

STIMULATING CHANGE FOR PASSION AND PROFITS



Presented by Bill Hogg and Associates

THE WAVES OF CHANGE ARE CONSTANT. FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION TO THRIVE AND GROW, YOU MUST BE WILLING TO CHANGE – ADJUST, ADAPT AND RESPOND. BUT MAKING CHANGE STICK IS NOT EASY, IT IS AN EMOTIONAL BATTLEGROUND. AND LEADERS CAN'T CHANGE PEOPLE – PEOPLE ONLY CHANGE WHEN THEY DECIDE TO CHANGE. SO TO STIMULATE CHANGE – FIRST YOU MUST CREATE A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE AND THEN HELP YOUR TEAM THROUGH THE EMOTIONAL PROCESS OF CHANGE. OTHERWISE, THE WAVES OF CHANGE COULD CRASH DOWN AND WASH YOU OUT TO SEA.

Success starts and ends with the people in your organization. When your team is managed effectively and clearly understands their role and what is expected of them, good things happen. Good leadership shapes behaviour and increases an individual's level of engagement.

If you are really serious about creating change that improves productivity and profits, you need to take a serious look at the leadership in the organization. How they approach change is the key to making it stick.

In this white paper we will examine how transformational leaders embrace change, build a strong organizational culture through trust and collaboration, and create buy-in and accountability to make change stick.

HOW GREAT LEADERS CREATE A CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP

There is no secret to creating a culture of leadership that will take your organization forward for years to come. It starts at the top with senior leaders reflecting internally – to understand their purpose, gain clarity about what they stand for and what the organization stands for – and identifying how to communicate this with the rest of your organization.

It is the strength of individuals who make an organization world class. Companies that make leadership development a strategic priority have the ability to attract and retain the best leadership talent, and move to the head of the pack.

Leadership Culture Starts at the Top

Transformational leaders understand that a culture of leadership doesn't start with a written document, but by the behaviours they model every day. You can't simply write down what you want your leadership culture to be and expect others to follow. Your culture is made up of the values you live daily – and those are not aspirational – they are actual behaviours demonstrated on a daily basis.

Leaders must understand and communicate a clear vision to create an environment that attracts people who share their same values.

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You lay the groundwork by being clear with your purpose, and then leading by example by modeling the behaviours they would like to see practiced. Only then can you begin to establish the right structures and processes to foster and reinforce the desired culture.

If you want to develop great leaders, you first need to learn to be a great leader yourself.

5 Things All Great Leaders Do to Create a Culture of Leadership

While it's easy to assume that great leaders were born to lead – and some are – more often great leadership is a result of hard work, gaining experience over time, continuously evolving, and being open to learning new skills and trying different approaches. Most of us were not born natural leaders, we had to learn – and this willingness to grow and develop will help create a culture of leadership.

Here are 5 things that great leaders do to help create a culture of leadership:

- 1. Leaders define clarity of purpose:** All great leaders find their purpose. It's clearly defined, and it is the catalyst for everything they do. Purpose helps to fuel their work ethic and drive their passion for what they do. More importantly, they create a purpose that resonates with others, and they communicate organizational values in a way that brings people together to rally behind their vision – creating a strong culture of leadership.
- 2. Leaders work on self-awareness:** Leaders need to be willing to change first – before organizations can change and transform. Leaders need to be self-aware, as well as organizationally and culturally aware, of the impact of their actions and decisions. They allow others to have a voice, they are open to critique and outside ideas, and they are willing to grow individually and professionally.
- 3. Leaders walk the talk:** You must reinforce company culture and values daily and with consistency. Leadership culture is a living and breathing entity. Strong leaders understand that organizational culture is dynamic and know it's critical to reflect a culture of leadership through their actions. If your team sees you practicing what you preach, they will be more open to buy-in. Values should be a regular touch point in decision-making to ensure they are being lived every day – not just when it is easy or convenient.
- 4. Leaders recognize the value of people:** Great leaders understand that the most valuable resource in their organization is people. They invest in people and help them develop their own leadership capacity – scaling it throughout the organization. Transformational leaders have a genuine desire to lift people up to achieve their own success.
- 5. Leaders create an attitude of transformative change:** Leaders themselves need to be transformative in order to inspire higher performance and a customer-focused culture. How you approach change is just as important as what you want to change. If you want to be a transformative leader and create long lasting organizational change, you need to approach it in a way which minimizes negative reactions, is aligned with business strategies and corporate cultures, and is inclusive in nature.

Anyone can be in a leadership position, but this doesn't mean they are a leader. There is a difference between managing and leading. Managers look after things/checklists (budgets, invoices, scheduling, reports) and usually do so from behind a desk.

However, people are led. Great leaders know that to connect with their teams, they need to be engaged – ready to step in and support their people, working side by side to get the job done. Leaders take the time to build their social skills and interact with others so that there is a strong teamwork atmosphere.

So forget about looking for the secret formula or shortcuts to create a culture of leadership. You won't find them. Start by taking a look in the mirror and reflecting on your own leadership. Look to yourself first for answers about how to create a culture of leadership.

Once you have a grasp on how to create a culture of leadership internally, it's important to reinforce this by focusing on character, not competence when hiring.

FOCUS ON CHARACTER NOT COMPETENCE

Your organization is only as good as the talent you recruit. It is the people who define and shape the organizational culture – so identifying people with the right character, attitudes, and behavior must be the highest priority when hiring or promoting within.

Character always wins – too often people are hired for what they can do, but fired for how they do it. This is why it's important to ensure your recruitment process is focused on finding and hiring people who share the same values as your organization instead of simply looking for the skills to fit a list of requirements.

Developing People and a Strong Organizational Culture

The real driver for long-term success is found in your organization's culture. You can't hire the right people if you don't first understand your desired culture and the type of people who are a good fit. The right hire should enhance and strengthen your desired culture.

You also won't be able to keep good people if you have a poor work environment. Companies succeed when the culture they create to improve engagement and build a strong work environment also attracts good job candidates. There is a reason why people flock to some companies and are reluctant to apply for positions at others.

As a leader, it's important for you to not only develop new hires, but also reflect on the management practices internally that contribute to a high performance work environment. Ask yourself:

- What is our mission? What are our goals? Does our team clearly understand what is expected of them to achieve these objectives?
- Are we making strides forward? Are we providing adequate feedback and support to our people?
- What support are we providing to our team? Are we offering enough training?
- Are we meeting our team's needs? How do we recognize our people for their efforts?

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As a leader, it is up to you to set the tone for your organization. It starts with the hiring process and follows through with culture development. When the people with the right character, behavior and skills are hired, your team will achieve a common vision more effectively, helping you deliver better results and create a culture and a company that will attract people with both character and competence.

A 3 Step Approach to Hiring Individuals Who Fit Your Culture

Finding the right people to work in your organization begins with a well thought out hiring process that gives priority to character and behavior over competence.

No matter how well defined your vision may be or how well the vision is communicated internally, you still need to have the right people in roles that are suited for their personality, skills, and abilities.

In order to hire the right people, you need to be clear about your organization's mission and about the character and competencies required to fill the open position. Following this 3 step approach will help you find the right people:

1. Focus on character: Character should not be confused with attitude. Character is how someone fits with your organization's values and whether they conduct themselves in alignment with those values. Someone can have a bright a cheery attitude, but still not share the same values/character traits you are looking for. Think about your culture – is it collegial or competitive. Neither is right or wrong – just different. Differences in character will create discord in your organization.

Of course, specific skills are often essential in a specific role, however, no matter how skilled someone is, the wrong character and the wrong fit will eventually lead to issues. Once you have quickly eliminated those who do not have the basic required skill sets, focus on character and someone who has the right mindset that will fit and enhance your current culture and has the ability to contribute to developing the culture you are designing.

2. Look for the right past behaviors: Probe for situational examples of past behaviours that demonstrate their character in action. Focus more on how they did it (their character) and less on what they did (the skill) – make sure to listen for the “how” versus the “what”.

3. Teach skills: Yes, potential candidates must have a certain level of competency, but skills should not be the focal point of the hiring process. Missing skills can be taught. Look for people who exhibit a willingness to learn, grow, and do what is best for the organization. Training can be used to fill in skill and knowledge gaps, and people with good character realize this and will be willing to put in the time and effort to ramp up as quickly as possible. These are the people who will have the biggest impact on performance and will fit within your culture without making waves.

Hiring the right people sets the groundwork for creating a strong culture of leadership. You can further develop this by focusing on collaboration and establishing trust.

BUILDING COLLABORATION AND TRUST INTO YOUR CULTURE

Do you want to build trust and cooperation in your organization? Then walk the talk.

It may sound simple, but it's one of the most effective ways to build trust internally and get people to support your vision.

Trust starts with leadership and filters down. It is the cement that binds people together who have similar shared values but with different talents, skills and interests. One of the most important ways to build trust is to ensure that people have a shared/common set of values. When you share the same values, you inherently are more likely to trust them and they are more likely to trust you.

Trust is earned when your team believes you will do what is right, deliver what you promise and are consistent with your leadership approach – regardless of what is easy or convenient.

Real trust exists when your team believes you are going to do what you say you will do. Leaders cannot just provide lip service and make false promises in an attempt to motivate and boost performance. If you don't follow through, your team will lose faith in your word, but also your leadership and the values, vision, and mission of the organization. This will lead to lower levels of engagement.

7 Ways for Leaders to Build Trust

There are certain things that all leaders must do and a number of critical moments where you can implement impactful change and build trust. Here are 7 ways you can build trust within your organization:

- 1. Be the first to show trust:** For one person to trust another – whether that person is the CEO or a frontline team member – that person needs to believe that the other has their best interests at heart. To be a trusted leader you have to demonstrate that you're there to help others succeed.
- 2. Walk the talk:** Many leaders can talk a good game, but when troubles arise only truly transformational leaders step up. They reinforce company culture and values daily and understand that it's critical to build trust consistently through their actions. Model the behavior you want others to follow. When your team sees you leading by example, they will follow suit and be more open to buying in. You lead by example by treating promises seriously, following through on commitments, and behaving consistently with your values.
- 3. Listen:** You can build trust and increase collaboration in your culture when you are willing to listen. Admit what you don't know and be open to new ideas, perspectives and approaches. Often, the act of listening alone will help you build trust with your team.
- 4. Practice self-disclosure:** Self-disclosure is another important action. Opening up builds closer relationships. Trusted leaders also show concern for others. You have to listen, and respect alternative views. Admit what you don't know and openly communicate with your team.
- 5. Give credit to others:** No one likes a glory hog, especially one that takes credit for the hard work of others. Rarely are successes achieved as a result of individual effort, there is usually collaboration – so be sure to share the spotlight with those deserving and celebrate organizational successes as a team.

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- 6. Hold yourself accountable first:** When things go wrong, many people have a tendency to look elsewhere to blame and fail to take ownership for their own shortcomings. As a leader, you need to look to yourself first before you can hold others accountable. When you hold people accountable for their actions, including yourself, you will earn your team's trust and respect.
- 7. Deliver what you promise:** Don't over-promise and under-deliver. Be upfront and honest with your team and refrain from making promises that you know you cannot deliver on – it will only hurt morale and cause your team to question your motives.

Knowing that you can trust your team to get the job done is essential. However, they will not trust you unless they know you are willing to follow through on your commitments and have their back. Mutual trust plays a large role in shaping an organizational culture that will thrive

Trust, much like organizational culture, is not built overnight. You need to earn it. Building an organizational culture is deeply rooted in trust, and collaboration starts with strong leadership that is willing to follow through, lead by example and walk the talk to create lasting and impactful organizational change. Leaders that personally role model trust virtues (e.g. honesty, reliability, discretion and focus on others ahead of themselves) and lead from trust values (e.g. relationship rather than transaction focus, collaboration, and transparency) create a strong work environment.

To build collaboration and maintain trust, leaders need to embrace organization change and lead the way.

HOW LEADERS EMBRACE AND LEAD ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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 own approach.

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

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.

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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3 Vital Steps to Lead Change

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. But change should never simply be for the sake of change. The key is to focus on change that is clearly linked to your strategic goals. Is it 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?
- How does it serve your strategic goals?

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

People are naturally resistant to change even when it is for their own benefit – so expect push back. 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 a personal perspective
- Tying change to the organizational vision, values and strategic goals
- Giving change time to stick
- Providing training and support

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 the ability to lead change ensures your organization is strong and in a position to thrive. However, without buy-in and accountable people, it will be difficult to create a high performance work environment.

HOW LEADERS CREATE BUY-IN, ACCOUNTABILITY & A HIGH PERFORMING WORK ENVIRONMENT

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.

Accountability Starts with Leadership

Part of framing change effectively and in a way that makes change seem less intimidating is by exhibiting the right behaviour yourself. There is a lot to be said by leading by example, especially when change is on the horizon.

This means demonstrating the desired behaviours you want to see modeled by others and holding yourself accountable to organizational changes – effectively proving you are onboard through your behaviour. This is the first step to creating buy-in and accountability internally.

How to Establish Accountability and Create a High Performance Environment

So, how do you get people to be accountable and achieve your goal of creating a high performance environment?

- **Clearly and consistently communicate your vision:** One and done never works –especially when trying to drive change. It is almost impossible for a company to over communicate. Critical messages must be repeated often – and repeated by senior leadership with consistency.
- **Have clear and detailed job descriptions:** Being accountable starts with a clear understanding of one's job. Vague job descriptions can lead to a vague understanding of a person's role. It also makes it more difficult for them to understand what they are accountable for and how leaders will hold them accountable. Write detailed job descriptions and include roles, responsibilities, as well as accountabilities.
- **Have clear performance measurements:** Measuring performance is one of the most clear and universal ways to hold people accountable. For example, when your team members know the goal is to close 5 deals per week, they have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Leaders establish expectations clearly during onboarding, training and coaching, and put people in leadership positions who share the same values and live them consistently.
- **Make accountability clear:** Make it clear that team members will be held accountable if they don't comply with change – and the consequences. More importantly, clearly communicate how you will be accountable for leading change.
- **Have an action plan:** Having an action or change management plan not only helps your team understand the direction of the company, it also is an opportunity for leaders to outline who is accountable for what, and the repercussions for not following through with their responsibilities.

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- **Improve the effectiveness of meetings:** Something as simple as having team members take notes during meetings can do a lot to improve accountability. Use meetings as an accountability session by ensuring team members are clear on expectations. Use the end of meetings to create actionable next steps with specific ownership and timelines to hold people accountable for what was discussed during the meeting.

When leaders demonstrate accountability, it helps people believe that they will be accountable in all things. Are you demonstrating accountability or letting things slip because they are “just small things”? Set the right example, display appropriate leadership behavior when going through change, and hold everyone accountable, including yourself. This will set the tone for all leaders to more effectively command accountability from your team.

Accountability and making change stick starts with having a no excuse approach.

A NO EXCUSE APPROACH TO MAKE CHANGE STICK AND DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Change always comes with its detractors, and if you don't take a firm, no excuses approach to change, you will have difficulty holding your people accountable for making change stick.

Making Change Stick Starts with an Effective Plan

When leader's initiate change behaviours and hold people accountable to deliverables, people always present excuses and reasons why change won't work. You can overcome these issues, establish accountability and implement a no excuses approach to change with an effective plan.

A change management plan is an effective tool that helps leaders focus and create a change strategy while also communicating the change process with team members. An effective plan includes the following elements:

- Service mandate and principles
- Process reengineering
- Service standards and accountability
- Training and coaching
- Change management strategy
- Communications strategy

This will provide you with a solid foundation for how to lead change, frame it properly, and effectively communicate the need and benefits of change to maintain a high level of engagement as your organization transitions. A strong change management plan eliminates excuses for non-compliance and also sets expectations and communicates accountability.

Learn more about change management plans by reading [Building Your Change Management Plan](#) or send me an [email](#) if you would like a copy of my Organizational Transformation Framework to help you identify which areas of your organization could benefit from some attention.

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Balancing Change and Employee Engagement

Going through a transition, making change stick and maintaining a high level of employee engagement is a tricky balancing act for leaders, especially if change is not welcome initially, but this is not an excuse to fall off track and fail to make change stick.

Getting your team involved with the change management plan helps to keep them engaged and accountable as change takes effect internally.

You can improve levels of engagement and make change easier by getting input about proposed change from all levels of your organization. Ask your team what they think, allow them to make suggestions, and get buy-in up front. This helps you determine what your people like or don't like, and the ability to collect multiple perspectives before solidifying your change strategy.

It's tough to hold people accountable for change when you impose something on them that they had nothing to do with. But you can hold them accountable when you make them part of the process.

A Simple 9 Step Change Management Plan

Your ability to keep your team engaged during change will have a huge bearing on your ability to make change stick and change your organizational culture. Here is a simple outline for how to keep your team engaged when you are going through change:

1. Identify values that guide your business
2. Set clear expectations
3. Develop a culture of trust and collaboration
4. Embrace and lead change
5. Create internal buy-in
6. Expect accountability
7. Monitor change and outcomes over time
8. Put in place a process to review and reward engagement
9. Have a no excuses approach to making change stick

CONCLUSION

Successful organizations understand the importance of investing in people – it's your company's most valuable resource. Strong leadership and a team of engaged individuals lay the groundwork for meeting internal goals and objectives, stimulating change and reducing the challenges to make it stick.

People are only going to change when they decide to change. Therefore, your role as a leader is to stimulate change and frame change the right way by having a strong change management plan, allowing your team to provide input in how change will take place and giving change time to take place. This will give it a better chance to stick and keep your people engaged during the transition.

If you are serious about making changes in your organization, consider these steps. This approach will help you create a passionate and engaged team that is willing to go above and beyond to achieve organizational goals.

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.

FURTHER READING

1. [Why Leaders Need to Reinforce Company Culture and Values](#)
2. [Leaders Need to Change First Before Organizations Change](#)
3. [6 Ways for Leaders to Create Organizational Change](#)
4. [Three Critical Elements for Finding the Right People to Work in High Performance Environments](#)
5. [How to Build Your Organizational Culture Based on Trust and Collaboration](#)
6. [How to Alter Your Leadership Approach to Build Stronger Leadership Teams](#)
7. [How Transformational Leaders Make Organizational Change Stick](#)
8. [How to Get Your Team to Buy into Organizational Change](#)
9. [Five Actions You Can Implement Today to Build a High Performance Work Environment](#)
10. [Seven Steps for Creating Behaviour and Performance Expectations that Drive Employee Engagement](#)



CHANGE INSTIGATOR | TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERT | PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

Bill works with senior leaders to stimulate change – that accelerates passion, productivity and profits! For over 30 years, Bill has been the go to guy when the [world's most recognized brands](#) are faced with challenges that require change – to improve bottom line results. Bill takes no prisoners and his clients love him for it.

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

For additional articles and information on how to transform your organization, contact bill@billhogg.ca