

3 STEPS HOW LEADERS EMBRACE AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

BY BILL HOGG

This is the fourth in our 6 part [leadership speaker](#) series of articles that looks at stimulating change for passion & profits.

Leadership is not static. Being a leader is a dynamic role that is constantly evolving and requires flexibility and willingness to change. If you are not willing to change and adapt yourself, you are not ready to lead. Your first step toward embracing and leading change is being open to altering your approach.

In my experience as an [organizational change consultant](#), leaders who embrace change have dynamic companies with a stronger and healthier culture and continue to grow, whereas organizations with leaders who shy away from change tend to be stagnant. Failure to recognize the need for change and failure to embrace it puts your organization in a vulnerable position.

Altering Your Approach as a Leader is the First Step Toward Organizational Change

Leading by example is essential if you want your organization to embrace change. You can hardly expect your team to embrace change if you first do not show you are willing to alter your approach as a leader and make changes to how you do things.

As discussed in, [How to Alter Your Leadership Approach to Build Stronger Leadership Teams](#), “You first need to change how you lead before the organization will follow your call for change. For example, communicating a need to cut spending and reel in budgets is difficult to argue if leaders make no observable change to cut spending at the executive level. However, when leaders frame change in the right way and take actions to support change, it will be embraced by management and team members at all levels in the organization, allowing transformative change to take place.”

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How to Lead Change: 3 Vital Steps

Once you acknowledge your willingness to change -- you open the door for organizational change to occur. Here are 3 critical steps to keep in mind as you lead change:

1. Identify the need for change

The need for change exists in every organization, and yours is no different -- you need to change to survive. The key is to focus on change in the right areas of your organization, at the right time and for the right reasons. Think about the different areas of your organization:

- Which areas are lacking?
- How can you better serve your customers?
- What can you do to improve efficiency?
- How can you better support your team?
- Which areas of your company culture need attention?

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Asking these types of questions, listening to your team, and reflecting internally will help you identify where change is needed.

2. Understand the landscape of change

Making change stick is not easy, it is an emotional battleground. As stated in [How to Get Your Team to Buy into Organizational Change](#), “Even if change is positive and will benefit the organization, it is difficult for people to accept because it represents a disruption to the status quo. People like consistency, and change creates uncertainty that makes people uneasy. Transformative leaders understand how to [frame organizational change](#) effectively.”

Expect push back. People are naturally resistant to change even when it is for their own benefit. You need to set the tone by communicating change in a way that takes into account your team's perspective -- particularly their emotional well-being. How you frame change makes a significant difference and you can have success by:

- Making change matter from your employees' perspective
- Tying change to the organizational vision and values
- Giving change time to stick
- Providing training and support

You can learn more by reading [How Transformational Leaders Make Organizational Change Stick](#)

3. Manage change

Managing change effectively has a lot to do with creating a well structured and transparent [change management plan](#). This plan provides you with a strategy and structure for your vision of change and how to achieve your defined outcomes. For change to occur, you need to:

- Ensure your team is in alignment with your vision
- Assign responsibility to team members so they can achieve the results you need for change to occur
- Hold people accountable
- Give your team the tools and resources to make change stick at all levels of the organization

Strong leaders recognize the need for change. Having a willingness to recognize the need for change and having the ability to lead change ensures your organization is strong and in a position to thrive.

The next article in our 6 part [organizational change leadership speaker](#) series will examine leadership behaviours that create buy-in and create a high performing work environment

For more information about this topic or to book Bill for a [leadership speaking](#) engagement, feel free to [contact Bill Hogg](#) or visit us online at www.BillHogg.ca where you can [sign up to receive an article](#) like this each month.

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*Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. He is recognized as the **Performance Excelerator™** because of his uncanny ability to stimulate change and transform organizations -- to create long-term, profitable relationships with customers and accelerate performance, productivity and profits with leaders and their teams.*

Bill provides world class executive consulting, dynamic keynote presentations and transformative workshops for clients that include; Adecco, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Pita Pit, RBH, State Farm Insurance, Thompson Abern, Toronto International Film Festival and ServiceOntario.