responses to Change and Transition](#). Each of the stages in the process needs to be recognised and responded to accordingly. For example, it's no good expecting grudging acceptance when staff are still in shock. You are more likely to get anger and no argument, no matter how reasonable to you, is likely to win staff around.

For those, managing the change, the challenge is to get staff through from shock to grudging acceptance in as fast a time as possible whilst minimising stress and limiting the effect on other areas of the organisation.

Shock and Denial

'I couldn't believe it! We had agreed to work towards building up student numbers in the department at a previous consultation meeting. The final decision to close us down came out of the blue. I still don't understand the criteria for the decision.'

No matter how well impending decisions have been trailed – once they become known there is a period of shock. People refuse to believe them at first – all large organisations abound with rumours that never come to fruition.

The shock stage is usually short-lived. Actions to take include:

- Communicate the broad headline issues, the reasons for change and the actions that will happen.
- Don't expect people to make decisions or take actions people will not be interested about the future as much as the past.
- Be available and prepared to listen.
- Think about a strategy to help staff through the remaining stages of the process.

Distrust

'There were other departments that weren't recruiting well but it was decided that ours should be the one to go. The data that was at the heart of the decision wasn't trusted by many academics throughout the institution.'

After the shock employees may feel as though 'the rug has been pulled out from under them'. The trust level within the organisation drops, and people who feel betrayed develop a generally suspicious, 'save-your-own-skin' attitude. Some organisations have reported suspicion among peers and a withholding of information for fear of advancing somebody else's interests. Actions here include:

- Communicate again the reasons and who is likely to be involved.
- Clarify and make clear the timescales for the decision-making process – and ensure these are kept to.
- Be honest about the future.
- Don't develop a blame culture – deal with issues not people.
- Be available – but don't expect a rush of people to talk to you.

Anger and Guilt

'People were very angry. The Unions were involved and the case went to tribunal which the institution lost. Three years on, some people are still angry about how it was handled.'

Change creates winners (those who benefit from the change) and losers (those who don't). The winners can often feel guilty and the messengers of the change may also feel guilty. Guilty people usually express their feelings indirectly and may feel uncomfortable around the losers. They may overcompensate ('don't blame me, I didn't plan this change') or they may even blame and/or patronize the losers for not being able to cope with the change well. This can also affect communication – those not involved don't know what to say to those that are, leading to an even greater sense of alienation by those most affected.

Those who don't benefit from the change or those whose friends/colleagues don't benefit can feel resentment, especially towards the hierarchy. They can become angry, blame the organisation and can look for ways to payback (working slowly, leaving work undone, leaking documents, making mistakes or organising opposition).

At this stage:

- Provide opportunities to let off steam.
- Expect open anger from some staff and acknowledge it as a natural reaction.
- Respond with empathy to people's sense of loss
- Start to explain the need for change in more detail but don't expect to be listened to straight away.
- Be careful about the wording of even confidential documents – they may become public.

- Don't expect engagement in new processes or decision-making at this stage.

Depression, Anxiety and Stress

'The response to the decision was that people started looking for other jobs and in the middle of the year some staff left which put the rest of us in a difficult position. This was very de-motivating and very stressful.'

Some people get anxious from the first rumour of change and when the changes are complete they then worry about the next set of changes. Nervousness, working extra time and taking on extra work to 'please the boss' can be examples of how some employees respond to change. 'If I get more paperwork out, start the day earlier and stay later, come in on weekends, maybe I'll get to stay or keep my staff or this office.' Anxiety can be a stimulus initially but can eventually lead to a decline in focus on tasks and reduce motivation, energy and adaptability. Stress and its negative effects usually accompany this behaviour. It is instructive to note that absenteeism, medical claims, stress related claims all increase at times of significant organisational change (although there may be a few months lag time).

Living with the anxiety of the unknown associated with a change can create fears that taking risks and setting work goals too high or being too creative may result in displeasing the boss.

Goals are set low, creative approaches to problem solving are scarce, and no one wants to take any chances of looking bad.

Some people focus on 'How does this affect me? What will happen to me?' Transitions focus people back on themselves, which can undermine teamwork and increase competition for positions as well as undermine customer service. It is hard to take care of others when you are preoccupied with your own survival. Self-absorption can also undermine loyalty and commitment to the organisation.

It's important to try to move through this stage as quickly as possible:

- Accept some temporary lack of motivation.
- Talk to staff.
- Reinforce the reasons for change and stress that the decision is not necessarily a reflection on the abilities of those involved. Rebuild confidence and self-esteem.
- Recognise that this may not be the best time for creativity.
- Provide counselling if necessary.

Regret

'I felt that I had been loyal to the institution and expected some loyalty in return. I felt isolated from the institution, not informed and not valued. I really feel that it could have been handled better. The worst aspect was the uncertainty.'

This is a more positive stage. Staff have come to terms with the change and its personal affects. In the mind, the past always represents a better time and a regret for its passing is natural. The challenge is to ensure that staff don't stay in the past and revert to old ways but engage actively in the new reality.

- Start communicating the future and set out the decisions to be taken.
- Discuss new roles.
- Set short-term goals that are achievable.

- Be positive but realistic.
- At this stage it can be useful to have a wake for the old ways – celebrating what was achieved and drawing a line under the past.

Acceptance

'I always acted in the best interests of my students. This was difficult at first but I have now become accustomed to my new role and new opportunities have opened up.'

This stage is assisted by moving from short-term to long-term vision and building and embedding the new reality.

Don't dwell on the past. This is the time to start enthusing about the future.

- Celebrate new successes.
- Make sure everyone is clear about new roles.
- Don't expect a radical change overnight – major wounds take a while to heal.
- Convert complaints to action.
- Promote personal responsibility and accountability.
- Delegate as much as possible where appropriate.
- Model new behaviours.
- Reduce the number of meetings relating specifically to change.
- Document any new procedures.
- Revise Job Descriptions and Performance Objectives.

Individual and Group Fears

Many of the above reactions arise from uncertainty about how the change will impact individuals and teams. The following check lists give some pointers as to how you might identify the major uncertainties that worry people and start to address them. We suggest that you address the individual fears as the first priority. Even where people are severely affected and negotiation is impossible you should treat the fears in a fair manner and with a sense of urgency.

Individual Fears

FEAR Type	Nagging Question	Response	Priority	Coping strategy
Job loss	Will I have a job after the changes?	Clarify if this is the case. Be prepared to answer tough questions	High Immediate response required	Competent HR team, devoting time to the affected from the changes Assistance with finding new job. Counselling. Stress management. Union support.
Degree of change	Will I personally have to change too many things?	Clarify if this is the case; Emphasise usefulness of changes and benefits in the long run.	Medium to high What is expected of each member of staff?	Communications strategy and clarity in promoting changes; Realistic expectations of amount of change at any one time. Provide training.
Salary and contract	Will there be change to my contract/ salary?	Clarify if this is a permanent or temporary measure, whether this comes as an incentive for the changes to be introduced.	Medium to high Contract clarity needs to be observed at all times.	Knowledgeable and supportive HR team
Perks and the spoil factor	Will I lose my parking space/company car etc? Will there be changes to my pension/holiday entitlement.	Clarify. Justify actions, be prepared to answer tough questions.	Medium to high	Be aware of perks and how staff view them. Look for alternatives.
Personal Status	Will I be gaining or losing status as a result of the changes?	Clarify immediately. Be prepared to answer tough questions.	High	Be honest. Provide personal recognition and support. Identify ways in

				which status can be enhanced.
Physical environment	Will I have to change desks/ offices/ buildings/sites?	Clarify at local level: if this is a permanent or temporary measure. Are there any incentives for relocation? Any efficiencies to be achieved?	Medium to high	Will the new environment be better – if so in what ways? Are there long-term advantages Don't promise what you can't deliver.
Technology	Will I get a new computer, or will I inherit someone else's old machine? Will I have a direct line? Will I be able to cope with the new technology?	Clarify at local level if 'technology' is going to be affected by the changes	Low to medium	Deal with uncertainty. Provide training and mentoring where necessary.
Career development	Would the change enhance my opportunities? How would the changes affect my career?	Clarify possibilities for career opportunities.	Medium	Talk 1:1 about longer term possibilities and what needs to be achieved to get there.
Overall Personal	What's in it for me? Push or pull?	Clarify issues. Resolve issues or look for alternative solutions.	High	Talk to those most affected and hear their concerns. <u>See Transition Management.</u>

Team Fears

FEAR Type	Nagging Question	Response	Priority	Coping Strategy
Purpose of the team	Are we clear what we are trying to achieve?	Be clear about the new purpose.	High	This requires more than just communication – but for staff to work with and explore the proposed new reality.

Change to standards, procedures	Will we be working to different standards?	Clarify if this is the case; justify changes	High	Immediate, uniform response required. Ensure standards and procedures are clear. Communication strategy, backing the business case for change
Morale and team spirit	Will we get on together?	If values and beliefs are affected at individual level, morale and team spirit might be affected too. Clarification and reassurance is needed.	High	Celebration of success, and incentives for the change need to be provided. Away days or similar events thinking about the new future.
Training and development	Will we need to acquire new skills as a result of introducing the changes?	Clarification and training needs analysis to be conducted	High	Address team needs. Team training can help cement new teams and identify tensions.
Communications within the team and with others	Will we know what's going on?	Identify how issues will be communicated amongst team.	Medium	Provide clear communication structures. Recognise importance of informal as well as formal communication channels. Discuss dissemination plan.

Principles of Transition Management

You have to end before you begin

Frequently people talk about what's about to begin and there is no mention of what has to end. No one can develop a new identity or a new purpose until he or she has let go of the old one. It is best to deal with endings realistically and help people gain closure on the past. They will move on more readily and take advantage of what the future has to offer if you do.

Between the ending and the new beginning, there is a hiatus

In between letting go of the old way and taking hold of the new, there is a difficult journey through the wilderness or 'a time in between the trapezes'. This is a dangerous time when systems don't work well and people lose heart easily. People need to know that it is usual to go through a chaotic interim between letting go and taking hold again and that it's normal to be discouraged and confused by the experience. Build in temporary sources of support and ways that people can feel in control by being involved in decisions that affect them.

The hiatus can be a creative time

The same forces that make the in-between time difficult, mean that the normal resistances to new ideas and new behaviours don't work well either. For that reason, the interim is a potentially creative

time, when new things can be introduced more quickly and easily than usual. This can be a time to step back and take stock, to try new things and a time to view every problem as an opportunity to abandon outmoded ways and create more adaptive and effective ones.

Transition is developmental

What ends is often not just a particular situation but a whole chapter and stage of development in the organisation's life cycle. Behind the scenes, a new organisation is taking shape. This is easier to see in retrospect, but it's worth remembering at the time that there is a purpose to all the distress and disturbance. Assist people to see that the old way was fine for its' time, but a new chapter is needed for a new day. It is also very important for managers to publicly identify, protect and carry forward the parts of the past that are valuable and still viable.

Transition is also the source of renewal

The leap from one stage of development to another, like comparable leaps in nature, releases energy. That is why organisations so often come out of a painful crisis with new energy and a new focus. Renewal for individuals or groups comes from going through transition successfully, not in time away from the situation. Emphasise the need to re-prioritise as a way of unloading irrelevant policies and procedures. Discontinuing the old ways can be a release, especially if it is paired with an effort to clarify and celebrate the new mission, strategies and the new identity that the organisation is growing into.

'The body language has changed dramatically. People are now much keener to get involved. Once you get people engaged, you can then start to move along through the transition.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

People go through transition at different speeds and in different ways

People get strung out along the path of transition like runners in a marathon. The leaders who designed the change are often far out ahead. They had a head start; they feel more in control of their fate and probably aren't as personally affected as many of the rank and file. Some people are more resilient during change. Leaders understand these things and communicate in terms that make sense from where people presently are, not just where the leaders are.

Most organisations are running a transition deficit

Many organisations don't give people a chance to complete the transition cycle. They think that they are saving time by hurrying people, but actually all they are doing is leaving people with still more unfinished business to carry along with them. Sooner or later the load will get too heavy, and some apparently small change will send the whole system into transition bankruptcy. To keep that from happening, slow down. Listen more and talk less. Investigate what old hurts and resentments may be getting in the way of people dealing directly with this transition. Do whatever you can to address them and lay them to rest. Build your case that this time will be different – and make sure it is!

The Timings of New Beginnings

Like any organic process, beginnings cannot be made to happen by a word or act. They happen when the timing of the transition process allows them to happen, just as flowers and fruit appear on a schedule that is natural and not subject to anyone's will. That is why it is so important to understand the transition process and where people are in it.

Only when you get into people's shoes and feel what they are feeling can you help them to manage their transition. More beginnings abort because they were not preceded by well-managed endings and neutral zones than for any other reason.

But if beginnings cannot be forced according to one's personal wishes, they can be encouraged, supported and reinforced. You cannot turn the key or flip the switch, but you can cultivate the ground and provide the nourishment. What you can do falls under four headings:

- You can explain the basic purpose behind the outcome you seek. People have to understand the logic of it before they turn their minds to work on it.
- You can put a picture of how the outcome will look and feel. People need to experience it imaginatively before they can give their hearts to it.
- You can lay out a step-by-step plan for phasing in the outcome. People need a clear idea of how they can get where they need to go.
- You can give each person a part to play in both the plan and the outcome itself. People need a tangible way to contribute and participate.

'Success breeds success – disseminate and adapt models for your own purpose and needs.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

Adoption of Change

Change is an incremental process, neither individuals nor organisations adopt a change overnight. Some change process theories describe the stages of a successful change process as consisting of three phases:

- **Unfreezing:** Creating the motivation to change by disconfirmation of the present state, creation of survival anxiety, creating of psychological safety to overcome learning anxiety
- **Moving:** Learning new concepts, new meanings, and new standards by imitation of and identification with role models, scanning for solutions and trial-and-error learning
- **Refreezing:** Internalising new concepts, meanings, and standards by incorporating into self-concept and identity and into ongoing relationships and groups

We would argue that change in real life is rather more organic than this. Rather than 'refreezing' at the end of a project a successful implementation will pave the way for a more change robust culture in which continuous improvement becomes normal. The model may nonetheless have some validity in the case of technological change where decisions taken as part of one project constrain choices in the future.

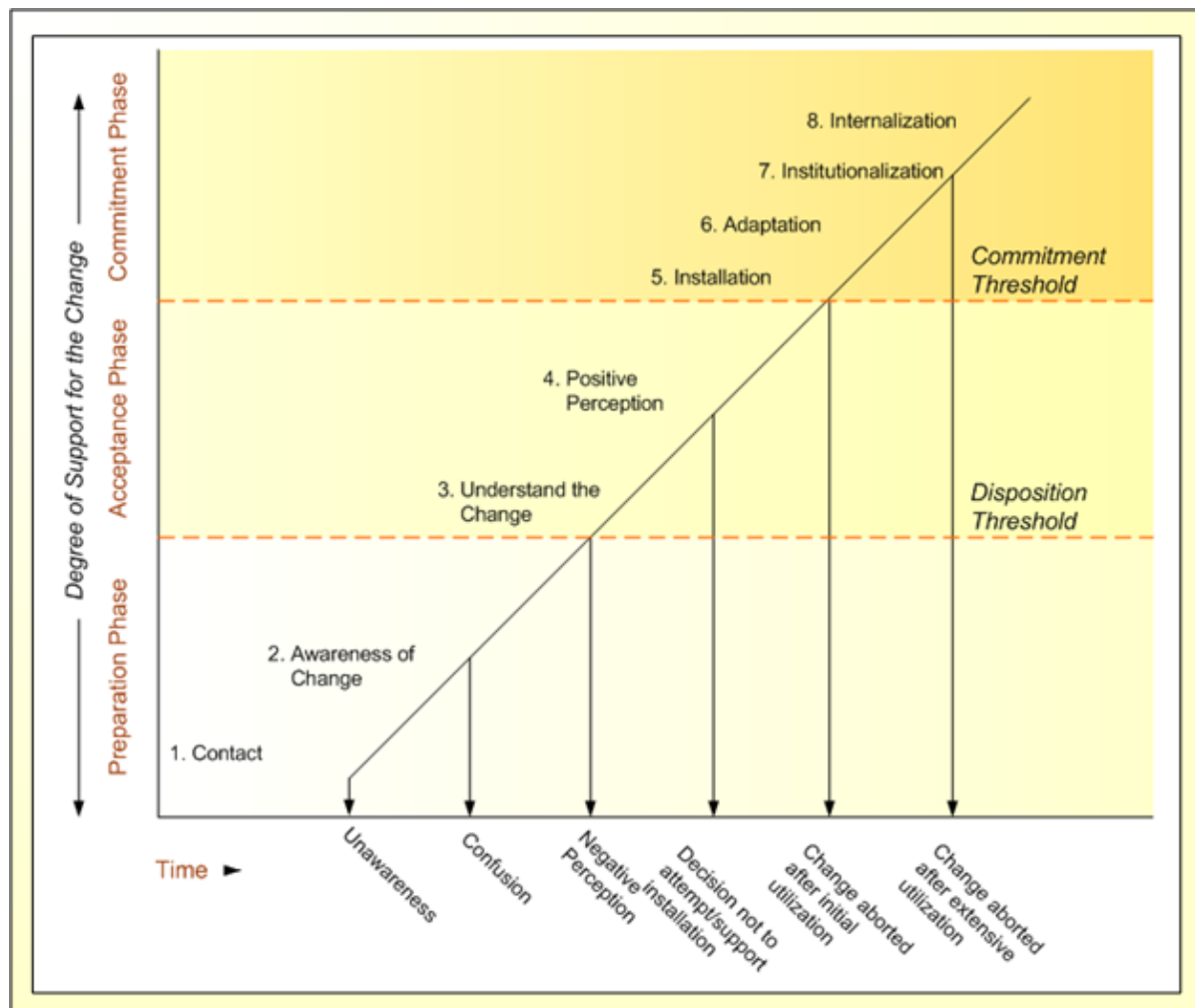
Innovation research is a field of research which suggests that the propensity of individuals to change and implement new ideas, products or processes differs. Rogers' (2003) theory on the diffusion of innovations refers to change processes in relation to the individual and his or her decision process regarding the adoption or rejection of an innovation/change. He differentiates five stages in the decision process:

1. knowledge occurs when an individual is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains an understanding of how it functions.
2. persuasion occurs when an individual forms a favourable or an unfavourable attitude towards the innovation.
3. decision takes place when an individual engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation.
4. implementation occurs when an individual puts a new idea into use.
5. confirmation takes place when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation–decision already made, but he or she may reverse this previous decision if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation.

'The whole department were given the same awareness sessions but only one became engaged... You have to motivate a lot of people in order to engage one.'

ILT Co-ordinator, FE College

Conner and Patterson (1982) propose a total of 8 stages (see figure below) for an organisation or a person to go through when becoming committed to a change goal. The authors claim that each stage indicates a critical juncture, in which commitment can be threatened. This is shown in the illustration below. If a stage is completed successfully, advancement to the next stage is possible. If not, the downward arrows indicate the result.



Innovation research (Rogers, 2003) categorises people in terms of their propensity to change, ranging from:

Innovators (venturesome) They are very eager to try new ideas. This interest leads them out of local circle of peer networks and into more cross-functional relationships. Communication patterns and friendships among a clique of innovators are common, even though their distance (functional, geographical, etc.) between the innovators may be considerable. In order to be an innovator, there are several prerequisites. These are control of substantial financial resources, the ability to understand and the ability to apply complex technical knowledge. The innovator must also be able to cope with a higher than average degree of uncertainty.

Early adopters (respectable) They are a more integrated part of the local social system than are

innovators. They have the greatest degree of opinion leadership in most social systems. Potential adopters look to early adopters for advice and information about the innovation. The early adopter is considered as individual to check with before using a new idea. They are respected by their peers and are the embodiment of successful and discrete use of new ideas.

Early majority (deliberate) They adopt new ideas just before the average member of a social system. The early majority interacts frequently with peers, but seldom holds leadership positions. The early majority's unique position between the very early and the relatively late to adopt makes them an important link in the diffusion process. They provide interconnectedness in the system's networks. They may deliberate for some time before completely adopting a new idea. Their innovation–decision period is relatively longer than that of the innovators and the early adopter.

Late majority (sceptical) They adopt new ideas just after the average member of a social system. They don't adopt until most others in their social system have done so. They can be persuaded of the utility of new ideas, but the pressure of peers is necessary to motivate adoption.

Laggards (traditional) They are the last group to adopt an innovation. They possess almost no opinion leadership. Decisions are often made in terms of what has been done in previous generations and these individuals interact primarily with others who also have relatively traditional values.

'When demand grew so fast this meant the Staff Department Unit had to find the energy and resources to support the process. If the energy and resources (and inclination/motivation on the part of the key staff had been found wanting then the results might not have been so dramatic'

From Implementing a VLE at the Belfast Institute of F&HE: Changing the Culture Case Study

Innovation research has also identified properties of innovations (in this case organisational changes) that are likely to meet with success. These are:

- relative advantage, the degree to which it is perceived to be better than the situation currently existing.
- compatibility, the perceived 'fit' of the innovation with existing structures, procedures and values.
- complexity, the degree of difficulty involved in learning about and implementing the innovation.
- trialability, the extent to which an innovation can be tried by potential adopters without major investment of time or resources.
- observability, the degree to which outcomes resulting from the adoption of an innovation are visible.

In our environment we do of course have a significant pressure group who may drive change:

'There is a strong motivational element that can be tapped that comes from the students themselves. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence that students who see other groups using the technology when they are taught without it produce a groundswell of concern and envy. Staff members are bluntly asked "Why are we not getting to use the computers when other groups do?"'

Educational Technologist, FE College

'The students were the biggest driver for change – once exposed to innovative practices, they expected that they would get similar 'treatment' from every lecturer. This spurred colleagues into action more than anything else. People who were thought of as barriers for the change in the beginning were eager to be trained and embrace 'the new', as the change wasn't anymore perceived as the whim of a VC or a DVC, but was what students really needed and wanted. It all made sense. We saw the opinion

changing influence that students as stakeholders of the teaching profession have.

From Changing Teaching and Learning styles Case Study

The Tipping Point

Rogers (2003) states that the adoption of an innovation/change will exhibit a normal distribution on a time graph but a concept of which is being increasingly used is that of the 'Tipping Point' (Gladwell 2000). The Tipping Point is similar to the idea of the 'critical mass' which originated in physics and is defined as the amount of radioactive material necessary to produce a nuclear reaction. The 'critical mass' in innovation research indicates the point at which enough individuals in a system have adopted an innovation so that the innovation's further rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining (Anghern 2005). This is especially relevant for interactive communications technology where a critical mass of individuals must adopt the technology before the average individual can benefit from the system.

Staff Development

Of course adoption of a change is not entirely optional even in our environment and the rate of adoption and time taken to reach the 'tipping point' can be influenced by an effective staff development programme. This can be particularly important where the change involves the use of new technology.

'It appears vital that staff are treated in a manner such that their personal dignity is not affronted when they seek help; for some staff, the change in role from expert/information disseminator to learner is one that affords many opportunities for loss of face and revelations about their level of skills that they may feel compromises their standing... These situations must always be handled with delicacy and sensitivity.'

Educational Technologist, FE College

Follow this link to find out more about designing an [effective Staff Development and Training Programme](#).

The Knowing–Doing Gap

Once you are into the implementation stage of your project you may find that you start to experience the Knowing–Doing Gap. Quite simply you know what needs to be done, you think you have put the right structures and processes in place but for some reason this hasn't translated into the right sort of response. Pfeffer & Sutton (2000) identify a number of factors that contribute to this gap:

Pseudo–action Deceptions:

- Thinking that knowing is sufficient for success.
- Thinking that talking (meetings, committees, reports, etc.) is action.
- Thinking that measuring things is action or contributes to performance.
- Thinking that making a decision is the same as taking action.
- Thinking that planning is the same as action.

Clogging the Gap by giving in to the Inhibitions of Fear:

- Fearing complexity, lack of clarity about what specifically to do.
- Fearing risk, mistakes, errors, and imperfection.
- Fearing competition, focusing on what others are doing and trying to get ahead.
- Fearing the new, the different, the unpredictable, falling back on precedence (standard operating procedures) and so mindlessly defaulting to what you've always done.

Taboos that prevent and forbid action:

- 'Don't make a fool of yourself.'
- 'Don't risk making a mistake, it's too dangerous.'
- 'Don't be imperfect.'

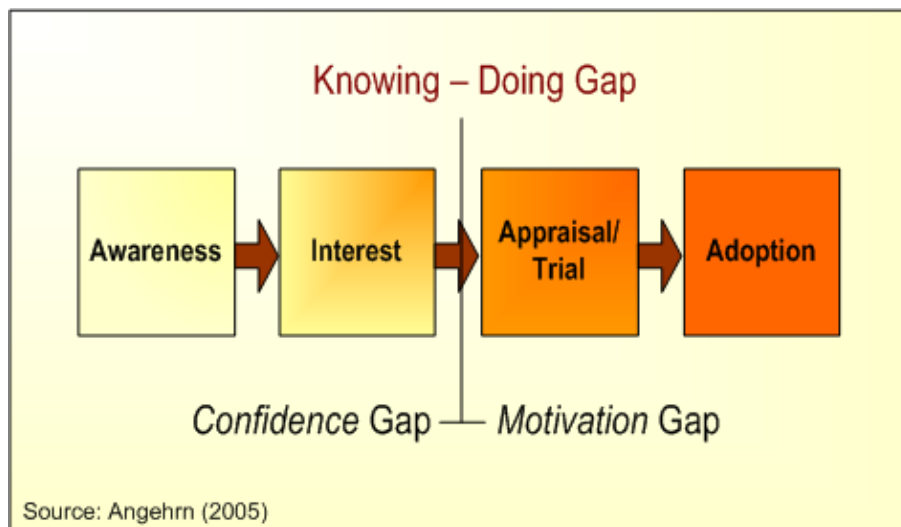
Lack of structure for action:

- No structure for following up.
- No structure for rewarding learning from mistakes.
- No structure for rewarding risk taking.

Personal items predisposing us from taking action:

- Not being action oriented in our person, being inactive and passive.
- Making excuses and letting excuses stop us.
- Discounting small actions.

Angehrn (2005) has shown how the gap links to the phases of adoption of a change:



If you recognise these symptoms in your change project you need to identify the underlying causes. If there seems to be a particular problem area you might try using the 5 Whys tool again to get to the root of the problem.

Reviving a Stalled Change Effort

If your change project seems to be stagnating, you experience the Knowing-Doing Gap and you cannot readily identify the main problem area/s then it is time for you to do a Reality Check and apply corrective measures.

This is a 3 stage process:

1. Conduct a reality check
2. Apply corrective measures
3. Monitor the results

At the first stage you will need to review two key things:

- the need for change and its relevance to the present climate,
- if we had achieved the objectives of the change, how would the present be different?

Even if the change now isn't relevant, there is value in undertaking a review to draw lessons for the future. Sweeping failure under the carpet is a way of encouraging a culture of blame not a culture of change.

Two supplementary questions are also important to help ensure that we don't make the same mistakes again if we re-invigorate the process:

1. Why didn't we recognise the signs that the change effort was not on track?
2. Why didn't we do anything about it?

This analysis can be undertaken individually but is best done as part of an activity which involves the original change team and possibly representatives of the key stakeholders.

Follow this link for a template for your [Reality Check](#).

This analysis will provide the basis for creating the measures required to restart the process (if it is assessed as both still necessary and feasible).

Actions that can be taken include:

- Restructuring the team
- Rebranding
- Higher profile involvement from senior management

'Top management was the face of the change, and it was their responsibility to find a way of going around the barriers of change, to ensure the change effort was resourced, to recognise the need to empower people at the shop floor level and to communicate clearly the vision for the change. Nothing more than to 'walk the talk.'

From Changing Teaching and Learning styles Case Study

- Response to staff concerns
- Greater investment (time, people, finance)

'Resource allocation is absolutely crucial – if you really want to effect change you've got to be able to direct resources in the way of that change.'

From Effects of Business Development and Knowledge Transfer on institutional culture Case Study

- Getting some well-known and respected staff involved
- Re-set SMART targets
- Staff development

Reviving a stalled effort will raise questions in people's minds – 'we've been there, we've done that' an attitude can be hard to work with, and people will need to be reassured that the business case for change is sound, and that their involvement will bring both personal and professional reward, otherwise the effort will be doomed to work against the resistance and the bitter experience of non-achievement.

In this infoKit we offer a multitude of tools that can help at each stage of this change process. For example, if you found that the aims and objectives of the failed change were not clear to stakeholders, you could use [Clarimission](#) to synthesise the aims of the change, and to achieve common understanding of the aims.

This is probably your last chance to effect the change – failure again will be almost certain death to the initiative so putting in place effective monitoring process is important to ensure that any early signs of faltering can be picked-up and responded to.

The End?

Is a change process ever over? How do you know when it is time to give up and move on to other things? In the real world the change often just becomes mainstream, part of the way in which we do things, and other change processes come to dominate our lives. Occasionally we can become fixated by the change and pursue it to the death even when the return on the effort is marginal. This can be the case when people are given specific projects to complete with no clear exit strategy. So the purpose of this section is to explore the notion of completion.

There are a number of signs that a change process has reached the end of its life-time. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's been successful – it could mean that it has just lost momentum and will need [reviving](#) to effect the desired change.

- People stop calling meetings.
- People stop coming to meetings.
- The change is now embedded in practice.
- Other committees and groups have taken it on board as part of their agenda.
- The original drivers no longer exist or the change process has been overtaken by other events.
- Senior management support has evaporated.
- Staff talk positively about it if there is talk of changing it further.
- The resources have run out.
- Staff are tired of the rhetoric.

Things to do to aid completion:

- Go back to the earlier aims of the change process (if you can find them) and assess the extent to which they have been met.
- Reinvent the change process (if the desired changes weren't met but are still valid).
- Redesign the change process if the change has only been partially met.
- Check whether any staff appointed to be involved in the change process need to be re-assigned?
- Check whether other staff affected by the change process now need to have their roles redefined to accommodate changes in working practices.

Write a final report (and circulate widely) to indicate a formal end.

- Draw a formal line under the process by a paper to a formal meeting.
- Let everyone know that the project has come to an end – **caution**: this can lead to people not taking the change seriously any longer and regressing into old ways.

Evaluation is an essential part of this process whether or not the change achieved the desired outcome. If you set SMART targets in the first place you should be well on your way to being able to say how well you met your aims. You may also find the Post Project Review template helpful.

If you achieved your aims – congratulations! If you didn't then you will have learned some valuable lessons to help you in the future. You may wish to review your aims or measure them against best practice in which case the following tools may help:

Balanced Scorecard – concentrates on four perspectives from which to view an organisation.

Benchmarking – can help you compare your own organisation's performance with best practice.

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