

THE ART OF LEADING CHANGE

APPLICATION GUIDE

Change is inevitable. Irrelevance isn't.

The Art of Leading Change

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Introduction

Welcome to the Art of Leading Change.

Change is a big subject. It's also a charged subject. So many leaders have struggled to implement it, and almost every leader who engineers change faces stiff opposition.

The stakes are high. The fastest path to irrelevance is easy: don't change.

But I suspect you're journeying through this course because you recognize that change is necessary and you want to lead change effectively. Over these sessions we are going to walk through tactical ways to lead change with vision, clarity, and courage. I'm glad you're here. Let's get started.

Before watching session 1, take a few minutes to do a self-analysis:

1. What do I hope to gain from taking this course?
2. Where are you or your organization currently stuck and in need of change? What is slowing you down or no longer working?
3. Are there any outside forces demanding that you or your organization change or become irrelevant (e.g. a global pandemic)?



Session 1

Session 1: Frozen, Hesitant, and Agile Leadership

So you're a leader in a world that is constantly changing, and you've enrolled in this course, *The Art of Leading Change*, to be equipped to lead well so that you and your organization don't just survive in the future but thrive.

As leaders, we must be in tune with the climates around us. If we want to stay relevant and have impactful lives and organizations, we need to regularly be evaluating and rethinking everything. Before we can develop strategies for how to lead through change, we need to pause and evaluate where we really are as leaders and organizations: What are our tendencies in response to rapid changes in the world?

This session will help you identify three types of mindsets leaders adopt when it comes to change.

1. Frozen Leaders

Some leaders aren't ready for disruption, and when their methods get challenged, they freeze. They just don't know what to do.

Frozen leaders are usually leaders who mistake the method for the mission: The way we do church is church. The way we do business is our business. When a global pandemic struck, frozen restaurant leaders couldn't see that the mission is food; the method was a restaurant. Frozen church leaders couldn't see that the mission is sharing the Gospel; the method was in-person gatherings.

Frozen leaders tend to focus on what they can't control, not on what they can control. And the hardest news? It's almost a guarantee that frozen leaders won't thrive in the future. They'll be the first to stall out. The first to go under. They can't adapt, and as a result, they're highly unlikely to survive.

Failing organizations are often led by frozen leaders who:

- Are inflexible
- Cling to their methods, and ignore the mission.
- React, won't lead
- Can't pivot
- Won't pivot
- Expect everything to go back to the way it was
- See the future and uncertainty as the enemy

2. Hesitant Leaders

Hesitant leaders change, but only as little as they have to. They realize the world is changing, and they're ready to adapt, but their adaptation has limits. They likely had a model or approach that worked just fine before the disruption. While they realize that it's broken, they're anxious to get into a predictable system as soon as possible.

The challenge in a crisis is that predictability is often suboptimal. When things change daily in an uncertain world, but your approach doesn't, static and predictable methods don't advance your mission; they undermine it.

Years ago, your methods may have had a 3 to 5-year shelf life. In a rapidly changing world, your methods can expire in days or months.

A hesitant leader says they are open to change. In reality, however, they are anxious to tweak a few things, but when it comes to real change, they hesitate, so they settle for suboptimal responses, which can lead to even more serious problems months or years down the road.

Some hesitant leaders lead organizations that make it into the future, but those that do often fail to thrive.

Organizations that survive but won't thrive are led by hesitant leaders who:

- Adapt but not fully
- Spend a lot of their energy on recreating what they used to do
- Make their old defaults their new defaults
- Focus on maintenance, not mission
- See further change as an obstacle, not an opportunity
- Make the methods subordinate to the mission
- Often find a new pattern and then freeze it. Adaptable enough to survive, but not nearly adaptable enough to thrive

3. Agile Leaders

Agile leaders are flexible leaders, pivoting and changing as often as changing conditions warrant. They recognize that the same conditions that killed some organizations will lead others to thrive because that instability produces opportunities to innovate and grow.

In an era of instability and rapid change, agility is ability. Flexibility is a superpower.

The agile leader doesn't have all the answers. They are simply committed to continually asking questions. Unlike the frozen leader, agile leaders focus on what they can control, not on what they can't.

Which is why the future belongs to them.

Agile leaders often lead thriving and growing organizations.

Thriving organizations are often led by agile leaders who:

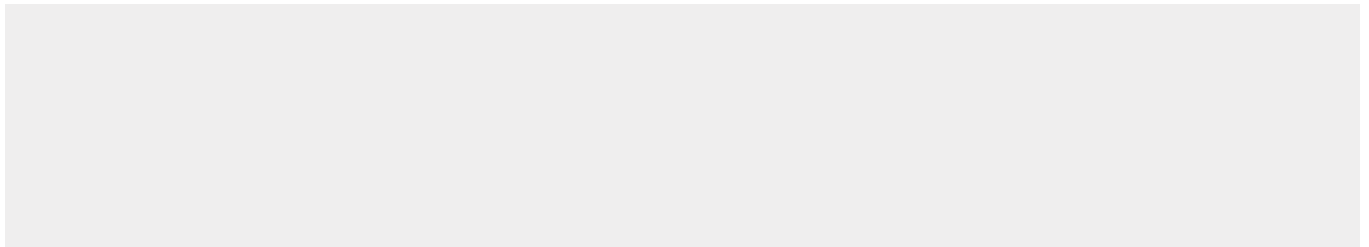
- Spend a lot of their energy focused on what they can do, not on what they can't
- Are ready to try new things
- Realize new methods give new life to the mission
- Simplify their model and methods so all the energy can go into the mission
- Create 30, 60, and 90-day strategies depending on the conditions

Agile leaders and thriving organizations are always ready to change the method so they can advance their mission. Agile leaders win again and again because the real winners are not just those who pivot once but those who keep evaluating, ideating, and implementing.

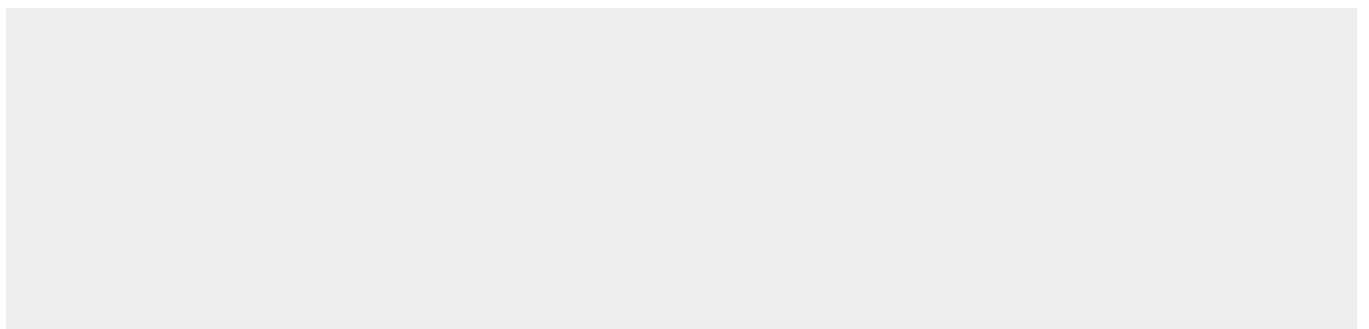
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Your turn. Take some time and determine exactly where you are as a leader.

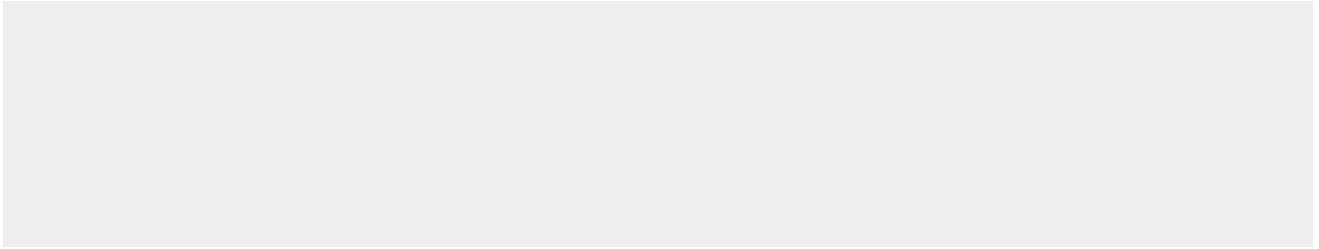
1. The world has changed rapidly over the last few years. How have those changes impacted both your leadership personally and your organization?



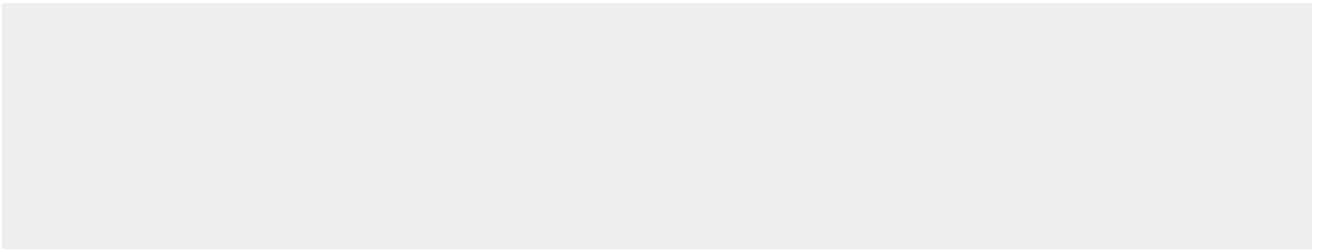
2. When was the last time you made intentional, significant changes personally and professionally? Why did you make those changes, and what were the results?



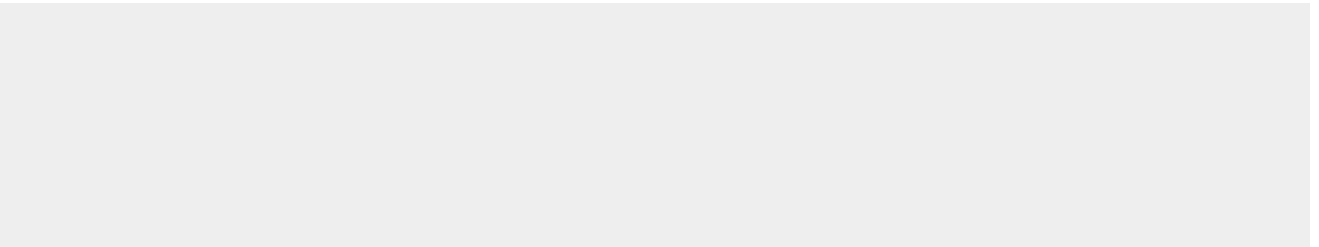
3. In this season of leadership, would you describe yourself as a frozen leader, a hesitant leader, or an agile leader? Why?



4. Where do you see opportunities to change your leadership and organization methods in order to further the mission?



5. What do you most want to accomplish from taking this course? Write down 1 - 3 objectives.



You Should Check This Out

The Thought Bubbles of Frozen, Hesitant, and Agile Leaders

What type of leader are you?

FROZEN LEADERS

- I can't believe this is happening.
- The world and marketplace are out of my control.
- Let's stick to the old methods. They worked before. They'll work again.
- Everyone else in my field is affected by the changing culture in the same way. There's really nothing I can do.
- Organizations and leaders with more resources can handle this. We can't.
- Nobody prepared me for this.
- We are so far behind we can't possibly catch up.

HESITANT LEADERS

- When will things go back to normal?
- We've already made a bunch of changes, so let's lock-in for a while.
- Do we have to pivot again? Really?
- Can't we just do this for a little longer?
- Look, I know that idea might be a good one, but let's just keep things the way they are right now. We need some stability.
- The results we're getting now are good enough. We're surviving. Other's aren't.

AGILE LEADERS

- Our mission is too important to let all the change around us kill it.
- That method isn't working, let's try a new one.
- Okay, we've done that for a few weeks. What if we tried it this way to see if it's even more effective?
- Things have changed again. What does this make possible?
- Anyone have another perspective that can help us move forward?
- What are other people doing that's making a difference? How can we learn from them?
- How can we move into the future stronger and better? Let's do that then.



Session 2

Session 2: The Speed of Change

In session one we looked at different responses to the need for change. In this session we will look at the speed of change. I've seen some leaders freeze and see their organizations struggle and die. But I've also seen other leaders bulldoze their way through change and either blow their organization apart, get fired, or both.

There are four things to keep in mind:

1. THE FASTER THINGS CHANGE THE FASTER YOU NEED TO CHANGE

Sometimes you have to change quickly because external factors demand it. The faster things change, the faster you need to change. Remember the distinction between changing the methods and changing the mission. If you're a church, you never need to change the mission. If you're a business, you probably don't need to change the mission. But every leader has to rethink the methods.

Now here's the challenge: the faster culture changes, the more quickly your methods will break. And you don't need me to tell you the culture is changing faster than ever. Disruption is as unpredictable as it is inevitable. The pandemic of 2020 accelerated change at a massive level, and the world that emerged out of it is less stable and changing faster than ever.

2. THE LEADER NEEDS TO CREATE URGENCY

For most organizations, there is little sense of urgency to change. Often there is no external crisis driving change. Successful organizations can also resist change for fear of ruining the very thing that brought success. The greatest enemy of your future success is your current success. It's so easy to think you've got something figured out, when in fact you've missed something that could help you reach twice as many people or ten times as many.

The best leaders disrupt themselves instead of waiting for external circumstances to force change. Your job is to raise the level of discontent with the status quo, and create urgency by casting a vision of the future that generates growing dissatisfaction with the present. To help people dream, imagine a better future, but do it in a way that moves them to action. It helps them dream. And it helps position you to grow.

3. CHANGE PROCEEDS AT THE SPEED OF TRUST

A leader can be excited about change but then experience frustration when change slows down because the team starts to resist.

Stephen M.R. Covey persuasively argues that ultimately, change happens at the speed of trust. When trust is low in an organization, change is slow and expensive. Conversely, when trust is high, costs go down, and speed goes up. High-trust organizations and teams are in the best position to implement change.

So, how do you create a high-trust team and culture?

4. DON'T JUST START WITH A PLAN, START WITH A TEAM

The worst way to implement change is to be the solo leader who goes on a retreat by yourself, comes up with a plan, and like Moses coming down the mountain, tells everyone what to do. That's almost a perfect recipe for both disaster and rebellion.

The best thing you can do is to create a small, sharp, highly trusting team to help you decide on what change you need to make in your organization. When this team helps you design the change, they will become some of your biggest evangelists for the change. We'll devote an entire session in this course to How to Communicate Change, but this team will be at the heart of it. If you have them, you'll eventually have the rest of your team, clients, customers, or congregation.

So, how do you design a team? Start with a small group of 3-7 people that could be your staff, your board, or a coalition you put together. Here are a few characteristics of the type of people you want:

- Credibility. Does the group have enough people with good reputations so that its proposals will be taken seriously by people?
- Leadership. Does this group include enough proven leaders to be able to drive the change process?
- Visionaries and operators
- Processors...may want to do implementation

The speed of change also depends on the degree of change. It's important to start thinking of changes categorically:

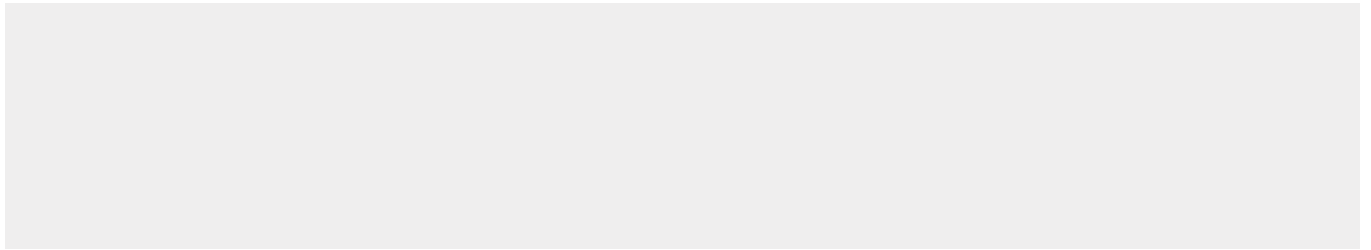
- Instant changes: (we will cover this in the next session)
- Short-term changes: Changes that can be implemented in under a year
- Medium-term changes: Change that will take 1-2 years to implement
- Long-term change: Change that might take three or more years to fully implement

There is a difference between change and transformation. Change is something you bring in from above that isn't fully owned or integrated by your clients, customers, or congregation. It's not part of the fabric yet.

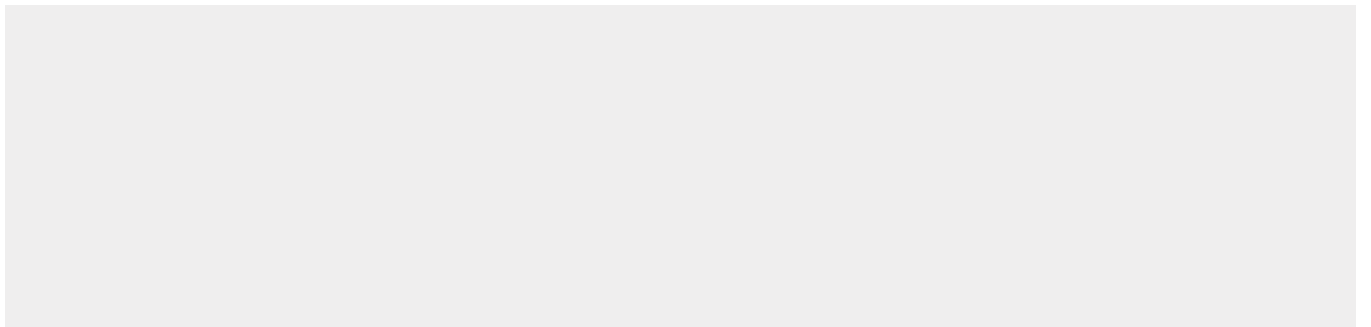
Transformation happens when the changes you make become embedded in the organizational culture. This happens when most people no longer want to go back; they want to move forward. Change can be implemented anywhere between 30 days and three years, but I believe transformation takes between 3-5 years.

Application Guide

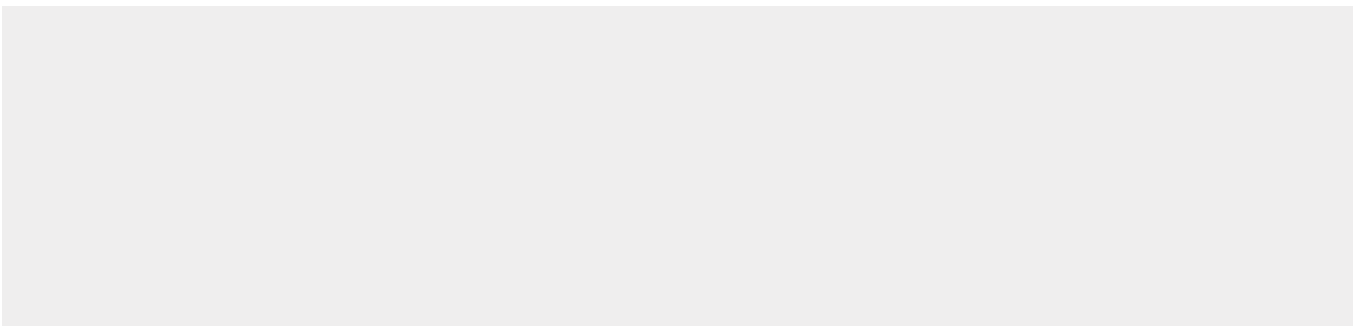
1. What are some examples of external changes that have driven the need for change in your context?



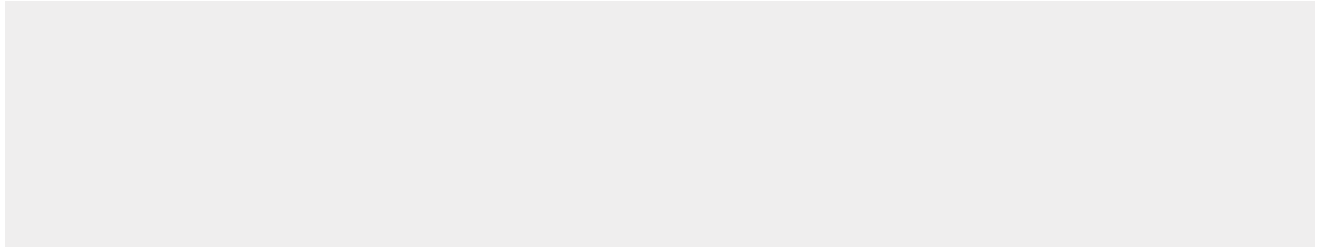
2. Have you ever experienced current success inhibiting future success? How so and what was the missed opportunity?



3. What is one change that you believe would serve to advance your organization's mission, health, and growth? How can you begin to cast vision for this change to drive discontent with the status quo?



4. Who comes to mind when you think of a dream team of 3 - 7 people who can help design and evangelize the change you listed in question #3? What characteristics of those individuals stand out?



You Should Check This Out

Carey's Facts About Change Cheat Sheet:

<https://careynieuwhof.com/cheat-sheet-13-facts-about-change-many-leaders-dont-realize/>



Session 3

Session 3: The 30-Day Pivot

Decades before the current era, organizations would develop a strategic plan that they ran for 3-7 years before significantly rethinking it. But in seasons of rapid cultural change, even annual planning can become irrelevant. In an uncertain leadership environment, pivoting is a muscle you'll have to flex again and again.

At the heart of becoming an agile organization is the ability to pivot every 30, 60, or 90 days as necessary. This simple framework to help your team and organization pivot in as little as 30 days and has three simple steps:

EVALUATE

The first step to the 30-day pivot is to gather your team and conduct a quick analysis by asking:

- What things are we currently doing that are working?
- What things are we currently doing that are not working?

Then go a step further by asking why:

- Why are people no longer coming to church services every week?
- Why are customers doing more online shopping than in-person shopping?
- At a restaurant, why is drive-thru taking off and dine-in slowing down?

To successfully evaluate, you need to identify a few metrics—your key performance indicators, or KPIs. These should be very clear. Data tells a story, and as you evaluate these metrics, ask, “What are the numbers saying?”

A few metrics you can consider as you evaluate:

- Growth
- Decline
- Conversion rates
- Customer satisfaction
- Number of new guests/customers
- Level of social media engagement
- Revenue

When you create a clear dashboard, you'll begin to notice where you have traction, where you don't have traction and an understanding of why.

IDEATE

Once you evaluate, then you and the team can ideate. During this phase it is important to let the team do the work. You should have a few ideas, but don't lead with them.

To maximize the effectiveness of your ideation process, check out my helpful ideation question list at the end of this section. These questions are designed to spur strategic brainstorming to unleash new momentum in strategic change.

Remember: Ideating isn't about your ideas...it's about the team's ideas. People who weigh in, buy in.

IMPLEMENT

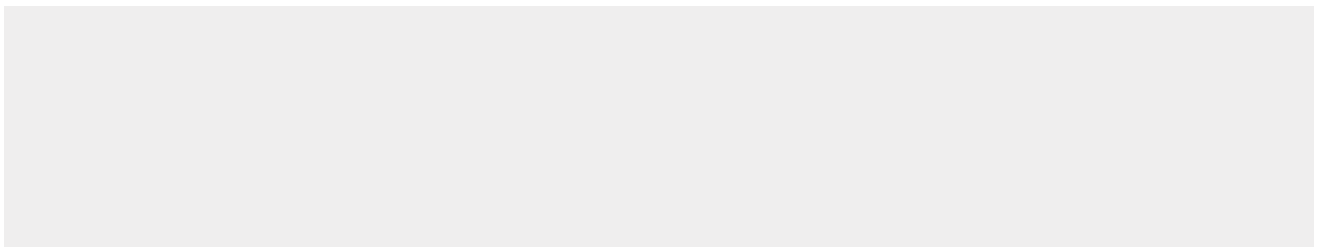
You've evaluated. Your team has ideated and come up with some potential opportunities and solutions. Now the most important step: implementation. Remember: a well-implemented B+ plan outperforms a non-implemented A+ plan every single time.

Try something. Experiment. Then, have regular meetings and regular check-ins. Pick a couple of key metrics to watch to determine if the pivot you made is making an impact. And if it's not working, simply say, "Okay, we did this for 30 days. It's not working. Let's do it again." You go right back to evaluate, ideate and implement.

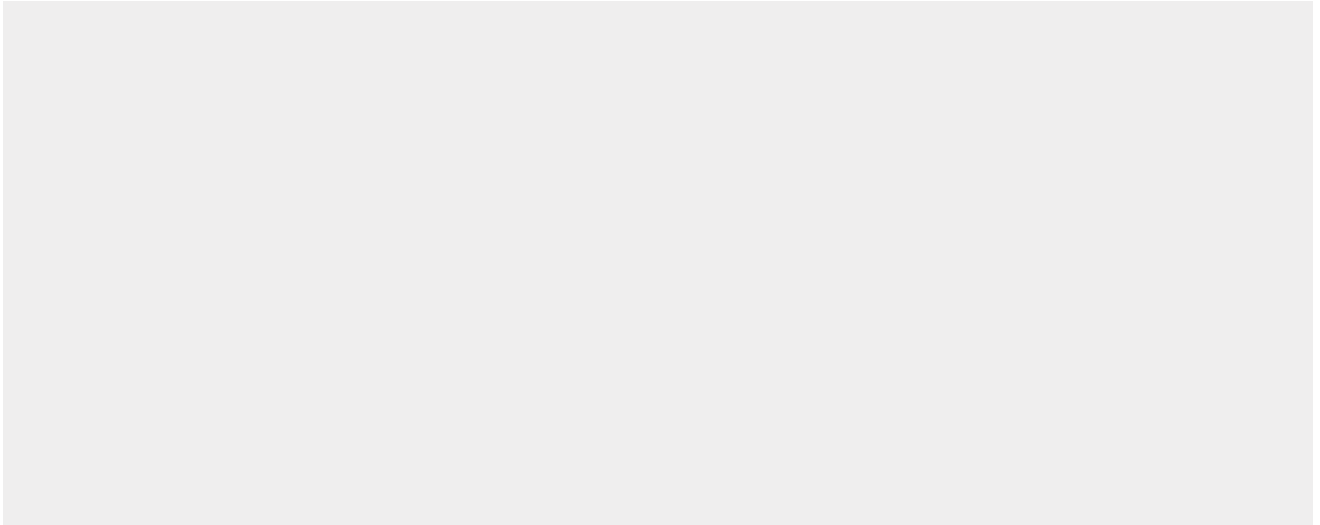
Ok. Now you've got a simple framework to be able to pivot quickly. Go ahead and work through the Application Guide, and in the next session, I'll share with you the framework I use to navigate change at a more traditional offsite.

Application Guide

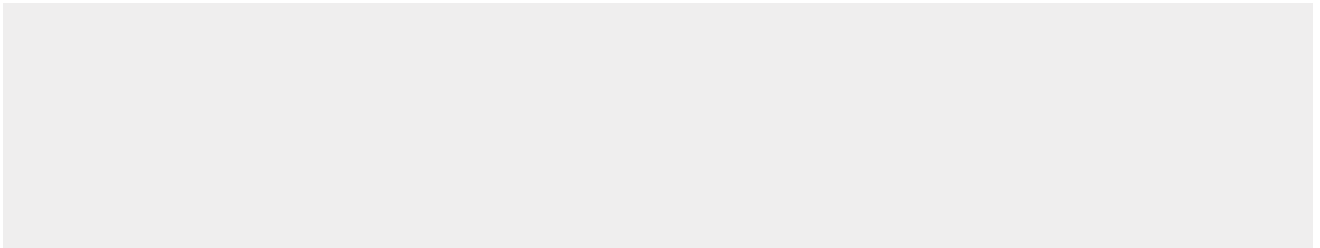
1. Reflect on your own leadership experience. Have you ever led a change in 30 days? What did that process look like and how was the pivot received? If you were to redo that process, what would you change?



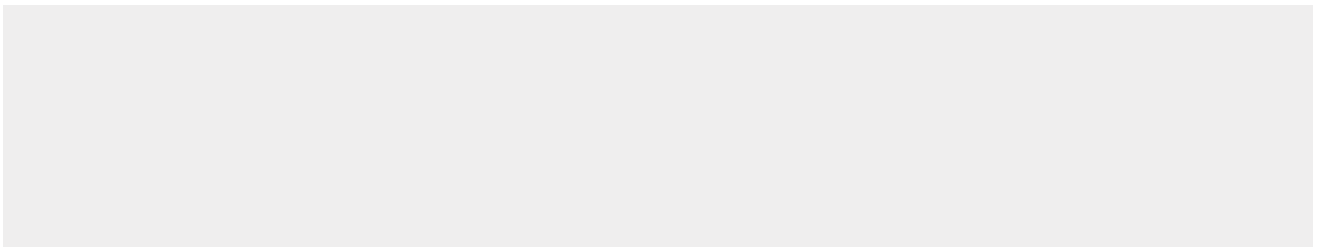
2. Why do you think that starting with evaluation is important? What difference can it make to include this step versus jumping straight to ideation?



3. Consider your current situation. What is a current challenge or opportunity that you want to see growth or progress in? What are some data metrics your team can use to evaluate the reality of your situation?



4. Is it challenging for you to implement a B+ idea? Why/why not? Why do you think implementing a B+ idea is better than no changes made?



You Should Check This Out

Helpful questions to lead a successful pivot ideation session:

1. What's changing? Isolate what's shifting that necessitates change.
2. Why is it changing? This is so critical. Unless you understand why it's changing, the solution you come up with may not change anything.
3. Why did the current methods break? Drill down on why your current strategy failed or is proving less effective.
4. What obstacles are we facing? What will get in the way of change?
5. Based on what we know today, what trends are we seeing for tomorrow? You can't forecast perfectly, doesn't mean you can't forecast. Based on what you know, what do you think is coming next?

Switch to what's ahead. Ask yourself five key questions:

1. What does this make possible? This will get you thinking about the solution, not the problem.
2. In light of the current obstacles, what are the opportunities? Sure, this is similar to the previous question, but often reframing a question gets the group thinking about a better answer.
3. Which methods are currently getting in the way of the mission? This can trigger discussion about what to stop doing. It's also turning the problem over in yet another direction.
4. What new methods can better support the mission? Make this open-ended. Choose the rule of no dumb ideas.
5. What will help us see better results in the next 30/60/90 days? This drives toward specificity. It will help you start to narrow the focus.



Session 4

Session 4: A Strategic Framework for Offsite Retreats

The 30-Day Pivot Framework gives you a framework for leading change quickly in the day-to-day. However, you'll likely want to still hold one or two retreats a year where you do more long-term strategic planning. This framework is designed for a smaller group, ideally 5 – 10 people and less than 25.

Before setting the agenda, let me first suggest that when it comes to long-term planning and solving long-term challenges, investing in an inspiring setting can yield significant dividends.

When it comes to setting the agenda, I recommend the following:

AN OPENING DINNER

Your team will benefit from a time to settle in over a relaxed, no-business-allowed dinner together. Give your team the gift of rest by not staying out too late, and allow your team to get some sleep for the first full day.

SESSION 1: MISSION, VALUES, REVIEW | 1-2 HOURS

Let people sleep enough to be able to contribute to meaningful dialogue, have a healthy breakfast, and then dig in for the first session. I recommend focusing this first session on a mission, vision, and values review.

Here are five questions you can use to catalyze the discussion:

1. What does the mission mean to you at this point in the life of our organization?
2. What's most energizing to you?
3. Where are we not living up to our values or mission?
4. What would you love to see us do more of?
5. What would you like to see us do less of?

From here, take a look at the year in review. Share key stats and review your KPIs for the last year. Look for trends, both positive and negative, and then plot your current trajectory based on known data. Remember, your job as a leader is to help people see the future, and this can create some discontent as we discussed in session two. That discontent will drive some of the change you'll engineer later.

SESSION TWO: DREAM SESSION | 1 – 2 HOURS

You've looked at what is, and now you are prepared to move into what could be. The dream session aims to spend unrushed time thinking about what could be possible.

The main question to ask and to keep coming back to is this: If money and logistics were no barrier, what would you dream of seeing us do to help people_____ (that's where you fill in your mission).

Let people talk, dream, and imagine. Inspire your team by giving permission to expand their horizons and dream.

SESSION THREE: CONDUCT A SWOT ANALYSIS | 1 – 2 HOURS

With eyes and minds wide open then, it's time to dive into a SWOT analysis. As a leader, remember to remain non-defensive and allow the team to speak first. You should offer your observations but only after your team has had the chance to share.

Strengths | what is your team and organization great at and is helping the mission

Weaknesses | What are internal challenges, bottlenecks, or stressors compromising your team or organization's effectiveness?

Opportunities | What are things you could or should do?

Threats | What are external challenges over which you have little or no control or agency (e.g., a lockdown caused by a pandemic)

Once you have the team's full list, identify 2 or 3 thoughts from each area that you think are the most pressing and compelling strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

BREAK AND FREE TIME | THE REMAINDER OF DAY ONE

At this point, I recommend taking a break and giving people free time for the remainder of the day. Be creative, have fun, and most of all give your team the chance to decompress to come back fresh on day 2.

SESSION FOUR: BRAINSTORM | 3 – 4 HOURS

After some free time and a good night's rest, your team can come back fresh and now you can begin shifting thinking to what is up ahead. This session could be broken into a few subsections in order to:

- **Determine the most strategic focus points for the next year.**

Out of everything you could be doing, what are the one or two most strategic focal points for your team to zero in on?

- **Establish a dashboard to track progress.**

Determine how to measure your effectiveness.

- **Establish a cadence of accountability.**

Determine how often you will evaluate the progress towards goals and the lead measures you are working on.

SESSION FIVE: WRAP UP | 30 MINUTES

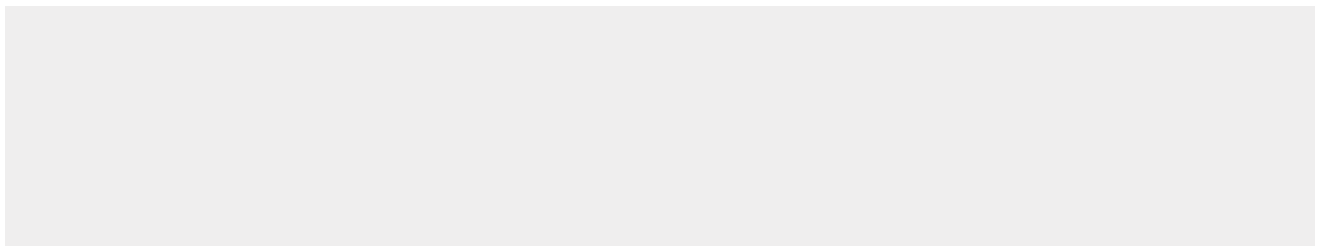
In this final session, you summarize everything you've decided to do, check to see if you missed anything, and get the buy-in from the group. Finalize that these are our goals or that this is our goal for the next year.

LAST NIGHT: CELEBRATION

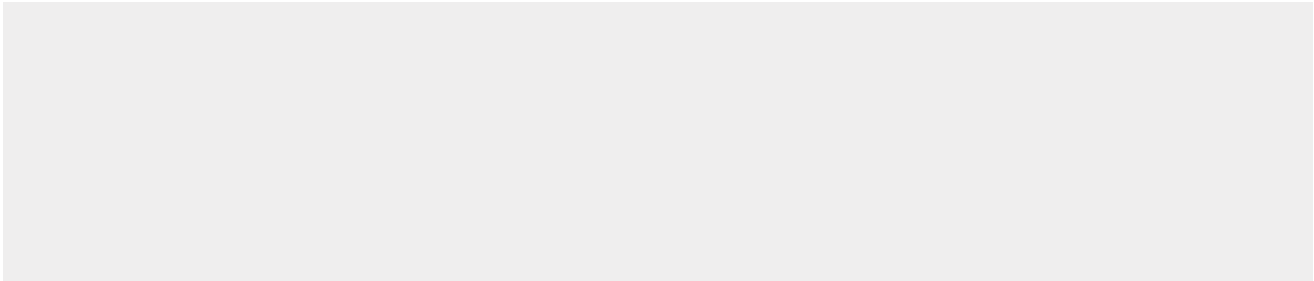
Here, if you have the extra time, plan a celebration dinner. Somewhere nice, a place to process, unwind, relax, make some final memories and connections and get ready to head home the next day.

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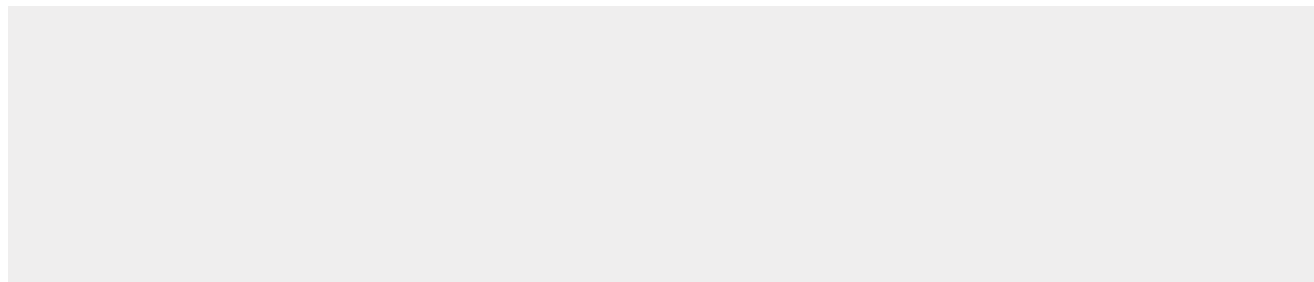
1. Have you ever participated in an offsite retreat? How did the experience impact the culture of your team afterward?



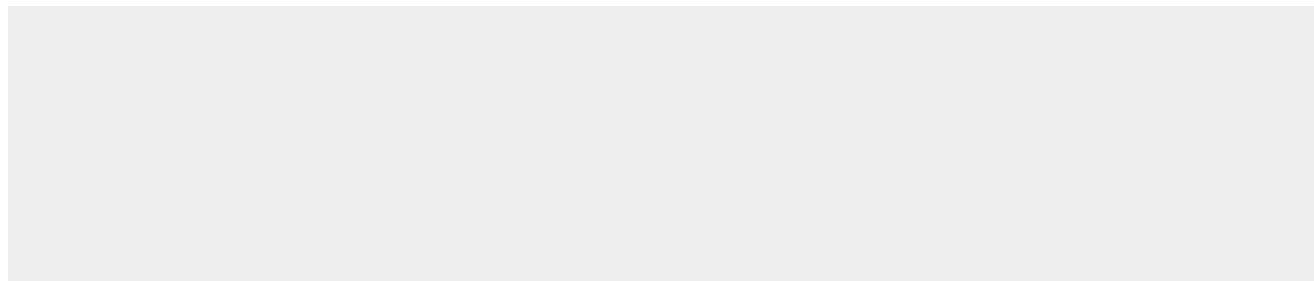
2. What is the most memorable team building activity you've had? What makes it stand out?



3. What organization could your team benefit from learning from or being inspired by? Take a little bit of time to research what it would look like to conduct an offsite retreat where that organization exists.



4. If you were leading your existing team through a SWOT analysis, what would your thoughts be on your current strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats?



You Should Check This Out

Does your team have a defined mission and values? [Check out my team mission and values](#) as an example.



Session 5

Session 5: How to Communicate Change

So you've decided what you're changing, you've got a plan. In this session we unpack a few important principles to help you communicate to the right people, in the right way, at the right time.

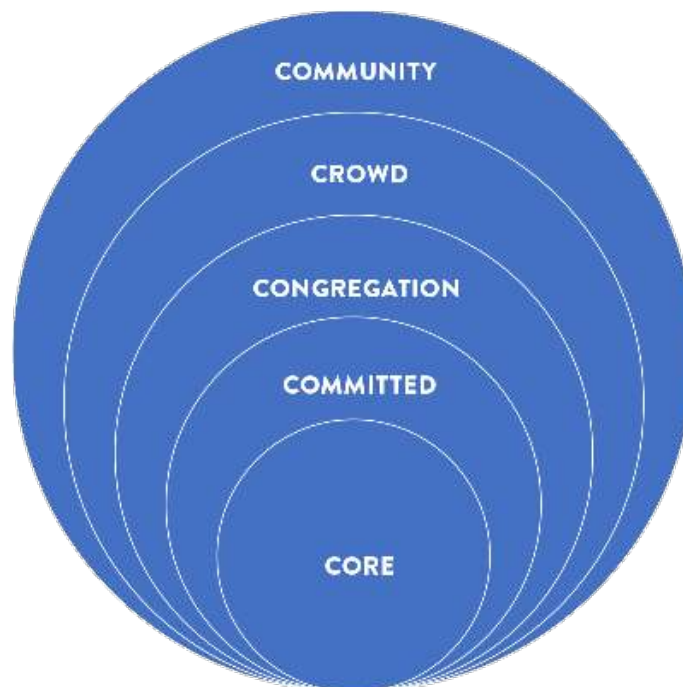
1. RESERVE THE DECISIONS EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE BODY THAT HAS TO MAKE THE DECISIONS.

The first principle is simple: decision-making bodies get to make the decisions. Other groups don't. Communicating about change is not getting permission to make change; instead you are explaining what you will do. However, as you communicate you'll want to elicit the feedback of a few key groups, which brings us to principle two.

2. COMMUNICATE CHANGE IN CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

People have different levels of engagement, responsibility, and interest in your decisions. To effectively communicate change, break the people you'll be talking to into several groups.

Let's break these down.



Gather input from the Core

WHO IS THIS:

While this group is not a decision-making group, these are the 15 – 20 are the people who will be implementing and funding the change (e.g. your board, other staff, key donors, and key volunteers).

WHAT & HOW:

Meet with your core to discuss the changes you're proposing. As you gather input, pay particular attention to the why, not the what and how of the decision. Focusing on the why unites people by keeping the conversation primarily at the level of the mission.

Dialogue with the Committed

WHO IS THIS:

This is the next most invested group and might include remaining staff, other volunteers, or other stakeholders.

WHAT & HOW:

What you're fostering here is dialogue. Here, you want to explain the changes, invite questions, and anticipate objections. This continues to be a two-way dialogue to continue identifying frequently asked questions, areas of confusion and resistance.

Information to the Congregation or Customer

WHO IS THIS:

These are your members, or in the case of a business, the customers who are on your email list or follow you on social media.

WHAT & HOW:

At this point, you move from personal dialogue to more of an announcement style of sharing the change that's coming. While you could do a broad announcement, I recommend that you give this group an insider scoop by letting them hear it early, not when it's announced to the crowd.

Now, by the time you make your public announcement or press release, well over half, if not 70% of people already know about the change, and many have become fans of it.

Vision to the Crowd

WHO IS THIS:

This is the general public within your organization, including visitors and loose affiliates. (Note: This group applies particularly to church leaders. If you are a business leader you need to worry less about the crowd because there's really no distinction between the crowd and the community.)

WHAT & HOW:

Broadly as you see fit. Cast vision, get people excited, and share away. Most people are with you.

Invitation to the Community

WHO IS THIS:

This is the general public outside of your organization.

WHAT & HOW:

Cast vision around how these changes create new opportunities to meet the felt needs of people in the community, and invite people into it.

3. BE INTENTIONAL WITH YOUR RESPONSES TO FEEDBACK AND QUESTIONS.

As you communicate with your different groups, you will be asked questions, given feedback, and even disagreed with sometimes. How you respond to feedback and questions is an opportunity to build rapport and trust with people.

Here are seven things you should never say when you're leading change:

Don't say:

"The proposed changes are great. I can't understand why you don't like them."

Try saying something like this instead:

"I can understand you don't like the changes. I would be upset if I were you too."

Don't say:

"God told me this is what we should do."

Try saying something like this instead:

"Our team has looked at this and prayerfully considered the options. We believe this is the best move we can make at this time for these reasons..."

Don't say:

"We've got this all figured out. Trust me."

Try saying something like this instead:

"No, we're not 100% sure this will work. But what we were doing was not working. So we're going to try this."

Don't say:

"I know you love the past. It's completely irrelevant...focus on the future."

Try saying something like this instead:

"We've had some great moments and seasons in the past, and we want to ensure we have many more in the future. That's what I'm hoping this change will accomplish."

Don't say:

"Everyone needs to get on board right now."

Try saying something like this instead:

"I realize this is going to stretch all of us, and I appreciate those of you who are willing to give this a chance even though you're not sure. We value that!"

Don't say:

"I know people are leaving. Who cares?"

Try saying something like this instead:

"Yes, it is sad. But I think what we need to remember is that they will have another church to go to. I'm excited about creating space for people who haven't yet been to church, and I'm excited that you want to create space for them here too."

Don't say:

"This plan is bullet-proof."

Try saying something like this instead:

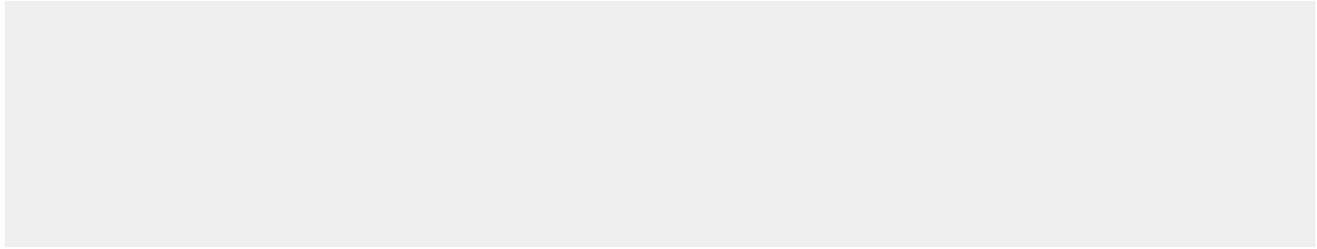
"We don't know for sure if this plan will work, but it's helped a lot of other churches (or...if no one's tried it that you know of, say 'nobody's really tried this before...'). We believe it's our next best step. So we're going to try it. And after we've given it our best, we'll make sure to evaluate it. Thanks for the freedom to try new things."

Application Guide

1. Have you ever experienced a change being hijacked because there was a lack of clarity as to whether a group was a decision-making group or a dialogue group? What was the result?

2. Why do you think it is important to segment your communication into groups based on levels of engagement?

3. What is one change your organization has made recently or will be making soon? Based on what you've learned from this session, map out a communication road map that shows what groups to communicate with, when, and how.



You Should Check This Out

You want to craft your message well, and if you want a primer on that, make sure you check out my [Art of Online Influence](#) course and take or revisit sessions 3-5 which will help you craft a memorable and powerful message designed to connect with your audience.



Session 6

Session 6: Navigating Opposition to Change

As a leader, the best way to elicit zero opposition is to do nothing significant. All worthy change draws opposition. The art of leading change comes in how you handle it. These five strategies will help you navigate opposition with the least amount of collateral damage:

1. DO THE MATH

Two questions you'll face as a leader include:

1. How much opposition is there?
2. Of all the voices you hear, which ones should guide you?

Answer: Do the math

As you consider your organization, you'll find there are four kinds of people, and each group is not equal in size:

Early Adopters | About 10% of your organization
Early Majority | About 30% of your organization
Quiet Majority | About 50% of your organization
Opponents | About 10% of your organization

Notice that only 10% of people will actively oppose change. Don't confuse loud with large.

2. CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS

You can focus on who you want to reach or who you want to keep. Remember that you never hear from the people you're trying to reach, but focusing on who you want to reach creates a more compelling vision. If 90% of people will be with you, would you sacrifice 90% for the sake of 10% who are opposed?

3. FIND A FILTER

In the face of opposition, ask yourself these two questions:

1. Is there a solid argument for what they're saying?
2. Are these the kinds of people we can build the church's future on?

If the answer is no, be kind, and move on.

4. ATTACK PROBLEMS, NOT PEOPLE

Facing opposition is frustrating and often downright infuriating. The art of leading change comes in your ability to separate the people from the problem. The best starting point is to turn to God because if you don't turn to God, you'll turn on them. The Bible is full of really honest prayers from people mad at the opposition they are facing. God can handle it.

Then avoid attacking people. How?

- Empathize with your opponents. Change can be very challenging.
- Wait a day before replying to oppositional emails, phone calls, or text messages.
- Reply relationally. Make it your aim to preserve the relationship even if you do not agree.

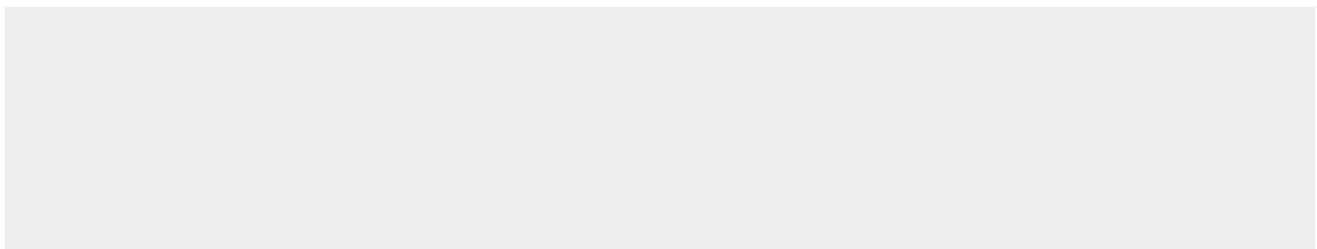
The high road is the best road. Ask yourself, five years from now what will I wish I had done? Then do it.

5. DON'T QUIT

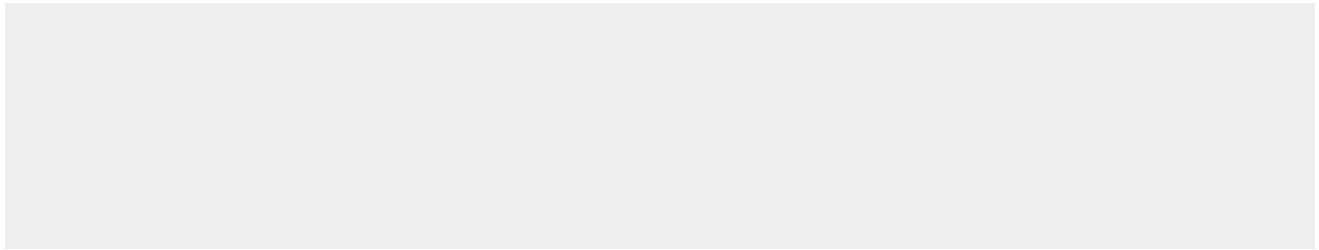
Most leaders are tempted to quit moments before their critical breakthrough. One way to bolster endurance is to simply create an encouragement file storing encouraging and affirming emails, comments, notes or otherwise.

Application Guide

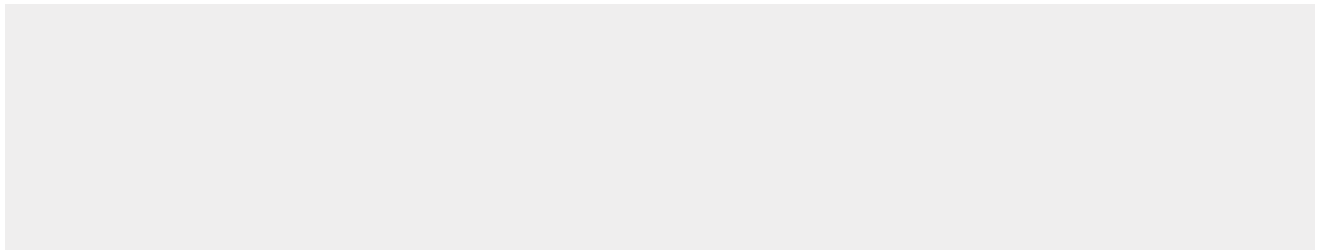
Think about a time when you were on the receiving end of a change you did not choose and were opposed to. How did you respond?



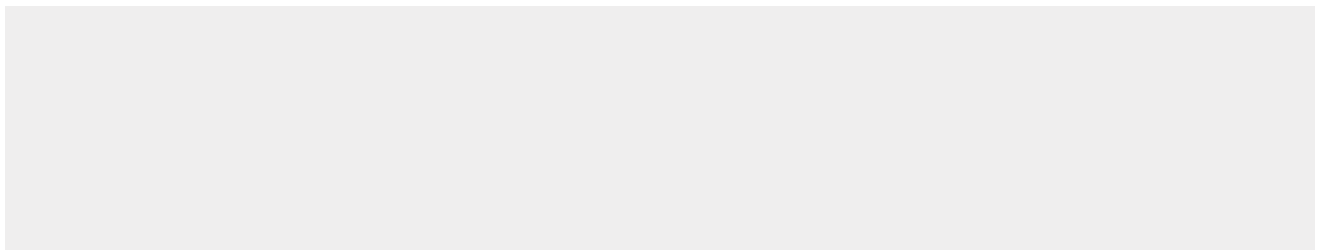
2. Now consider when you implemented change and were on the receiving end of opposition. What was your perspective? How did you respond?



3. Consider your current situation. What is a change you are considering? What objections and questions do you anticipate? How can you prepare to address opposition with empathy?



4. Have you ever responded too quickly to opposition? What was the result? Why do you think waiting a day to respond to criticism or opposition is healthy?



You Should Check This Out

How to Lead in a Divided Era:

<https://careynieuwhof.com/how-to-unite-a-divided-people-4-keys-to-leading-in-an-angry-era/>

Mark Batterson on How to Stay Motivated and Encouraged in Church Leadership, Habit Formation and Reframing the Future:

<https://careynieuwhof.com/episode463/>



Session 7

Session 7: The Psychology of Change

Now that you have a framework to help you navigate the Art of Leading Change, the thing that is most likely to derail you are the dynamics of change; the internal dialogue you carry on with yourself, and your fear of upsetting people, which is why in this session we cover more on the psychology of change. These insights will help you and your team to keep going when you want to give up by helping you understand some of the complex dynamics at play.

1. LEADERS CRAVE CHANGE MORE THAN MOST PEOPLE DO BECAUSE THEY'RE, WELL, LEADERS.

As a leader, your passion level will always be naturally and appropriately higher than most people's when it comes to change.

2. FEAR OF OPPOSITION DERAILS MORE LEADERS THAN ACTUAL OPPOSITION.

Remember, courage isn't the absence of fear; it's the determination to lead through your fears.

3. PEOPLE AREN'T OPPOSED TO CHANGE NEARLY AS MUCH AS THEY ARE OPPOSED TO CHANGE THEY DIDN'T THINK OF.

Everybody favors their ideas, but most organizational change is driven by leadership. All real change is. Realize that most people will support you as you continue to give them time and lead through the change process.

4. CHANGE IS HARD BECAUSE PEOPLE CRAVE WHAT THEY ALREADY LIKE.

Your people want what they know and experience because people never crave what they haven't seen. This is why vision is so key. You need to paint a clear enough picture that people begin to crave a future they haven't experienced.

5. MOST OF THE DISAGREEMENT AROUND CHANGE REALLY DOES HAPPEN AT THE STRATEGY LEVEL.

Most leaders stop at aligning people around a common mission and vision, but you also need to work hard at aligning people around a common strategy. When people are aligned around a common mission, vision, and strategy, so much more becomes possible.

6. MOST PEOPLE OPPOSED TO CHANGE DO NOT HAVE CLEAR VISION OF A PREFERRED FUTURE.

You can't build a better future on a vision of the past. Remember that when they tell you about how good things used to be.

7. INCREMENTAL CHANGE BRINGS ABOUT INCREMENTAL RESULTS.

You'll be tempted to compromise and reduce vision to the lowest common denominator: incremental change. Incrementalism inspires no one.

8. UNIMPLEMENTED CHANGE BECOMES REGRET.

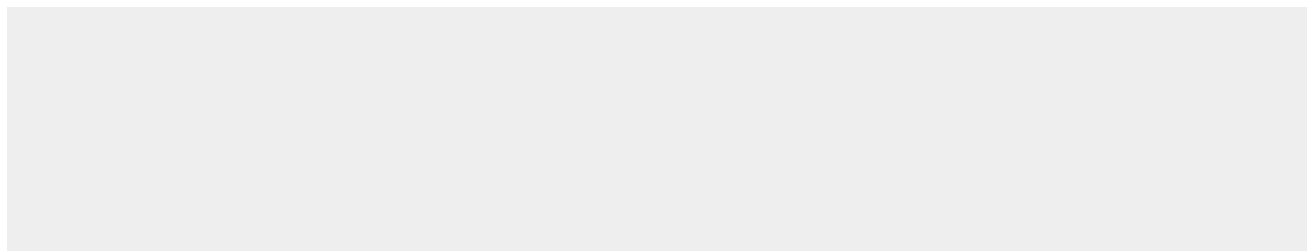
Studies on regret show that most regrets are not from action but from inaction. Your boldest moments are often your best moments. So be bold. The future is waiting, the world is changing faster than ever, and unimplemented change usually becomes regret.

Application Guide

1. Why do you think understanding the psychology of change can make you a healthier, more effective leader? What are some ways it helps you avoid pitfalls while leading change?

2. Have you ever experienced regret because of something you didn't do? If you could go back, what risk would you take?

3. What is a change you think should happen but feels risky? Imagine yourself five years in the future. What would you tell your current self about the risk you're facing?



You Should Check This Out

5 Reasons You Still Feel Disoriented, Dissatisfied, and Depleted (The Challenge of Crisis Leadership): <https://careynieuwhof.com/5-reasons-you-still-feel-disoriented-dissatisfied-and-depleted-the-challenge-of-crisis-leadership/>

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have completed The Art of Leading Change.

Here's the thing about a course like this: it's only as good as you apply it. Like a football team's playbook, as a leader you ought to study the plays, practice the plays, then get in the game and run the plays.

So now it's your turn. I've put together the **Change Management Assessment Matrix & Checklists** for you to use over and over again as you lead change now and in the future. You'll notice the scalability of this tool based on the degree and scope of the change you're looking to make. Remember: change is inevitable; irrelevance is not. So go and dream, innovate, take risks, and watch what happens.