

The 15-Minute Guide for Leaders
*Be the **Master of Change***

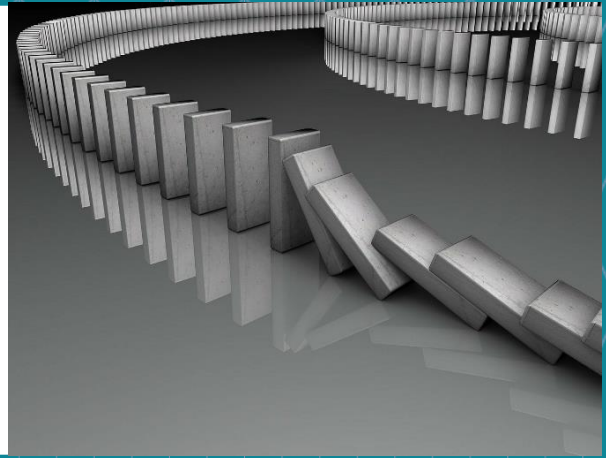


MASTERING THE

***Four Stages
of
Change***

Change IS Inevitable.

The
ESSENTIAL
CHANGE ENABLED ORGANIZATION
CEO



As a leader and/or sponsor of a critical change initiative, understanding this model will help you predict how your people will react to change, so that you can help them with their own personal transitions and ensure that they have the help and support they need.

The Change Curve is a powerful model to understand the stages of personal transition in the context of organizational change.

The ability to manage the different stages of change – and the manifestation of the behaviors and reactions associated with change is critical.

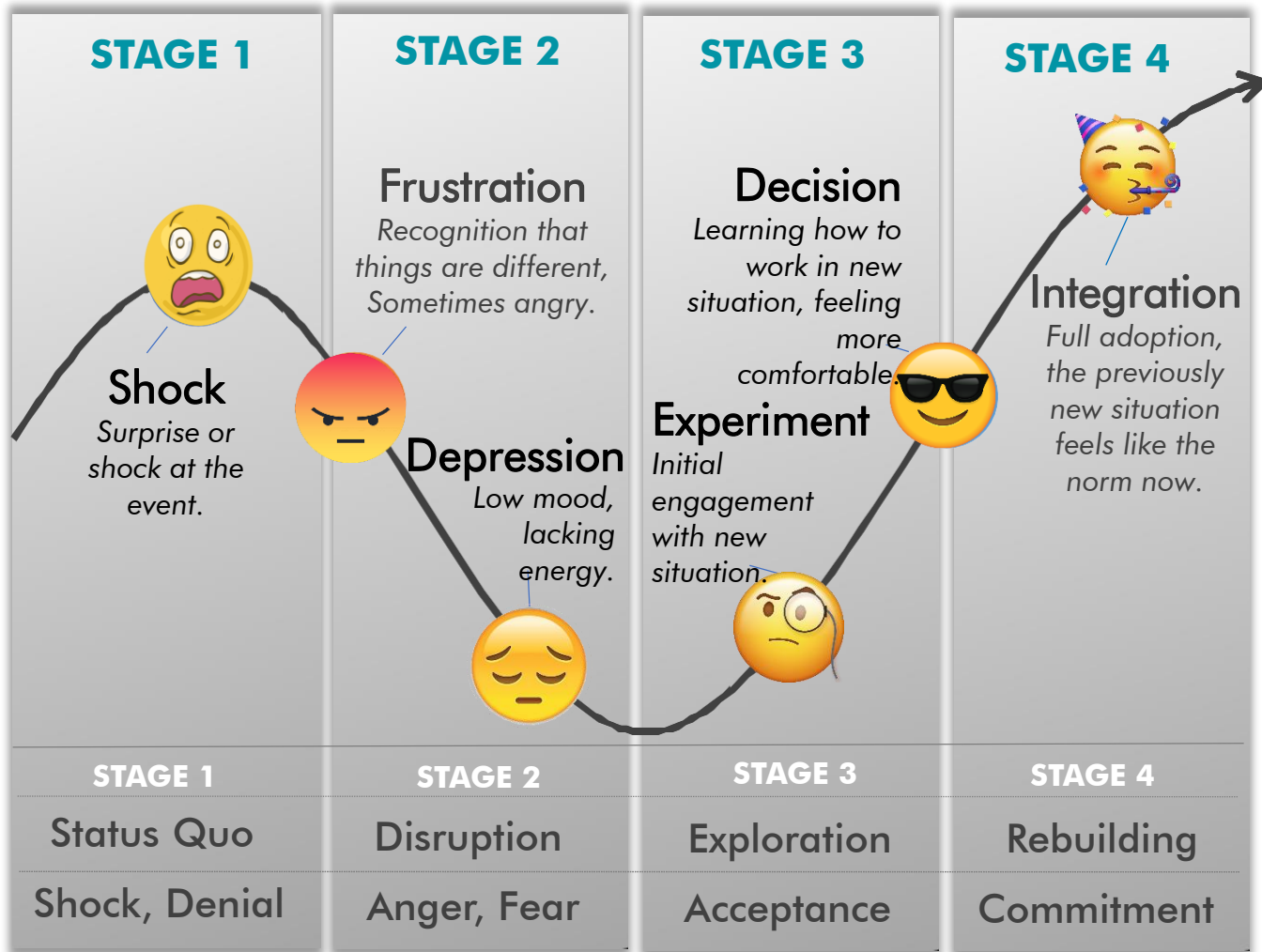
In all organizations, there is an acute need for successful shepherding of people through times of change in order to minimize losses in productivity, engagement, morale and finally adoption.

THE 4 RESPONSES

TO CHANGE...

In every organization, there will be a wide variety of reactions to changes in your workforce. How people adapt and engage to on-going changes that directly affect them can be very dependent on leaders expertly guiding employees through the Change Curve.

The following shows what to expect from your next transition & explains the types of responses you can expect from your People.



Reactions Over Time

STAGE 1

Shock & Denial



***Your strategy is to
provide clarity and understanding.***

01 Key Indicators

What types of behavior to be on the lookout for...

- Indifference
- Disbelief
- Avoidance
- Withdrawal

02 You'll Hear

What you'll hear in conversations...

- Silence
- "It will never happen."
- "things never get finished around here."
- "It won't help our business."
- We don't need to do THAT, all we need to do is..."

03 STRATEGIES

Strategies...

- Provide frequent consistent messaging & information.
- Confront without threatening.
- Demonstrate the visible signs of change.
- Clarify what is changing and what is not.
- Place change in the broader context to give people the big picture.
- Address rumors and misinformation frequently.

STAGE 2

Frustration/Depression



***Your strategy is to
maximize communication
and spark motivation***

01

Key Indicators

What types of behavior to be on the lookout for...

- Indifference
- Disbelief
- Avoidance
- Withdrawal

02

You'll Hear

What you'll hear in conversations...

- "It won't work."
- "We've never done things that way before."
- "We tried that in the past and it just didn't fly."
- "The data is flawed."
- "It used to be..."

03

STRATEGIES

Strategies...

- Probe for underlying feelings/concerns.
- Acknowledge and legitimize feelings.
- Clarify case for change, vision, plan.
- Listen reflectively and actively.
- Establish firm expectations.
- Provide exposure and opportunity to influence through participation.

STAGE 3

Exploration



***Your strategy is to
develop capabilities
and share knowledge.***

01

Key Indicators

**What types of behavior to be
on the lookout for...**

- Cooperation
- Future Orientation
- Initiative
- Self-Efficacy
- Confidence

02

You'll Hear

What you'll hear in conversations...

- "How can I help?"
- "Let's do this!"
- "We can even do 1 better."

03

STRATEGIES

Strategies...

- Provide guidance, support and recognition.
- Provide frequent feedback on progress.
- Provide opportunities for leadership for advocates.
- Enroll advocates to assist others.
- Establish "performance levers" to sustain new behaviors.
- Be careful not to overload or burn people out.

STAGE 4

Adoption



***Your strategy is to
normalize and
reinforce new ways***

01 Key Indicators

What types of behavior to be on the lookout for...

- Energy
- Risk-taking
- Tentativeness
- Impatience
- Activity without focus

02 You'll Hear

What you'll hear in conversations...

- Enthusiasm
- Optimism
- "I've got an idea..."
- "Let's try..."
- "What if..."

03 STRATEGIES

Strategies...

- Acknowledge efforts and the struggle.
- Celebrate successes and endings.
- Provide opportunities for visible advocacy.
- Provide varied opportunities for participation and contribution.

A quick case study...

As a leader of change with my clients, I learned very early how to leverage the multiple responses from employees for the benefit of the project.

On a client project, they were focusing on optimizing margin management across the globe for their products. The Finance department had their home-grown systems that they loved and felt a great deal of mistrust for the technology that was being developed and prepared for go-live.

I knew adoption would be difficult.

The Critics and The Victims became very vocal early in the project. They were out in numbers. My client partner and I sat down and created a resistance mitigation plan using some of these strategies.

One of the most successful actions we took was to meet 1:1 with the most vocal resisters to discuss their concerns and doubts. We treated that group as a special stakeholder group. Over several weeks, we showed them the logic behind the new system, got them early seats in user testing and review of report outputs so they could trust the data.

I'll admit, it was a bit time intensive to do this but so well worth the time and care. This group of people moved from being the biggest critics of the project to key leaders in our Champion Network, giving presentations to future end users and advocating for the new system. We had a successful implementation and high adoption.



Gretchen
Asher

<http://www.TheEssentialCEO.com>
Gretchen@TheEssentialCEO.com
Tel: 206-257-3822



We help organizations develop **IN-HOUSE** consultant-level Change Management capabilities.

This *Mastering the Four Stages of Change* Template is a topic in the Ongoing **15-Minute Guide for Leaders** Series by The Essential CEO.

We have nearly 3 decades of experience leading change in large corporations. This Series contains easy to consume templates and is designed for immediate use by leaders to create sustainable change in their organization and company.