



WHAT REALLY WORKS IN LEADING CHANGE? THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

At a meeting of one of our Directors' Leadership Groups recently we asked what topics people would like to learn more about this year. The most popular answer was leading/managing change. Now these are all really good leaders from sophisticated backgrounds so it told us something about how acute the felt need right now is for organisations to improve how they handle change. Therefore, both this and the next edition of Inklings is devoted to what, in our experience, really works in successful change. We hope this reaffirms your faith in approaches you already know and gives you some fresh options. We have focused on what are the more "left brain" technique models this month and in our next edition the rest of the Magnificent Seven will cover the more "right brain" approaches.

1. TREAT YOUR ORGANISATION (BE IT TEAM, DEPARTMENT, BUSINESS UNIT, MIGHTY GLOBAL BEHEMOTH) AS A **SYSTEM**.

Otherwise you will be in for one or two unpleasant consequences:

- too little change. We put all that effort in and hardly anything happened!
- the wrong kind of change. We didn't mean **that** to happen!

There are some highly practical systems models of organisations around. We use a variation on Jay Galbraith's classic model. It shows clearly how the components fit together and affect each other. As somebody once said – your organisation is perfectly designed to achieve your current results.

2. UNDERSTAND AND USE THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE.

Brilliant thinkers like Kurt Lewin told us ages ago that you have to find the right balance of forces to get change moving. Concentrate all your efforts on "pushing" the change and you simply build resistance. It is amazing what a simple Lewin model like the "Change Equation" can do to help in framing change efforts.

3. APPLY THE LESSONS OF THE TIPPING POINT.

Malcolm Gladwell is a journalist but he really highlighted some profound lessons we can use in organisations. These days we have converted his insights into Levers of Change that can be fine-tuned to bring a change through the tipping point. We also have access to a great simulation which lets you use the levers. If you simply read Gladwell's book you can find ideas to apply in your situation.

4. PLANNING CHANGE IS NOT JUST A PROJECT PLAN. Organisations tend to treat change as a series of tasks, often technical in nature and (sometimes) do a pretty sophisticated job in planning the project at this level. Change usually works in much more complex ways so you have to build these extra variables in. John Kotter's 8 stage model is a good starting point for this.

Click for Cole-McKee's services in Change Management

(http://www.colemckee.com/pages/services_pages/change.htm) using the above principles or for further reading in the field of managing change (www.colemckee.com/pages/resources.htm).

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