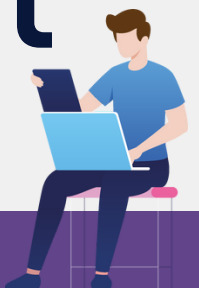




Our approach to change management

How we'll help you make change happen in your business



The World is changing at a rapid speed...

and we're now experiencing what is being called the 'fifth industrial revolution' as the business world shifts to advanced technologies, such as AI and robotic-based technologies.

As HR leaders, we understand the importance of change...

Not only is it inevitable, it's essential for innovation and growth. But we also know how important it is to manage change correctly.

Because for our people, organisational change creates uncertainty and anxiety which creates engagement, performance and mobility challenges.

We cannot risk this, or risk losing our best talent in what is a hugely competitive employee marketplace, due to poorly managed change processes.



Change management programmes are the answer

Great change management programmes will create engagement, reduce anxiety and will increase confidence.

Poor change management programmes will result in reduced confidence levels, loss of talent and resistance.

It is, therefore, our responsibility to create people-centric change programmes to ensure our businesses navigate change correctly without damaging the relationship we have with our employees.

There are different change management models you could use...

There are several change frameworks that you can employ, and each comes with its own pros and cons. And when it comes to your own change, we'll look at what you're trying to achieve, along with timescales, etc., to determine which framework of change will be best to use.



Let's explore two frameworks that we might use to help your business:



Change management model 1: Freeze-Unfreeze-Freeze

Kurt Lewin, a psychologist who specialised in social psychology and group dynamics, created the Freeze-Unfreeze-Freeze model of change in the 1940s. There are three phases of this model.

Phase one: Freeze

This is your company as it is now, without any change. It is called Freeze because your organisation's processes and behaviours are more fixed and resistant to change.

Phase two: Unfreeze

This is your company going through your period of change. It's where you disrupt your existing operational processes and behaviours to introduce new ones.

Phase three: Freeze

Once the changes have been implemented, your company then returns to a fixed state, using the new operational processes and behaviours.

This model of change management has pros and cons.

The pros are that it's simple and disruptive – get the job done quickly and return to normal as quickly as possible.

For your team, they will understand that they just need to get through an unstable period of change, then they can return to normality.

But you may also find that this model is too simple depending on the nature of change...

It lacks a programmatic approach and leaves the 'how' undefined.

This method should only be used where the failure risks are acceptable, and the window of change is short.

It's also worth considering whether your business can really commit to freezing and a business-as-usual promise, in times where agility can mean competitive advantage.

You also wouldn't want to apply this method too often, the beauty of this method is that it is a manageable spell of disruption, if you disrupt too often then it simply starts to feel like chaos.



Change management model 2: 8-step approach



John Kotter, a renowned leadership expert and professor at Harvard Business School, created the 8-step approach to change management in 1996. The 8-step model provides a systematic framework for guiding organisations through the process of implementing successful change initiatives.

There are a number of methodologies that incorporate a mixture of these steps, but the platinum approach to a change management programme is the 8-step approach. This framework promises the 'implementation of change, powerfully and successfully'.

You'll build an implementation strategy which will create maximum engagement. The steps should be used simultaneously, but the key to success is that every single one is considered, planned and delivered. This is how you'll minimise disruption and maximise your odds for success. **The steps are as follows:**

Step one: Create Urgency

Do you have a compelling reason to change? Are competitive forces affecting your ability to trade? Has your market changed and you need to respond to remain relevant? Will doing nothing mean possible extinction?

Step two: Form a Powerful Coalition

Do your most powerful people understand and support the need for change? The most powerful may not necessarily be your leadership who will have strategic knowledge to apply to risk, but your most powerful people may be those who can undermine your programme. Your leaders will need to be joined up and supportive to ensure the compliance of your team members.

Step three: Create a Vision for Change

Can you verbalise or paint a picture of what the end state is, and can you measure it to know if you have been successful? Does your change programme benefit your team to be able to help them understand 'what's in it for me'? Will your vision be one where your team can work more efficiently or create a greater sense of pride in their work or your business?

Step four: Communicate the Vision

Can you communicate the vision? Do you have the words, the means and the channels to ensure that everyone understands what you are trying to achieve and how you intend to do it? Think about different learning styles to ensure that everyone can understand your plan and that it is relevant rather than abstract. If you engage your people you won't have to do things TO them, you can do things WITH them.

Step five: Remove Obstacles

If your change plan is going to fall at the first hurdle, then you need to have planned to remove those hurdles or have a suitable work around ready to launch. If your systems can't support new working methodologies, then don't wait for your team to spot this (and they will).

Step six: Create Short-Term Wins

To create momentum, can you break your project into chunks? Using an iterative sprint cycle can focus the team on short term successes and can help to embed incremental changes on your journey. Being able to celebrate quick wins will also create a sense of engagement and success.

Step seven: Build on the Change

Once you reach this stage you can start to build. You'll have built credibility through your actions and you can really drive your changes into the new BAU.

However, this is the point where change can also start to lose momentum, so don't be fooled into thinking that you're finished as incomplete change programmes rarely stick and this is where consistency to the change is key.

Step eight: Anchor the Changes in Corporate Culture

Once you have enacted your new-world vision, your team will feel confident to commit themselves to the new ways and fully adopt and embrace the change. Your policies and procedures have all been scrutinised to ensure that they align with the new ways and, if you are really successful, your people will forget that there was ever another way. All of the new methods will become the new normal and any anxiety or resentment will be a thing of the past. This is the point of engagement, where your change project has been firmly anchored into your culture and is considered to be the way we do things around here.



How to choose the right method?

You'll need to select your change model according to your needs.

Not every change management programme requires a platinum approach and this will be dictated by your budget, your timeframe and your risk appetite.

You'll also want to consider what your culture can cope with; some teams are just far more accepting of instability and this is likely where your trust scores are high.

We're here to help

We're incredibly experienced at supporting senior HR teams lead change in their organisation.

Get in touch to book a confidential chat about our approach and how we can help.

Get in touch



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