

MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

On Time, On Target, On Budget

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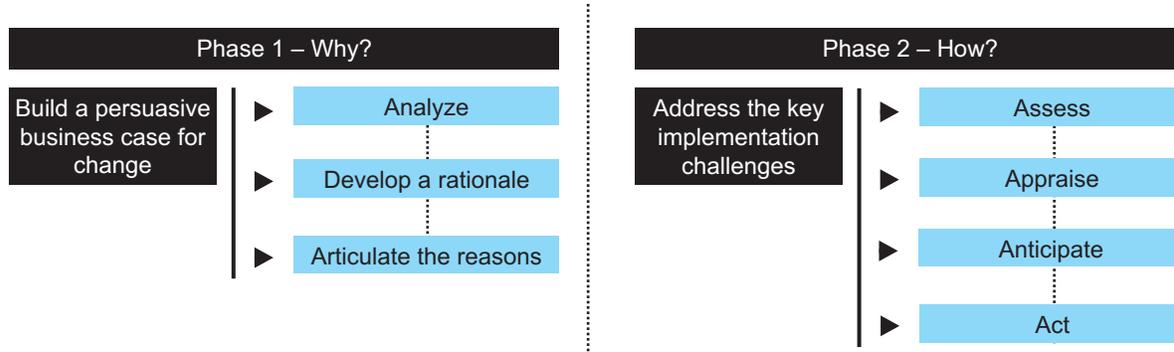
AL MURPHY runs his own consulting firm, Managing Change Consultants. He specializes in the issues associated with the implementation of change in organizations. Mr. Murphy is a graduate of Pepperdine University and has consulted with a wide variety of businesses, including not-for-profits.

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MAIN IDEA

When it comes to implementing change in an organization, there is no one cookie cutter template which can always be used. There are just too many complexities, dimensions and organizational dynamics involved for this to be a realistic option. Instead you have to do the hands-on work required to make change happen on a case-by-case basis.

Fortunately there is a way of thinking and planning which can substantially increase your organization’s chances of success in making a change when necessary. The process itself consists of two phases:



In Phase 1, you build a business case for the change you want to make. Phase 2 then looks at all the fine details involved in making that change happen. By doing this, you start with a conviction the change is desirable and necessary. Potential change sponsors or champions can then become involved confident in the knowledge careful thought and preparation has gone into what's happening. A coordinated effort to secure the cooperation of everyone can then be launched. With this kind of deliberate build-up, it then becomes increasingly likely your change will happen on time, on budget and on target.

“If you want to initiate a change in your organization, your first action should be to create dissatisfaction with the status quo. If the employees are all content with the way things are, they won’t be receptive to change, will they? But if everyone shares the urgency of a strong perceived need to do things differently, you have a shot at successful change. The faster and more efficient an organization must be today, the less capacity the organization will have to learn and adopt changes that will secure its future. One dilemma that is built into almost every organization is the pull-and-tug, the continuous trade-off that exists between the quest for immediate, continuous improvement in organizational efficiency and the necessity and allure of long-run strategic modification. Pursuing both simultaneously is extremely difficult because strategic changes often bring short-run inefficiencies. Any strategic change, accompanied by the resulting tactical modifications, can potentially disrupt this delicate balance. Learn to live with change. If you can, learn to love it. We believe successfully leading organizational change efforts is a skill that can be learned! Let the adventure begin.”

– Ken Matejka and Al Murphy

“We have to face the difficult challenge of changing when things are going well.”

John Chambers

Phase 1 – Build a business case for the changes you want to make Pages 2 - 4

Your business case will provide the answer to the one question everyone will ask: “Why are we changing?” People want to be satisfied the management has done its homework and has thoroughly researched the change rather than doing something as a knee-jerk reaction. Your business case must convince people this is the right change to make before they are asked to buy-in and get behind the change program.

Phase 2 – Address the key implementation challenges which will arise Pages 5 - 7

Once everyone understands why change is required, you now increase your chances of success by anticipating where problems will arise and planning how to overcome those challenges in advance. By taking preemptive action to defuse the roadblocks before your organization actually reaches them, you stay ahead of the forces which can derail your change initiative. By identifying these roadblocks, anticipating what corrective action is required and then acting appropriately, you can smooth the way for the requisite changes to be made.

Conclusion – Never forget making change happen is part science, part art. Page 8

Do all you can to make change happen on time, on target and on budget, but never lose sight of the fact change management is both an art and a science. You may know intellectually what needs to happen but the human side of leading change is vitally important as well. Change will always be a permanent part of the business landscape so get better at it.

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