

## CHAPTER 18. REFRAMING CHANGE: TRAINING, REALIGNING, NEGOTIATING, GRIEVING, AND MOVING ON

### CHAPTER 18 OVERVIEW

#### Chapter 18 Summary

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Chapter 18 provides a four-frame view of organizational change. Major change generates *structural implications* (needs for different formalized relationships and alignments), *human resource implications* (needs for individuals to feel valued, effective, and in control), *political implications* (needs to manage the inevitable conflict between supporters and opponents of the new order), and *symbolic implications* (grief and loss of meaning).

Change efforts often fail because change agents operate with a limited perspective. They use only one or two lenses to conceive projects and then misread or entirely miss unanticipated consequences of their actions. The authors reframe organizational change as a four-dimensional process (see Table 18.1 in the text).

Structurally, change disrupts the formal system and undermines existing routines governing who does what and how things get done. Jobs or whole departments disappear or are redefined. Processes change. Lines of communication and authority become confused. Organizations need time and careful attention to communication and realignment of structural elements.

From a human resource perspective, change undermines individuals' skills and inhibits their ability to fulfill basic needs. Organizations need to provide training to help people develop the understanding and skills to implement the change, along with support to help them deal with psychic disruptions.

Politically, conflict is a central reality in organizational change because almost any change creates winners and losers, benefiting some parties and interests much more than others. The authors advocate creating arenas—meetings designed to turn disputes and divisive issues into shared agreements. They contrast “street fighting” approaches to conflict with the deliberateness of arenas where critical learning, bargaining and negotiation can take place. The creation of arenas is not an empty political ploy or an inevitable watering down of proposed plans. Arenas provide a critical vehicle for adapting new ideas to existing realities.

Symbolically, change inevitably means loss. Change disrupts symbols, attachments, and meanings and triggers two conflicting responses: hold on to the past or let go of past attachments and rush pell-mell into the future. Humans need rites of

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mourning to heal the loss and ease the transition from the known to the unknown—something that organizations often deny. The authors argue that transition rituals must accompany any significant organizational change.

To integrate the information on successful change presented in the chapter, the authors examine the stages of change described by Kotter and combine these stages with the four-frame approach (see Table 18.2 in the text). The chapter concludes with a story from Kodak's Black and White Film Division as an example of a successful, multiframe change effort.

### **Chapter 18 Major Case Examples** \_\_\_\_\_

- DDB Bank
- A top management decision to purchase state-of-the-art technology
- A large hospital's investment in a new integrated information system
- A school system and the principals
- Structural problems in a hospital
- The Experimental Schools Project
- The drug company facing competition from generic products
- New Coke and Coca-Cola Classic
- Delta Corporation
- Team Zebra at Kodak

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING CHAPTER 18**

Instructors can use this chapter to focus on:

1. A four-frame approach to planned change.
2. The impact of environmental changes on organizational adaptation, examining specific human resource and structural implications of change.
3. The political aspects of change
4. The symbolic aspects of change.

Teaching methods appropriate for each approach are described in the sections that follow. Student exercises keyed to the approaches appear in "Student Exercises for Chapter 18," beginning on page 10.

### **Chapter 18: A Focus on a Four-Frame Approach to Change** \_\_\_\_\_

Instructors can use Table 18.1 in the chapter as a starting point for discussions of how the frames can be used improve the prospects of success for needed changes.

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## Chapter 18: Cases Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change

A number of cases provide rich opportunities for multiframe discussion of change dynamics.

- Frito-Lay, Inc.: A Strategic Transition—1987–92 (HBS 9-195-239, teaching note 5-196-072) describes the efforts of a new CEO to return the company to profitability, to clarify the company’s vision, and then to build the infrastructure (human, capital, and information) needed to support the long-term change in strategy and organization.
- Torrington Wuxi Bearings: From a State-Owned Enterprise to a Sino-American Joint Venture (University of Hong Kong HKU083, teaching note HKU084, available through HBS). A new manager arrives to head a money-losing joint venture in China. He sets about to transform it from a state-owned enterprise to a market-focused organization.
- Charlotte Beers at Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide ([A] [HBS 9-494-031] and [B] [HBS 9-495-032]) deals with a new CEO brought in from the outside with a mandate to revitalize a historically successful global advertising agency. Case A describes the situation facing Beers, case B describes what she did, and a companion videotape (HBS 9-497-501) shows Beers reflecting on her experiences.
- Fiat ([A] [HBS 9-694-041] and [B] [9-694-042]) presents an analogous situation. In Case A, Paolo Cantarella, the new general manager of the Italian automaker, sees a need for major change in how Fiat develops new vehicles. Case B presents the next chapter in the story.
- Inland Steel Industries ([A] [HBS 9-992-006]) is the first in a series of cases about an effort by minority employees to move the company toward more aggressive efforts to promote diversity. A teaching note (HBS 5-992-010) and video (HBS 9-992-013) are available.
- Instructors who used First National City Bank Operating Group for the structural or human resource frame can return to this situation with the Project Paradise case (HBS 9-476-002). Project Paradise explores the continuing change processes described in the First National City Bank series. Those who have not used First National City Bank Operating Group ([A] [HBS 9-475-061] and [B] [HBS 9-475-162]) will find it a powerful change case for discussion here.
- Deaconess-Glover Hospital ([A–F] [HBS 9-601-022–9-601-027], teaching note 5-602-075) is a series of cases about an effort to transfer the Toyota Production System (TPS) to a health-care setting in Massachusetts. The A case covers many of the basics

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of the TPS and their application to a diagnosis of the hospital's current functioning. Subsequent cases deal with challenges in the change effort.

- An Organizational Sea Change: Total Quality Management in the Coast Guard (KSG 1205.0) describes an effort to implement TQM and give more initiative to the front line in a top-down, military organization.
- Dealing with Corruption in the Police Force of La Paz (KSG 1104.0, Epilogue 1104.1). A new reform mayor ponders what to do in the face of a consultant's report documenting stunning levels of corruption in the police force of Bolivia's capital city and asserting that many of the police are illiterate and lack the capacity to do their jobs. A good case to test students' ability to do multiframe diagnosis and strategy formulation.
- Johnson & Johnson: Hospital Services ([B] [HBS 9-392-050], teaching note 5-387-006) deals with a change effort hampered by conflicts between strategy and culture. A video of chairman and CEO James Burke (HBS 9-884-527) is also available.

### **Chapter 18: Films or Videos Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change**

The film *The Gods Must Be Angry* provides a vivid example of how the accidental introduction of a Coke bottle disrupts a primitive tribe. In addition, many training films address the topic of change.

- Tom Peters, *Liberation Management* (VPH), presents ideas from the book of the same title in an accessible and entertaining format.
- The training and development film *Transitions: Letting Go and Taking Hold* (CRM), which explores a worker's move from hourly employee to first-line supervisor, and the non-narrated animation *The Egg: A Film about Resistance to Change* (Salenger) can be used alone to explore individual responses to change or to supplement any of the change cases listed above ("Chapter 18: Cases Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change").
- CRM's *Taking Charge of Change Video Program* emphasizes the necessity for change in a turbulent world. It primarily emphasizes structural and human resource issues, and it provides an opportunity for students to discuss what's right, what's wrong, and what's missing from the treatment of organizational change.

### **Chapter 18: Reading Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change**

Kotter's view of change, discussed in the chapter, is described in two books:

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- J. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996).
- J. Kotter and D. Cohen, *The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

Other excellent treatments of organizational change include:

- Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture Based on the Competing Values Framework* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1999).
- Peter Senge and colleagues, *The Dance of Change: The Challenges to Sustaining Momentum in Learning Organizations* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).
- Clayton Christensen, *The Innovator's Dilemma* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2003). This influential book focuses not so much on the process of organizational change as on a major source of change (disruptive technology) that creates dilemmas for large, established firms.

Instructors whose students have little knowledge of OD or planned-change literature might want to assign one or both of the following readings:

- Fred Massarik, Marissa Pei-Carpenter, and Richard F. Beckhard, *Organization Development and Consulting: Perspectives and Foundations* (New York: Wiley, 2002).
- W. French and C. Bell, *Organization Development: Behavioral Science Interventions for Organization Improvement*, 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1998)—a classic in the OD literature.

These books introduce students to change management and provide opportunities to apply and clarify insights about the four perspectives. Students can use the frames to critique the classic change models and to develop a more comprehensive view. (This activity can be done as an in-class discussion, written assignment, or take-home exam.)

## **Chapter 18: Activities Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change**

A focus on planned change can make good use of simulations, role plays, and experiential exercises—activities that move beyond diagnosis and discussion to skill practice and change strategies.

- Several brief in-class exercises on change are discussed on the OBTS listserv at <http://www.listproc.bucknell.edu/archives/obts-l/200202/msg00001.html>. An example is presented as Exercise 18.1 in “Student Exercises for Chapter 18.”

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- HelpCo: An OD Role Play, in Pfeiffer and Jones's *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relationship Training* (La Jolla, Calif.: University Associates, 1977, vol. 6, p. 66), adds the dimension of managing change from a consultant's role.
- Several activities dealing with organization development and change can be found in Chapter 18 of Marcic, Vaill, and Seltzer, *Organizational Behavior: Experience and Cases*, 6th ed. (South Western, 2001).
- Back issues of *Exchange: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Review*, the *Journal of Management Education*, and the *Academy of Management Learning and Education* often contain ideas for class exercises.

Instructors can draw on students' experiences by asking them to write minicases about challenging change efforts they have experienced. Students can analyze these cases as a written assignment or take-home exam and/or can meet in small groups to develop four-frame approaches to what they might have done differently.

Instructors working with undergraduates or students with limited work experience will want to remind them that cases need not be drawn only from jobs or the workplace. Many powerful student minicases have been written about attempts to change family dynamics, relationships with roommates, sports teams, requirements for courses, on-campus activities, and so on. In courses with ongoing student teams, students might want to explore their experiences attempting to change the functioning, structures, or relationship patterns in these groups.

A variation is described in Exercise 18.2.

## **Chapter 18: A Focus on Human Resource and Structural Implications of Change**

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Another option for teaching this chapter is to focus on the structural and human resource aspects of change. Many of the cases and activities already suggested (see "Chapter 18: Cases Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change," "Chapter 18: Activities Focusing on a Four-Frame Approach to Change") can be adapted to concentrate on these two frames and to examine issues of education/training and structural redesign and realignment.

### **Chapter 18: Cases Focusing on Human Resource and Structural Implications of Change**

Cases geared to a rich exploration of structural and human resource concerns include:

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- In ABC Sales and Service Division: A Case Study of Personal and Organizational Transformation (HBS 9-494-075), the management of the sales and service arm of an information systems company attempts a major change that begins well but starts to founder on unaddressed human resource issues.
- Progressive Corporation's Divisionalization Decisions ([A] [HBS 9-481-067], [B] [HBS 9-481-068], [C] [HBS 9-481-069], and video HBS 9-882-514) enables students to explore, with case A, whether an experimental division should be established at Progressive Insurance Corporation and, with cases B and C, the company's actual decisions. The cases are good for examining the objective and subjective factors that influence change and organizational design. The video vividly shows the contrasting personalities and managing styles of the CEO and the COO of the company.

## **Chapter 18: A Focus on Political Aspects of Change**

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In Chapter 18, the authors stress the importance of negotiating, bargaining, and creating appropriate arenas to reveal and manage conflict—an inevitable aspect of any organizational change. While this may seem like common sense, it's easier said than done. Collaboration demands complex skills. Bargaining and negotiation processes can easily go awry. Productive arenas require good diagnosis of political realities, bringing relevant constituents together, setting clear parameters, tolerating and constructively managing high levels of conflict. Instructors can use this chapter to work on these kinds of issues and skills.

Instructors who have not already done so, for example, can focus on developing skills in negotiation, political diagnosis, or conflict management. They can offer simulated conflict-filled experiences and explore student strategies and reactions. They can discuss, in large or small groups, cases that deal with conflict, asking students to design appropriate arenas for the given situation (Who are the key players? The necessary referees? The appropriate spectators? What are essential rules? What is the best location for this political arena? How long should it exist?). They can provide opportunities for students to examine their own experiences and successes in managing conflict well.

The teaching notes for the political frame (Chapters 9, 10, and 11) provide a varied list of cases, films, simulations, experiential activities, skill-building exercises, and readings that can be adapted for any of these purposes. For example, a sequence of four cases from Inland Steel Industries (HBS 9-992-006, 9-992-007, 9-992-008, 9-992-009, and teaching note 5-992-010) describes a bottom-up push by minority employees to get their company to be more aggressive in its efforts to promote diversity and affirmative action.

Instructors should be aware that students often bring a variety of strong personal reactions to creating political arenas. Some students and executives approach bargaining with cynicism, having seen too many cases of watered-down, no-win solutions. Younger, less experienced students may underestimate the skills needed to manage collaboration or doubt their own abilities to endure intense conflict. It is well worth taking the time to

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explore the personal associations that students have with political aspects of change and to offer opportunities for students to examine the implications for their own leadership.

It is also helpful for instructors to remind students of the ways in which creating and managing arenas integrate learning from the other frames. Good arenas are well structured, with clear rules, roles, and regulations. Successful arena designers know their internal and external environments well and manage the explicit and implicit messages to both. Managing conflict draws on interpersonal skills that underpin human resource approaches to management. For example, students are often surprised to think of basic communication skills such as reflection and paraphrasing as political strategies and productive responses in the face of anger, attack, and widespread disagreement. And the symbolic meanings of choices, reactions, and communications have critical consequences for the actual outcomes.

### **Chapter 18: A Focus on Symbolic Aspects of Change** \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching about the symbolic aspects of change can focus on two related issues: understanding the dynamics of loss and developing ways of responding. There are a variety of ways to help students develop an appreciation for the dynamics of loss. Because the theme is familiar in fiction and film, instructors can choose from many powerful and poignant examples. A powerful activity exploring people's responses to loss is presented in Exercise 18.3.

Instructors can ask students to meet in small groups and talk about examples of loss that they have experienced or seen in their own lives: a loss that they sustained personally or a loss sustained by someone they knew. They can talk about what was lost, how people responded to the loss, and what seemed to help people get over it.

### **Chapter 18: Reading Focusing on Symbolic Aspects of Change**

Loss is a pervasive theme in drama and fiction. Works by a host of classical and popular writers are possible sources for exploring loss. Examples include the following:

- Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (New York: Viking Press, 1949).
- Alice Walker, *The Temple of My Familiar* (New York: Pocket Books, 1989).
- David Mamet's dark and powerful *Glengarry Glen Ross* (available as a case and teaching note from Hartwick, as well as a feature film).
- Sue Miller, *The Good Mother* (New York: Dell Books, 1986).
- Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club* (New York: Ivy Books, 1989).
- May Sarton, *Journal of a Solitude* (New York: Norton Library, 1973).

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- Alice Koller, *An Unknown Woman* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981).
- Anne Tyler, *Ladder of Years* (New York: Ivy Books, 1995).
- Many of the novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis, John Updike, William Styron, Doris Lessing, Philip Roth, John Barth.

For information on human responses to loss, instructors can see:

- Peter Marris, *Loss and Change* (New York: Pantheon, 1974) is a powerful treatment of how loss disrupts both our activities and our meaning systems. (The book is out of print, but many libraries have it, and used copies are available on-line.)
- Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1969); *Questions and Answers on Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1974); *Death: The Final Stage of Growth* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1975); and *Working It Through* (New York: Macmillan, 1982).
- John Bowlby, *Loss: Sadness and Depression* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

### **Chapter 18: Films or Videos Focusing on Symbolic Aspects of Change**

The central issues of change, loss, and meaning are cinema staples, and there are many film possibilities. Powerful class activities can be built around films or film excerpts. Examples include:

- *The Godfather* and *The Godfather II* can both be read as films about leadership and change in organizations, and both are about loss at multiple levels—the loss experienced by an aging gang patriarch who struggles to cope with changes in his business environment (in particular, the rise of the drug trade) and the loss experienced by his Ivy-league, war hero son, who ultimately gives up his image of himself as different from his family.
- David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross* presents one of the darkest visions of organizational hell on film, with powerful performances by Jack Lemmon and Al Pacino as desperate salesmen trying to save their jobs by selling real estate no one wants to buy. It is definitely not a feel-good movie, and the earthy language will not appeal to every audience, but it offers deep symbolic and political veins to mine.
- Personal reaction to loss is captured eloquently in Ron Kovic's poignant drunken lament to his father about the loss of his manhood and future in Vietnam in *Born on the Fourth of July*. Another example is Sally Fields's outburst of grief in *Steel Magnolias* as she leaves the cemetery after the burial of her only daughter. Both

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examples parallel the stages of mourning outlined by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (see “Chapter 18: Reading Focusing on Symbolic Aspects of Change”).

- *Ikiru*, by the great Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa, is a moving account of a middle-aged man’s struggle to come to terms with a diagnosis of terminal cancer.
- Other possible popular films include *Death of a Salesman*, *Field of Dreams*, *Roger and Me*, *On Golden Pond*, *Terms of Endearment*, *The Big Chill*, *The Rain Man*, *Tender Mercies*, *Beaches*, *Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore*, and *Coming Home*.
- The training and development film *Transitions: Letting Go and Taking Hold* (CRM) is a more analytical examination of a worker’s transition from hourly employee to first-line supervisor and the human responses to loss and change.

Before playing a film, instructors can tell students that they will be seeing an example of the dynamics of loss and ask the class to consider the following questions while watching the film:

1. How is this an example of loss?
2. Who is losing what?
3. What is the impact of the loss experience?
4. Is it similar to or different from the text description?
5. What might Bolman and Deal recommend to make the experience of loss less painful and more productive?

## STUDENT EXERCISES FOR CHAPTER 18

### EXERCISE 18.1

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#### **Focus:** A Four-Frame Approach to Change

Several brief in-class exercises on change are discussed on the OBTS listserv at <http://www.listproc.bucknell.edu/archives/obts-1/200202/msg00001.html>. One interesting activity, suggested by Douglas O’ Loughlin, asks groups or teams to designate a change agent. Change agents leave the classroom and learn that their task is to persuade each member of their team to eat a teaspoonful of an unknown substance in a closed container (the unknown substance will be edible but ugly—for example, yogurt or oatmeal colored to an unappetizing hue). Each change agent gets a container and a supply of plastic spoons. After the change agents perform their task, debriefing can examine what strategies change agents used, what worked and what didn’t work, and so forth.

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**EXERCISE 18.2**

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**Focus:** A Four-Frame Approach to Change

Form student intervention groups. The groups will do the following:

1. Identify a situation that is “ripe” for change.
2. Develop a possible four-frame change strategy.
3. Implement the strategy.
4. Assess the results.

If course requirements or time prohibit carrying out the full intervention cycle, students can identify a situation and then focus on developing their proposed strategy. Students can explore their learning from this activity in a course paper, in small group discussions, and/or in a brief presentation to the larger group.

You can leave the identification of projects to the groups—reminding students to think broadly about a wide array of possible change sites—or you can identify small, manageable projects on campus, in the community, or in the classroom.

Alternatively, you can ask all student groups to focus on the classroom, choosing one aspect of the course that they would like to change. This offers the added benefit of collecting student feedback and possible course design suggestions. Compare the differences in project content and focus across groups and explore the rationale and implications of the choices for effective change.

**EXERCISE 18.3**

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**Focus:** Symbolic Aspects of Change

A powerful class activity can be built around the ideas in Peter Marris’s book *Loss and Change* (New York: Pantheon, 1974).

Start by asking individuals to consider the question “What are the most important things that give your life a sense of meaning and purpose?” Ask each student to make a brief list, assuring students that their lists are personal and they will not have to share them unless they wish.

After giving people a few minutes to develop their lists, ask volunteers to give examples of the items that they produced. Typical examples include family, love, faith, success, career, and helping others.

Collect these examples in a list on the board, and then note two things about the items on the list: (1) they are of great importance, but (2) they are abstractions. For example, the concept of family is an abstraction, even if your family or mine is a very specific set of individuals. Label the list on the board “meanings.”

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Next, argue that meanings can only be expressed through attachments: attaching love to a particular person, attaching success to a particular set of activities and purposes. Ask people to review their lists and for each meaning briefly note related attachments.

Follow this with a discussion of Marris's view of three major forms of change:

1. Substitution: substituting one item for another (for example, trading in the old clunker for a new car).
2. Evolution: gradual change over a period of time in an individual's significant meanings and attachments.
3. Loss: sudden disruption of the linkage between a meaning and its attachment (for example, loss of a spouse or child usually breaks a number of different attachments; loss of a job may disrupt an individual's ability to express such meanings as achievement, success, and competence).

Marris argues that people do not resist change itself. They resist the disruption of their existing meaning structures. We are all, Marris says, profoundly conservative with respect to our own ways of making sense of the world. That means that substitution is the easiest kind of change for people to deal with, while loss is the hardest. The "rebound marriage" after a divorce, in this light, is an effort to convert loss into substitution ("I did not lose anything because I have a new one even better than the old one"). Such marriages often fail because the effort to avoid loss is futile.

Next, ask students to generate a list of the ways people respond to loss. Students usually list emotions such as sadness, anger, denial, depression, and ambivalence (holding on to the past versus going forward). Note that those are the normal human responses to loss. If you are a change agent and people respond with those feelings, that is a sign that they are responding normally, not a sign that there is something wrong with them or your suggested change.

It is often helpful to remind students here that reflection and paraphrasing are helpful ways of responding to others who express strong emotions—and a simple interpersonal strategy often overlooked by change agents who interpret these normal human responses to change as irrational resistance or an attack on them or their work.