

Change and Transition

William Bridges in his excellent and best selling book “Managing Transitions” (Published by Perseus Books, ISBN 0-201-55073-3,) makes a distinction between change and transition. Change is planned - e.g. you can plan when a new IT system is going to be implemented.

That does not mean everyone is going to use it.

The initial response, anger, frustration, a variety of fears - that is the transition and you can be sure there **will** be a reaction.



20 /50 /30

Any change in any system:

- 20% of the people say, yes
- 50% say, I wonder if this...
- 30% say, actively resist

80% in any organization need to be influenced in some way so it is possible for them to receive the benefits the new system would bring.

What strategy?

- 1) Don't lose your 20%; keep them excited
- 2) Start with 50% and move them to the 20% group
- 3) 30% -> who's key, focus on them

Understanding Change and Transition

Mechanics of Change

- Change happens when something stops or starts
- Change can be structural, economic, technological or demographic
- Change can be planned and managed in a more or less rational manner
- The rate of change is under the control of management

Dynamics of Transition

- Transition is the personal process of adjustment and accommodation that is necessary for people to shift their focus of attention and energy from established procedures and/or situations to different ones
- This cannot be managed by the same rationales or formulae that work with change



Change & Transition

External Change – the difference in policies, structures or practices that we are trying to bring about. Primarily physical and tangible.

Internal Change (Transition) - the reorientation process that we have to go through in response to the external change. Primarily psychological and intangible.



Change & Transition

Change:

- begins with a new start, goal or vision for the future
- can be planned and managed in a more or less rational manner
- rate of change is under management control
- example: **implementing** new IT system

Transition:

- personal process of adjustment and accommodation from what “was” to “what will be”
- begins with an ending
- cannot be managed with a rational formula
- people are often not aware of their own internal reactions and how these affect change
- example: **reaction to** new IT system

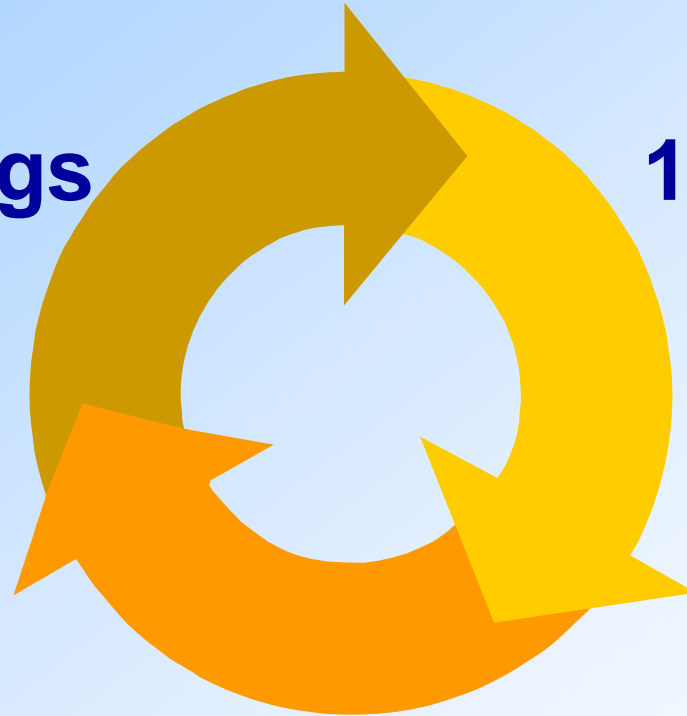
Managing transitions effectively is the key to ensuring that change works.



3 Stages of Transition

3. New Beginnings

1. Letting Go

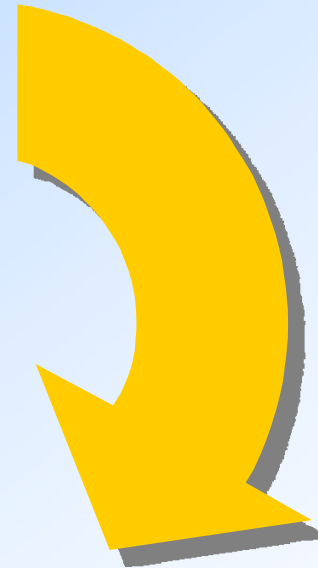


2. Neutral Zone



Stage One: Letting Go

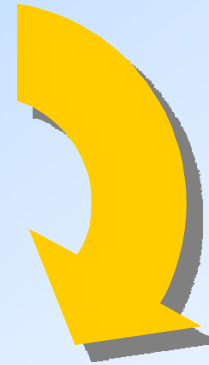
Denial
Resistance
Compliance
(including
malicious compliance)



Stage One: Letting Go

Key Actions:

Communication
Acknowledging Success
Closure



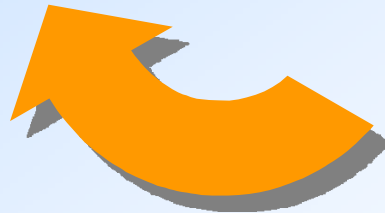
Stage Two: Neutral Zone

There are more questions than answers

People assume their managers are holding out on them

Managers experience frustration

Can be a very creative time



Stage Two: Neutral Zone

Key actions:

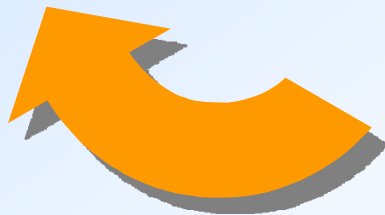
Communication

Feedback

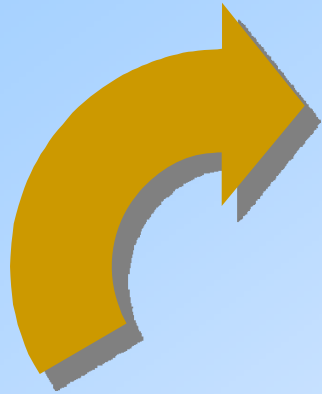
Intermediate Milestones/Goals

Support

Actively engage as many people as possible



Stage Three: New Beginning



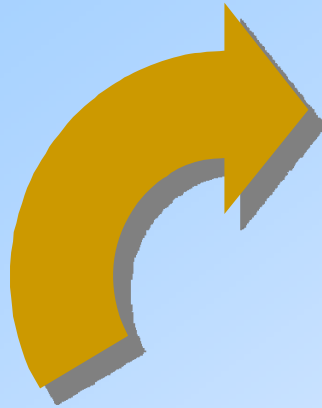
People begin to realize that the worst is over and they get on with their lives.

This is often a fleeting period in an organization's life.



Stage Three: New Beginning

Key actions:



Communication

Feedback

Celebration

Consolidation of learning

Planning

