

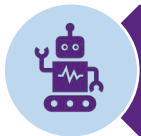
10 Steps to Implement Change Management



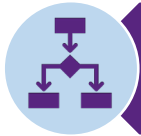
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Change management is a collective term for all approaches to prepare, support, and help individuals, teams, and organisations in making organisational change.

The most common change drivers include:



Technological evolution



Process reviews



Supporter habit changes



Regulatory and external change



Pressure from competitors



Acquisitions, mergers, splits and organisational restructuring

Change is a *Cultural* Challenge

In major transformations, the focus is normally on devising the best strategic and tactical plans. But to succeed, you must also consider the human side of change management – the alignment of the company's culture, values, people, and behaviours – to encourage the desired results.

Plans themselves do not capture value; value is only realised through the sustained, collective actions of employees who are responsible for designing, executing, and living with the changed environment. Companies will only reap the rewards when change occurs at the level of the individual employee.

When CEOs involved in transformation are asked what keeps them up at night, often say they are concerned about how the work force will react, how they can get their team to work together, and how they will be able to lead their people. Leadership teams that fail to plan for the human side of change often find themselves wondering why their best-laid plans go awry.

STEP 1

Address the “human side” systematically.

Any significant transformation has challenges with people. A change management strategy should be developed early and adapted often as change moves through the organisation, beginning with the leadership team and then engaging key stakeholders. This involves data collection and analysis, planning, implementation discipline, as well as a redesign of strategy, systems, or processes.

The change management approach should be fully integrated into program design and decision making, both informing and enabling strategic direction. It should be based on a realistic assessment of the organisation's history, readiness, and capacity to change.

Jobs may change, new skills developed, and some people will be uncertain and resistant.

STEP

2

Communicate the Message.

Change cannot be realistically achieved without buy-in of the people that it affects.

The best change programs reinforce core messages through regular, timely advice that is both inspirational and realistic.

Consider which channels are used for internal communications, and how best to reach each department to ensure that the message of change permeates your business. This should form part of your communication strategy.

STEP 3

Leaders must be speaking with one voice.

When a change is on the horizon, people will turn to the CEO and the leadership team for strength, support, and direction. It should be recognised that the senior leadership team is formed of individuals under stress, who also need support.

The result of a strong vision and strategy for change will be goals, principles and communication of a consistent message from the unified senior management team.

Change is unsettling at all levels of the organisation; strong leadership gives employees faith that change is being managed well and implemented with a specific goal in mind.

Executive teams that work well together are best positioned for success.

STEP 4

Involve every layer.

As transformation programs progress they affect multiple levels of the organisation.

Now that leadership is involved and unified, the message of change needs cascade through the organisation.

Departmental leaders who are identified and trained must be aligned to the organisation's vision, equipped to execute their specific mission, and motivated to make change happen.

As an example, officers will set the strategy, vision, and targets. Next, senior executives and managers will design the core of the change initiative. Then leaders from around the organisation drive implementation. This approach is a good way for a company to identify its next generation of leadership.

STEP

5

Make a formal case.

Buy-in is key to the success of change. If you don't have a business case yet, create it. Follow these three steps:

1. Articulate a convincing need for change.
2. Demonstrate that the organisation has the leadership to get there.
3. Provide a roadmap to guide behaviour and decision making. Leaders must then tailor this message for a variety of internal audiences, describing the pending change in terms that matter to the individuals.

A business case will help create leadership-team alignment.

STEP

6

Ownership.

Ownership is required by leaders. As part of that ownership, leaders must be willing to accept responsibility for making change happen in all of the areas they influence or control.

Ownership is often best created by involving people in identifying problems as well as the solutions.

Make it clear that responsibility for this transformation is a positive opportunity.

STEP 7

Assess the cultural landscape and organisational readiness.

Companies often make the mistake of assessing culture either too late or not at all.

Identify possible conflicts or resistance in your organisation. Are there other barriers to change? For example, what if one department is undergoing a change that runs counter to your new initiative. It is for this reason that change needs to reflect overall strategy and consider the entire organisation.

Identify the core values, beliefs, behaviours, and perceptions that must be considered for successful change to occur.

STEP

8

Address culture in its entirety.

Once the culture is understood, it should be addressed as thoroughly as any other area in a change program.

Find opportunities to model and reward the behaviours that champion change.

It only takes a few doubtful individuals for a negative perception of change to form. Cut through this by incentivising support.

This requires developing a baseline, defining an explicit end-state or desired culture, and devising detailed plans to make the transition.

STEP

9

Prepare for the unexpected.

No change program goes completely according to plan. You won't have total control over how people react and there certainly won't be consistency in the way they react. You also won't have total control over the external environment shifting.

Effectively managing change requires continual reassessment of its impact and the organisation's willingness and ability to adopt the next wave of transformation.

Do not punish failures or allow them to demotivate staff. No change will be perfectly executed. If a certain department struggles to adopt change, take feedback and allocate necessary resources.

STEP 10

Speak to the individual.

Leaders contemplating change know that people matter.

Don't the mistake of taking your attention away from people just to focus on plans and processes that don't talk back.

Employees need to know how their work will change, what is expected of them during and after the change program, how they will be measured, and what success or failure will mean for them and those around them.

Team leaders should be as honest and explicit as possible.

Master the "soft" side of change management.

Author



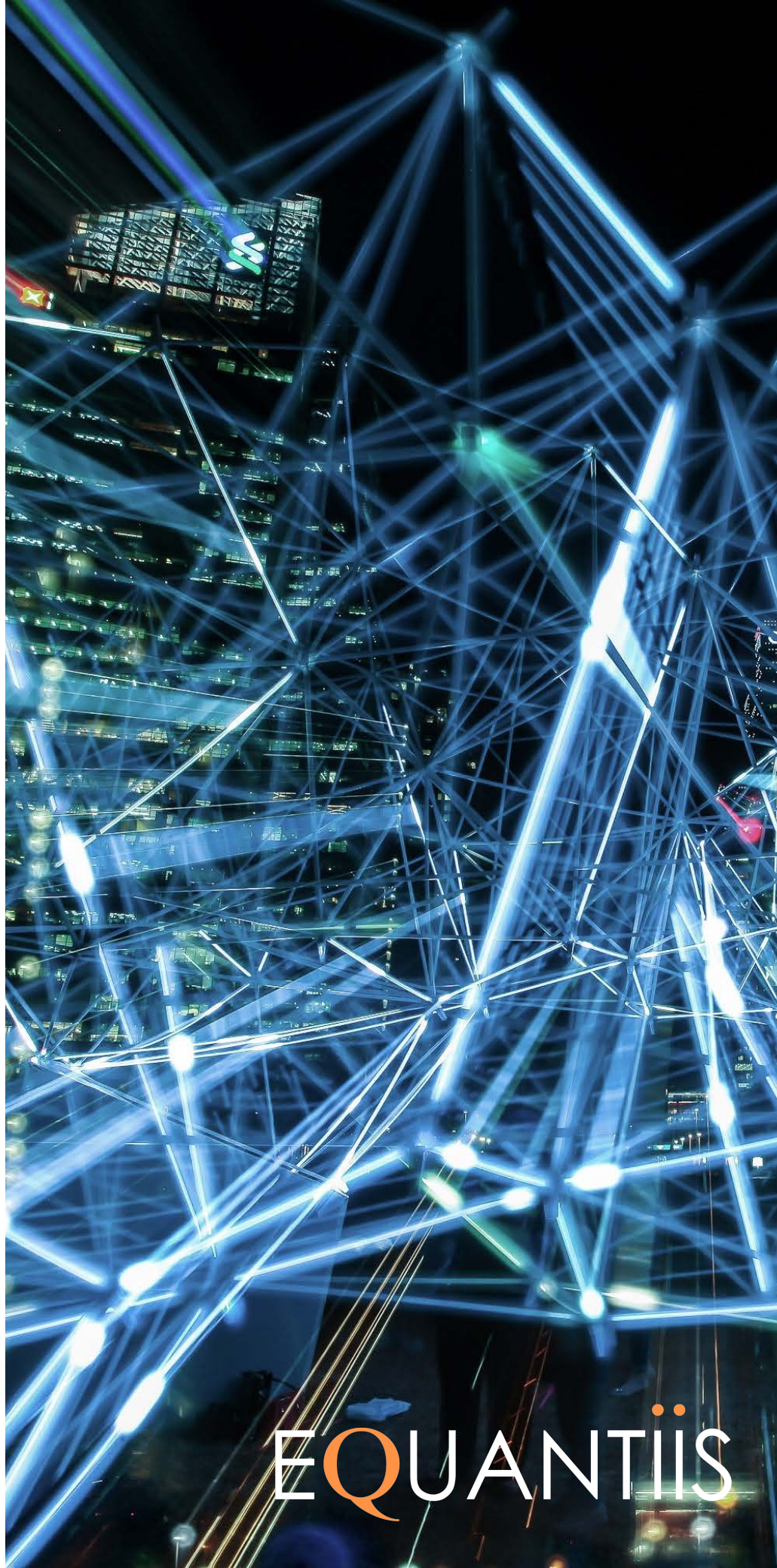
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