

BRINGING IN CHANGE

Anuradha Sharma



In quite a few of our training sessions we quote a line from a Greek philosopher, Heraclitus 'Change is the only constant.' This is true for all kinds of industries, may it be manufacturing or service.

What was true more than two thousand years ago is true today too. 'Change' is also the vital component of the programs like 'Lean.' We live in a world where "business as usual" is change. New initiatives, project-based working, technology improvements, staying ahead of the competition - all drive ongoing changes to the way we work. Change and improvement are continuous processes and to bring in change and improvement, a strong top management commitment is required.

Philip Kotler is 'the world's foremost expert on the strategic practice of marketing'. He is known to be behind the success of Jack Welch and Bill Gates. He is the 6th most influential person on business thinking, and a professor at Harvard Business School and world-renowned change expert. He introduced his **eight-step change process** in his 1995 book, "**Leading Change.**" These steps can be equally beneficial for each one of us while doing any kind of project.



Step One: Create Urgency

A sense of urgency around the need for change should be developed. This will help spark the initial motivation to get things moving.

An honest and convincing dialogue should be done with the entire team on market realities including competitive scenario, and consumer expectations so as to be better prepared to respond to current and future market needs.

Potential threats should be identified, opportunities should be examined and discussed to get people talking and thinking.



Step Two: Form a Powerful Coalition

A strong leadership and visible support from key people within the organization is needed to lead people by example and convince about the need to change.

Kotler suggests that for change to be successful, 75% of a company's management needs to "buy into" the change. In other words, one has to really work hard on Step One, and spend significant time and energy building urgency, before moving onto the next steps. If we act without proper preparation, we could land up in a mess.

*Enthusiasm is that kindling spark which marks the difference between the leaders in every activity and the laggards who put in just enough to get by.
- Unknown*

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Enthusiastic and influential people from different departments should be identified and motivated to bring in change and made to work in a team to continuously motivate other people for the same.



Step Three: Create a Vision for Change

It's not what you do once in a while, it's what you do day in and day out that makes the difference.

- Jenny Craig

A vision should be presented to people in such a way that it is understood clearly by everyone and there should be something to be gained by each of the person who is asked to contribute to achieve it.



Step Four: Communicate the Vision

One needs to communicate the vision to its people in the ways things are done and by showing commitment for the vision.

Step Five: Remove Obstacles

One needs to talk to people, know about the hurdles they are facing in achieving the vision, get to the root causes of the personal and professional problems they are going through, guide them and empower them to contribute their share towards the determined vision.

Step Six: Create Short-term Wins



Short-term achievable targets should be made; each "win" that is made can motivate the entire team. People should be rewarded and acknowledged for their contribution in achieving the desired goals.

Step Seven: Build on the Change

Kotler emphasizes that quick wins are only the beginning of what needs to be done to achieve long-term change.

Each success provides an opportunity to build on what went right and learn from what went wrong.

Step Eight: Anchor the Changes in Corporate Culture

Make continuous efforts to ensure that the change is seen in every aspect of your organization in order to make it a part of

I try to do the right thing at the right time. They may just be little things, but usually they make the difference between winning and losing. - Kareem Abdul-Jabar

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organization's culture. Publicly recognize the people who helped in bringing about a change. This would motivate them to keep doing the good work they are doing and others to work towards improving by bringing about the change.

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