

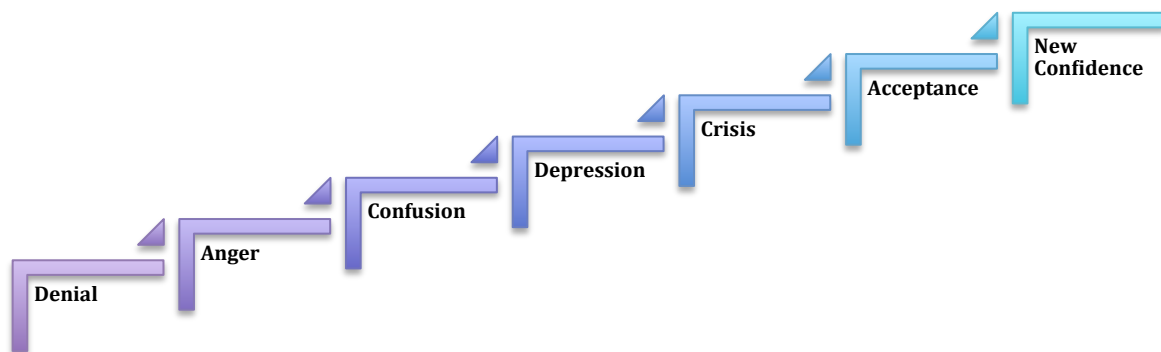
CHANGE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Most companies and organizations stop at the point of strategic planning and fail to articulate a change management plan. There may be 50 tactics to implement strategy, but none of them are collated or viewed through the lens of change management strategy. Some will say – our strategic plan IS how we're going to change.

However, a change management plan focuses not on what you are going to do, but how you are going to do it through people. It's not the action plan of what, who, and by when. ***It's the people element of beginning to implement tactics, communicate consistent messages about the plan, and then assessing where people are in experiencing, acting out, accepting, and adopting change as viewed by their behaviors.***

Let's take a look at Torben Rick's Change Management Arc in his "Increasing the Likelihood of Successful Change Management" article.

Torben Rick: <http://www.torbenrick.eu/blog/change-management/iincreasing-the-likelihood-of-successful-change->



For those of you who may also be familiar with Elizabeth Kubler Ross' "On Death & Dying" work, there is a striking resemblance to the stages that the terminally ill or bereaved go through, with managing change. Her seminal work noted that it includes "denial, anger, bargaining, depression, & acceptance." Now look at Torben Rick's graph of the stages of change management.

This is critical information for leaders, because we need to understand that to move towards something new, particularly if we are changing culture, eliminating products or programs, conducting lay-offs or eliminating departments, we need to recognize that we are overseeing a form of death. Even in the greatest excitement about a new venture, there will be those within our customer base, who are unprepared for change, not open to change, or even if they become supporters, may be late adopters.

The speed with which employees and customers move through this cycle determines how leadership needs to behave and the frequency and intensity of ongoing communications. ***The slowest person in key employee or leadership roles to embrace change will determine the pace with which you can successfully implement.***

Leaders need to know where each person is in the change process personally and where their customer base is in order to shorten the transition. This is particularly true if the company or organization is in a crisis management situation or if there is a short window to take advantage of an opportunity that can have a long-term benefit. Take a minute to think about a change that your company or your family is going through. Look at Torben Rick's graph and locate at which stage each person is on the graph. Now consider your company or family in totality and determine at what point the change management process can be located.

Use this tool in the future to have conversations with your company leadership, board, and team members, providing common language and a visual to help them understand the organizational and personal dynamics of change.

Create a change management plan that is inclusive of knowing not only the facts of what the strategic plan dictates but also the emotion and process of changing that must be managed, based on the current location of each individual and the entire organization in the experience.

Consider building messages that honor the past, create financial truths, elucidate a compelling future, and take into account how people process the emotion of the journey they are being asked to take. Ponder the following as you plot your course:

What are you asking them to leave behind?

How quickly are you asking them to make the journey?

What are you asking them to learn – how much and how fast?

What are you asking them to simply accept and move on?

What venues do they have to process, ask, vent, share, and form new bonds and understandings?

How are you being towards them?

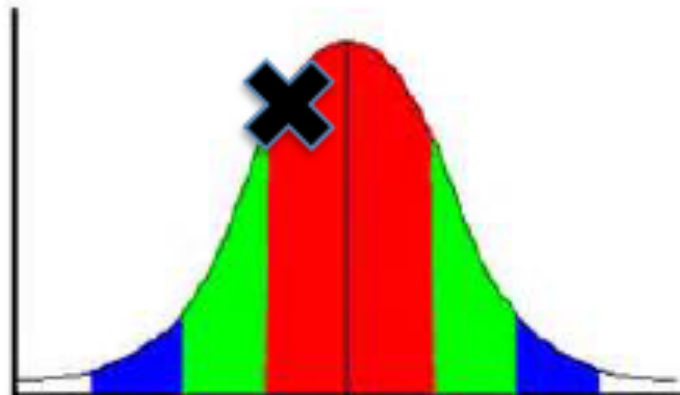
What behaviors are you showing?

How much do they think you care, feel, see, and understand?

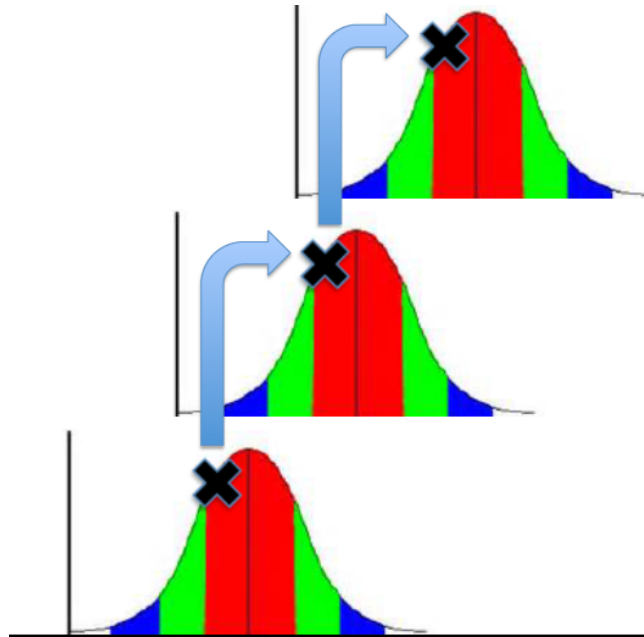
Change management takes time, resources, and recognition that it does require a managed process with constant oversight. Include one-on-ones, team meetings, coaching, blogs, mentoring, podcasts, videos, input collection methods, leadership development, social media, mechanisms to contribute adjustments that may be needed, and monitoring feedback.

THE CHANGE EFFORT EFFECT

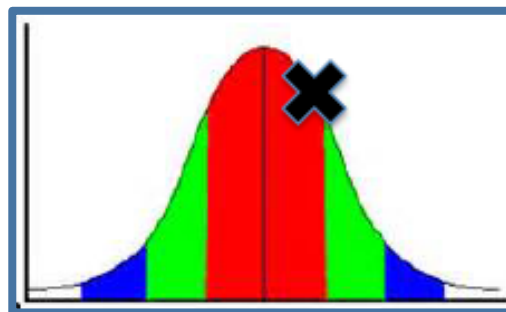
Companies and organizations that continue to leverage up from leading edge innovation, deepest resources, and greatest momentum can be found on a traditional bell curve at the top left.



Consistent strategic visioning, excellent strategic planning and execution, and outstanding change management, allow for them to align the variables of success to keep arching upwards from one bell curve to another, ensuring longevity and relevance.

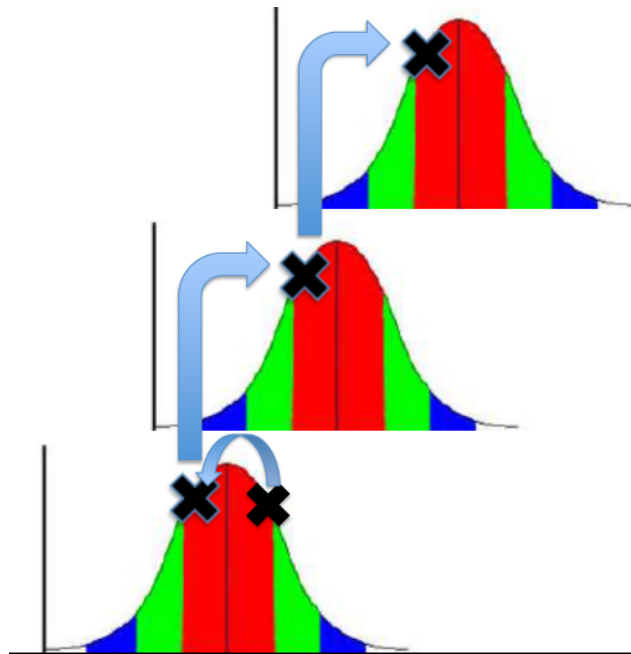


Organizations that allow themselves to move towards the top right are now in a maturation phase of ideas, infrastructure, and energy that requires much greater effort to pull back towards the left in order to be able to leverage up again. The closer they progress towards the arch downwards, the less likely they are to remain competitive or relevant.



Should they allow themselves to block new technologies, fail to interact with customers, preserve old productivity methods, or miss generational preferences all because “this is what made us successful,” irrelevance is on the horizon. Yes, some companies and organizations last for long periods of time in maintenance, but most wind up selling assets, selling the company, or closing.

The effort that it takes to move the status from the top right to the top left of the bell curve and then leverage up to a new future is substantially greater in time, money, resources, and communication.



Aside from regular research, R&D resources, human capital investment, and use of latest technological capabilities, companies must dedicate the assets to manage the change effort effect. Plot the location of the change effort effect for your company. Where is each product or service located on the Bell Curve? Where is the entire company located on the Bell Curve? Where would you like it to be for each answer? What effort will need to be exerted to change it?

The first and greatest error is to fail to have a change management plan, followed by a close second of being oblivious to where the company and its products and services are on the change management effect bell curve.