

LEAN CHANGE MANAGEMENT

PREVIEW!

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES FOR
MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Jason Little



HMEXPRESS

Lean Change Management

Innovative Practices for Managing Organizational Change

Jason Little

This book is for sale at <http://leanpub.com/leanchange>

This version was published on 2014-09-22



This is a [Leanpub](#) book. Leanpub empowers authors and publishers with the Lean Publishing process. [Lean Publishing](#) is the act of publishing an in-progress ebook using lightweight tools and many iterations to get reader feedback, pivot until you have the right book and build traction once you do.

©2013 - 2014 CC BY-SA 3.0

Tweet This Book!

Please help Jason Little by spreading the word about this book on [Twitter!](#)

The suggested tweet for this book is:

I just bought Lean Change Management by @jasonlittle
#leanchange <http://www.leanchange.org>

The suggested hashtag for this book is [#leanchange](#).

Find out what other people are saying about the book by clicking on this link to search for this hashtag on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/search?q=#leanchange>

Contents

1. Foreword	1
2. Lean Change Management Chapter 1	2

1. Foreword

I hope you enjoy the 3 preview chapters of Lean Change Management! The complete book is filled with more stories and ideas that I think will help you navigate the often murky waters of change.

In addition to the book, there are also bonus materials and extras:

- Mini-book: The Art and Science of Change
- 3 Techniques for Architecting Change (PDF and Video tutorials)
- Interviews from people using these techniques
- Skype coaching from me (limited number available)

[Get the Complete Book¹](#)

Thank you again for taking the time to check out this book! You can contact me through <http://leanchange.org>² to keep up to date on new ideas or if you simply want to connect and chat!

¹http://leanchange.org/?utm_source=leanpub&utm_medium=book&utm_campaign=LaunchOct2014

²<http://leanchange.org>

2. Lean Change Management Chapter 1

Introduction - A story how it all began.

When the shoving started, I thought to myself, “*What the hell have I gotten myself into?*” Certain moments in your life are unforgettable, and I will never forget my experience at the AYE (Amplify Your Effectiveness) conference, where I learned why change is so difficult.

Until that time, my experience as a change agent was limited to helping organizations adopt Agile software practices. The Agile movement started with the creation of the Agile Manifesto in 2001. At its core, it’s a set of four values and twelve principles that spawned a variety of processes, methods, and practices.

I had focused on learning these processes, methods, and practices and lulled myself into a false sense of security that I knew it all. At its core, none of this stuff was rocket surgery; it was simply a set of common-sense practices for building better software. How could anyone not get it?

Shows how little I knew.

I remember walking into Steve Smith’s session on change

having no idea what to expect. Steve was one of the five AYE Conference hosts. Now, this was a big step for me. I knew a couple of people at this conference but, as the typical introvert who scans the room to latch onto a friendly face, I found only unfamiliar ones. Forty of us formed a circle of chairs, and Steve asked us to answer the question, “How do you feel about change?” I was sitting two chairs away from Steve and hoped the order of answers would be random — but no such luck!

Before I could think, or even reword the answers of the people before me, I heard these words fall out of my mouth: “I like change! Change is exciting, fresh, and new, and I think shake-ups are needed every now and then!” Phew, I passed that hurdle with no major problems.

Once everyone had the opportunity to answer that question, Steve started a simulation designed to have people experience the Virginia Satir Change Model. This five-stage change model describes the effects each stage of a change has on feelings, thoughts, performance, and physiology.

The stages of the Satir Change Model:

Stage 1 –Late Status Quo stage: Everything is familiar and comfortable, and performance is stable.

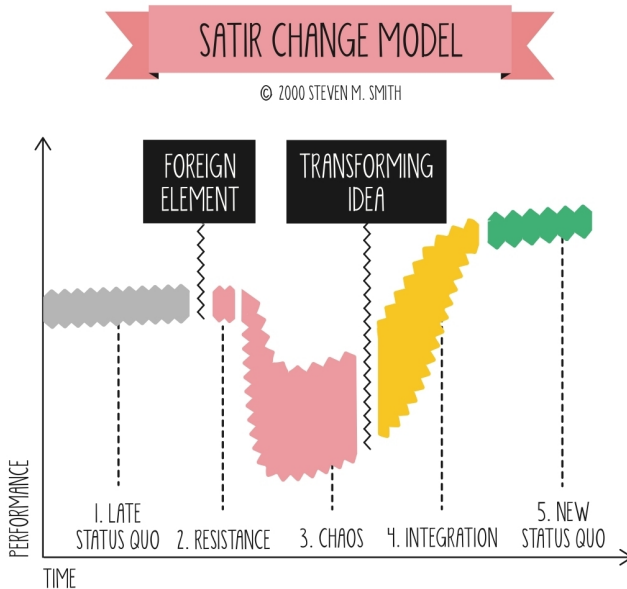
Stage 2 –Foreign Element: This stage is about resistance. In my view, Agile is a powerful Foreign Element that generates a strong response from people. Some love it, others resist it.

Stage 3 – Chaos: People feel that they’re losing their iden-

tity and experience a general sense of loss, which leads to a drop in productivity and an increase in confusion or anger.

Stage 4 – The Transforming Idea, Practice and Integration: Once people have tumbled through Chaos, they reach the point where they get it. They hit The Transforming Idea. The Transforming Idea leads into Practice and Integration. Here, people integrate the benefits of the Foreign Element into their new identity.

Stage 5 – New Status Quo: Performance starts to stabilize at a higher level than it was during the Late Status Quo.



Virginia Satir Change Model by Steven M. Smith.

Satir Change Model

Back to the conference session...

One person was elected to be the Star of the session, and the other participants were divided into groups that represented different stages of the Satir Change Model. Each person had a different task.

I was part of the Late Status Quo group, which was responsible for keeping the Star in one corner of the room.

The New Status Quo group was responsible for moving the Star to the opposite corner of the room.

The Foreign Element group was responsible for triggering the change.

Chaos was responsible for disrupting the process.

I remember Steve saying, *“I don’t know what’s going to happen here, but let’s start!”* Then, the simulation started, and my group did what any rational group would have done.

We built a wall. Literally.

Really.

We looted the hotel for tables, chairs, plants, and anything else we could find to build a physical wall that would keep the New Status Quo out and the Star in. We also borrowed the fancy chairs in the lobby to set up a cozy place within our compound to keep the Star comfortable! I will never forget the looks directed our way from the hotel staff.

The Foreign Element group ended up doing most of Chaos’ job, and they gave a performance worthy of an Academy Award! They chanted, sang and banged on garbage cans. As they were disrupting, the New Status Quo group decided that it was time to take down the wall so they could get at the Star.

They started pulling the tables and chairs down, and we put them back up.

Then they took them down again.

And we put them back up.

Soon after, a shoving match started, and Steve had to step in. If you've never met Steve, he is about 6-foot-3 and has a booming voice, so when he put his hands in the air and yelled, "Hold it!"...we stopped.

After the room of highly enlightened coaches and agents of change realized what they had done and calmed down, Steve restarted the simulation.

The New Status Quo somehow learned that the Star was a huge fan of Johanna Rothman, who was facilitating a session in the room beside us. They asked Johanna to come over, and that's all it took for the Star to vacate the Late Status Quo compound and relocate to the New Status Quo area.

To this day I still have "Aha!" moments about what happened that day. I wrote about the experience in my blog that same day, and indicated that the message was received loud and clear:



Try as you may, change cannot be controlled.

Oddly enough, my brain hears that message in Steve's booming voice!

As I wrestled with this opening chapter, I had another "Aha!" moment. The New Status Quo created the ultimate

motivator for the Star when they brought in Johanna. It didn't matter how chaotic the room was, or what obstacles were in the way; the Star was motivated to talk to Johanna, and he didn't stop until he made it to the other corner of the room.



People have a way of fighting through the pain of change when they want the outcome badly enough.

This leads me to answer the question, “Why did you write this book?”

I wrote this book for people who are passionate about bringing meaningful change into their organizations. I want to help them broaden their toolkit by filling it with ideas from Agile, Lean Startup, neuroscience, psychology, organizational development and change management. Of course, while this book will help you stock up your toolkit with tools; you'll have to decide which tool to pull and when to pull it!

Many of the stories in this book are about my experiences with triggering change through the introduction of Agile software practices, but at the end of the day, change is change. And this is not just my conclusion: many people I talked to while writing this book confirm that these ideas can be applied to any organizational change.

Organizational change is a powerful Foreign Element that brings uncertainty and provokes an emotional response from people.

The product development world has learned to manage uncertainty better with Lean Startup. I will get you up to speed about Lean Startup later on. For now, I'll tell you that its principles can be applied to change by involving those affected by the change in the design of the change. That involvement will validate that it is the change that is most likely to work, and it will likely reduce the symptom of change resistance. Yes, I refer to resistance as a symptom. The annual Version One State of Agile Development survey cites that change resistance is one cause for Agile failure. There are many studies from the change management world that reach similar conclusions. This [study from Onirik¹](#) cites 2 two reasons why change initiatives fail. The first is the unpredictable nature of those pesky humans, and the second is the lack of a structured change process. Taking ideas from the Satir Change Model and other psychology models, change agents can understand that different people process change at different rates and different intensities. Someone who values certainty, and is highly averse to risk, may appear resistant until they understand the benefits of the change — or if the change interferes with their belief system. Change agents need to know how to help them understand the benefits the Foreign Element brings. Sometimes, this means involving them in the design a new process in order to motivate them.

As for the notion that we should “check our emotions at the door” when we come to work? Not going to happen —

¹<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/30239194/leanchangemanagement/cracking-the-change-code.pdf>

and that's a good thing. People are emotional creatures, and that emotional response is a sign that change is happening. This is why change agents need to understand how the brain reacts to change and how to focus on ability and motivation to help bring successful change into organizations.

Finally, taking ideas from traditional organizational development and change management can help change agents manage the uncertainty, resistance and emotional response to change.

I believe combining ideas from different communities can help change agents better understand change dynamics, which will move the slider further away from plan-driven approaches, and towards feedback-driven approaches.

Remember, your change doesn't begin on the start-date written on your Gantt chart. It begins when people are whispering at the water-cooler, "Did you hear they're doing a re-org? Am I fired?" If you rely solely on plans, you're planning to fail.

This book will help you navigate the murky and messy waters of change. It will stock up your toolkit with tools, but you'll have to decide which tool to pull, and when to pull it!

Finally, this book is not a recipe that you'll follow to ensure successful change. This book will help you become a chef, if you're willing to put in the time and effort. Sometimes, your Crème Brûlée will come out nicely toasted, sometimes you'll burn it beyond recognition —either way, you will be on the path to knowing how to facilitate meaningful change

that improves people's lives.