



# A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO CHANGE

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**VALUING  
PEOPLE**

An Organisational Resource Enabling  
A Person-Centred Approach

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# OVERVIEW

Achieving excellence in person-centred care requires a long-term commitment at the organisational level, thoughtful planning and careful implementation. It requires consultation with, and involvement of, the people affected by the changes and should be based on an assessment of the degree to which care and support is being done well and areas that require improvement. So how do you develop changes that lead to good improvements?

This section contains an overview of some change management theories, models and tools to assist you in managing the steps required to implement successful change, develop an action plan and lead people through the transition. It provides an example of a continuous improvement model that will help you to plan for and undertake continuous quality improvement activities in response to the areas in need of improvement highlighted in the self-assessment process.

It is not intended to be prescriptive nor exhaustive. A 'a one size fits all' approach to managing change is ineffective, as each community organisation is different, with its own structure, history, culture and needs, and each change event is different.

Person-centred care models may present a challenge for some service providers and can involve changes to current processes as well as changes to organisational culture. Introducing change that facilitates person-centred service delivery will require a collaborative approach that empowers consumers and staff to proactively participate in the process.

This resource is underpinned by the belief that implementing a person-centred approach to care in community organisations is more likely to succeed when an organisation demonstrates a person-centred approach to its workforce.

Fundamental to the success of organisational change is the acceptance of the change by employees.



# CHANGE MANAGEMENT THEORIES, MODELS AND PRACTICAL TOOLS

Change planning is the process that allows an organisation to imagine its future and define the steps required to achieve it. Planned change takes conscious and diligent effort and effective communication to be successful. Before embarking on any organisational change initiative, it is wise to carefully plan and anticipate potential problems.

In its simplest form, a change plan answers three questions:

**Where are we now? → Where are we going? → How do we get there?**

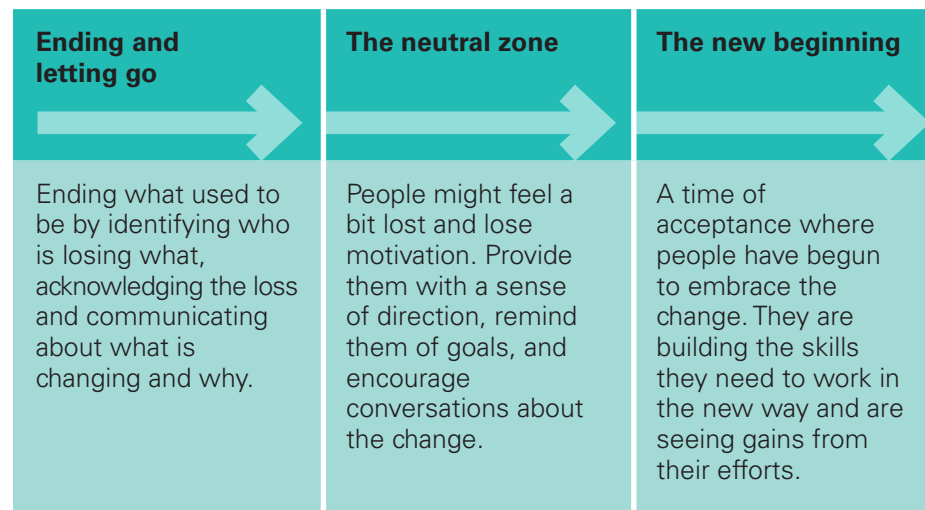
By answering these questions, a change plan helps to identify the right things required to enable an organisation to progress and improve.

There are numerous models and theories about change management and transition. They all simplify quite complex situations. Each approach has its advantages and drawbacks; however, no one framework will suit all situations. Successful change initiatives often use and adapt aspects of various models to suit the culture of the organisation and the context of the change. All require leadership to create and sustain purpose and skill at managing the activities and mechanisms for planning and monitoring change.

Change is an inherent characteristic in all organisations and involves adopting new mindsets, processes, policies, practices and behaviour. It can be a time of exciting opportunity for some and a time of loss, disturbance or threat for others. How such reactions to change are managed can be the difference between surviving and booming in a business environment.

Being uncomfortable with change can influence people to resist and oppose it. When you are about to launch any new practice or system it is important to understand how people are feeling about the change and provide support to help them accept and support it.

William Bridges<sup>1</sup> ideas on transition provide a good understanding of what happens during organisational change. His model focuses on transition, not change. The three phase process of transition helps to explain what happens in people's minds as you guide them through change. It is not a change management model.



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 Bridges<sup>2</sup> believes that change is situational and about the different policy, practice, or structure that is being changed, whereas transition describes the psychological reorientation that people have to go through before the change can be embraced into work practice. Until people successfully transition from the old way to the new way, the change will not succeed.

To engage people it is important to get them involved in setting up the measurement criteria for change, including defining the expectations and milestones (see Appendix 2 for a link to a more detailed explanation and other resources).

One of the cornerstone models for understanding organisational change was developed by Kurt Lewin<sup>3</sup> back in the 1950s. His three stage model is known as Unfreeze – Change – Refreeze, which describes a way to prepare for what is coming and make a plan to manage the transition.

Later, John P. Kotter<sup>4</sup> suggested a sequence of actions that organisations should take to increase the chances of change being successful. This eight-step change model provides clear steps for the process and has a focus of engaging staff as a key factor for success but has limited evidence of true participation.

It starts from a basic assumption that people will resist change and that is not always true (see Appendix 2 for a link to a more detailed explanation and other resources). The model can be summarised as:

1. Increase urgency – Inspire people, help them to understand the need for change.
2. Build the team – Get the right people in place and the right mix of skills and levels.
3. Develop a vision for change – Develop strategies to achieve the vision.
4. Communicate for buy-in – Involve many people, communicate the essentials simply.
5. Empower action – Remove obstacles, provide constructive feedback.
6. Create short-term wins – Set aims that are easy to achieve.
7. Don't let up – Foster and encourage determination and persistence.
8. Make change stick – Reinforce the value of successful change.

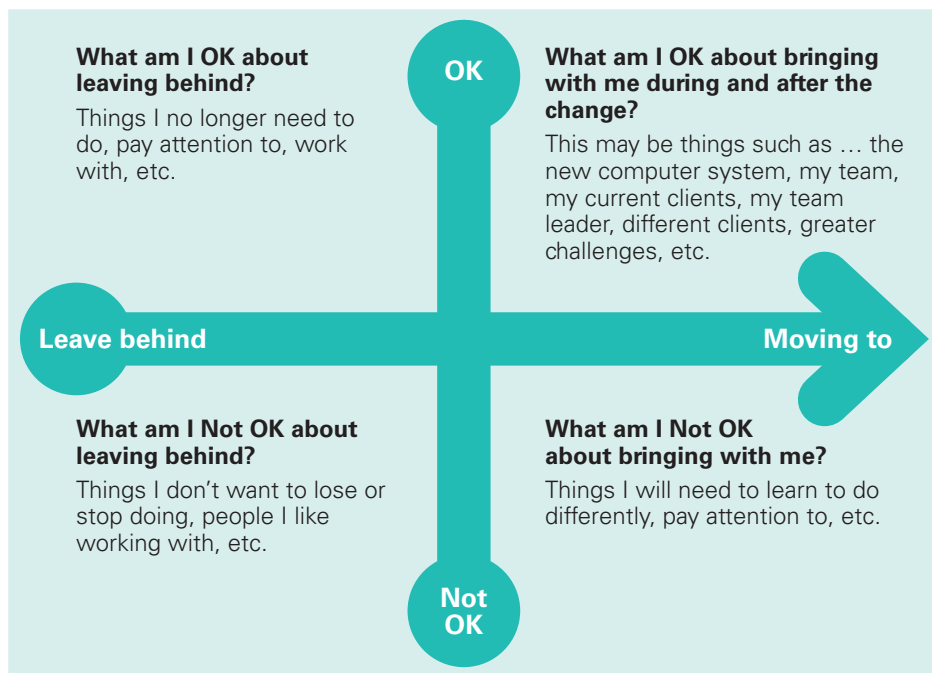
There are numerous models to assist organisations to undertake change. They all provide a set of suggested actions that are shared, including creating a vision, establishing a sense of urgency, creating strong leadership and empowering employees.

The range of models and theories indicate that it can be difficult to get people to change their behaviour even where there are good reasons to do so, where the change is logical and where it will result in better outcomes for people.

There is also a range of practical thinking tools to help people think clearly by providing a framework to assist their thinking. Stirik and Sanderson provide many examples including the 4 Plus 1 Questions shown below, which is a tool for reflection and learning about what works and doesn't work. It is based on the foundation of person-centred planning.<sup>5</sup>

<b>4 Plus 1 Questions</b>
What have you tried?
What have you learned?
What are you pleased about?
What are you concerned about?
The 'Plus 1' question is: Based on what we know, what should we do next?

**The road to change...what are we dealing with?** is a tool to use with staff to promote discussions about a proposed change. The model, produced by Transpire Organisational Development, can help people to acknowledge the impact of change. Individuals or teams can use the tool.



(Transpire Organisational Development)

The vertical axis relates to feelings – at one end **OK**, at the other end **Not OK**.

The horizontal axis highlights the many things that the change (whatever the change is) will involve **Moving to** at one end, and **Leave behind** at the other.

The bottom two corners are areas to pay particular attention to. Participants need to think about the change and complete the model on a personal level, and if they feel comfortable, you may want them to share some responses.

Despite the broad range of approaches to change management, some common factors for delivering successful change exist:

- Communication is a key component in the success of any change initiative.
- A Change Management Plan that defines the vision and scope of the change is needed.
- The experience and emotions of the people who will implement and live with the change is addressed.
- Resources are clearly identified and made available.
- Change should be led by a person or team who are passionate, visible and committed to the effort.

Before undertaking any change process there are a number of questions to ask yourself or your team.

Is the reason for change clear and understood?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there evidence to support the change?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there executive/senior leadership support for the change?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we understand the barriers to the change?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we engaged the right people in the process?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we have a plan that describes how we will get to our goal?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the plan include steps necessary to sustain the change?	<input type="checkbox"/>

The vision of person-centred care can only be realised by empowering people who use services and those who care for them to play a leading role in shaping and driving the changes they want to see.

## SECTION REFERENCES

Making lasting change towards person-centred care approaches requires person-centred thinking to become a part of everyday thinking and work. It requires champions of person-centred thinking to engage with people using and providing services to review their experiences and determine their priorities for change.

Appendix 2 contains links to other useful resources.

- <sup>1</sup> Bridges, W. (1991). *Managing transitions: Making the most of change*, 3rd ed. Da Capo Press, Philadelphia.
- <sup>2</sup> Bridges, W. *Getting them through the wilderness*. <http://www.wbridges.com/articles.html> Accessed 15/5/2013.
- <sup>3</sup> Kaminski, J. (Winter, 2011). Theory applied to informatics – Lewin's Change Theory. CJNI: *Canadian Journal of Nursing Informatics*, 6 (1), Editorial. <http://cjni.net/journal?p=1210> Accessed 15/5/2013.
- <sup>4</sup> Kotter, J. (1995). *Leading change: The 8-step process for leading change*. <http://www.kotterinternational.com/our-principles/changesteps> Accessed 15/5/2013.
- <sup>5</sup> Stirk, S. & Sanderson, H. (2012). *Creating person-centred organisations: strategies and tools for managing change in health, social care and the voluntary sector*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.