The Garden of Change
Looking at Change

Types of Change

**Micro** - I must change
Affect you, your family or friends

**Organizational** - we must change
Affects any work, professional or social institution

**Macro** - everyone must change
Things with global implications

Magnitude of Change

**Volume**
Number of changes

**Momentum**
How long you have to make the change and the length of time until the next needed change

**Complexity**
The variety of people and factors involved in the change

Phases of Change

**Present state**
Status quo

**Transition**
When we disengage from status quo and develop new attitudes & behaviors

**Desired state**
The way we want things to be

Roles in change

**Sponsor**
Has the power to sanction the change

**Agent**
Responsible for actualizing the change

**Advocate**
 Wants to achieve a change, but lacks power to sanction

**Target**
Those who must actually change
Promote Change as a Positive Experience

What You Can Do as an Individual

1. Approach change as an on-going process rather than a specific event.
2. Accept that there is a cost to change.
3. Believe that the status quo costs more than the pain of transition.
4. Accept the discomfort of ambiguity as a natural reaction to transition.
5. Present changes in a manner that takes into account an individual’s frame of reference.

Promoting Change Positively as a Leader

Communicate effectively.
Use clear & concrete language, check assumptions, be verbally/non-verbally congruent.

Listen actively.
Attend to content, values, feelings, and perspectives.

Generate trust and credibility.
Help others overcome their fear of victimization and see themselves as key contributors to the team where there is a healthy balance of power.

Recognizing Resistance to Change

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Survival in a World of Permanent White Water

Today’s complex, interdependent, and unstable systems require continual imaginative and creative initiatives and responses by those living and working in them – and especially by those leading and managing them. Ideas to keep in mind are:

- Our continual imaginative and creative initiatives and responses to systems are, in fact, *continual learning*; in other words, continual learning is what we are seeing as we observe people acting in complex situations.
- We need to consider carefully what we need to learn about continual learning to live productively and comfortably in our macrosystems.
- We need also to consider whether we are prepared to engage in continual learning as we need to be, and if so, how we go about engaging in it.

The Characteristics of Permanent White Water

1. **Permanent white water conditions are full of surprises.** This is perhaps the most obvious characteristic of permanent white water conditions – the continual occurrence of problems that are not expected, problems that are not “supposed” to happen.

2. **Complex systems tend to produce novel problems.** This second characteristic of permanent white water conditions usually occurs along with the first one of surprise. Novel problems are those that are not only not anticipated but also not even imagined by those concerned with the system.

3. **Permanent white water conditions feature events that are “messy” and ill-structured.** These events do not present themselves in neat packages that can easily be delegated or farmed out to a consultant. An unexpected lawsuit, for example, has ramifications in all directions, affecting a wide range of loosely related policies and practices in an organization. Dealing with the meaning and consequences of such an event involves people in a wide range of operations that have their own imperatives and contingencies and that may be simultaneously feeling the effects of other white water events.

4. **White water events are often extremely costly.** They may be expensive in terms of dollars or some other scarce resource in the system. Cost can be measured in absolute terms, but cost can also be relative. Even when the absolute magnitude of cost is not that great, permanent white water events are costly in the sense that the time taken to deal with them must be diverted from other pressing issues and is acutely felt as a diversion of time and resources. In general, we say that these events are extremely *obtrusive*. In their messiness, costliness, and ramifications, they simply cannot be ignored.

5. **Permanent white water conditions raise the problem of recurrence.** They make us ask whether a particular white water event could have been anticipated, whether anything like it will occur again, whether a new system should be designed to forestall this type of event in the future. These events increase the red tape; in other words, as investigations are conducted and conditions that led to the event are reconstructed. Bureaucratic complexities are introduced as various policies and functions are created to prevent the problem from recurring. While such protections may be undoubtedly valuable in some circumstances, it is important to understand that no number of anticipatory mechanisms can forestall the next surprising, novel wave in the permanent white water. There is no way the system can be protected against all eventualities without paralyzing it.

Adapted from:
Characteristics of Change Agents

**Attitudes and Values**
1. Primary concern for the benefit of the community and society as a whole.
2. Respect for the strongly held values of others.
3. Belief that individuals have the right to participate in choosing change alternatives.
4. A strong concern for helping without hurting.
5. Respect for existing conditions as a reflection of individual concerns for security and identity.
6. A strong sense of own identity.
7. A belief in their own power to help others.

**Knowledgeable About**
1. Individuals, groups and communities are open interrelating systems.
2. The value bases of different subgroups within the community.
3. The motivational bases of different subgroups within the community.
4. Range of human needs and their interrelationships.
5. Probable priority of needs under differing conditions and at different stages of life.
6. Why and how people and systems resist change.
7. How their role fits into the pattern of change.
8. How others see their role.
9. Available resources and how to access them.
10. The knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to be an effective user of resources.
11. The knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to be an effective agent of change.

**Skills**
1. How to bring people to awareness of their own potential.
2. How to build collaboration for change.
3. How to build value bridges.
4. How to resolve misunderstandings and conflicts.
5. How to empower others for change.
6. How to convey your knowledge, values, and skills to others.
7. How to assess the community and generate self-assessment by members.
8. How to bring people to a conception of their priority needs in relation to the needs of others.
9. How to relate effectively to individuals and groups who have a strong sense of powerlessness.
10. How to relate effectively to powerful individuals and groups.
11. How to expand other's awareness of potential resources.
12. How to bring people to a realization of their own resource-giving potential.
13. How to organize and implement successful action plans.

References

The Secret Garden: potential, growth and change


